

For Benefactors, Patrons and Friends of The Fed

# M'LEV EL LEV

heart to heart

Summer 2021

**THE  
FED**

Caring for our  
Community



## ROYAL RECOGNITION FOR MY VOICE

As My Voice delights in news of its Queen's award for volunteering, we learn how one woman's dream has become central to Holocaust Education | Pg 6

## FED TAKES LEAD ON COVID MESSAGING

As Covid-19 lessens its grip on our lives, local authorities turn to The Fed to relay important messages to our community to keep the numbers down | Pg 10

## WIDENING HORIZONS - A WIN-WIN ARRANGEMENT

A bold new approach to recruiting nursing staff took The Fed overseas, safeguarding a core service for the community and generating vital income | Pg 16

# a word FROM RAPHI

**W**elcome to the Summer 2021 edition of M'Lev El Lev - our fourth issue.

On the one hand it seems like just yesterday that we sent you our inaugural Summer 2020 magazine; on the other, so much has happened since then that it seems impossible that only 12 months have elapsed.

For everyone at The Fed, Covid-19 has meant that we have not stopped for a moment since March 2020.

From that point we went into overdrive – ensuring that the thousands living in our community, who rely on our help, were provided with extra support. At Heathlands Village our workforce readily absorbed the huge additional burden placed on them to keep our residents as safe as possible.

Right across the board our staff rose to the challenge, going 'above and beyond' – but that's what they do around here.

With all that in mind, it was immensely gratifying that our staff body – and our army of over 550 volunteers – received deserved recognition in the recent Jewish Rep Council 'Community Stars' Awards.

One of our key focuses over the last 12 months has been to secure sufficient funds to guarantee the continuation of our life-enhancing – and often life-saving – work.

The fallout of Covid-19 forced our fundraising target to be raised to £2 million for this year - a colossal amount for a Manchester charity.

We don't have the luxury of the far larger donor bases enjoyed by London-centred charities offering satellite services in Manchester. Unlike them, The Fed is a *local* charity. Unlike them, we are *your* local charity, and unlike them, we mostly rely on our community – on *you* – for support.

We were compelled to cancel our Appeal Dinner scheduled for last April and, like countless other charities, had to pivot our strategy and find a way to engage with our donors as effectively and personally as we would normally do, via a face-to-face event.

We came up with The F Word – a 30-minute national TV show – a first for a UK Jewish charity. At its centre was Tony Walsh's brilliantly crafted poem, 'Not Alone'. It tells the story of our Manchester Jewish community – surviving pogroms, wars and antisemitism to cross borders and make our way here; the challenge to establish ourselves; the contributions of so many to making our city great.

It underlines The Fed's role across the generations – the golden thread running through

our community for more than 150 years – looking after the destitute and most vulnerable – never more so than during Covid.

The analytics tell us it was watched by thousands of people, and the feedback from the hundreds of conversations our Fundraising team and trustees have had with our donors has been stellar.

Most importantly, it achieved our aim. The response was magnificent raising over £800,000. I thank every one of you for your part in this.

But that was only the first leg. We must still raise in excess of a further £1.2m this year to safeguard anyone in the community from slipping through The Fed's safety net.

The unceasing demand for our services drives us forward as individuals and as an organisation.

It is only via your ongoing partnership in our work that we can guarantee the resources to meet the demand on our vital services – thank you again for your commitment to The Fed and to your local community.

Wishing you and your loved ones a safe, dry and very enjoyable summer. ■

PS Haven't seen The F Word yet? You can view it on The Fed's YouTube channel. Believe me, you'll be impressed!



*Raphi Bloom*

**Raphi Bloom**  
Director of Fundraising  
and Marketing



**1,284**  
cases involving  
mental health  
support

**4,385**  
calls for help  
answered



**31,500+**  
hours of  
volunteer support

**47**

victims of domestic  
abuse and/or  
violence supported



**£150,000+**  
of benefits  
claimed for clients

**1 in 8**

Jewish households  
in Greater Manchester  
supported



# trek4thefed AT THE PEAK OF THEIR POWERS!

Over 50 gutsy trekkers laced up their boots and raised more than £25,000 for The Fed over a gruelling 35km course in Ullswater.

“  
*I would recommend it to everyone. It was an incredible atmosphere, everyone pulled together and the feeling as you cross the line at the end is indescribable!*”

## Want to join our 2022 trek4thefed?

Taking place on 3 July 2022 – contact Rochelle Broman in our Fundraising team to register your interest!

rochelle.broman@thefed.org.uk  
0161 772 4800

**M**ore than 50 intrepid trekkers rose to the challenge and scaled the heights of the Lake District's Ullswater Way in mid-June.

Our second trek4thefed in the English countryside – with the pandemic again preventing a return to Israel – nevertheless took place under (mostly) blue skies and baking heat.

Setting off at 7am, the team split into six groups, depending on ability and experience, before beginning the hike which involved a climb of more than 1,000m of elevation throughout the day and covered an arduous 35km.

Our delighted Director of Fundraising and Marketing, Raphi Bloom, reflected on the event:

“It was a fantastic day that was physically challenging but full of camaraderie and commitment to The Fed, and it raised more than £25,000. Just fantastic!”

“You could really feel that our trekkers got a huge buzz – and extra stamina – out of pushing themselves to cover the climb knowing they were raising so much money for such a crucial cause.

The glorious weather and views definitely helped as well!”

Rochelle Broman, The Fed's Fundraising Manager – and a newbie to long distance walking – loved the sense of accomplishment the trek presented:

“I would recommend it to everyone! There was a fabulous atmosphere, with everyone pulling together. The feeling as you cross the line at the end is indescribable! I was on such a high – excuse the pun!” she enthused, laughing.

“I'm not a great walker and have never taken part in anything like this before but I got through it because of the team spirit and the support everyone gave each other.

“With the right practice and training in the weeks before, our treks are achievable for the vast majority of people - even me!”

And a final word from Raphi: “Every single participant made a magnificent effort to fundraise for The Fed, besides their physical efforts on the day.

“A huge thank you to all of them and I'm looking forward to seeing them again next year on our 2022 Trek – wherever that may be!” ■





Volunteer Steph Roth reading from Margit's book as she looks on



Fed staff displaying finished My Voice storybooks



Anne Super proudly exhibiting her storybook

# ROYAL RECOGNITION *for my voice*

**In June 2021 volunteers for a Fed 'project within a project' – My Voice – were notified that they are to receive the highest accolade attainable by a UK volunteering group – the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – equivalent to an individual being awarded an MBE. Representatives of the project will be presented with the award by the Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester later this summer.**

**As we join our volunteers in absorbing the news of their momentous achievement, we take a look at this unique project, for whom time is of the essence.**

My Voice is a project which does not enjoy the privilege of time. By its very nature it is fuelled by a constant sense of urgency. Its participants are well into their 80s or beyond and, more often than not, declining in health and memory. All have a

mission to accomplish in whatever time they have left.

This discrete programme, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and private donations, sits within the infrastructure of The Fed's Volunteer Services Department. Its purpose is to support Holocaust Survivors and Refugees in recalling and chronicling their life-stories, strictly in their own words – hence the title of the project.

It empowers them to give voice to memories of childhood years, before Nazi persecution wrought devastation to Jewish communities throughout Europe. It honours their triumph in building positive, productive lives quite literally, for many, from the ashes. Above all else My Voice is a celebration.

Supported by a specialist team of both employed staff and volunteers, together numbering well over

50 individuals, Survivors become storytellers, their recollections published into beautiful, personalised volumes.

This unique group of Fed service-users arrived in the UK, as children or young adults, with scant command of English or knowledge of the culture of their new home. Barely any brought personal possessions. A few were fortunate to have snapshots of their families; even fewer to have any remaining family – and if so, any knowledge of their whereabouts.

Despite the hardship suffered, almost without exception, they went on to marry, have children, create successful careers or businesses and make important contributions to the Jewish and wider communities.

The stories of their resilience have huge relevance for future generations. They provide hope and inspiration to migrants from

all areas of the globe, fleeing oppression and seeking refuge and the chance of a new life within new borders.

“  
*Above all else  
My Voice is a  
celebration*”

By not focusing solely on the years of oppression, they fill a historical gap – painting pictures of everyday family life across many lost European Jewish communities and enhancing our knowledge of post-war UK Jewish history.

The books provide participants' families with invaluable legacies and – although not the project's original intent – their authentic voices offer major first-person historical accounts in the realm of Holocaust Education.

The key component of My Voice is the befriending process: employing exquisite care and sensitivity, the project coordinators match each storyteller with a volunteer befriender. The success of each book turns on the quality of the

storyteller-befriender relationship, built over many weeks and months.

It is within this safe context that storytellers feel comfortable and supported in opening up about their experiences – some for the first time – and allowing their memories to be recorded.

“It's a delicate balance,” explains Volunteer Services Manager Juliette Pearce who oversees the project.

“The task is urgent, but it's a process that can't be forced – the pace has to be set entirely by what the storyteller feels at ease with.”

## From Margit's dream to essential educational resource

In May 2017, My Voice celebrated the publication of the first set of completed life-storybooks at an event at Heathlands Village in the presence of the Mayor of Greater Manchester and Mark Adlestone OBE DL. Befriending volunteer, Steph Roth, sat alongside Kindertransport refugee Margit Cohen, and read extracts from Margit's book.

Juliette recalls a conversation some years earlier with Margit. She smiles fondly at her recollection →

## Voices of My Voice

### Sam Gontarz, zt”l

*“Most of us “boys”, as we're known, are in our mid-80's now. We don't know how long we have – weeks, months or years and there's got to be someone to take over the job of telling our stories. This project makes me feel confident that what happened won't be forgotten and the deniers won't succeed.*

*I built my life from nothing through sheer hard work. When I started my business, I worked day and night – I'd pack bags till 1 or 2 in the morning. Normally people go to school or college or university, but I only went to school for two years from the age of seven to nine. Having no education didn't hold me back. If you have drive you can succeed.”*

### Anne Super

*“My real parents died having had no other children. Neither of them reached 30. They were simply robbed of their life. That was all the life they were allowed. All that's left is me, I have to think it, I have to see it, I have to hear it. I lived every minute of my life. I have had to, because my parents never could, and no other children that they could make ever could, so everything is on me.”*



Ike Alterman is presented with his storybook



The My Voice team with Yoni Berrous



Leonard Kaufmann reading from his storybook



of their exchange and of a lady she clearly admired enormously.

“Margit was a formidable force! It’s down to her that the My Voice project came about in the first place.

She spotted me one day on the main downstairs corridor of Heathlands Village and accosted me. I felt like a naughty schoolgirl!” Juliette laughs. “She wagged her finger at me and said, “I want you to help me tell my life-story! My whole life-story – before I die”.

“It was like a bolt of lightning. I had total clarity about the responsibility we, as an organisation, had to help Margit and other Survivors tell their stories. I saw the urgency of the task, and the importance to the storytellers of every single word being heard and meticulously recorded. From that day My Voice was born.”

Today, as the project has grown, Juliette’s sense of duty is shared with two passionately committed members of staff - Project Leader, Louise Senderovich, and Communications and Development Officer, Jocelyn Elton.

Louise joined the team in early 2019 from a media and copywriting background, Jocelyn from a background of Law and

communications.

Jocelyn emphasises the importance of not ‘ghost-writing’ the books: “We can allow no room for doubt in the reader’s mind as to the authenticity of the stories. This ensures that within the family the voice of their loved one is recognisable, and in terms of Holocaust Education, the stories are believable and will be accepted as the first-hand accounts that they are.

“

*“I want you to help me tell my life-story. My whole life-story - before I die.”*

“Whilst not wishing to decry other methodologies My Voice differs from many testimonial projects in that it is not template-driven or formulaic. The approach is informal and there is time to reflect and go back over memories to elicit further detail.”

Speaking for herself and Louise, Jocelyn sums up the tremendous satisfaction they feel in carrying out the task that Margit set for The Fed.

“When a completed book is presented to the author our sense of achievement is profound – seeing their words in black and white and knowing that no one can take that away.

“We are validating and giving recognition to what they have been through.”

Louise is keen to emphasise the project’s wrap-around service: “My Voice is unique in that it sits within a social care setting and as such we can offer extra care and support beyond the core purpose of producing the life-story books.”

The process potentially risks eliciting distressing feelings. Easy access to psychological support, provided on an entirely voluntary basis, is of major benefit. Alongside this, participants can take advantage of other Fed services such as practical assistance with shopping and errands, support in attending important medical appointments, opportunities to join the department’s ‘coffee-stop’ get-togethers or to receive food and Yomtov parcels.

The project has to date published 28 books and has 13 currently in production, covering the entirety of the story-tellers’ lives.

On the anniversary of

Kristallnacht, in November 2017, a first set of volumes was presented at The Fed to Dorit Novak, Director General of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

At her invitation in June 2018 representatives of the project attended the International Conference on Holocaust Education at Yad Vashem alongside delegates from over 50 countries as diverse as Japan, China and Macedonia.

Here they first discussed making the books available for Holocaust Education in UK schools and colleges with the museum’s Director of Education. Since then four My Voice volunteers have been trained by Yad Vashem as Holocaust Educators.

Juliette talks with heartfelt passion: “As people’s stories began to emerge, My Voice’s wider value became apparent. We knew its importance in validating Survivors’ experiences, and to their families in terms of the legacies produced. We came to realise their significance in terms of Manchester’s heritage, but the Yad Vashem visit brought about a real step change. It revealed the wider relevance of our home-grown Manchester project, in contributing to Holocaust Education in a world – in the not-too-distant future – without Survivors. The books will

keep their messages alive and enable Survivors to continue to talk to young people in a real and immediate way.”

In July 2019 Yoni Berrous, Head of European Jewish Programming for Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies, met a further group of storytellers at Heathlands Village and was presented with the next set of nine signed copies for the Yad Vashem archive.

On that occasion he spoke of “...the importance of bringing meaning to the Holocaust... Although people are exposed to the Holocaust in school or through film and TV this tends to include a lot of facts and figures and numbers, and this dehumanises it.”

The answer, he said, is “... to bring meaning and bring it back to the core. My Voice is part of the answer.” ■

## From Voice to Print

- **Training** of My Voice volunteers in specific roles
- **Befriending** volunteers record their conversations with the story-tellers.
- D2U, a **transcribing** company offers a pro bono transcription service to the project.
- Volunteer **editors** work through the initial transcripts, cross-checking facts, reordering information and preparing drafts for approval or change.
- This may require multiple drafts and questions being devised by editors to elicit more detail or fill gaps in the story.
- Volunteer **proof-readers** check for typo and grammatical errors, until a final version of the text is approved.
- Volunteer **photographers** take photos of the family and other photographs, artefacts and documents which the story-teller wishes to include.
- Volunteer **designer** produces layout of text and photographs for each book.

# Fed leads on COVID MESSAGING

Fed commissioned to lead key Covid and public health messaging in Bury, Salford and Manchester

Answering urgent requests to assist the local authority is a growing part of The Fed's brief. In an effort to slow the surge of the Covid Delta variant, Fed volunteers jumped into action with little warning in May when the call came from Salford Council to mobilise.

could do so safely. This latest effort, responding in great numbers and with virtually no warning to help the council, further cements our relationship with the local authority and provides a timely reminder of the crucial nature of our volunteers' work."

The call from Salford is part of a bigger picture – a tri-borough approach by Bury, Salford, and Manchester City councils to commission The Fed to take the lead on Covid communications for the local Jewish community.

As we emerge from the worst grip of the pandemic, The Fed has been tasked with delivering key public health messages including the continuing need for Covid testing and vaccinations.

Bernie Garner, our Director of Community Services, is thrilled with the new partnership:

"We are delighted that council leaders recognise the power and efficacy of The Fed's reach and have identified us as their key strategic partner in taking their messaging campaign into the Manchester Jewish Community.

"We're especially gratified that they recognise the need to deliver this important communication, in a culturally appropriate way.

"This partnership will provide a model for future collaboration which will benefit communities across the county."

Effusive in her praise, Lizzie Hughes, Integrated Neighbourhood Lead for Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall, commented:

"The tri-borough work led by The Fed is a great step forward in providing a more consistent level of support and developing better services for our Jewish residents."

Marc Levy, CEO of the Jewish

Representative Council of Greater Manchester and Region, endorsed the collaborative approach:

"Through the Strategic Group, we are delighted with the progress that has been made in ensuring the community are able to operate across local authority boundary lines. The collaboration and cooperation between our community and representatives from local and national government has been truly unprecedented."

To deliver the messages The Fed will use email and social media extensively, but for sections of the community who shun such means of communications, hand to hand leafleting on streets will be the mainstay of achieving our aims. The design and wording will be adapted to engage an ultra-orthodox audience.



With the extra work incurred by the campaign, our volunteer services team have taken on a new member of staff, Julie Abramson, funded by the local councils on a 12-month contract, to coordinate volunteers involvement. ■



As infection rates rose across the borough, the local authority contacted The Fed to support them in dispensing information, offering lateral flow tests, and educating and encouraging people to accept a vaccine when it becomes available.

Volunteer Coordinator, Debra Foster, commented, "In less than 24 hours we had people on the streets." Volunteer Services Manager, Juliette Pearce, was delighted with the response.

"We are so proud of all of our volunteers who have gone over and above throughout Covid to assist and support wherever they

# CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

Bury Council's Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation Fund has awarded £13,000 to support a 12-month communal menu, designed to reduce loneliness and promote wellbeing, across all age groups in the Manchester Jewish Community.

With the objective of ensuring that members of the Greater Manchester Jewish community remain healthy and independent, The Fed - in partnership with Manchester Maccabi and The Nicky (run by Manchester Jewish Community Care) - collaborated in securing the funding, which now supports a range of projects.

These include The Fed's 'Walk and Talk' group – initiated during lockdown to allow people to socialise outdoors, by meeting regularly in Heaton Park in north Manchester, our 'Mums 'n' Tots' group, which has recently held sessions at the Maccabi Centre in Prestwich, and 'Coffee Stops' for older isolated people, supported by our Volunteer Services Department.

Also on the menu are Maccabi's outdoor exercise class and Mindfulness and Meditation sessions plus activities, lunch and a bathing service for older people at The Nicky.

The Fed's bid-writer Lucy Edwards said,

"A key element of The Fed's organisational strategy is to champion and actively seek opportunities to work in close partnership with other communal organisations. It was a delight to work with my counterparts at Maccabi and MJCC.

"For the community this award is great news. It means that whether you're a mum with a tiny tot who wants to meet others in similar circumstances, or someone who wants to be active but has no one to go with, or an older person with little social opportunity, there's an option on the menu for you."

Endorsing Lucy's message Mark Adlestone, OBE DL, Chair of the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester and Region added:

"The Jewish Representative Council (JRC) is delighted that The Fed, Maccabi and MJCC have joined forces to obtain much needed funds. This will enable them to work together to care for vulnerable and isolated members of our community. We envisage working with all organisations across our diverse community to ensure this collaborative approach is replicated elsewhere so we do not waste valuable resources". ■



# A MAN WITH HIS FINGER on the pulse



## An interview with Marc Levy

Since our interview, Marc has been appointed CEO of the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester and Region, alongside his employment with the JLC. We wish him the best of luck, and know that the community is in very safe hands.

**M**arc Levy's rolodex would make most journalists drool.

With contact details for some of the most influential and powerful people in the country, he certainly isn't short of people to call on when pressing issues arise.

From wooing former Foreign Secretaries and Secretaries of State for Defence, to enjoying casual dinners – in a pre-Covid world – with leading politicians of all stripes, as the Jewish Leadership Council's *North West, North Wales, and West Midlands External Affairs Manager* (a greater tongue-twisting title than any of his contacts!) Marc has a window into the personal lives and professional activities of the men and women who inhabit the seat of power across the UK.

All of which make his comments about The Fed astonishing.

"The Fed has literally made my job easier; in some ways it almost makes my job run itself. I can say to one of the most senior politicians in the county, the Secretary of State for Health, that here in Manchester we have one of the best care homes in the country at Heathlands Village and that he should come for a visit – and he is blown away when he arrives.

"Greater Manchester's Mayor, Andy Burnham, regularly publicly references the organisation's amazing work, and it's telling how often he comes to The Fed to visit.

"Having this resource to back up our community is fantastic. When you build expectations up that high, there's a risk they can be easily disappointed – but everyone who visits The Fed is, like I said, simply blown away."

Coming to the JLC in 2016 following a successful 11-year career as a law firm partner, Marc immediately set about building up a network of contacts in the north of England, acting as the Council's professional and political face for the

Jewish community. Responsible for engagement with Local Authorities and their Leaders, Councilors, Members of Parliament, and Metro Mayors across the region, he has established close relationships and regularly meets with key decision-makers to discuss areas of local and national interest.

"On one visit to a senior member of the Cabinet, I was given a pass that took me straight through the usual security stations and right into the Secretary of State's waiting room.

"One of the armed guards who escorted me up to the office caught sight of the pass and commented that 'You must be very important to have one of those' – to which I responded, 'no, just a guy from Manchester with a big mouth!'"

Involved in communal matters since his teenage years, it was Marc's participation in the UJIA Leadership course in 2015 that set him on the path to his present employment.

"Through the UJIA's course I visited Parliament for a day and was amazed. I thought: 'This is where it all happens!' Even earlier, I had shadowed Ivan Lewis when he was a Minister as part of my work experience, and just got the bug."

Marc grew up surrounded by family who placed a premium on the importance of community involvement. Born in Saltire Gardens, Salford, in the heart of the Jewish community, his childhood served as an introduction to numerous communal organisations and figureheads.

"My grandfather was on his shul's executive board, my grandma was the deputy-head at King David Infants School for many years, and my dad was shul president. It's really in my blood – the UJIA course just gave me that extra desire to get further involved."

Having grown up just a short

distance from Heathlands Village, Marc's understanding of the organisation has grown extensively in recent years – from a very early beginning.

"One of my truly earliest memories is of singing in the King David school choir at Heathlands Village, back in the late 1980s. I vividly remember the residents clapping and singing along – but aside from that day, the truth is I didn't know a great deal about either Heathlands or The Fed.

"Little could I have imagined that three decades later, The Fed would be enabling me to engage with some of the most senior politicians and leaders across the county.

"It's safe to say that I now share a wonderful relationship with the place."

As an advocate for the Jewish community on a national scale, Marc is uniquely placed to view and pass comment on the wealth of Jewish organisations across the county – so how does he view The Fed?

*"The Fed is instrumental to the future. The Jewish community would not be able to function without it."*

"Throughout the pandemic, I've seen the same phrase over and over again – 'the community's safety net' – and I couldn't put it any better. That's a brilliant turn of phrase.

"The fact that one in eight homes in Jewish Manchester rely on the care and support coming out of this organisation is breathtaking. Unlike my younger self, I am fully aware of the breadth of the services The Fed provides – but I don't think

everyone appreciates how much The Fed does.

*"I've seen the same phrase over and over again – 'The community's safety net' – I couldn't put it any better."*

"Aside from the most well-known services, some of the smallest things can make the biggest difference – volunteers to go shopping, mental health Drop-In sessions for community members, a listening ear, a simple act of much-needed friendship.

"The plainest way of putting it is The Fed is instrumental to the future. The Jewish community would not be able to function without it."

In more recent times, Marc has strengthened his relationship with The Fed further, joining its inaugural Philanthropy & Leadership course, organised by Director of Fundraising and Marketing, Raphi Bloom.

"It's been fascinating," Marc enthuses.

"I enjoy listening and learning from all different kinds of people, and hearing from titans of industry and commerce like Leo Noe and James Timpson has been mesmerising. All the speakers we have been privileged to hear from have achieved so much in the worlds of business and philanthropy and have pertinent lessons for people of my generation.

"You simply cannot buy access, information, and experience like that – and it's being handed to us on a plate by The Fed."

Spending time with leading figures like Leo and James has →

DONATE



reinforced Marc's passion – if there were any doubts whatsoever – that getting involved in your own community is of vital importance.

“We all love our communities – speaking personally I love the Manchester community. We all care for each other and want the best for one another. Even throughout the Covid-19 pandemic I have been continuously inspired: the creation and mobilisation of the Covid-19 Response Group, which morphed into the Jewish Strategic Group, has shown me how inspiring our leading community organisations are. In the face of such adversity

and challenge, they looked outwards at how they could help the most vulnerable and needy.

“The Strategic Group, chaired by Mark Adlestone OBE DL – another Fed luminary – is already making great strides in preparing the community for the challenges of a post-Covid world.”

As someone who has seen Ministers come and go, and Council Leaders and Members of Parliament voted in and out of office, the sense of permanence and stability that these communal bodies offer is not lost on Marc.

“These organisations are amazing – invaluable even - and

“

*When we can give, we must give – you might need them yourself one day.*

the crucial lesson is that when we can give, we must give – you might need them yourself one day.

“The safety net is knowing that The Fed will be there if you do.”

Quite the lesson, coming from just a guy from Manchester with a big mouth. ■

# MAKING A HOUSE

# a home

**T**he Fed's impact is often measured in millions of pounds; hundreds of cases; thousands of hours of volunteer support and in these pages it is

order restored, walls plastered and cheerfully painted, new bedding and furniture in place.

The young man whose room this is, has complex special educational needs including autism, learning and social communication difficulties. In his early 20s, he is totally reliant upon a structured routine and thrives on consistency.

He regressed during the pandemic and his behaviours and life skills were negatively affected.

Our social worker built a trusting relationship with him, advised and helped him in completing a lasting power of attorney, and secured a grant to enable the improvements to be made to his room.

The Fed continues to support him in relation to his Education, Health and Care Plan so that he

“

*His future is looking much brighter – as well as his walls.*



largely the written word that paints a picture of the scope and complexity of our work.

Yet sometimes, the changes The Fed brings about in someone's circumstances can only truly be illustrated in images. Here we share the 'before' and 'after' photos of a client's bedroom, following the involvement of one of our social workers.

While not palatial, the room has been transformed – rubbish cleared,

can continue attending college.

His future is looking much brighter – as well as his walls. ■

# PESACH PLAY

*an oasis of calm for young Fed clients*



**T**he limited easing of lockdown rules allowed The Fed to throw open the doors of our Children's Centre, before and during Pesach, to welcome back small groups of youngsters. We offered fun, friendship and opportunities to build life skills and, at the same time, provided their families with a period of respite from their caring responsibilities.

Complying with social distancing guidelines, with temperatures taken and masks worn by all staff, the youngsters were delighted to be back amongst familiar faces in a safe, enjoyable setting. They soon settled down to enjoy their favourite toys, games, snacks, and Pesach-themed crafts: painting seder plates.

“The sessions are like an oasis of calm in the middle of everything going on around us,” commented one of our sessional workers. ■

# widening horizons

## A WIN-WIN ARRANGEMENT

A bold new approach to recruitment averted a potentially devastating crisis in the provision of nursing care at Heathlands Village.

**I**n the Summer of 2019, The Fed's Director of Clinical Services, Karen Johnson, sat late one afternoon staring at her computer screen checking the nursing rotas for the coming week.

"I remember being really alarmed. I looked at who was available and realised we simply could not go on like this – we were too vulnerable. Staffing levels were stretched to the limit. How were we going to be able to continue to deliver a safe service?"

Staffing levels for qualified nurses at Heathlands Village had been fluctuating for some time, following many years of stability. Indira Doolooa, team leader of our Dr Simon Jenkins nursing department had retired at the end of June after 14 years' loyal service.

"Indira's departure left us with only two full-time nurses during the daytime. They were both covering huge amounts of overtime and relinquishing annual leave to keep the department going – how long could that be sustained without one of them going off sick?"

"We'd wasted no time in seeking to recruit her replacement. We weren't naive, but the task turned out to be a lot tougher than expected," says Karen. "Less new staff were qualifying because the

training bursaries for nurses had stopped.

“We simply could not go on like this – we were too vulnerable.”

"In an emergency we could pull management staff, including me, out of our offices, into our uniforms and 'onto the floors' to provide hands-on nursing care. Once in a while, this is a great safety net to have but not on a regular basis when there's a job to be done at strategic level.

"We went to recruitment agencies and were successful in taking on new nurses, but this was costing us £6,000 per nurse – which you accept if it means you end up with a well-qualified new member of staff who intends to stay with you long-term. But that's not how it worked out! People came and went. In the space of one six-month period, we spent £30,000 on agency fees and had nothing to show for it. We were just bleeding money out."

But why? Karen shakes her head



Karen Johnson, Director of Clinical Services

as she thinks back to that bleak period. "They had no integrity, no staying power, and while I can't prove anything, I have a strong suspicion that some people we took on were agency-hopping. They'd be induced to sign up with a golden handshake of say £1,000; take a job; stay a month and move on to the next agency, another hand-shake and so on."

That afternoon, pouring over the rotas, Karen realised how precariously close The Fed was to having to close down its nursing department, a decision "...which would have been awful for the community. Where would people go? It's horrible to think that someone we were looking after might have had to move somewhere else."

She took her realisation to Fed CEO Mark Cunningham. The crunch had come, and with the backing of the board, a decision was made which turned The Fed's fortunes around.

"Today we are in 100% a better place. We've gone from a nursing team of seven covering days and nights, to a very healthy one of 14."

So, how did The Fed's strong directorship preserve the community's choice? How did we ensure people could continue to be cared for in the home they knew, even if their needs changed? How did we continue to accommodate couples – where one spouse needs a nursing service – under the same roof? So much was at stake.

The answer lay with a bold new recruitment strategy and setting our sights beyond the UK horizons. We signed up with an agency specialising in the recruitment of overseas nurses and by December 2019 we had taken on our first cohort of six staff from Africa and India.

Whilst double the average fee of UK agencies – at £12,000 per nurse – the benefits are enormous. We have enhanced our existing team with a group of highly experienced, highly qualified people who have committed to three years' employment – and bought the

stability that is essential to running an effective service.

There has been a good deal of additional investment – not all directly financial – in terms of the completion of Home Office sponsorship paperwork and satisfying due process, paying for our new employees' first month's rent and devoting HR time to helping them secure accommodation, and orientate themselves in their new city.

“The answer lay with a bold new recruitment strategy and setting our sights beyond the UK horizons”

Significantly, by enhancing the size of our existing team we have been able to enter into local authority contracts to provide 'discharge to assess' (D2A) beds. These offer short-term NHS funded support for people who are fit to leave hospital and need social work assessment for their longer-term care (by our Community Advice and Support Team - CAST).

We are currently contracted for 29 D2A beds till the end of September, bringing in nearly £30,000 per week. At the height of the pandemic, we were offering 48 beds and, in the year ending 31 March 2021, this arrangement generated income of £1,113,750.

Chief Executive, Mark Cunningham explains: "Without the investment in the right calibre of committed staff we could not meet our contractual obligations. Bringing on board overseas staff guarantees the future of nursing care within a Jewish setting for our community, and at the same time through our D2A contracts, underwrites other key services – volunteer support, social work support, our mental health Drop-In, Project Smile Play and Learn.

"It's been a game-changer." ■

**C**harles Ndanga, 33 landed at Manchester Airport in December 2019, having flown 16 hours and over 5,000 miles from his home in the Zimbabwean capital of Harare. He had left behind his wife Stella and sons Jonathan, Abraham and Joshua who was just two months old, to take up employment at Heathlands Village. His arrival and that of five other new recruits spelled rescue for our home's nursing department but equally saved Charles from having to give up a career that fills his life with meaning.

This middle of five sons to a college lecturer father and mother who is a retired secretary and housewife, Charles is the only one of his family to pursue a medical career. Having graduated as a Bachelor of Nursing at the University of Zimbabwe in 2011 he says he first had his sights set on being a doctor but did not manage to get the necessary grades at A level. "I sat down with my father, and he asked, 'So, what next?' and I told him that I would go into nursing with a view to later entering medicine. But that didn't happen because I fell in love with nursing! I remember my first practical training experience and the satisfaction I got from just helping someone. I went home that day with the most incredible feeling of fulfilment!" →



It is a feeling that's never left him. "I feel like I was born to be a nurse. I'd love my boys to follow in my footsteps and have some type of medical career," though at the moment his five-and-a-half-year-old and four-year-old are more interested in the idea of being a firefighter or a policeman!



But what made Charles decide on such a drastic change to his life which involved initially leaving his wife and children, as well as his parents and brothers, back in Harare? "It was mainly for economic reasons," he explains. "The Zimbabwean economy is in depression; the currency is losing value day on day. Prices were doubling every day while salaries were stagnant". Charles had been working in a private hospital for five years but his 1,000 US dollar a month salary had shrunk to a fifth of its value.

"We were syphoning from our savings to maintain a decent standard of living and make ends meet – even to buy basics. It wasn't sustainable and reached the point where it wasn't sensible for me to continue working as a nurse. I'd have been better off following one of my brothers into retail, but I felt I couldn't leave my profession. Nursing is intrinsic to my identity, and I couldn't see life without it.

I didn't want to go abroad but the only way I could keep on nursing and provide the right standard of living for my family meant leaving Zimbabwe.

He signed up with an agency

specialising in jobs in the UK – the process taking about a year including preparing for exams needed to practice here. He spotted the job at Heathlands Village and immediately said, "I want that one!" Attracted by the idea of living in the north of the country where he knew the cost of living would be less, and the salary which was better than that offered for NHS positions.

The fact he would be working for a Jewish organisation he says was a bonus since, as a devote Christian, he personally holds firm pro-Jewish, pro-Israel beliefs and is very keen to learn more about Judaism.

While he knew he would be separated from his family for some time he certainly did not anticipate a split of over

12 months due to the pandemic.

His wife and children were unable to join him in Manchester until January of this year, and Charles is prepared to laughingly admit that it was a bit of a shock to the system to have to share space with his family again after getting used to a quiet lockdown life. But he seems to have adjusted happily to the change and working nights gives him more family time.

He is very clearly taken with his new Fed family too "I expected to feel like an outsider, but I walked into the door at Heathlands Village and the first people I met were Mark Cunningham, Bernie Garner and David Eventhall and they used their first names to introduce themselves! I was so taken with the fact they were down-to-earth, humble people. In Zimbabwe people are very status minded. You'd never be greeted by a chief executive, a director and a trustee like that!

I felt immediately welcome and that's continued. People are friendly, the work environment is free, and I feel able to express myself freely. I'm really happy with my decision." ■

“  
I feel like I was born to  
be a nurse ... nursing  
is intrinsic to my identity,  
and I couldn't see life  
without it.



# FILLING THE GAPS WHEN VISITS STOP

**F**or the staff who run the activity programme for Heathlands Villagers, the pandemic has thrown up a unique challenge.

BC – before Covid – the team, under the management of Nick Burgess, would include regular sessions facilitated by volunteers, such as singalongs, music appreciation and current affairs discussions, and frequent visits by professional and amateur entertainers – dancers, musicians and local school choirs.

But then Covid put a stop to both volunteers and entertainers entering the Village.

Residents were limited for months to only virtual family visits, followed later by pod visits, and more recently limited face-to-face contact with an 'essential care-giver' family member.

So, as Nick explains, maintaining people's wellbeing, by 'filling the gaps' has been his primary focus over the last year or more.

While sections of our workforce were working from home, his team remained on site alongside other essential workers, conjuring up new ways to maintain residents' wellbeing.

"We had to think outside the box. Having no family members or volunteers around, we had to create new ways of engaging and motivating people, keeping things as normal as possible, and keeping our regular volunteers involved – they've always played a huge part in our activity centre.

"We invited them to run video sessions over Zoom, such as sing-alongs, quizzes, music appreciation, discussion groups, poetry sessions, coffee mornings and so on. The residents were delighted to see familiar faces."

"In-person activities had to be covid-safe with social distancing maintained. For a long time this meant restricting activities within separate household groups.

"We'd never had to wrestle with anything like this before.

"The team spent much of the day going round the Village with mobile phones and hand-held or giant tablets, enabling video calls between residents and their families. We still use these a lot when in-person visits aren't possible."

Though the immediate threat of the virus receded over the summer of 2020, volunteers were still not

able to come into direct contact with residents, but adjustments to the activity programme were made: "We invited performers into the garden to sing through the windows," Nick recalls. "One young boy would come every Friday to sing Shabbat songs."

On special occasions, when in ordinary times we would welcome families and friends in their droves to the Village, Nick's team stepped up again.

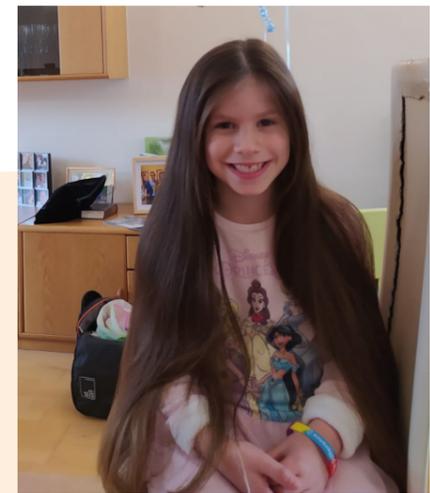
"Birthday parties would take place – in fact still do – without family being present. We hold Zoom parties and staff make an extra-special fuss of people. We make sure they don't feel they're missing out."

And now as the weather improves, residents often spill out into the Village garden, where the team have recently organised afternoon teas under the marquee, and a Wimbledon afternoon complete with strawberries and cream.

"It's been about maintaining normality and enjoyment no matter what was thrown at us," said Nick – and it's a goal which he and his activity coordinators have certainly achieved. ■

# FUNDRAISING

## Round up



### A Cut above the rest

**S**ix year old Oria Fox, one of The Fed's newest and youngest fundraisers, showed immense bravery recently – having her lovely long locks lopped off for The Fed!

"I had 14 inches cut off my hair," Oria said, "I donated it to Zichron Menachem. It's a charity which helps children who have cancer. And at the same time, I wanted to raise money for The Fed."

Seen opposite proudly showing off

her before-and-after hair, Oria was invited to Heathlands Village recently to receive a Fed Hero certificate from Fundraising Manager, Rochelle Broman:

"We are so grateful that Oria thought of The Fed in her efforts to help other people and delighted to have a new little fundraiser on board!"

Having initially set a target of just £500 Oria has so far raised almost £2,500! Wow! ■



### The F Word

does the job, and then some!

**O**ur greatly anticipated national broadcast, The F Word, went live last month, launching our £2m annual appeal and the verdict was unequivocal: "It was an unrivalled success!"

"We were looking for a way to excite and engage people with our cause despite not being able to hold our traditional appeal dinner. Raising £800,000 towards essential services, The F Word did the job, and then some!" said Raphi Bloom, The Fed's Director of Fundraising, Marketing and Communications.

The show's centrepiece poem – "Not Alone" – by Tony Walsh focuses on the history of the Manchester Jewish community and the role of The Fed as its safety net for over 150 years – from those fleeing pogroms in the 19th century to those battling hardship during the pandemic.

"We were overwhelmed by the community's generous support which clearly indicated that they

understand how vital The Fed is to thousands of Jewish people across Greater Manchester," Raphi continued.

"The unique TV format enabled us to tell our story with even greater impact and to reach a much wider audience than a traditional appeal dinner.

"The follow up we undertook also enabled us to engage with our donors in a very personal way which was appreciated.

"Many organisations have been holding emergency campaigns in recent months. What differentiates The Fed is that every single year is an emergency for us. If we don't succeed, we will no longer be able to offer life enhancing, and often even life-saving services, and Jewish people here in Manchester will suffer.

"The F Word has given us a great head-start, but we have a marathon to complete to guarantee support for everyone who needs us." ■

“

*Dahlia really thought out of the box and it was such a great event.*

### No Escaping

#### Dalia's ingenuity

**D**ahlia Marks came up with an ingenious way of raising money for The Fed as part of her Bat Mitzvah celebrations – by holding a virtual escape room night with all proceeds being donated for our essential services.

Dahlia is a member of our 2021 Bar and Bat Mitzvah Programme. She welcomed friends and family, and programme co-ordinator,

Natasha Sarak, to her escape room in April.

A very impressed Natasha said, "Dahlia really thought out of the box, and it was such a great event – really well-thought out and a fantastic way to support The Fed!"

Following the event, Dahlia was presented with a glass trophy marking her efforts as a Fed Hero – there's no escaping that fact! ■



“  
*Every year is an emergency for us.*



# Fed stalwarts TOT UP 75 YRS!

**A** combined total of almost 75 years' of service was cause for celebration this summer, as two of our longest-standing members of staff celebrated remarkable milestones.

In May, our Chief Executive, Mark Cunningham, celebrated 25 years with The Fed, and the culmination of a journey that has seen him operate at every level of the organisation.

Starting as a social work student in May 1996, Mark rose through the ranks, being appointed Senior Social Worker, followed by Director of Community Services, and then Chief Operating Officer.

With Mark's predecessor, Karen Phillips, retiring in 2017, Mark took the reins of the charity on April 1 of that year.

"It might have seemed like an April fool's joke at first," said Mark, "but it has been a privilege to be

involved with this organisation for so long.

"I love my job, I love coming to work, and I love the people I work with. I really couldn't ask for more."

Former Fed Chairman, and recently appointed Honorary Patron, Mark Adlestone OBE DL, was full of praise for Mark:

"We knew from day one that Mark's appointment as Chief Executive was the right one. His guidance for many years – but particularly through the pandemic – has been a constant reassurance to our staff and clients, and stands out as a beacon of all The Fed is proud to represent.

The challenges over the last 12 months have required outstanding leadership, and we have been fortunate indeed to have Mark in position."

Fed Chairman, Bernie Yaffe, presented Mark with a certificate marking his quarter-century involvement with the organisation.

"Mark's twenty-five years of incredible service to The Fed has been matched only by his unstinting service to the wider

Jewish community during that time.

"Mark is the reason I can sleep easily at night as Chairman of The Fed. The incredible way he has led The Fed through the last 12 months prove beyond doubt he is the right man for the job."

For Brian Pomfret, former FMS (Facilities Managed Services) Manager, at Heathlands Village, this summer marked his retirement after a scarcely believable 49 years!

"My sister was working at Heathlands immediately after it opened its doors," Brian recalled. "She told me there were a few jobs available.

"I arrived for my interview with Matron Oddy, and the rest is history!"

Brian's long relationship with our organisation spans, in fact, six decades, from the early 70's, during which he has seen the Village undergo many significant changes.

"It was always a bustling place – even back then – but things were a bit different. A couple of the units were laid out like hospital wards with beds down the side, and there were more new faces more frequently, but people weren't with us as long.

"The organisation has evolved and grown stronger as the years have gone by – we've progressed and moved with the times.

"Beyond the routine, I'll miss my colleagues very much – some of whom have been part of my life for more than 30 years.

"Heathlands and The Fed provided me with a good livelihood and a roof over my head. I'd always wanted to travel across America – that was my dream – and between 1972 and 1996 I did that ten times – the final time on my honeymoon! That was all thanks to The Fed.

"You've got to work somewhere – why not work somewhere that makes you happy?" ■

“  
You've got to work  
somewhere – why not  
work somewhere that  
makes you happy?”

At any time, over 1,800 people of all ages benefit directly, and 3,600 indirectly, from The Fed's social care and community services - whether living at Heathlands Village or in their own homes - equivalent to 1 in 8 Jewish households across Greater Manchester.

Our 350+ social workers, support workers, case workers, nurses, social care workers, coordinators and behind-the-scenes staff, together with over 550 volunteers, provide care, advice and support through a range of projects and departments:

Carers' Support Services | Community Advice and Support Team (CAST) | Day Care | Dementia Care | Discharge to Assess Department (D2A) | Drop In Mental Health Services | End-of-life Care | Moorview Supported Independent Living | Mums 'n' Tots Sessions | My Voice Project | Nursing Care | Project Smile Play and Learn Service | The Purple Café (Community Café) | Residential Care | Volunteer Support Services | Walk 'n' Talk

**Together these make up one fantastic charity which is not replicated anywhere else in the UK.**

### *Our Benefactors*

donate £25,000 or more per annum

### *Our Gold Patrons*

donate £10,000 or more per annum

### *Our Silver Patrons*

donate £7,500 or more per annum

### *Our Bronze Patrons*

donate £5,000 or more per annum

### *Friends of The Fed*

donate £1,500 or more per annum



The Fed, Heathlands Village, Manchester M25 9SB | [info@thefed.org.uk](mailto:info@thefed.org.uk) | 0161 772 4800 | [www.thefed.org.uk](http://www.thefed.org.uk)  
Registered Charity Number: 1117126 | Written and designed by The Fed's Marketing and Communications Team.