

One Caribbean®

CELEBRATING CARIBBEAN EXCELLENCE, CULTURE & COMMUNITY



| ISSUE 4 - Q. 1

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COVER STORY

IN CONVERSATION WITH: KAREN-MAE HILL, OBE

High Commissioner of Antigua and Barbuda:
A Journey of Diplomacy, Culture, and Heritage

BUILDING A SMARTER CARIBBEAN:

Transformative Projects Shaping the Region

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ISSUE 4: Q1:2025

EDITORS NOTE

Welcome to Issue 4 of One Caribbean Magazine, where we continue our mission to celebrate Caribbean excellence, culture, and community.

This edition arrives at a time when the Caribbean diaspora is not only redefining its voice but powerfully asserting its presence across diplomacy, innovation, heritage, and healing. From our cover story with the formidable Karen-Mae Hill, OBE, to the transformative visions shaping the region's digital future, we are reminded that our stories don't sit quietly, they lead.

We honour community champions like Howard Jeffery of the Pepper Pot Centre, whose family legacy remains a lifeline for Caribbean elders in London. We spotlight regional milestones, from Guyana's evolving oil economy to Grenada's visionary health infrastructure and Dominica's sustainable development. These are more than features, they are blueprints for progress, anchored in our collective spirit.

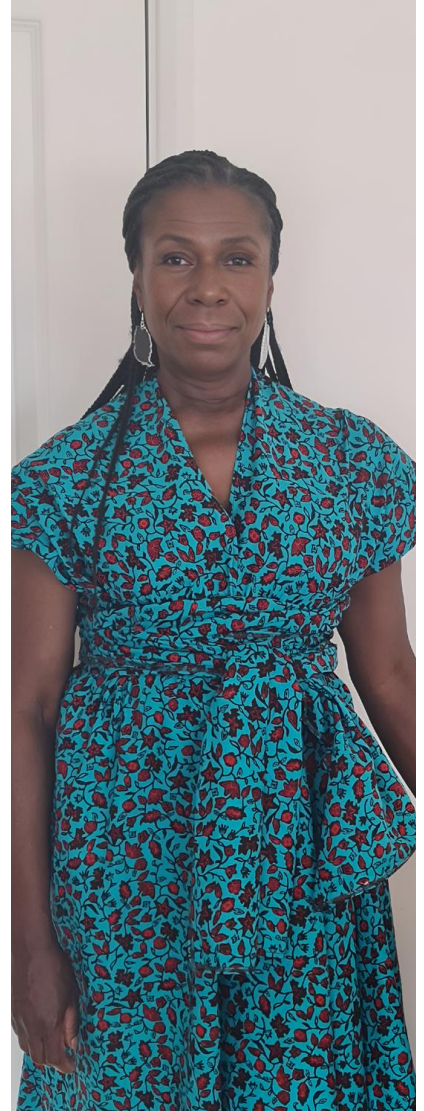
In the UK, our 100 Caribbean Voices survey speaks directly to the heart of who we are: complex, proud, and deeply connected. It affirms that Caribbean identity isn't monolithic, it's a mosaic, one we must continue to preserve, amplify, and share.

*As we celebrated brilliance at the 2024 Black Honour Awards - soon to become the **Caribbean Honour Awards** we were reminded of the power of recognition and representation. This is our time, and our community is rising.*

*If this resonates with you, if you see yourself, your family, your heritage in these pages then join us. **Subscribe**, share, and help us grow. Every new reader strengthens our voice, our visibility, and our mission.*

Let's keep telling our stories, boldly, proudly, and together.

Elizabeth Flanders
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF





Photos from the 2024 Black Honour Awards
Bottom: 2022 Black Honour Awards winners



IN CONVERSATION WITH KAREN-MAE HILL, OBE

**High Commissioner of Antigua and Barbuda:
A Journey of Diplomacy, Culture, and Heritage**

By: One Caribbean Magazine



Karen-Mae Hill is a distinguished diplomat, academic, accomplished musician, qualified barrister, and advocate for the cultural and economic development of Antigua and Barbuda and the wider Caribbean region. Currently serving as the High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, she has a deep-rooted passion for her homeland and a wealth of experience in international relations. In this conversation, we explore her background, career, personal reflections on life and leadership, and what the future holds for her.

Early Life and Influences

Born in Antigua, Karen-Mae Hill hails from a large and musically gifted family. *"I come from a large family," she shares. "I'm one of six children. So, I kind of fit in the middle of it."*

Education played a crucial role in shaping her path. *"I attended school in Antigua up to my first university experience," she explains. "I did primary school, secondary school, A-levels, and the first year of the University at the University of the West Indies in Antigua before heading off to the UK to further my studies."*

Music is woven into the fabric of her family. *"My great-grandmother and grandmother were both avid musicians," she says. "My grandmother played the organ, and my great-grandmother played the mandolin, saxophone, and organ at an incredibly high level despite having no formal training. All her children were musicians, so music has always run deep and wide in our family."*

Hill's family history also carries an intriguing migration story. *"Interestingly, my grandmother was born in the Dominican Republic because my great-grandparents migrated there during the interwar years. Many Antiguan went to work in the sugar plantations in the Dominican Republic at that time. My great-grandfather worked in a factory there, and that's where my grandmother was born before the family moved back to Antigua."*



Growing Up in Antigua and Barbuda

"Antigua is actually a really wonderful place to grow up," Hill reflects. "Even within the British education system, my experience was deeply influenced by my parents; my mother was a teacher, and my father was a policeman, both now retired."

She describes a structured yet enriching childhood. *"I grew up in a home that was very Christocentric. My family was deeply involved in religious and community activities. I participated in Pathfinders, completing all the grades and learning skills like knot-tying, hiking, and camping although I preferred 'glamping' and would often avoid sleeping outdoors."*

Music remained a significant part of her upbringing. *"It was ingrained in our daily lives,"* she says.

Hill attended Antigua Girls' High School, the oldest all-girls school on the island, founded in 1886. *"I did very well academically,"* she notes. *"In fact, there's a Karen-Mae Hill Award given annually to the top student in modern languages at the school, which I sponsor with a trophy and a cash incentive."*

Reading was another cornerstone of her upbringing. *"I grew up reading Enid Blyton, The Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew, Thomas Hardy, and the Brontës. My mother believed in a '12 by 12' reading challenge, so I had read most major English classics by the time I was 12. My siblings and I would have spirited debates about literature; my brother loved 'Wuthering Heights,' while I thought 'Jane Eyre' was the best book ever written."*

She credits her disciplined yet loving household for shaping her into who she is today. *"My parents always emphasised education. My father had a mantra - whatever one child got; the others had to receive the same opportunities. That philosophy ensured all of us had access to the best education available."*

The Role of the High Commission

The High Commission of Antigua and Barbuda in the United Kingdom serves as the country's official diplomatic mission. As a Commonwealth country, Antigua and Barbuda refers to its diplomatic presence in fellow Commonwealth nations as a High Commission rather than an embassy. The office plays a crucial role in representing Antigua and Barbuda's interests on multiple fronts.

Key Functions of the High Commission:

- **Diplomatic Representation:** The High Commission represents Antigua and Barbuda in the UK, engaging with government officials, international organisations, and other diplomatic entities to advocate for national interests.
- **Consular Services:** It aids Antiguan and Barbudans living in or visiting the UK, including passport services, visa processing, emergency support, and legal guidance.
- **Trade and Investment Promotion:** The office works to attract business opportunities by fostering trade relations and investment between Antigua and Barbuda and the UK. interests.
- **Cultural and Tourism Promotion:** The High Commission plays an active role in promoting the rich culture, heritage, and tourism potential of Antigua and Barbuda.

- **Commonwealth Engagement:** Given that London is the headquarters of the Commonwealth, the High Commission actively participates in Commonwealth-related meetings and initiatives that align with Antigua and Barbuda's interests.

As a political appointee, Hill's role as High Commissioner carries significant responsibility, demanding diplomatic skill, strategic leadership, and a steadfast commitment to her nation's interests. Her background as a qualified barrister further equips her to navigate complex negotiations and effectively advocate for Antigua and Barbuda on the global stage.

Hill remains unwavering in her mission to drive meaningful change, championing not only her country but the entire Caribbean region by strengthening international partnerships. *"There is always more to be done,"* she acknowledges. *"But we continue to push forward, ensuring that the voices of Antigua and Barbuda, as well as the wider Caribbean, are heard on the world stage."*

Leadership in Heritage Preservation

Hill is a director of the Antigua and Barbuda Heritage Trust, an organisation dedicated to the preservation of historic sites, including the Government House. Under the patronage of Governor-General Sir Rodney Williams, the Trust is actively restoring the Government House into a museum showcasing the nation's history.

Collaborating with international institutions, including the London Museum, the initiative seeks to transform this landmark into a cultural and educational hub.

Preserving Caribbean Heritage and Identity

Hill is deeply committed to preserving Caribbean heritage and fostering cultural pride among younger generations, particularly children of Caribbean descent living abroad. She emphasises the importance of engaging them in cultural activities and organising trips that help nurture a strong sense of identity.

"We must ensure that young people remain connected to their heritage, their history, and their roots," she states. *"Tell them about our Nobel laureates, Derek Walcott and Arthur Lewis. Share the region's achievements in sports and music - Usain Bolt, Rihanna. Let them experience the cuisine, the traditions, and truly be a part of it."*

Hill believes that when our children visit the Caribbean, their experience should go beyond the beaches. She encourages parents to expose them to historical sites, local traditions, and community life to deepen their cultural understanding.

At the same time, she expresses concern about the declining interest in literature and foreign languages among Caribbean youth. *"We need to return to the fundamentals, extracurricular activities like music, drama, language, and community engagement to build confidence and a sense of belonging,"* she says.

For Hill, preserving cultural identity is not about choosing one heritage over the other but embracing both. *"By the time they turn 18, there should be no confusion about who they are. They should be able to say with pride, 'I am British, but I also have Caribbean heritage, and I embrace both.' You don't have to choose - you can be both."*

She stresses the importance of early exposure, warning that prolonged disconnection from one's heritage can lead to a sense of not fully belonging anywhere. *"Too often, children grow up feeling distant from their roots, which can create confusion - not quite feeling at home here, but not belonging there either. But when they are raised with an understanding of their rich dual identity, they come to see it as complementary, not conflicting."*

Championing the Blue Economy

Hill is also a strong advocate of sustainable ocean development. She serves on the steering committee for the Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy at the University of the West Indies. This initiative aims to advance intellectual progress and strengthen institutional capacity in the areas of marine science and the blue economy while benefitting from the societal, economic and environmental opportunities for the Caribbean within this emerging sector.

Balancing Career and Personal Life

With such a demanding career, how does Hill maintain balance? *"It's a challenge,"* she admits. *"There's always a balancing act between professional responsibilities and personal well-being. My work is deeply fulfilling, but it requires constant travel, long hours, and a strong support system."*

Despite her busy schedule, she prioritises healthy eating, fitness, and quality time with family. *"Maintaining a balanced lifestyle is essential for my well-being and effectiveness in my work."*

Accolades and Recognitions

In recognition of her contributions, Hill was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2000, for her services to public life. *"It was an incredible moment,"* she recalls. *"Being recognised for one's work is always humbling, but for me, it was also a reaffirmation of the values my family instilled in me, service, dedication, and excellence."* Beyond this she has received multiple accolades for her advocacy in culture, heritage preservation, and disability rights. Her dedication to public service and diplomacy has earned her respect both locally and internationally.



Looking Ahead - What's Next for Karen Mae-Hill?

“

Oh, my goodness! Well, some say politics is the next step, that I should throw my hat in the ring. I know the idea has been floated, and there's even talk in Antigua and Barbuda that I have my sights set on leading the country. But I haven't made that decision just yet.

Others believe I should continue doing what I'm doing because, as they say, I'm making a meaningful impact both at home and abroad. Honestly, I'm open to the challenge. The Prime Minister has asked me about politics, and he's also enquired about the possibility of me serving as an ambassador in another part of the world.

For me, it's simple, wherever there's an opportunity to use the skills and talents I've been blessed with, I'll embrace it. So, we'll see where the journey takes me next!

”





THE FUTURE OF THE CARIBBEAN: Transformative Projects Shaping the Region.

By: One Caribbean Magazine

The Caribbean is embracing a bold future where technology and sustainability drive development. **Three of the region's most ambitious projects** the **Smart City initiatives in Barbados**, the **Hope Vale Climate-Smart Medical City in Grenada**, and **Dominica's Sustainable Development efforts** illustrate a shift towards intelligent urban planning, advanced healthcare infrastructure, and eco-friendly tourism. These initiatives promise to enhance economic resilience, improve public services, and **position the Caribbean as a leader in digital transformation and sustainable development.**

Additionally, the **Connected Caribbean Summit 2024**, held from December 9–12 in Miami, played a pivotal role in shaping these advancements. The summit brought together regional leaders, tech innovators, and policymakers to discuss strategies for digital transformation and smart infrastructure implementation across the Caribbean. (connectedcaribbean.org)

Another notable event that has propelled the region's tech landscape forward is **Sci-TechKnofest 2.0**, the largest virtual science festival in the Caribbean, held from March 21–27, 2022 in **Trinidad**. Themed "**The Deep Tech Revolution**," this festival showcased cutting-edge advancements in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and renewable energy, highlighting the Caribbean's potential in scientific and technological innovation.

Furthermore, in the last quarter of 2024, Hazel Brandy-Williams' REACH ME CORP. has spearheaded Technovation Girls St. Kitts & Nevis, an initiative designed to empower young women in technology and entrepreneurship. By providing mentorship and hands-on training in coding, artificial intelligence, and business development, this program is inspiring the next generation of female innovators in the Caribbean's growing digital economy.

Smart Barbados: The Future of Urban Living



The Smart Bridgetown Wi-Fi Corridor

One of Barbados' flagship smart city projects is the Smart Bridgetown Wi-Fi corridor, a collaboration with Cisco and local technology provider Productive Business Solutions (PBS). This initiative aims to provide free public Wi-Fi throughout the capital, enhancing connectivity for residents and visitors. Beyond internet access, this project lays the groundwork for future smart city applications, such as intelligent transportation systems and digital public services.

Source: [Business Barbados](#)

FutureCITY [x]: Citizen-Driven Smart Design

Another groundbreaking initiative is FutureCITY [x], an urban development platform that combines AI-powered sustainable design metrics with digital twin architecture. This tool enables governments to create smart, inclusive urban spaces, addressing environmental, social, and economic objectives.

"By placing citizens at the center of development discussions, we ensure that smart cities serve the people, not just the technology," notes the Future Barbados initiative.

Source: [Future Barbados](#)

Barbados
National Energy
Policy goal: to
be 100%
renewable by
2030

Source:
<https://smartenergybarbados.com/>

Smart Energy Buildings

In collaboration with the Republic of Korea, Barbados is implementing the Demonstration of Smart Energy Buildings project to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. This project serves as a model for future smart grids, eco-friendly buildings, and renewable energy initiatives across the country.

Source: [Barbados Ministry of Energy](#)

Grenada's Hope Vale Climate-Smart Medical City: Revolutionising Caribbean Healthcare

Project Polaris: A Vision for a Health and Medical Hub

Grenada is embarking on one of the most ambitious healthcare and urban development projects in the Caribbean, the Hope Vale Climate-Smart Medical City. Spanning 84 acres, this development will feature a state-of-the-art, climate-resilient smart hospital, serving as a cornerstone for medical tourism, retirement healthcare, and biotechnology research.

Source: Public Now



Partnership with Mount Sinai Health System

To ensure the success of this project, Grenada has signed a partnership agreement with the New York-based Mount Sinai Health System. In the first phase, the initiative will focus on modernising the Grenada General Hospital, strengthening its quality and safety systems, and improving healthcare services across the island.

"This partnership is a game-changer, bringing world-class medical expertise to the Caribbean and setting a precedent for future healthcare investments in the region," stated Grenada's Minister of Health.

Source: [Loop News Caribbean](#)

“
This partnership is a game-changer, bringing world-class medical expertise to the Caribbean and setting a precedent for future healthcare investments in the region
”

The Government of Grenada's Vision

A government-produced video highlights the transformative nature of the Hope Vale Climate-Smart Medical City, emphasising its role as a beacon of medical excellence and innovation. Located in the Parish of Saint David, this project is poised to revolutionise healthcare, education, and tourism across the OECS.

At its core is a state-of-the-art Smart Research Hospital, designed with patient-centred care and community engagement in mind. The facility will provide value-based specialist care, innovative healthcare solutions, world-class medical training, and cutting-edge research. Among its key specialties are oncology, reconstructive plastic surgery, fertility treatment, stem cell therapy, and physical therapy.

Dominica's Sustainable Development: A Vision for Eco-Friendly Growth

Dominica is advancing its commitment to sustainable energy and infrastructure with the construction of the Dominica International Airport, expected to be completed in 2026. This project is part of the nation's broader strategy to enhance connectivity, economic growth, and eco-friendly tourism.

The airport is designed to be energy-efficient, utilising solar power and rainwater harvesting to minimise environmental impact. Additionally, the project aligns with Dominica's geothermal energy development, which aims to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and transition the country into a carbon-neutral tourism destination.



What These Projects Mean for the Caribbean

The smart city initiatives in Barbados, the medical city in Grenada, and the sustainable development efforts in Dominica mark a transformative era for the Caribbean. By integrating technology, sustainability, and citizen-driven planning, these nations are creating resilient, future-ready societies.

The **Connected Caribbean Summit 2024 underscored the importance of regional collaboration**, with discussions focused on digital governance, infrastructure resilience, and technological inclusivity. The summit reinforced the role of public-private partnerships in accelerating smart development and fostering innovation across the region.

As these projects unfold, they provide blueprints for other Caribbean nations looking to embrace digital transformation, enhance healthcare, and build sustainable, intelligent cities. **The future of the Caribbean is bright and it's getting smarter every day.**

The future of the Caribbean is bright—and it's getting smarter every day.

GUYANA'S OIL BOOM: Navigating Regional Impact and Geopolitical Shifts

By: One Caribbean Magazine

In just a few short years, Guyana has gone from an overlooked South American nation to one of the world's fastest-growing oil producers. Since ExxonMobil's 2015 discovery of vast offshore reserves, Guyana has positioned itself as a key energy player, producing approximately 645,000 barrels of crude oil per day by early 2024, with projections exceeding one million barrels per day in the near future ([U.S. Energy Information Administration](#)).

The discovery has sparked economic optimism and foreign investment, but it also presents significant challenges ranging from geopolitical tensions to environmental concerns. As Guyana navigates these uncharted waters, the question remains: **can this newfound wealth be leveraged for sustainable development?**



Economic Windfall: A Boom for the Region

Guyana's oil wealth has not only transformed its economy but has also had ripple effects throughout the region. The nation's GDP growth has skyrocketed, positioning it as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. International partners, including India and China, have taken notice. India, in particular, has pursued energy deals to secure a stake in Guyana's oil exports, strengthening trade relations between the two nations ([Associated Press](#)).

The economic boom has also led to government-backed initiatives aimed at redistributing wealth. In an unprecedented move, the Guyanese government announced direct cash payouts to citizens, a policy designed to ensure that oil revenue benefits all residents, not just foreign investors or elites ([The Guardian](#)).

Guyana's Deep Caribbean Connections

Though located on the South American mainland, Guyana has deep cultural and historical ties to the Caribbean. As a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), it plays a vital role in regional economic and political affairs. Many Guyanese identify strongly as Caribbean,

sharing cultural traditions, cuisine, and linguistic influences with the island nations. This identity extends beyond governance, Guyanese migrants have long contributed to the social and economic fabric of Caribbean nations, and many maintain close ties with families and businesses in the region.

The oil boom is set to further integrate Guyana into the Caribbean economy, with increased trade and investment opportunities benefiting both Guyanese and neighbouring island nations. Energy security and economic cooperation within CARICOM are expected to strengthen, fostering regional stability and growth.

Geopolitical Tensions and the Essequibo Dispute

With great wealth comes great geopolitical friction. Guyana's oil discovery has reignited a long-standing territorial dispute with neighbouring Venezuela over the Essequibo region. Venezuela, emboldened by its own economic struggles, has renewed its claims over the resource-rich area, prompting international concern.

Tensions escalated in late 2023 when Venezuela's military detained Guyanese fishing vessels, an act widely seen as an attempt to assert dominance. The dispute has since reached the International Court of Justice, with diplomatic efforts underway to prevent conflict ([Wikipedia](#)).



Environmental Dilemmas and Climate Responsibilities

Despite its newfound economic prosperity, Guyana faces the paradox of being both a major oil producer and a historically significant carbon sink due to its vast rainforests. The country has long been an advocate for environmental conservation, yet its oil production raises concerns about sustainability and climate change commitments.

Critics argue that without strict environmental regulations, Guyana risks environmental degradation, including offshore spills and deforestation. Migration and climate change experts warn of displacement due to industrial expansion, necessitating proactive measures to mitigate risks ([Migration Policy Institute](#)).

Can Oil Wealth Be a Blessing, Not a Curse?

The story of oil-rich nations is often a cautionary tale. Countries like Venezuela and Nigeria serve as reminders of how mismanaged resource wealth can lead to corruption, economic disparity, and political instability. To avoid the “resource curse,” Guyana must implement sound governance, transparency, and long-term economic planning.

As ExxonMobil continues to expand production and new international players seek a foothold in the industry, Guyana must balance economic ambition with responsible management. The nation stands at a crossroads: will it become a model for sustainable oil wealth distribution, or will it succumb to the pitfalls that have plagued other resource-rich nations?

Sources:

- U.S. Energy Information Administration: [Guyana's Oil Production Growth](#)
- Associated Press: [India's Interest in Guyana's Oil](#)
- The Guardian: [Guyana's Cash Payouts from Oil Wealth](#)
- Wikipedia: [Guyana-Venezuela Crisis](#)
- Migration Policy Institute: [Climate and Migration in Guyana](#)

Guyana's oil boom is a defining moment for the country and the region. As the world watches, its leaders have the rare opportunity to shape a prosperous, sustainable future. Whether they succeed will determine not just the fate of Guyana but also its place in the global energy landscape.



Leading with Purpose:

An Interview with Howard Jeffery, Chair of The Pepper Pot Centre, London

By: One Caribbean Magazine



Centre members attending a cricket match at Lords



Centre members celebrating their birthdays



Centre members participating in Chair Yoga



Howard Jeffery Chair of the Pepper Pot Centre



Howard & Cleopatra Jeffery attending a Sky hosted event

In this exclusive interview, we sit down with Howard Jeffery, Chair of The Pepper Pot Centre in London. Founded over 50 years ago in the front room of Howard's parents the Centre has grown to a vital resource that serves as a hub of culture, companionship and community for elderly Caribbean residents. Howard shares the Centre's inspiring journey from humble beginnings to becoming a cherished cultural institution, as well as the challenges it faces today.

Origins and Vision

One Caribbean: Pepper Pot has such a rich history. Can you take us back to the beginning and share how it all started in your family's front room?

Howard Jeffery:

"Oh, absolutely! Pepper Pot began 50 years ago in my mum and dad's front room. My mum, who was working in social services after the Notting Hill riots and was also a midwife, noticed that elderly Caribbean people didn't have a place to go once they retired. They faced isolation, and some churches wouldn't even take them in. So, my parents had this vision, and after negotiating with the council, they started a luncheon club.

Fast forward a bit, Pepper Pot officially became a registered charity in 1981, but the idea had been brewing long before that. We first set up in Acton Road, moved around a bit, and have now been in our current spot near Ladbroke Grove tube station for 24 years. The whole idea was, and still is, to give older Caribbean folks a place to come together, have a hot meal, play dominoes, meet friends, go on trips. It's a proper day centre with a Caribbean vibe.

Of course, as the community has changed, we've started welcoming people from different backgrounds too. Our funding mostly comes from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, but we've also been branching out to other sources, including private sector support.

Oh, and just last year, in 2024, the Greater London Authority (GLA) came by for a consultation. They're planning a memorial to honour those who died in the transatlantic slave trade, and they wanted to hear from our elders about what they'd like to see. It's a big project, aiming for completion in 2026."

A Personal Journey of Leadership

One Caribbean: You clearly have a deep connection to Pepper Pot. What inspired you to take on a leadership role, and how has your journey shaped the centre's growth?

Howard Jeffery: *I retired about five years ago after a career in further and higher education. I was a director at four different London colleges and even spent some time in the U.S. at Jacksonville University.*

About 12 years ago, my mum called me, she passed away three years ago at 91, and said, "Pepper Pot needs help, they're having funding problems. Can you step in?" At first, I hesitated because of my full-time job and family commitments. But I agreed to help in a small way. Then, the Chair of the Trust got sick, and I was asked to take over in 2012. I've been leading it ever since."

My family roots are in Guyana, and my parents were part of the Windrush generation. The values they brought, community, resilience, and service are the foundations of Pepper Pot. It's personal for me. Interestingly, my youngest son plays football for Guyana, highlighting how cultural identity and belonging are complex and meaningful. He was born and raised in the UK but represents Guyana on the field. It's a reminder that identity isn't always about where you live - it's about

where your roots are and how you carry that with you. This personal connection drives my commitment to preserving a sense of community and cultural heritage at Pepper Pot.

Current Challenges and Resilience

One Caribbean: Pepper Pot has stood the test of time. What are some of the challenges you're facing today, and how are you navigating them to ensure its future?

Howard Jeffery: *"Our biggest challenge right now is our lease, it's running out. Property in this area is expensive, so negotiations are tough, but we're determined to stay. This community needs this space."*

Back in the day, Pepper Pot was a hub for well-known activists like Darcus Howe and Roland Gordon. Many of them are no longer with us, but the centre remains. We've faced tough times before, and I'm confident we'll keep fighting for our place in this community."

Adapting During COVID-19

One Caribbean: The pandemic was challenging for many communities. How did Pepper Pot adapt, and what did you learn from that experience

Howard Jeffery: *We acted quickly and decisively. During the pandemic, we delivered 50 meals a day, five days a week, and occasionally on Sundays, for about two and a half years. Many of our elderly members didn't have next of kin nearby, so ensuring they were fed and remained connected was crucial. We're incredibly proud that not a single member of our priority group died from COVID. It was a testament to the strength of our support network, truly made a difference.*

Programmes and Community Engagement

One Caribbean: Pepper Pot offers so much more than just a gathering space. Can you share more about the activities and programmes that bring the community together?

Howard Jeffery: *We run half-day programmes, including IT classes, bingo, reminiscence sessions, knitting, yoga, Bible study, and fitness classes. We also organise cultural outings, such as visits to theatres, the Royal Albert Hall, Ascot, Kew Gardens, the cinema, seaside trips, and more. These activities provide our members with opportunities for social interaction, cultural enrichment, and physical well-being.*

At a recent meeting, members voted unanimously in favour of a trip to Paris, reflecting their enthusiasm for new experiences and cultural exploration. To make this dream a reality, we are actively seeking sponsorship to help with the costs, ensuring that all members can participate in this exciting adventure.

Funding and Volunteering

One Caribbean: Keeping a community centre running isn't easy. How do you secure funding, and what role do volunteers play in keeping Pepper Pot thriving?

Howard Jeffery: *We're quite resourceful. Our funding comes from a variety of sources, including grants from the National Lottery and donations in kind like Nando's, which provides us with chicken every week. The centre also receives significant support from other key funders, including Global Radio, SKY Television, Westway Trust, Westminster Council, and the Rausing Trust. We also rely heavily on volunteers. They run activities, offer companionship, and assist with events. We're always looking for more volunteers,*

especially younger people and those with IT skills to help our elderly members navigate the digital world.

At the Christmas party 2024, we had 24 volunteers. Some were groups from organisations such as the University of West London, Morley College, Westway Trust, and Amos Trust.

Cultural Preservation and Community Unity

One Caribbean: With so many cultural institutions disappearing, how is Pepper Pot preserving Caribbean heritage, and what more can the community do to support this mission?

Howard Jeffery: *The Caribbean community in the UK is at a crossroads. We've lost many cultural institutions over the years. We must ask ourselves: Do we want to maintain a strong Caribbean presence? If so, we need to take collective action. We have skilled professionals among us, lawyers, accountants, IT experts who can contribute to sustaining our community centres.*

Pepper Pot is more than just a day centre; it's a living, breathing part of the

Caribbean spirit in London. To ensure its future, we need to work together with a shared purpose. It's about unity, dedication, and preserving our cultural identity.

A Call to Action

One Caribbean: For those inspired by Pepper Pot's story, how can they get involved or support your mission?

Howard Jeffery: *Pepper Pot isn't just a place; it's a legacy. We need support through volunteering, donations, or simply spreading the word. Every little act of kindness helps. We've come this far by standing together, and that's how we'll continue to thrive. If anyone wants to get involved, our doors are always open.*

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Pepper Pot Centre continues to be a pillar of strength and community in, serving not just as a day centre but as a cultural touchstone for generations. Through leadership, resilience, and community spirit, Howard Jeffery and his team are ensuring that Pepper Pot remains a place of belonging and purpose.

2023 SURVEY REPORT

What it means to be Caribbean or of Caribbean heritage in the UK.

Prepared by Elizabeth Flanders,
Founder & Event Director at Event Connoisseurs Limited.

eventconnoisseurs.com/



100 Caribbean Voices

Publication Date: March 2025

FOREWORD: A Personal Note

What Does it Mean to Be Caribbean in Britain Today?

This is more than a question it is a reckoning.

As a British-born woman of Grenadian heritage, I have often felt mislabelled, unseen, or oversimplified. Being Caribbean in the UK is too often reduced to a singular identity, usually Jamaican, while the rich diversity of our islands is erased. This report is a response to that erasure.

The 100 Caribbean Voices Survey was created to centre our stories, from Grenada to St. Lucia, Barbados to Jamaica - and to spark a national conversation about culture, belonging, and legacy. At a time of demographic change, political turbulence, and generational drift, it asks: ***How do we hold on to who we are?***

The voices captured here are not just data points, they are testimonies of strength, struggle, and love for a culture that deserves more recognition than it currently receives.

To the 55 respondents: thank you. Your words are powerful. They will shape how we remember and how we move forward.

Warm regards,

Elizabeth Flanders

Founder, 100 Caribbean Voices Survey

Event Director, Event Connoisseurs Ltd

(Celebrating Caribbean Excellence, Culture, and Community)

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reclaiming Identity. Celebrating Heritage. Shaping the Future.

The 100 Caribbean Voices Survey offers a timely and necessary insight into what it means to be of Caribbean heritage in Britain today. With 55 respondents from across the UK, this national snapshot captures a tapestry of experiences that reflect both the pride and the pressures of navigating dual identities in a multicultural society.

What also emerges is the emotional cost of cultural invisibility. For some, the absence of meaningful representation led to diminished self-worth, disconnection from their roots, and a sense of cultural erasure. These are not just reflections, they are reminders of the urgent need for cultural affirmation, structural change, and intergenerational continuity.

Through three core themes: **Culture, Identity & Heritage; Navigating Caribbean Heritage in the UK; and Cultural Awareness & Recognition** the survey surfaces deep concerns about cultural continuity, community cohesion, and visibility, alongside a powerful sense of pride, resilience, and belonging. It is both a celebration and a reckoning.

1.1 KEY FINDINGS IN BRIEF

Culture and Identity Remain Strong, But Vulnerable

- 61.8% actively maintain ties to Caribbean roots.
- Family and food are the primary vehicles of cultural transmission.
- Younger generations report surface-level connections and seek deeper access to heritage.

Dual Identity: A Strength and a Strain

- Code-switching is common but emotionally taxing.
- Caribbean identity is often diluted in areas with limited cultural infrastructure.
- Intercultural relationships and island-specific distinctions shape identity experiences.

Recognition is Limited and Often Superficial

- Fewer than 10% feel Caribbean contributions are fully appreciated in UK institutions.
- Stereotypes (e.g. laziness, aggression) continue to influence public perception.
- Caribbean culture is celebrated through food and festivals but often misunderstood or commodified in deeper societal contexts.

1.2 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Preserve Culture

- Integrate Caribbean heritage into UK education systems.
- Fund storytelling, language, and culinary heritage initiatives.
- Develop digital cultural archives for wider access.

Enhance Representation

- Recognise Caribbean contributions beyond Black History Month.
- Establish Emancipation Remembrance Day.
- Amplify diverse Caribbean excellence in media, leadership, and the arts.
- Create national awards and public campaigns to highlight contributions in education, politics, medicine, and the arts.

Invest in Infrastructure

- Sustain key institutions like Black Cultural Archives and Windrush Foundation.
- Empower Caribbean High Commissions to lead cultural diplomacy.
- Create a UK Caribbean Think Tank to shape policy and public discourse.

Empower Youth

- Revive Saturday schools and mentorship programmes.
- Support mixed-heritage identity exploration.
- Centre young voices in community development.

Unify the Community

- Build a national coalition of Caribbean-led organisations.
- Promote cross-island and intergenerational dialogue.
- Encourage collaboration across arts, education, business, and faith sectors.

1.3 A CALL TO ACTION: Reconnect. Reclaim. Reimagine.


This is more than a report. It is a cultural manifesto built from lived experience and layered identity.

- To policymakers: Cultural equity is not optional - invest in education, mental health, representation, and cultural infrastructure.
- To educators and cultural institutions: Teach the full Caribbean story: past, present, and future. Make it visible beyond Black History Month.
- To Caribbean communities: Honour your heritage. Mentor the next generation. Speak your truth. Unite across islands, ages, and outlooks. Reclaim what was lost and imagine what is next.
- To wider UK society: Understand that British history is incomplete without Caribbean voices.

This is a moment to listen deeply, act decisively, and commit to cultural legacy as both inheritance and responsibility.

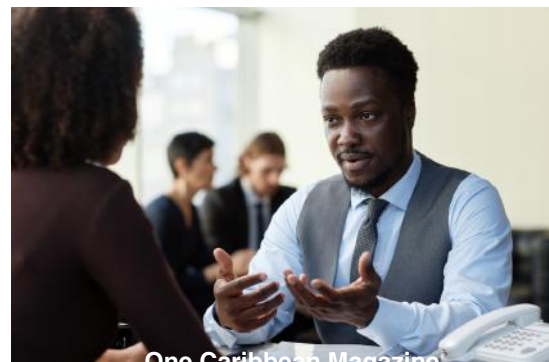
Whether you're part of the Caribbean community, an educator, policymaker, or ally, this report is an invitation to listen, learn, and act.

Download the [full report](#) or [condensed report](#).

 Join the movement to preserve, protect, and celebrate Caribbean identity in Britain.



LOCAL COMMUNITY AND MORE...





CALL TO ACTION **VOLUNTEERS**

Support Your Community at
Pepper Pot Centre

At Pepper Pot Centre, we're more than just a community space - we're a lifeline for elderly members from the Caribbean and wider community who rely on us for friendship, support, and a sense of belonging. But we can't do it alone. We rely on dedicated volunteers to help keep our programmes running smoothly.

We need volunteers like you to help us keep
this vibrant community thriving

Kindly message us for further information
admin@pepperpotcentre.org.uk





VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY NO. 1

IT Support Volunteers: Empower Our Elders Digitally

Feel the joy of making someone's day brighter. Your time and skills can help an elder feel valued, connected, and confident.

Many of our elderly members feel isolated and frustrated by the digital world. Your basic IT skills can help them reconnect with loved ones, access essential services, and regain their independence. Simple tasks like ordering online, renewing passports or managing online correspondence can transform their daily lives.





VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY NO. 2&3

General Volunteers: Bring Smiles and Companionship

We always welcome volunteers for various roles, from helping at events to providing companionship to our members. If you're passionate about supporting your community, we'd love to hear from you.

Volunteer Drivers: Safely Connect Our Community

Our community outings rely on dedicated drivers to transport members safely. If you have a valid driver's license and a heart for service, join our team!



OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are the backbone of the Pepper Pot Centre, ensuring that our members receive the care and assistance they need.

Take inspiration from 89-year-old Mohammad Ali, whose kindness and commitment prove that age is just a number. His dedication reminds us that community is built by those who care, no matter their age

We also work closely with students from local colleges, providing them with opportunities to gain experience while making a meaningful impact. However, we are always looking to involve more young people and skilled professionals from our community to strengthen our efforts further.

WHY VOLUNTEER?

- Make a real impact in the lives of elderly individuals.
- Gain valuable experience and meet like-minded people.
- Help preserve and strengthen our community ties.

DO VOLUNTEERS NEED VETTING?

Yes, we take safeguarding seriously. While some roles require DBS checks, we ensure that volunteers can start with proper supervision while waiting for clearance.

UPCOMING EVENTS NEEDING SUPPORT:

Love events and cultural experiences. Join us as an event volunteer! Whether you're helping organise a theatre trip or celebrating Caribbean culture, your involvement makes these moments unforgettable for our elders

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Ready to make a difference? Join our Pepper Pot family today and help us keep this community vibrant and full of life. Reach out at

admin@pepperpotcentre.org.uk or visit us in person: 1A Thorpe Close, Ladbroke Grove, London W10 5XL. We can't wait to welcome you!



Commission on Community and connection

British Future is supporting a new independent, cross-party Commission on Community and Cohesion, focused on how to strengthen community connection, cohesion and resilience. It is chaired by former communities secretaries Sir Sajid Javid and Prof. John Denham, and backed by both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. We'd very much welcome network members sharing their views and insights through the new [Call for evidence](#) (**deadline 28 March**). More info at www.livingwelltogether.org.uk.

VE Day 80

To ensure that the Windrush community is included in national commemorations of the 80th anniversary of VE Day this May, we spoke to [Together](#) who are helping to organise national events for VE Day 80. They are keen to highlight the **Black Caribbean contribution to WW2**, particularly by involving veterans and their families.

To help honour this WW2 contribution we need your help to connect with people in your communities who have personal or family stories they would be willing to share. If your organisation, or those you work with, can help, please let us know.

Free and discounted tickets to 'Alterations' Windrush generation play at the National Theatre

We're pleased to be partnering with the National Theatre so that Windrush Generation elders + family members can see their new play, [Alterations](#), for free. Discounted tickets for all Windrush 100 Network members are also available. The play "illuminates the Guyanese experience of 1970s London and the aspirations and sacrifices of the Windrush generation."

To book free tickets for Windrush generation elders + up to 3 people accompanying them, [click on this link](#) and select your preferred dates and the number of tickets required. Maximum four tickets per person, on a first-come-first-served basis.

To book £10 tickets, for select performances 3 March-2 April subject to availability (up to 4 tickets per booking), use the promo code SUIT10 and order [using this link](#).

We found this article from ***The Guardian*** to be quite intriguing - share your thoughts with us!

THE GUARDIAN NEWSPAPER

Sunday 9 February 2025

**IS IT TIME TO RING THE
ALARM ON INTERNET DOOR
CAMERAS?**

by Eva Wiseman



The article critiques the rise of surveillance culture in suburban life, particularly through Ring doorbells and smart technology. It highlights how these devices transform once-private spaces into zones of constant monitoring, fostering paranoia and hyper-vigilance. Street WhatsApp groups circulate videos of supposed threats - sometimes mundane - amplifying fear and distrust.

The writer expresses concern over society's increasing acceptance of surveillance, despite privacy risks, police access to footage, and even reports of hackers exploiting such devices. Amazon, through Ring and its delivery services, is portrayed as profiting from this fear and passivity, encouraging people to prioritise convenience over real-world interactions and worker welfare.

The piece also discusses the dangers of technology-facilitated abuse, particularly for domestic violence survivors, and questions how widespread surveillance impacts younger generations' trust and perception of safety. Ultimately, the author argues that these devices, while marketed as security tools, erode privacy, community bonds, and mental well-being, making suburbia less about safety and more about mutual suspicion.

you can read the full article [here](#).



celebrating excellence



2024
BLACK
HONOUR
AWARDS



SATURDAY
26 OCTOBER
2024

2024 BLACK HONOUR AWARDS

the highlights

A Night to Remember:

Royal Lancaster Hotel, London – The atmosphere was one of elegance, excitement, and empowerment as guests gathered for the **Black Honour Awards 2024**. Hosted by the ever-charismatic **Mr. Cee**, the evening unfolded as a heartfelt tribute to Black excellence, innovation, and resilience.

The **Black Honour Awards 2024** stood out as a signature event in the UK's social calendar - a **prestigious celebration of the incredible contributions of the Caribbean community**.



Now in its **second year**, the ceremony honoured the outstanding achievements of individuals and organisations whose work continues to make a lasting impact. More than just a celebration, the event served as a powerful platform for storytelling, connection, and the sharing of journeys that inspire.

As part of the **second annual Spirit of the Caribbean Ball**, the awards also paid homage to the deep-rooted **influence and resilience of the Caribbean community in the UK**.

Looking ahead, this legacy continues under a new name - **The Black Honour Awards will become the Caribbean Honour Awards**, reflecting the evolving vision and the heart of the event.

Here are the highlights from our unforgettable 2024 event.

Opening and Welcome

The evening began with a warm welcome from Mr. Cee, who set the tone for the night with heartfelt reflections on the power of recognition. As guests enjoyed a beautifully three-course meal, he reminded everyone of the importance of honouring one another's brilliance and celebrating achievements within our own communities.

Honouring Trailblazers and Change-makers

The ceremony showcased exceptional individuals across a range of fields, from healthcare and education to entrepreneurship and community leadership.

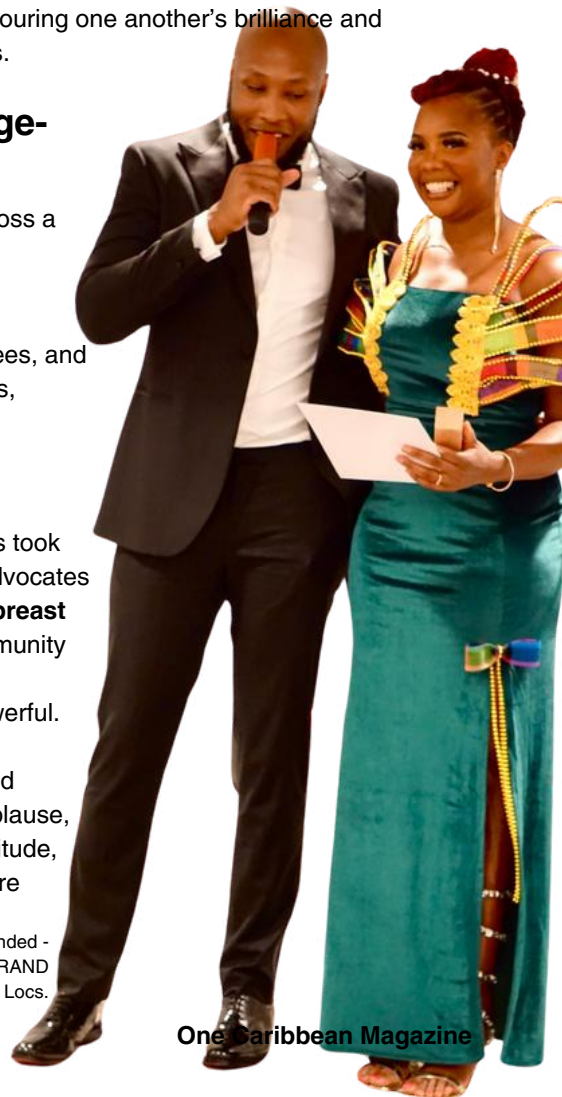
For the full list of winners, highly commended honourees, and standout contenders, and to read their inspiring stories, please [visit our website](#).

Moments That Moved Us

The stage came alive with emotion as many recipients took time to share the significance of the moment. From advocates in **mental health, learning disabilities, autism and breast cancer awareness**, to social entrepreneurs and community leaders, the messages were clear: being seen and acknowledged by one's own community is deeply powerful.

For many, this recognition reaffirmed their purpose and inspired them to continue pushing forward, not for applause, but for impact. The evening echoed with heartfelt gratitude, shared purpose, and a collective promise to uplift future generations.

Photo: Jeana Dorival, Highly Commended -
INNOVATIVE BLACK OWNED BUSINESS OR BRAND
Tiny Hands Locs.



Spotlight on Excellence

Caribbean Food Champion

Dawn Burton, co-founder of the **UK Caribbean Food Awards (UKCFA)** and recipient of the **Black Owned Business or Brand Award**, beamed with pride. She celebrated the power of Caribbean cuisine and the innovation of Black-owned culinary businesses, stating, *"We've put Caribbean food on the map - and this is just the beginning."*

Healing Through Holistic Care

Colin Simms, Complementary Therapies Practitioner, received a **Highly Commended** distinction in the **Outstanding Personal Achievement** category for his work in sustainable pain relief. His dedication to improving lives through holistic treatment stood out as a powerful example of purpose-driven care.

Small Business, Big Heart

Jeana Dorival, founder of **Tiny Hands Locs**, expressed heartfelt appreciation for her community of supporters. Her story highlighted the passion and persistence behind her journey, and the joy of being recognised for her dedication.

Against the Tide

Philip L. Als, a **Standout Contender**, captivated the audience with his story of taking part in the **North-West Passage Ocean Row 2023**. He spoke passionately about the importance of visibility and how such recognition could spark ambition in young people to strive beyond limitations.

Top Right: EXCEPTIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO CARIBBEAN CULTURE IN THE UK winner - Balham and Tooting Sports and Social Club: Rosy Burton, Secretary (holding the award) and Mrs Lorna Mayne, President (holding the microphone).

Bottom Right: NHS HERO (S) AWARD winner - Alison Hewitt, Senior Radiographer receiving her award.

Connection, Community, Celebration

In his closing remarks, Mr. Cee encouraged attendees to continue building connections and supporting one another beyond the ceremony. The celebration flowed into networking, laughter, and meaningful conversations - bringing together people united by pride in culture and commitment to progress.

Looking Ahead

The **Black Honour Awards** have always stood for community, excellence, and empowerment. As the event evolves into the **Caribbean Honour Awards**, the mission remains the same: to spotlight brilliance, honour legacies, and champion the voices shaping our future.

An unforgettable night of legacy, pride, and purpose. A celebration of Caribbean excellence.





CARIBBEAN FOCUS



The Caribbean Islands

Trinidad and Tobago

**This series aims to provide
comprehensive insights into each
individual island.**

A Deep Dive into Trinidad and Tobago: History, Culture, and Influence

Trinidad and Tobago, officially **the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**, is the southernmost island country in the Caribbean. Comprising the main islands of Trinidad and Tobago, along with numerous smaller islands, it is located, according to Wikipedia, **11 kilometers (6.8 miles) off the northeastern coast of Venezuela and 130 kilometers (81 miles) south of Grenada**. The nation shares maritime boundaries with **Barbados to the east, Grenada to the northwest, and Venezuela to the south and west**. The capital is **Port of Spain**, while the largest and most populous city is **Chaguanas**.

Historical Background

Trinidad was inhabited by Indigenous peoples for centuries before becoming a Spanish colony following Christopher Columbus's arrival in 1498. In 1797, Spanish governor José María Chacón surrendered the island to a British fleet commanded by Sir Ralph Abercromby. The Treaty of Amiens in 1802 formally ceded Trinidad and Tobago to Britain as separate states, and they were unified in 1889. Trinidad and Tobago gained independence in 1962 and became a republic in 1976.

In 1844, the British government permitted the immigration of 2,500 Indian workers from Calcutta and Madras to Trinidad as indentured servants. Workers had the option to buy a plot of land in lieu of return passage. Between 1838 and 1917, 145,000 Indians immigrated to Trinidad. Around the same time, workers were also brought from China.

Economic and Industrial Strength

Unlike most Caribbean nations and territories, which rely heavily on tourism, Trinidad and Tobago's economy is primarily industrial, focusing on the exploitation of its reserves of oil and natural gas. This has made it one of the wealthiest countries in the Caribbean, boasting a per-capita income significantly higher than the average for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Key industries include:

- Petroleum and natural gas extraction
- Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) exports
- Manufacturing and industrial development
- Financial services and banking

Trinidad and Tobago was removed from the OECD's list of developing nations in 2011, a testament to its economic success and high standard of living.

Politics and Governance

Trinidad and Tobago is a parliamentary republic, with a President as the head of state and a Prime Minister as the head of government. The political system is based on the Westminster model, with a bicameral legislature consisting of:

- The House of Representatives (41 elected members)
- The Senate (31 appointed members)

The country has a multi-party system, with the two dominant parties being:

- People's National Movement (PNM) – Traditionally associated with Afro-Trinidadian support.
- United National Congress (UNC) – Typically supported by Indo-Trinidadians.

Trinidad and Tobago maintains strong diplomatic ties with CARICOM, the United States, the United Kingdom, and regional trade organisations, playing a leadership role in Caribbean affairs.



Cultural Heritage and Traditions



Trinidad and Tobago is renowned for its rich African and Indian cultural heritage, exemplified in its Carnival, Diwali, and Hosay celebrations. The country is also the birthplace of the steelpan, the limbo, and music genres such as calypso, soca, rapso, parang, chutney, and chutney soca.

Festivals and Cultural Events:

- **Carnival:** A world-famous event featuring elaborate costumes, soca music, and street parades.
- **Diwali:** The largest Diwali celebration in the Western Hemisphere, reflecting the strong Indo-Trinidadian presence.
- **Hosay:** A Shia Muslim observance that blends Indo-Caribbean and Islamic traditions.
- **Emancipation Day:** One of the biggest heritage celebrations in the Caribbean.

Cuisine: A Fusion of Flavours

Trinidad and Tobago's cuisine is a blend of African, Indian, Chinese, Creole, and European influences. Some of the most popular dishes include:

- **Doubles:** A street food favourite consisting of curried chickpeas (channa) sandwiched between two pieces of fried flatbread (bara).
- **Roti:** A staple dish, particularly buss-up-shut (paratha roti) and dhalpuri.

- **Pelau:** A one-pot dish made with rice, pigeon peas, chicken, and coconut milk.
- **Bake and Shark:** A fried shark sandwich, commonly sold at Maracas Beach.
- **Callaloo:** A soup made from dasheen leaves, okra, coconut milk, and spices.

Trinidad and Tobago is also known for its diverse street food culture, offering a unique culinary experience to visitors.

Tourism: Natural Beauty and Adventure

While tourism is not the primary economic driver, Trinidad and Tobago still attracts visitors with its natural beauty, beaches, wildlife reserves, and cultural festivals.

Notable attractions include:

- **Maracas Beach:** One of the most famous beaches, known for its scenic views and Bake and Shark stalls.
- **Asa Wright Nature Centre:** A paradise for bird watchers, home to exotic species such as the toucan and hummingbird.
- **Tobago's Buccoo Reef:** A vibrant coral reef system perfect for snorkelling and diving.
- **Gasparee Caves:** A limestone cave system with crystal-clear pools, accessible by boat.
- **Caroni Bird Sanctuary:** Home to the Scarlet Ibis, the national bird of Trinidad.
- **Tobago Main Ridge Forest Reserve:** The world's oldest legally protected rainforest.
- **Pitch Lake:** The world's largest natural asphalt deposit, located in La Brea.

Trinidad's nightlife, bustling street food scene, and world-famous Carnival make it a top destination for those seeking both adventure and cultural experiences.

The Legacy of National Heroes in Trinidad and Tobago

While Trinidad and Tobago does not have an official National Heroes' Day, it has recognised several individuals for their contributions to independence, labour rights, and cultural development.

Some key figures include:

- Dr. Eric Williams: First Prime Minister, known as the "Father of the Nation."
- Tubal Uriah Butler: A labour leader who fought for workers' rights.
- Sir Ellis Clarke: The first President of Trinidad and Tobago after it became a republic in 1976.
- CLR James: A historian, journalist, and intellectual who wrote extensively on Caribbean identity and anti-colonial movements.

Trinidad and Tobago continues discussions on formally recognising National Heroes' Day to honour these figures and their contributions to the nation's development.

Trinidad and Tobago's Influence on the Global Stage

Trinidad and Tobago is not just a leader in the Caribbean; it has made significant impacts globally through:

- Energy exports: A major player in the LNG market, supplying natural gas to multiple countries.
- Cultural exports: Soca and calypso have influenced global music, while Carnival has inspired similar festivals worldwide.
- Sports: Athletes like Hasely Crawford (Olympic Gold Medalist in sprinting) and Brian Lara (record-breaking cricketer) have placed Trinidad and Tobago on the world stage.

The country continues to leverage its industrial strength, cultural richness, and strategic location to maintain economic and diplomatic ties with major global players.

To conclude, Trinidad and Tobago stands as a unique and powerful force in the Caribbean, balancing a rich history, a booming economy, and a globally recognised cultural heritage. From its indigenous past and colonial struggles to its modern-day economic success and cultural vibrancy, the nation embodies resilience, innovation, and unity. As discussions around national heroes continue, the country remains dedicated to preserving its legacy while looking toward the future.



Jamaica's Move Towards becoming Self-governing: Following in Barbados footsteps

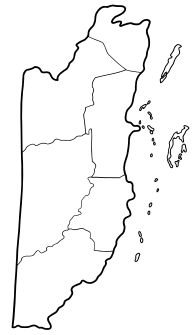
Jamaica is making significant strides toward becoming a republic, following in the footsteps of Barbados, which removed the British monarch as head of state in 2021. In December 2024, the Jamaican government introduced the Constitution (Amendment) Republic Act 2024, setting the stage for the removal of King Charles III and the installation of a Jamaican president. The bill is expected to be debated further in March 2025, as Prime Minister Andrew Holness pushes to complete the transition before the next general election (People, 2024). This move aligns with a broader Caribbean trend, as countries like Belize are also distancing themselves from colonial-era institutions by removing the British monarch's image from their currency (The Times, 2025).

Public opinion on the matter has fluctuated, with earlier polls showing majority support for republicanism, though more recent surveys indicate a more divided electorate (Wikipedia, 2023). Despite this, the push for self-governance remains strong, driven by a desire to assert national identity and fully decolonise. If successful, Jamaica's transition would mark another historic step in the region's move toward sovereignty and self-determination (Reuters, 2025).

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HONOURING LEGACY, EMBRACING CHANGE: BELIZE'S NEW BANKNOTES



Belize has recently undertaken a significant redesign of its currency, replacing the image of Queen Elizabeth II with portraits of national heroes, marking a step toward greater national identity (The Guardian, 2025). The new banknotes prominently feature George Cadle Price, the country's first prime minister, and Philip Goldson, a prominent political figure known for his contributions to Belize's independence movement.

The Central Bank of Belize collaborated with De La Rue, a currency design and security printing company, to create the new banknotes (De La Rue, 2025). The redesign celebrates Belizean culture by incorporating images of national heroes alongside symbols like the national flower, the black orchid. Additionally, the notes include enhanced security features to prevent counterfeiting.

This move is part of Belize's broader efforts toward decolonisation, reflecting a growing trend among Commonwealth nations to assert their own identities. The redesigned notes are expected to enter circulation by mid-2025. (Platform.KeesingTechnologies, 2025). For more details on the new currency design and its significance, you can visit the Central Bank of Belize's official website.



Images below from the

2025 Issue



Sources:

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#Caribbean

ART

CULTURE

HERITAGE



The Blacker the Pot, the Sweeter the Food

The Dutch Pot (Exploring the cultural significance of the Dutch pot in Caribbean cuisine and tradition.)

By Paula Shutt

The Caribbean Dutch Pot or 'dutchie' is more than just a cooking vessel; it is a symbol of cultural identity and culinary artistry. This cast-iron pot,

often handed down through generations, plays a central role in Caribbean kitchens, particularly in countries like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, and has very much found its way in British Caribbean cooking.

Crafted from heavy-duty cast iron, the Dutch Pot is known for its durability and ability to distribute heat evenly. When people started to arrive in Britain in greater numbers in the 1960s and 70s, they had begun to ask their friends and relatives to bring Dutch pots with them. At the time, British cookware was mainly made from aluminium, a much thinner material not capable of producing quite the same cooking result or deep flavours as those achieved in a dutchie.

A brand new dutchie is silver and shiny, and needs to be used over and over to develop and season. With the use of oils, strongly pigmented spices and with hours and hours of heat, the Dutch pot will turn black – and the flavours achieved in it get better and better – as the saying goes; 'the blacker the pot, the sweeter the food'.

With those sweet foods, Caribbean flavours have become a popular part of the fusion of flavours and styles which make up the British diet. Not many British people seasoned their food before cooking it in the 1960s. With the influx of people from the Caribbean and India, this began to be part of the British understanding of how to develop flavour, and soon the traditional blandness of the UK diet was being replaced with curries, jerk and spice.

Even rice tasted good – and became much more readily available. Prior to the 1960s people from the islands had to hunt for savoury rice to cook with their dishes – most of the rice available in the shops was pudding rice.

So the humble dutch pot made its contribution to the success of Caribbean cuisine going back over decades. These days there is a huge range of cookware and cooking methods used by all of us to create meals. The trend is towards speed, moisture retention and health when it comes to preparing food. People are less inclined to do a long slow cook in a pot on the hob – and might use an electric slow cooker if they go down that route.

But are we missing a trick? The Dutch Pot's significance goes beyond its cooking capabilities; it holds cultural and familial value. Many Caribbean households boast a Dutch Pot that has been passed down through generations, becoming a cherished heirloom. The pot becomes seasoned over time, absorbing flavours from various meals and contributing to the unique taste of dishes prepared in it. This seasoning process is often considered a rite of passage, as aspiring cooks learn the art of maintaining and using the Dutch Pot from older family members.

In Caribbean communities, the Dutch Pot is a common sight at social gatherings, festivals, and family celebrations. It brings people together, creating a sense of community and shared culinary heritage. Street food vendors and restaurants alike rely on the Dutch Pot to create authentic and flavourful dishes that cater to locals and tourists alike.

In essence, the Caribbean Dutch Pot is more than a cooking utensil; it is a vessel that carries the stories, flavours, and traditions of the Caribbean. As it continues to play a pivotal role in the region's culinary landscape, it remains a symbol of cultural pride and a connection to the tapestry of our Caribbean heritage.

A photograph of a family meal scene. An older man with glasses and a mustache sits at the head of a wooden dining table, looking down at a plate. The table is set with white plates, glasses of water, and a large bowl of spaghetti. In the background, there is a white sofa and a green armchair. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

Go wash up the two plate in the sink: Caribbean Parenting

A reflection on Caribbean parenting styles, values, and their impact across generations.

By Paula Shutt

The official description of Caribbean parenting could go like this:

It is deeply rooted in a rich tapestry of cultural traditions, resilience, and familial bonds. Embodying a fusion of African, Indigenous, European, and Asian influences, Caribbean parents often prioritise a strong sense of community, discipline, and respect within the family unit. The extended family plays a crucial role, with grandparents, aunts, and uncles contributing to the nurturing environment.

All accurate. For those of us with first and second generation Caribbean parents, actually experiencing Caribbean parenting first hand was another thing altogether. It made us grow a backbone, learn resilience and toe the line even when the instructions were bewilderingly unclear.

One thing is for sure, the discipline we learned was often firm but imbued with a sense of love, aiming to instill values of responsibility and respect for elders. It might not always have felt like that, but phrases such as '**You take up a book from morning?**' and '**Stop de gallivanting**' can easily be translated as the need for the next generation to prioritise their study, particularly as the Windrush generation and those before them cited perceived opportunities for themselves and their children, particularly through education, as a reason for making the month long boat trip, or the expensive flight over to the UK to start a new life.

Once our elders arrived on what must have appeared to them as a frozen isle, they realised that all they had believed about Britain being a place of affluence was untrue. They discovered first hand that there were slums, poverty and disenchantment. This, combined with the treatment they received from an unwelcome British public who didn't want '**blacks or Irish**' in their establishments, would understandably make them focus on preparing their children for some challenges in the future. The tough love upbringing they undoubtedly received in the Caribbean, would have filtered down into fears for how their children would cope in this cold new land they were trying to fit into.

So, when they said '**you outta order**', '**you think me and you is the same size**' and '**you think me is one of you fren**' perhaps there was an underlying need to make us humble and respectful – so we would not just fit in, but be enabled to find our feet and be successful in this unfamiliar culture.

Content creators on Tik Tok and Instagram, like Jamaican creator Julie Mango, use those things our parents would say to make hilarious content, and enable us to heal a little – because it was tough love for sure.

So now when we hear:

- *Yes, Mash it up*
- *You want me to give you something to cry for?*
- *You better stop you noise*
- *You outta order*
- *Me soon dead*
- *Fix you face*
- *I brought you into the world - I could take you out*

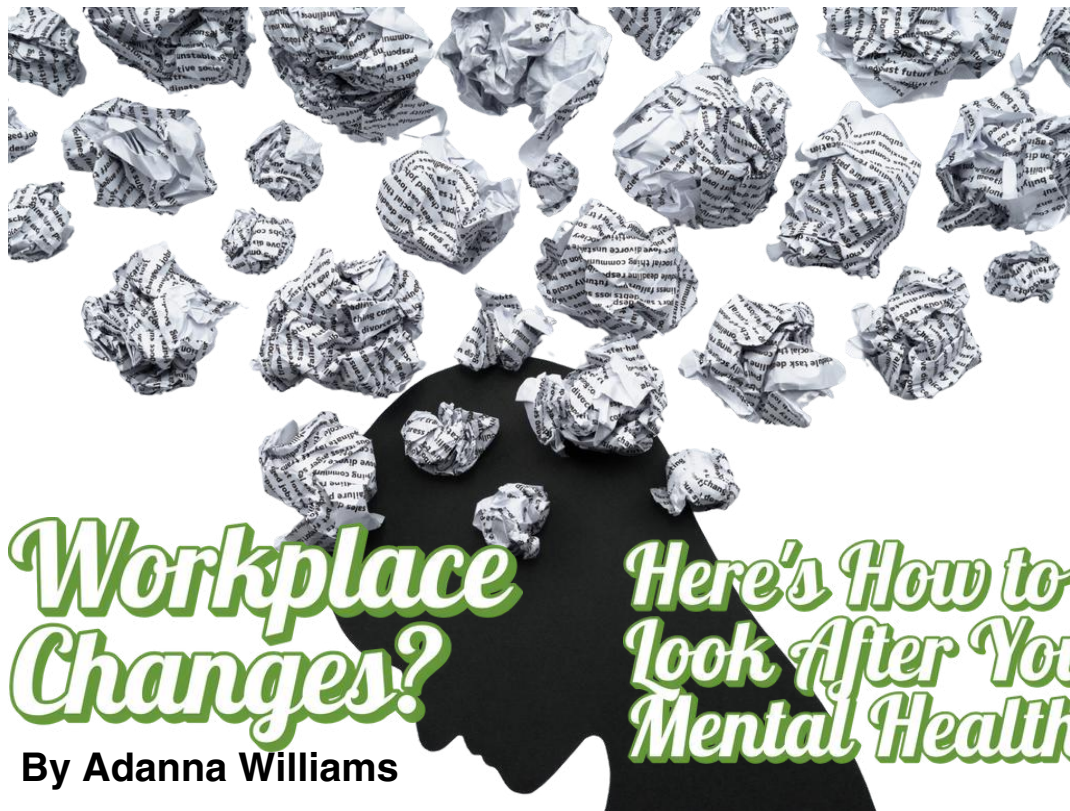
We can laugh and share in our collective understanding of what we went through. Perhaps we can also appreciate that our parents did the absolute best for us that they could, driven by their commitment to shaping well-rounded individuals who had the tools to succeed, and develop the **Caribbean Excellence in Britain** that we see all around us today.



HEALTH & Wellness

One Caribbean Magazine

Page 55



Workplace Changes?

By Adanna Williams

Here's How to Look After Your Mental Health

Hello readers,

Thank you for your time and attention today, the aim of this article is to provide some guidance and strategies for supporting your mental health and well-being whilst navigating organisational changes.

Many of us who work in healthcare is being impacted by changes currently. Maintaining mental health during organisational change in the UK requires both personal strategies and an understanding of the workplace resources available.

I hope you find these helpful.

Adanna



1. Understand the Change Process and Stay Informed

- **Access Information from Your Employer:** In the UK, employers are legally obligated to communicate changes that may affect employees, particularly under the **Employment Rights Act 1996**. Staying informed about changes in your role, responsibilities, or company structure can alleviate uncertainty and stress.
- **Workplace Consultations:** The **Collective Redundancies and Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) Regulations 2006** in the UK mandate consultation with employees when major organisational changes are imminent. Engaging in consultations or seeking updates from management can provide clarity.
- **Check Your Contract or HR Policies:** Understanding your rights and any policy changes can empower you. UK employees should review the terms of their contracts to better understand their position during organisational shifts.

2. Focus on What You Can Control

- **Work-Life Balance:** The **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** emphasises the importance of balancing work and life to prevent stress. Setting boundaries between work and personal time is essential, particularly when organisational changes may lead to longer hours or increased workload.
- **Time Management:** Prioritising tasks and breaking them into manageable steps can help reduce feelings of being overwhelmed. Tools like the **Time Management Matrix** or simple task planners can help regain a sense of control.

3. Practice Self-Care

- **Exercise:** The NHS recommends regular **physical activity** to reduce stress and improve mental health. Even simple exercises such as **walking** or **stretching** during breaks can boost energy levels and relieve anxiety.
- **Sleep and Nutrition:** Good sleep and proper nutrition are crucial to maintaining a strong mental foundation. UK-based resources such as **Mind** (UK's leading mental health charity) and the **NHS** offer tips on improving sleep and maintaining a balanced diet for mental clarity.
- **Mindfulness:** Incorporating mindfulness or relaxation techniques can help combat the stress of change. The NHS offers free resources on mindfulness practices. Apps like **Headspace** and **Calm** also have specific UK-based programmes.

4. Communicate Openly

- **Speak to HR or Management:** If you're feeling overwhelmed, it's important to reach out. UK companies often have **Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs)**, which provide confidential counselling and advice services. Use these to talk about how you're coping with the changes.
- **Leverage Peer Support:** Sharing experiences with colleagues or support groups can normalise the stress of change. **Mental Health First Aiders** in some UK workplaces are trained to provide initial support for employees experiencing mental distress.



5. Seek Mental Health Support

- **Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs):** Many UK employers offer EAPs to support employee mental health, offering services like **confidential counselling, stress management support, and financial advice**. These services are a valuable resource, especially during periods of organisational change.
- **Access Therapy and Support Services:** The **NHS offers free mental health services**, including therapy, through its IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) programme. You can access these services by self-referring through the NHS website or via your GP.

6. Develop a Growth Mindset

- **Resilience Building:** View organisational changes as **opportunities for growth**. Developing resilience can help you adapt to changing work environments. The **Mental Health Foundation** offers advice on building resilience, which can be helpful during periods of uncertainty.
- **Learning Opportunities:** Take advantage of any training or development opportunities that arise from the changes. UK employers often provide access to development programs or courses that can help build your skill set and confidence.

7. Understand Legal Rights

- **Know Your Employment Rights:** In the UK, employees are protected under various laws during times of organisational change. For example, if you're facing redundancy or restructuring, your employer must follow fair procedures and offer appropriate support. The **ACAS** (Advisory, Conciliation, and Arbitration Service) offers guidance on employment rights and provides free advice if you need help understanding your legal position.
- **Flexible Working:** Under the Employment Rights Act 1996, employees have the right to request flexible working arrangements. This can be particularly helpful if you're dealing with additional stress or responsibilities due to organisational changes.

8. Connect with Professional Networks

- **Professional Support Groups:** Seek out professional networks or communities related to your industry. In the UK, there are various organisations that provide support and advice to professionals experiencing workplace challenges, such as **CIPD** (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) for HR professionals or **Mind** for those dealing with mental health.
- **Online Communities and Forums:** Many UK-based online forums, such as those provided by Mind and **The Samaritans**, offer spaces for employees to discuss how they're coping with workplace changes in a supportive environment.

9. Practice Flexibility

- **Adapt to Changes:** Try to remain open and flexible when facing new tasks, structures, or leadership. Being adaptable can reduce stress, as it gives you the mental space to accept change rather than resist it.
- **Continuous Feedback:** UK organisations often have structured feedback systems, such as performance reviews. Engage with these regularly to gain clarity on your performance and how you can align with the changes taking place.

10. Advocate for Mental Health in the Workplace

- **Promote Mental Health Awareness:** If your organisation doesn't already provide mental health resources, you can suggest or even advocate for these initiatives. Many UK organisations now prioritise employee well-being and offer mental health days or wellness programmes.

Maintaining your mental health during organisational change is critical to you getting the best outcome for you. Being in a good space mentally helps you to make better and informed decisions about your future. It is vitally important for you to understand your rights and local policies. Accessing support that can often be free through work-based systems like EAPs and NHS services. Engaging in self-care practices, as simple as going for a walk, listening to your favourite and uplifting songs or spending time with friends, supportive colleagues and loved ones. Being flexible and open to change can also help to make the process seem less difficult as an open mind and heart can positively influence your mind-set for success. If it becomes challenging and the outcomes are personally favourable resources like **ACAS** and your **Unions** can advocate for you and give you guidance. They are experts at navigation challenging corporate transitions and offer assistance when needed. Don't hesitate to reach out for support and for those who see others in distress signpost them where possible.

Take care of yourself and each other.

Adanna Williams is a Registered Mental Health Nurse and Non-Medical Prescriber + Regional Director for Workforce Strategy and Transformation with the NHS



MARCH

HEALTH &
Wellness

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

March is prostate cancer awareness month. In the UK, about 1 in 8 men are diagnosed with it each year. **For Black men the rate is 1 in 4.**

Source:  MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Currently only 3 in 10 women diagnosed with ovarian cancer live beyond 10 years. There are 7500 women receiving a diagnosis in the UK each year.

Source:  OVARIAN
CANCER
ACTION

Brain Tumour Awareness Month

A brain tumour can affect any of us. There are over 16,000 primary and secondary brain tumours diagnosed in the UK each year. There are over 80,000 people in the UK living with a brain tumour diagnosis

Source:  brainstrust
BRAIN TUMOUR TRUST

9-15

National Salt
Awareness Week



10-16

Brain Awareness
Week

17-13

Nutrition and
Hydration Week



8

 International Women's Day

12

National No Smoking Day

12

Young Carer's action Day

13

World Kidney Day

20

World Oral Health Day

21

World Down Syndrome Day



ROOTED IN NATURE

Exploring the Richness of Caribbean Plant-Based Foods

Exploring the Richness of Caribbean Plant-Based Foods

Growing up in Jamaica I have many fun childhood memories of the seasonal nature of eating. We would spend hours in the bush, fruit picking, my favourites were mangoes, nasberries, sweetsop, sugar cane and soursop. Our sweets were fruits and we were fit, healthy and happy children.

The Caribbean Islands with their lush landscapes, crystal-clear waters and endless sunshine, has an abundance of nourishing foods.

By Nicole Powell



A Tradition of Wholesome Eating

Long before plant-based food became a global trend, Caribbean communities thrived on diets rich in wildcrafted/organic seasonal fruits, vegetables, grains and healing herbs.

In the Caribbean, traditionally our diets have been built on whole, plant-based ingredients. From the hearty ground provisions like yam, dasheen (also called eddo or taro) and sweet potato to superfoods like breadfruit, moringa and callaloo, plant-based nutrition has always been a way of life. Dishes like Ital stews, ackee with roasted breadfruit and fresh coconut-based treats showcase how our ancestors mastered the art of plant-powered cuisine.

Sea Moss - The Superfood Gift to the World

One of the most powerful plant-based treasures from the Caribbean is sea moss. Revered for its mineral-rich profile, sea moss has been a staple in Caribbean households for centuries, used to boost immunity, improve digestion and enhance overall vitality.

Growing up my grandmother would boil sea moss and make it into a punch that they would sweeten with canned milk and spices. Today, it's celebrated worldwide, but for us, it's not just a trend - it's a cultural staple rooted in our heritage.

About me - Nicole Powell

I am the founder of a company called Caribella, we specialise in sea moss and other plant based remedies. We take inspiration from getting the full benefits of nature's herbal Pharmacy and have added a modern twist.

My inspiration for Caribella came from a life changing experience. I started taking sea moss 5 years ago on the recommendation of a doctor in Jamaica. At the time I had just gone into menopause and my blood test results showed I was low on iron, calcium, magnesium and potassium. I felt exhausted, brain fog and bloated all the time. After taking sea moss continuously with no other supplements for 7 months, my blood test results showed I was completely balanced, I had more energy and clarity,

my skin glowed and my bloating disappeared. I was so impressed with the results I started to tell family and friends about it and they also saw amazing results and started requesting that I make products for them. My passion for natural supplements and herbs grew, as well as the demand for the products, and 3 years ago it became a business.

Reinventing Caribbean Treats for a Healthier Future

Traditional Caribbean sweets are undeniably delicious, but many are high in refined sugars. At Caribella, we've reimaged classic flavours with a healthier touch. Take our Coconut Chips, for example, crafted in the spirit of Jamaican coconut drops but sweetened naturally with agave and dehydrated instead of boiled, preserving all the goodness of coconut without unnecessary additives.

Seamoss



Yam



Sweet Potatoes



Moringa



Breadfruit





These small changes make a big impact, allowing us to enjoy the flavours we love while staying true to our commitment to wellness without compromise. We are passionate about sharing these plant-based traditions in a way that fits today's health-conscious lifestyles.

We invite you to embrace Caribbean plant-based nutrition and traditions, whether it's adding sea moss to your daily routine, having a cup of herbal tea, swapping sugary snacks for wholesome alternatives, or simply reconnecting with nature.

Caribella

IG: Caribella_moss

www.caribella.org

APRIL

HEALTH &
Wellness

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

The earlier bowel cancer is spotted, the more treatable it's likely to be. In fact, more than 9 in 10 people survive bowel cancer when it is diagnosed at the earliest stage. So please, #PassItOn.

Source:  **Bowel Cancer UK**
Beating bowel cancer together

Stress Awareness Month

For Stress Awareness Month 2025, the theme: **#leadwithlove**. This theme encourages us to approach ourselves and others with kindness, compassion, and acceptance, no matter the challenges we face.

Source:  **Stress Management Society**
From stress to life change

World Autism Acceptance Month

8/10
of autistic people experience mental health problems

Only 26%
of autistic pupils feel happy at school

Only 30%
of autistic people are in any type of employment

Source:  **National Autistic Society**

28/4 - 04/5

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week

Once diagnosed, MS stays with you for life, but treatments and specialists can help you to manage the condition and its symptoms.

More than 150,000 people in the UK have MS. In the UK people are most likely to find out they have MS in their thirties and forties. But the first signs of MS often start years earlier. Many people notice their first symptoms years before they get their diagnosis.

Source:  **MS Society**

2

World Autism Acceptance Day

7

World Health Day

11

Parkinson's Awareness day

22

Earth Day

It's a Salty Affair

By Sharon P Scott

Salt, a staple in almost every kitchen around the world, has been an essential part of human diets for centuries and used widely as a preservative. Scientifically, it is known as sodium chloride (NaCl) and plays a pivotal role in the body, supporting various physiological functions. However, like many things in life, balance is key. While salt is vital for our health and general wellbeing, excessive consumption can have serious consequences. It is therefore important that we understand and maintain the balance between necessity and excess for optimal health.

More than just flavour

Salt is more than just a compound used to enhance flavour; it is a critical component of our biology. One of the main components of salt is sodium which is an electrolyte that helps regulate fluid balance, nerve function, and muscle contractions.

Some of the key roles that salt plays in our body:

1. Maintaining Hydration
2. Nerve and Muscle Function
3. Regulating Blood Pressure
4. Supporting Nutrient Absorption



An **inadequate** dietary intake could lead to symptoms such as fatigue, dizziness, muscle cramps, or even more severe conditions like hyponatremia (low sodium levels in the blood).

What Happens with Excess Salt Consumption

While salt is essential for life, modern diets often contain far more sodium than the body requires. Processed foods, restaurant meals, and snacks usually contain hidden sodium, which can easily lead to excessive consumption. **The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends consuming less than 5 grams of salt per day (about one teaspoon)**, but many people exceed this limit without even realising it.

Excessive salt intake can have a range of negative effects on your health, including:

- **High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)** – global prevalence 1.28 billion and black individuals are known to be at significantly higher risk leading the ethnic minority community at 55% in the Unites States alone.
- **Heart Disease and Stroke:** global prevalence of 17.9million deaths annually and in the united states are 30% more likely to die from heart disease than other ethnic groups.
- **Kidney Damage** leading to kidney disease – 9.1% globally with blacks at 3 – 4 times higher risks and account for 35% of people in the United States despite being making up only 13% of the population
- Other negative effects include Osteoporosis, Bloating and Water Retention

Diet play a crucial role in development, prevention and management of hypertension, heart and kidney disease with salt intake being a major contributing factor.

Tips for Managing Your Salt Intake

Managing sodium cravings can be challenging, especially if you've developed a taste for salty foods. However, with some simple strategies and mindful changes to your diet and habits, you can curb your sodium cravings and retrain your palate to enjoy less salty flavours because balancing your salt intake doesn't mean eliminating it altogether. Instead, focus on moderation and making healthier choices. Here are some tips to help you reduce and manage your sodium consumption:

Read Labels.	Gradually Reduce Sodium Intake
Choose lower-sodium versions of your favourite foods	Slowly reduce your consumption of processed and packaged foods.
Cook at Home	Choose Fresh Foods
Limit Processed and Packaged Foods and increase whole food such as whole grains	Taste Before Adding Salt
Stay Hydrated	Be Aware of Restaurant Meals
Use herbs and spices in place of salt eg. garlic, paprika	Increase Potassium-Rich Foods eg bananas
Use homemade sauces and less shop bought sauces such as soy sauce or ketch-up	Practice mindful eating – eat slowly with consideration of what you put in your mouth
Address Stress and Emotional Eating	Get adequate sleep to balance hormones and minimise cravings
Keep a journal to note patterns and seek help if necessary,	Choose healthier snacks

Soon, your taste buds will adapt, and you'll start to notice and appreciate the natural flavours of foods.

Conclusion

Salt is a vital nutrient that your body needs to function properly, but moderation is key. Consuming too much salt can lead to a host of health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease, and kidney damage. By being mindful of your salt intake and making healthier dietary choices, you can enjoy the benefits of salt without putting your health at risk. Remember, the goal is not to eliminate salt entirely but to strike a balance that supports your overall well-being. Your heart, kidneys, and bones will thank you for it.

For more information:

1. Action on Salt UK – A public health campaign focusing on reducing salt intake to prevent hypertension
2. InterSalt Study – a landmark study that investigated the link between sodium intake and blood pressure across populations.
3. Black Women's Health Imperative – they provide resources and advocacy for addressing health disparities including the role of diet in chronic diseases
4. Salt Sugar Fat by Michael Moses – investigates the role of processed foods in contributing to chronic diseases.
5. Global burden of Disease Study - examines the impact of dietary risk factors
6. The Food Foundation UK
7. Public Health England
8. World Health Organisation

Sharon P Scott – S. P. Scott is a nurse and writer with over 25 years in the NHS, and a decade in renal medicine, where the benefits and dangers of salt have been noted.



MAY

HEALTH &
Wellness

National Walking Month

Walking is one of the easiest ways to improve our health and stay connected to our community. This year, we invited you to discover the #MagicOfWalking and celebrate the many health and happiness benefits of walking and wheeling.

Source: Living Streets

Stroke Awareness Month

Every day in the UK, another 240 people wake up to the catastrophic impact of a stroke. For Stroke Awareness Month 2025, we want every survivor and their loved ones to know we are here to support them for however long their recovery takes.

Source: Stroke Association

5-11

Dying Matters Awareness Week

The mission: to break down the stigma and taboo of talking about death and dying.

Source: Hospice UK

5-11

Deaf Awareness Week



12-18



19-25

Dementia Action Week



5

World Hand Hygiene Day

8

World Ovarian Cancer Day

10

World Lupus Day

15

Global Accessibility Awareness Day

17

World Hypertension Day

19

World IBD Day (Crohn's disease)

29

World Digestive Health Day

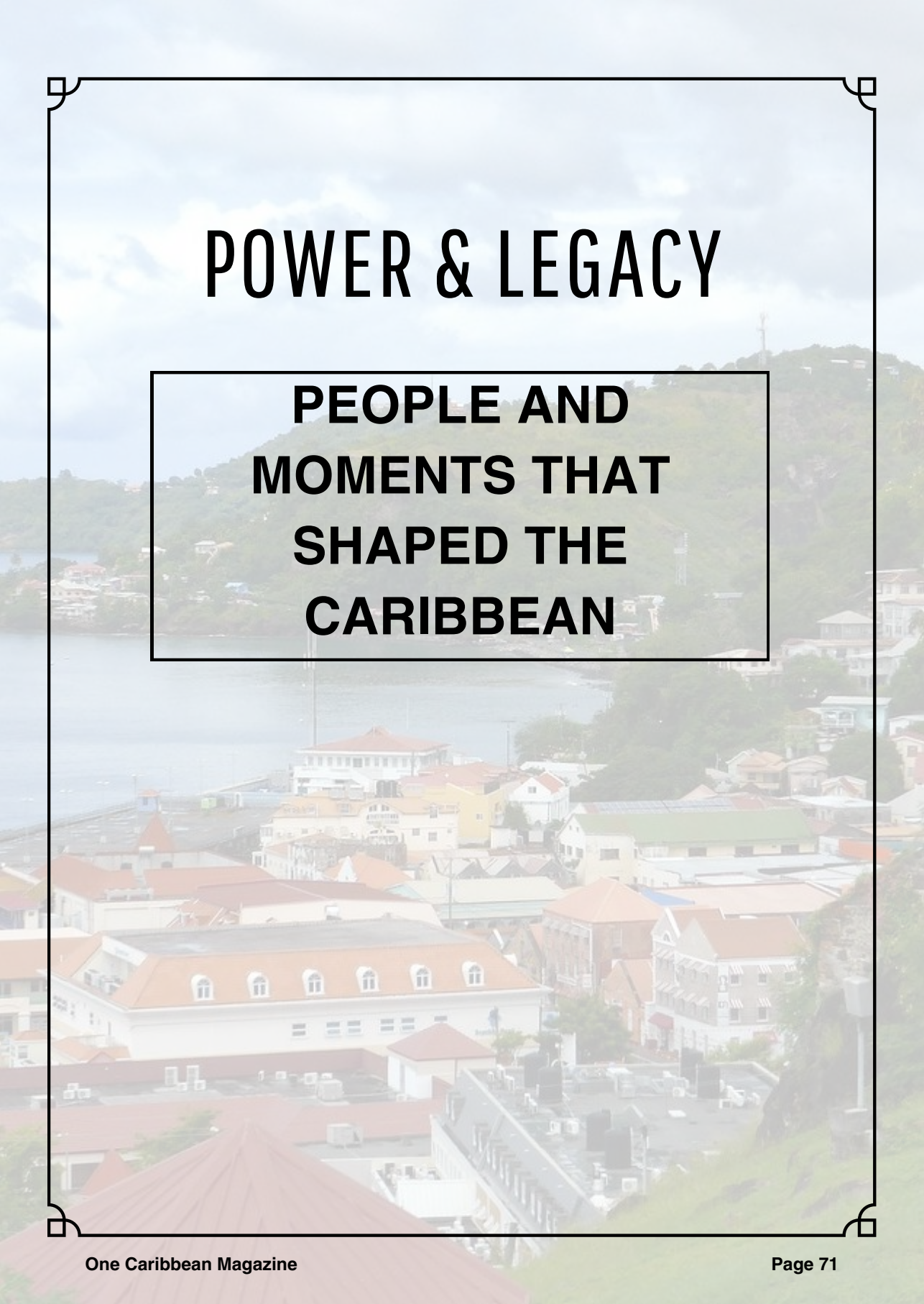
31

World No Tobacco Day





your journey
starts here

An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in the Caribbean, featuring a mix of colorful buildings with red and white roofs. The town is situated along a bay, with a large body of water in the foreground and a lush, green hillside rising in the background. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. The entire image is framed by a thin black border with decorative corner elements.

POWER & LEGACY

PEOPLE AND MOMENTS THAT SHAPED THE CARIBBEAN

People and Moments that Shaped the Caribbean

The Caribbean has been shaped by a rich tapestry of influential figures and defining moments, each leaving an indelible mark on the region's history. From visionary leaders and revolutionaries to economic and cultural shifts, the Caribbean's story is one of resilience, transformation, and progress. The islands have witnessed struggles for independence, groundbreaking political achievements, and cultural revolutions that have defined their identity on the world stage.

In this series, we explore the individuals and events that have played a pivotal role in shaping the Caribbean's political, social, and economic landscape. Our aim is to provide a well-rounded view, acknowledging both the triumphs and challenges of these figures and moments. We recognise that history is complex, and those who have shaped it have done so in ways that may be viewed differently depending on perspective. Some have been hailed as heroes, while others remain controversial their legacies debated for generations.

By examining all sides, we seek to present a balanced narrative that captures the depth and diversity of the Caribbean's past and its ongoing evolution. Through these stories, we highlight the courage, vision, and determination of those who have left an enduring impact, ensuring that their contributions - both celebrated and contested - are understood in the broader context of Caribbean history.

Background Photo: Located in the town of Diamant in Martinique, the Cap 110 memorial is a tribute to all the slaves who suffered the slave trade in Martinique.

PEOPLE AND MOMENTS THAT SHAPED THE CARIBBEAN:



DAME MARY EUGENIA CHARLES

Dame Mary Eugenia Charles was a pioneering Caribbean leader whose contributions helped shape the political landscape of Dominica and the wider region. As the first female Prime Minister in the Caribbean and the first woman to be elected as a head of government in the Americas, Charles was a trailblazer in politics, governance, and law.

Early Life and Education

Born on May 15, 1919, in Pointe Michel, Dominica, Eugenia Charles came from a well-off family that emphasised education and service. She pursued legal studies at the University of Toronto and later at the

London School of Economics, where she qualified as a barrister. Upon returning to Dominica, she became one of the island's first female lawyers and established a successful legal practice.

Political Career and Leadership

Charles entered politics in the 1960s, advocating for democracy and economic development. She co-founded the Dominica Freedom Party (DFP) in 1968 and became its leader. Her strong stance on political integrity and her opposition to corruption gained her widespread support.

In 1980, following the tumultuous tenure of Patrick John and the political instability that plagued Dominica, Charles was elected as Prime Minister. She served for 15 years (1980–1995), making her the longest-serving female head of government in the Caribbean.

Key Achievements

- **Restoring Stability:** When she took office, Dominica was in crisis, struggling with economic difficulties and the aftermath of attempted coups. Charles worked tirelessly to restore stability and rebuild democratic institutions.
- **Economic Reforms:** Her administration implemented economic policies aimed at revitalising Dominica's economy, including initiatives to support agriculture and infrastructure development.
- **Foreign Policy and Regional Leadership:** Charles was known for her strong stance on democracy and her willingness to intervene in regional matters. She played a key role in supporting the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada in 1983, aimed at restoring democracy after a Marxist coup. This earned her the nickname *"The Iron Lady of the Caribbean."*
- **Advocacy for Women and Democracy:** As a female leader in a male-dominated political landscape, she inspired women across the Caribbean to participate in politics and governance. She also worked to strengthen democratic institutions in Dominica and the wider Caribbean.

Legacy

Dame Eugenia Charles retired from politics in 1995 but remained an influential figure in Caribbean affairs. Her leadership style, marked by firmness, integrity, and a commitment to democratic principles, left an indelible mark on Dominica and the region. She passed away on September 6, 2005, but her legacy continues to inspire leaders, particularly women, in the Caribbean and beyond.

Dame Eugenia Charles was a symbol of resilience, intelligence, and effective leadership. Her tenure as Prime Minister not only transformed Dominica but also reinforced the role of women in leadership across the Caribbean. Through her contributions, she remains a defining figure in the region's history.

History is Made Every Day

History is not just a record of the past; it is a living, evolving force shaped by the actions of individuals and communities each day. Every decision, innovation, and movement contributes to the legacy of future generations. Leaders like Dame Eugenia Charles remind us that change is often driven by determination, courage, and a vision for a better tomorrow. Across the world, new leaders emerge, social movements take shape, and societies transform, proving that history is not static but a continuous story written by those who dare to make a difference.

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OPINION

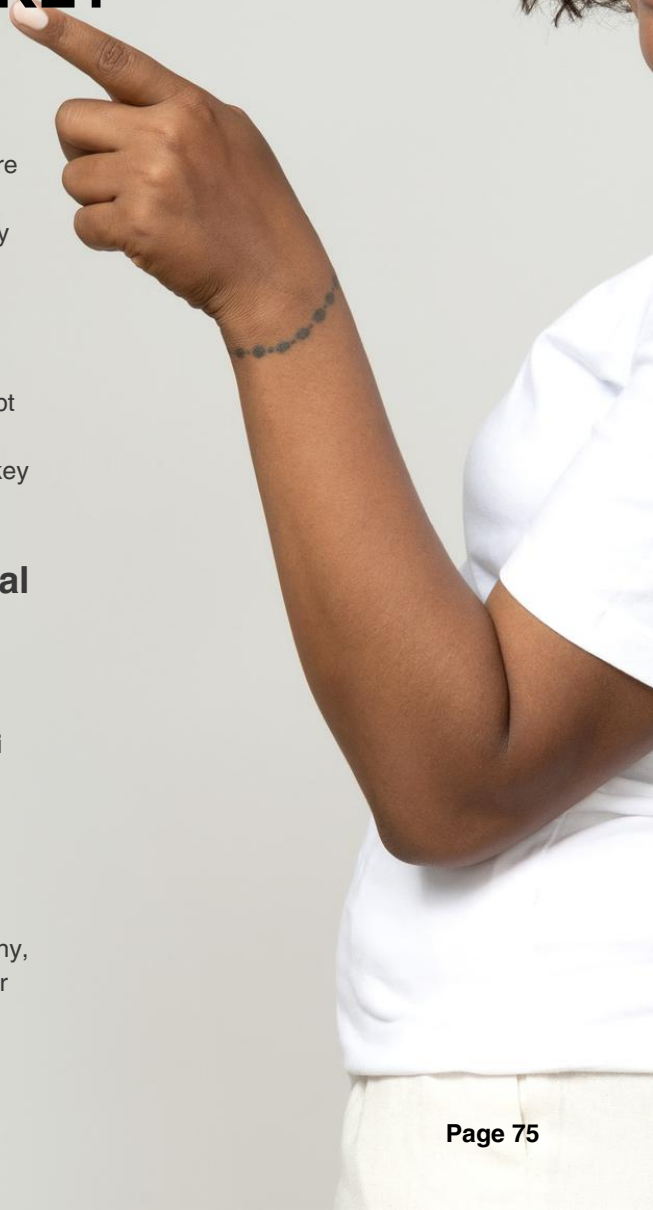
WHY ARE KREPT AND KONAN FRONTING SAVEWAYS SUPERMARKET WITH JUST A 24% STAKE?

BY ELIZABETH
FLANDERS

When Croydon rap duo Krept and Konan were revealed as the faces of Saverways supermarket, the move was met with curiosity and excitement. The idea of two celebrated artists stepping into the grocery business seemed like a bold and unexpected move. However, a deeper look at the corporate structure raises an important question: if Krept and Konan only hold a 24% stake in the company, why are they being positioned as key figures of Saverways?

Symbolic Influence vs. Actual Control

A search of **Companies House records** in early March 2025 shows that the **only listed officers for Saverways** are **Kaysor Alam Ali and Mr. Shamsudduza Arif**. Both are registered as persons with significant control (PSC), with Mr. Arif being the sole individual with the legal right to appoint or remove directors. This suggests that while Krept and Konan have a financial interest in the company, they do not have decision-making authority or direct control over its operations.



OPINION



Photo: Krept, Konan & Kaysor Ali
Credit: The Standard Newspaper

This distinction is crucial. It means that despite their high visibility in marketing and promotional efforts, the duo may have little influence over the supermarket's strategic direction, hiring practices, or overall governance. Their role appears to be more about branding than business leadership.

The Power of Celebrity Branding

It is not unusual for celebrities to lend their names and faces to businesses without being majority stakeholders. Rihanna's Fenty Beauty, Jay-Z's partnership with Armand de Brignac, and even David Beckham's affiliations with various brands illustrate the effectiveness of leveraging celebrity status to drive consumer engagement.

However, the key difference is that in many of these cases, the level of control or ownership is either clearly defined or the

partnership is structured in a way that allows them to actively shape the brand. In contrast, the governance of Saveways remains firmly in the hands of its lesser-known stakeholders, raising the question of whether Krept and Konan's involvement is merely a marketing tactic rather than a genuine business venture.

Transparency and Public Perception

From a consumer standpoint, there is a potential for misunderstanding. If the public perceives Krept and Konan as the driving forces behind Saveways, there is an implicit assumption that they are making key business decisions. But **if they do not hold the power to appoint directors or dictate the company's direction, their role is largely symbolic.**

This raises ethical concerns about transparency. ***Are consumers being misled into thinking that Saveways is a black-owned business spearheaded by the duo?*** If business decisions are made by individuals behind the scenes, who is truly accountable for the company's successes or failures?

Risk vs. Reward for Krept and Konan

While this move certainly enhances their entrepreneurial portfolio, Krept and Konan also take on reputational risks. If Saveways faces financial troubles, poor business practices, or public criticism, they could bear the brunt of the backlash, despite not having operational control. Without the authority to make executive decisions, they may also find themselves unable to intervene if the company moves in a direction they do not agree with.

Conclusion: A Smart Business Move or a Superficial Role?

At face value, Krept and Konan's involvement in Saveways looks like an exciting venture and expansion of their business interests. But with only a 24% stake and no official governance authority, their role seems more like a strategic branding play than true business leadership.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with this approach, the lack of transparency around their actual level of control could be misleading to consumers who assume they are at the helm of the business.

If Saveways is to be positioned as an authentic entrepreneurial endeavour, there needs to be clearer communication about who is really in charge. Otherwise, Krept and Konan risk becoming the public faces of a company they do not truly control, an arrangement that may not work in their favour in the long run.



Photo: Krept, Konan & Kaysor Ali / Credit: The Standard Newspaper

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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