

Staff and Volunteer NEWSLETTER


FEBRUARY 2021

**THE
FED**

Caring for our
Community

A protective ring around our village!

Well done, guys!
only 13% of staff
still to go!



As we go to print, and with the help of Dr Prabhakar and the Fairfax Practice team, we are delighted, and more than a little proud, to have vaccinated 87% of our staff against Covid-19!

Fed employees first began receiving their jabs in December, with more and more taking up the fantastic opportunity of an early first dose throughout January and February.

Karen Johnson, The Fed's Clinical Director, explains:

"A group of 15 staff were vaccinated on 15 December, and a further nine on the 16th.

This was made possible as one of the local surgeries had a few spare vaccines left at the end of the day which would otherwise have gone to waste. We sprang into action and had staff there within an hour of the call!

"I am so proud of all of our staff who have been vaccinated – especially those who initially didn't want to have the jab but changed their minds to safeguard their colleagues and our residents and tenants."

Turn to page 10 to hear what colleagues say about their initial concerns about having the vaccine and what changed their minds.

Message from Mark

WELCOME to our first Staff and Volunteer newsletter of 2021.

I've just re-read my message in our first issue of 2020. I was celebrating the fact that work had started on Willow Tree House, adding a further 11 vital rooms for people living with dementia; I was thanking Heathlands Village staff for keeping our residents safe and well through the challenges of the winter months; reflecting on a host of amazingly well-attended and successful fundraising events and pondering how we would afford a further hike in our wages bill with another increase in the National Living Wage (NLW).

Oh, how life has changed! Occupancy in Heathlands is 20% down. Does anyone know anybody who's had flu this year? I don't. Events aren't happening; our appeal dinner is cancelled (though we have a fantastic alternative in the making!!) and the impact of the rise in the NLW is the least of our financial problems.

But as I write, this morning's headlines report findings that the Oxford jab reduces the spread of Coronavirus, giving our hopes of freedom a massive boost. And I don't think it's unrealistic to expect more good news stories like this as we move through the month.

I WAS reading an article recently

about the 'survival of the kindest' which got me thinking. So much is outside of our personal control at the moment. We are tired of being at home; tired of not seeing our loved ones, or simply just *tired*. But what we still have within our power is the ability to be kind to each other - and to ourselves, which is often less easy...

There's a quote from the late Maya Angelou, an American poet and civil right activist. Even if you think you hate poetry you should read her stuff - it's incredible! This seems so relevant to where we are now:

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

THE LAST year has brought our values as an organisation - 'CREW' - even more sharply into focus. We are a crew - one that is above all Caring - and that shows Respect for the people we look after and one another; that delivers an Excellent service and that Works Together!

I think we've proved that over and over in the last 11 months - thank you! I can't say it enough times.

RIGHT NOW, we are planning our organisational strategy for the new financial year and every team will be getting together to discuss how their

plans will support our overall aims for 2021/22. We all need to prepare for change on a personal, work and communal level. It's likely we will be working, resting and playing differently in the future, which is exciting but a little unnerving too.

But let's remember that headline and remind ourselves that more good news will be on its way. The things we once took for granted will have a new lease of life - a summer BBQ with friends and family, sitting in the sun with a cold beer or a G and T! (What a wonderful thought!); visiting Gran and Grandad, kids' playdates and sleepovers ... The Central Café at Heathlands Village will be abuzz with lunchtime visitors. Our volunteers will be out and about taking people to Tesco and Brackman's. Children will be playing in the garden at the Children's Centre.

Hold on a little longer; keep yourself and others safe. Get vaccinated! We are so grateful to all staff who have already had their jab. That's what will bring back the lovely times we took so much for granted.



Housekeepers – Heathlands Hidden Heroes

If there's one positive thing that has come out of the pandemic it is that many, who'd never given much thought about the role of carers in hospitals and nursing homes, haven't been able to escape an awareness of their crucial role in caring for our loved ones in our absence, and tragically in some cases, even holding their hands as they take their last breaths.

But there's yet another band of hidden frontline heroes who, even in normal times - if you remember those - play a notable role in the lives of Heathlands Village's residents and Moorview tenants: our housekeeping staff!

During the pandemic their work has assumed greater importance than ever as they've been charged with helping to keep our care home virus-free with increased cleaning routines, especially of hot-spot surfaces such as door handles and lift buttons.

But a less obvious aspect of their job can easily be overlooked. 'Sandra', whose Mum 'Maisie' lives on Heathlands Village's Wolfson Unit, tells us:

"Mum has a really nice relationship with one of the housekeepers, Irene, who's been cleaning her room daily for coming up to two years. Mum has to spend a lot of time resting in her room and often doesn't feel up to going downstairs to see her friends or join in the activities.

"This has been especially hard during lockdown when my sisters and I haven't been able to see her in her room or take her down to the café for lunch.

"Mum told me she and Irene 'have fun together'. It dawned on me how Irene has become a significant person in mum's life - Mum looks forward to seeing her and having a chat and a laugh together. Clearly housekeepers do so much more than just tidying

and cleaning - they become friends too. They contribute to keeping people's spirits up and helping them feel less isolated."

Julie Dixon heads up a team working across our home's eight living areas.

"They are so much more than just housekeepers. They befriend residents; play music and sing and dance with them; encourage them to do a bit of cleaning to give them a sense of purpose; help them choose what to wear and with any hobbies like watering their plants."

Pat Slater is one of Julie's team and has worked at Heathlands Village for over 20 years, first on the care team and in recent years as a housekeeper on the first-floor residential household.

"I enjoy my job immensely and I love my residents. So far as I'm concerned, they could be my mum or dad, aunty or uncle and that's how I treat them.

"Sometimes I'll help them on with a jacket or cardy or if they're feeling peckish or thirsty, I'll pop down to the kitchen and get them what they want. It's important to me to make them really feel that this is their home.

"We're lucky because we have more time than the care staff to spend with our residents. As we're working, maybe changing the bed or sweeping the floor, we talk to people about their lives - they'll tell me about bringing up their children, what work they did and so on. Some of them have fantastic stories. I remember one man who was a tenant on Moorview telling me how he came over as a little boy in the war - it was unbelievable.

"I often dance and I sing when I'm working. One sweet man, who died very recently, would tell me, 'Don't let them stop you singing 'cos you cheer me up'".

LUCY'S UPDATE

Our Trusts, Foundations, and Bids Fundraiser, Lucy Edwards, has ensured that funding for various crucial Fed projects has continued to flow in throughout these challenging times.

With people's mental health of prime concern across the world at the moment, we are grateful to have received a grant of **£3,000** from **The Garfield Weston Foundation** towards the cost of our mental health support services. Although our in-person Drop In sessions are currently suspended, our community

teams are extremely busy, providing critical telephone and online video contact, helping to maintain the wellbeing of those we advise, care for and support.



The Hospital Saturday Fund have awarded The Fed a grant of **£2,000** toward providing specialist dementia training, which will be rolled out in the next few months.

The Yorkshire Building Society has awarded us **£1,000** towards

provision of new over-the-bed tables. These are fantastic for any resident who prefers, or needs, to have their meals or enjoy an activity or video call from the comfort of their bed.

The Percy Bilton Charity have given us a grant of over **£4,000** towards the cost of a mobile shower unit. This is a huge bonus for residents who are unfortunately unable to enjoy using the shower in their bathroom easily. We will literally take the shower to their bedside!



TEN TO TACKLE

- with Josh Thomas

A fairly new addition to The Fed, Josh's 12 months with us have seen The Fed – and the rest of the world – undergo some barely imaginable changes. Here, he talks us through how his duties have morphed into a unique, multifaceted, Covid-specific role.

1. What is your current position at The Fed?

Hospitality Supervisor.

2. How did your involvement with The Fed begin?

A chance encounter with a job advert for a temporary position in the catering department! I just about pipped someone else to the post, I think. I started on 17 Feb 2020, about 4 weeks before our first lockdown and the rest is history.

3. How has your role changed over the last 12 months and what are your main responsibilities now compared to before?

I still work in Catering and help with food supervision and operations on the households. However, I have now diversified into what I would still very much consider hospitality, but an entirely new role, as I handle the visitor booking telephone lines throughout the week, taking calls from relatives booking in their slots in our pods and window visiting areas.

I have had an input into improving the experience in the pods such as working with IT to improve the communications system. I'm also helping the household managers with the co-ordination and completion of the lateral flow testing for essential visitors to the home such as medical professionals, contractors and visitors to our end-of life residents.

4. What – if anything – did you know of The Fed before you joined?

The whole organisation was completely new to me. I only moved to Manchester a few months before taking the role.

5. Sports team?

There are many but will always be a Cardiff City FC fan deep down.



6. Favourite film or TV show?

Very tough one! Would be a very close one for top spot but it would have to be between Interstellar and the Wolf of Wall Street.

7. Favourite holiday destination (for the future!)

My favourite regular destination is rural France, near Limoges. My best mate has a farm out there in the middle of nowhere. Perfect escape!

8. What are your hobbies/what do you do in your spare time?

Seems like forever ago we were able to do anything social. I run a few times a week, I watch as much football as possible (great schedule at the moment). Pre-lockdown my girlfriend and I went bowling quite often and completed country walking routes.

9. Describe The Fed in less than 30 words

The Fed is as much a community as an organisation, full of great people to be around, helping and supporting those who need it most.

10. Why is The Fed important to you?

I am fairly new to The Fed as you know, but it is such a great organisation to be part of. The times we have all faced over the past 12 months have been testing in almost every way to everyone, but it shows a great organisation when everyone who is a part of it pulls together to help each other through and protect the community's most vulnerable.

Village Residents Receive Their Vaccines

In late December, our residents and tenants at Heathlands Village received their precious first vaccines against Covid-19.

Our huge thanks go to Dr Prabhakar and his team at Fairfax Group Practice for carrying out the many vaccines on site to keep us safe and for their hard work and assistance throughout the pandemic.



Lockdown can't spoil the Chanukah fun!

Despite all the restrictions on physical interaction and socialising, Chanukah at the Village was a roaring success! With the help of technology, the creativity and hard work of various staff teams and the 'up-for-anything' spirit of our residents and tenants, we enjoyed a vibrant, exciting and fun-filled eight days.

The festivities began with a lively Zoom link-up with Broughton Jewish Primary School. The programme, organised by BJPS's Rabbi Coleman – brother of our Activities team's Shoshi Black – arranged for classes from different school years to sing and dance in a Chanukah-themed musical production, and culminated in a joint menorah lighting by our children and villagers.

The day before Chanukah, we had been contacted by ITV News, asking to film our Chanukah celebrations for a news feature. We were happy to oblige and delighted to see our familiar home and its friendly faces featured on the television, on the evening of our Broughton Jewish link-up!

The days continued with Chanukah-themed parties, games and quizzes, with doughnut making (of course!) and a wonderful Zoom-led art session with ChavasArt.

Another wonderful highlight of the week was our Virtual Heathlands Choir – a five-minute, feel-good singalong, arranged and organised by our Activities team, together with our brilliant music therapist, David Robinson, from the charity Nordoff Robbins. It may not have totally compensated for missing our usual, standing-room-only Residents' Chanukah concert, but it brought much needed cheer to everyone who saw it, and spread the joy of the festival of lights far and wide from Heathlands Village.



THANK YOU

Tammi Wise and the Volunteering Team

We want to pass on our thanks to Customer Services for their tireless work in getting messages to the Volunteer Services Team.

They speak to such a huge variety of our clients and their family members; people who are anxious and stressed - all wanting immediate support. The team calmly pass on the messages to us to follow up. We thank them for their patience and understanding and are sure they are getting to know our clients almost as well as we do!

Ashlea Wyton

With Shift Leaders from First Floor Residential moving to new roles, I want to thank Shannon White who has stepped up to be Acting Shift Leader. She has just completed her first week in the job (at the time of writing) and is doing an absolutely amazing job!

To everyone else on the First Floor – you all do an amazing job, and especially during Covid, have gone above and beyond, dealing with sickness and people shielding, bank staff joining us and lots of other challenges. I am so pleased with every single one of you and it is a pleasure being your manager.

Alison Lightfoot

Thank you to all the staff who have been completing their e-learning in the absence of our usual classroom training. It's important we don't allow ourselves to fall

behind with this, particularly our mandatory training. Also, a thank you to Kelly Stanton who is helping everyone to keep on track with their training by sending out her regular 'reminders'.

Andrea Alinson

A huge, ongoing thanks to my Customer Services team who continue to take on additional tasks, expanding their roles across site and offering support wherever it's needed. In particular, I want to say thank you for covering extra shifts – sometimes at very short notice - to cover annual leave or staff needing to isolate.

Julie Dixon

I would like to just say a very personal thank you to all my staff in all three teams, who have worked so hard throughout this pandemic, going above and beyond more often than usual. It hasn't been easy but they have kept going when the going got tough. You are all so amazing and I am so proud to work alongside you. I have the best teams. Thank You! :)

A huge number of Thank You's from our Clinical Director, Karen Johnson

A HUGE THANK YOU to Charlotte Johnson and Molly Cunningham for all the work they put in to the swabbing process and the new LFTs, as well as for their fantastic instructional videos posted on workplace.

A HUGE THANK YOU to Marie, Mary,

Sue and Ashleigh for continuing to support the site in my absence.

A HUGE THANK YOU to all our Nursing team and carers who continue to work despite being emotionally and physically drained.

A HUGE THANK YOU to Sarah Holland for stepping out of her usual role and going to support the D2A services in Eventhall House.

A HUGE THANK YOU to our Activities team for continuing to keep the residents entertained during lockdown.

A HUGE THANK YOU to our customer services team for helping register all the monthly residents' and staff swabs.

A HUGE THANK YOU to Josh for stepping out of his normal role in catering and taking over the visiting work.

Sheila Heywood-Holt

Thanks to all the Maintenance team and Alan Jones for all their hard work with a swift makeover on EH1 and Oakwood you all did a great Job!

To the housekeeping staff, porters, laundry staff, catering staff, IT, the ops managers and supervisors that all go above and beyond, thank you for your hard work over the last few months its appreciated.

To the rest of the staff that work at The Fed you are all stars and doing an amazing job. Everyday we all have the ability to make a difference to someone's life. Keep making that difference.

Hello, Goodbye

We wish a fond farewell to our Clinical Manager, Sue Cleary, who is set to enjoy (a second!) well-deserved retirement, and Vicky Newbury from Housekeeping who has moved on to pastures new.

We are delighted to offer a warm welcome to Elfreda James, our new Nursing Unit Manager!

A fresh face on site, she joins us with more than 15 years' experience of working in care, nursing and social care. A Registered General Nurse, with knowledge of palliative and dementia care – to name just a few of her areas of expertise – she joined us as Nursing Unit Manager on 25 January and is currently being inducted on D2A.

Welcome, Elfreda! We look forward to meeting you, hopefully in the not too distant future!

Clinical Director, Karen Johnson gives her verdict on the enormous impact Sue Cleary has made on the organisation:

"Sue has been at The Fed for more than ten years and has been hugely instrumental in getting us to where we are today. She has been a fantastic Clinical Manager and a massive support to all her friends and colleagues.

Known as D.I. (Detective Inspector!) Cleary, due to some top-quality sleuthing a number of years ago, Sue is warm-hearted and so caring, with the great sense of humour you often need to work here!

She will be sorely missed by all of us but definitely never forgotten! You might see her around occasionally, giving people injections, as she has agreed to still

support us with vaccinations on site.

Sue, we all wish you a very happy and well-deserved retirement with lots of PJ days!"



Sue Cleary



Elfreda James

Long Service Awards

We wish congratulations and offer our real thanks to these colleagues who have reached some incredible Fed milestones!

Pat Slater – 20 years

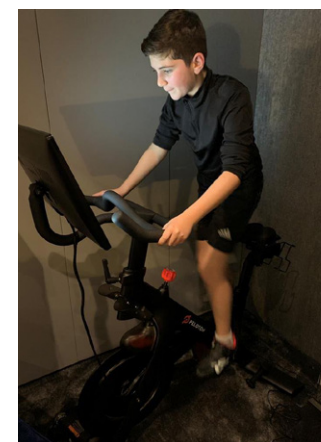
Sandra Manley – 20 years

Beverley Ratcliffe – 25 years

Fed Fundraising – with a difference

Our loyal supporters never cease to amaze us with their innovative Fed fundraising ideas and the last few months have been no different!

Despite the pandemic curtailing effectively all traditional fundraising events, we have enjoyed a spike in the number of challenges people have thought up as a way of supporting their favourite charity!



Two of our youngest Fed fundraising heroes, Ben Pinkus and Nadav Whelan - both of whom are taking part in our 2020 Bar and Bat Mitzvah Programme - came up with unique fundraising schemes over the winter: Ben pledged to cycle four miles every day in January and

Nadav committed to walking 5km every day for a month to raise money for The Fed.

At the time of going to print, Ben has raised more than £2,000, with Nadav closing in on £1,500. We are in awe!

Meanwhile our Fiona & The Two Heathers' Bridge Tournament – a Fed tradition going back more than a decade – made a swift transition to an online format, attracting more than 60 competitors and raising over £1,600 in the process. This will sponsor one of Heathlands Village's new visitor pods, majorly improving the quality of residents' visiting since these were recently resumed.



Further afield, our FedEx committee – a group of 'expat' young Mancunians living in London – held a successful 'Raffle at Home' in aid of The Fed. With close to 500 tickets bought, they raised a phenomenal £3,500!

CONGRATULATIONS

Huge congratulations to my nephew, **Noah Ros** in Hospitality and Customer Services, who has been accepted into Oxford University. He's worked so hard at Holy Cross so this is a wonderful achievement.
– Rebecca Ward

Congratulations and happy special birthday to **Robert Marks** – the big 3-0! - FR & Marketing Team!

Huge well done to **Natasha Sarak** for overcoming her fear of needles to have the Covid vaccine. We're all so proud of you! xx - Rochelle Broman

Congratulations to **Winnie Morgan** in Housekeeping on a special birthday – 70 years young! - Julie Dixon

Congratulations to **Nicolette and Eli** on the birth of baby Amber – a new baby for our Willow Team!
– Sonia Fahy



Staff Festive Lunch



Our Staff Festive Lunch looked quite different to other years, but we pulled out all the stops to ensure that a Covid-compliant, safe and delicious celebratory meal could be enjoyed! Thanks to our fantastic Catering team for producing a wonderful take-away festive lunch!



THE FED Staff Awards

In recognition of hard work and efforts above and beyond the call of duty, Employee of the Month awards for September to December were presented to:

Alesha Field-Johnston, Customer Services; Sunday Adeoye, Night Staff D2A; Kayleigh Jefferies, Willow Tree House; Darren Hawkins, FMS



Look out for new digital nominations on Facebook Workplace, live for one week each month. Responses can be given privately - no one will see your answers. The nomination invitation will be sent by direct message to all staff members - let us know who you think should receive the award!

Volunteers reading this should remember that they too can vote by emailing robert.marks@thefed.org.uk explaining why you are nominating a particular member of staff.

Lunch is not a Luxury!

When The Fed launched the communal campaign with the Herschel Weiss Centre to provide school meal vouchers for some of the neediest families in the community, we could not have imagined the overwhelming response it would be met with.

Picking up the baton from Marcus Rashford but focusing closer to home, our goal of raising £20,000 was met in under 48 hours! The generosity of our community knows no bounds!

Working together with local schools and social support organisations, almost £25,000 of Tesco vouchers were distributed to 423 children and their families across the community, ensuring they would not go hungry over the winter holidays.

In addition, a special menu guide was created by The Fed's Marketing team, listing five affordable, healthy two-course kosher meals to feed four people for under £20. These were delivered to each family who received the vouchers.

Feedback from families was very emotional, for example

"I've not been able to let my children choose in many months. Choice is something many take for granted. These vouchers allowed me to give them choice."

"My girls were utterly thrilled. Thank you so much. Since my husband left, we haven't been able to buy Shabbos Fruit. This week we are going to be able to get some grapes and maybe even a melon too!!"



It's Fedruary which means it's nearly FED FRIDAY

Each year, February is time for our Fed Friday event which brings in critical income to support our crucial work supporting people of all ages across the community.

This year, with it being impossible to host guests at home, we had to get our thinking caps on to create a 2021 Covid-compliant Fed Friday.

Normally we would ask our supporters to invite people for Friday night dinner and ask guests to 'Ditch the gift and donate to The Fed instead!' This time around, we are asking partner households to donate to our Fed Friday campaign and sponsor Fed Friday Shabbat packs for 500+ community services clients, at £25 per pack. The money raised will also support the work of our Community Services teams.

To raise awareness of our community

services in the run up to Fed Friday we have upped our social media game! The second month of the year has been re-named 'Fedruary'!

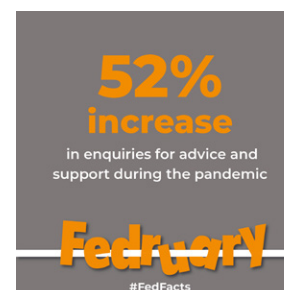
Each day during Fedruary we're posting a striking Fed Fact, highlighting the breadth and crucial nature of our work.

We've also created a Fedruary Facebook profile frame to add to your own profile picture! We're turning Facebook 'Fed' orange!

For more information on this year's Fed Friday, visit thefed.org.uk/event/fedfriday21/

To add the Fedruary frame to your profile:

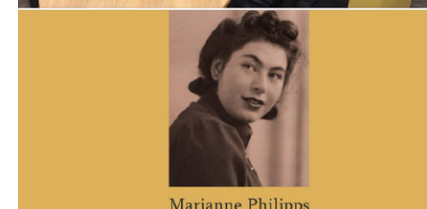
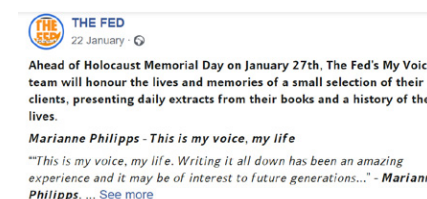
1. Click edit on your profile pic
2. Choose 'Add a frame'
3. Search 'Fedruary' in the search box, and away you go!



HMD

In the week preceding Holocaust Memorial Day, The Fed highlighted the critical importance and poignancy of its 'My Voice' project, by presenting snapshots of some of the life-stories produced by the project with brief histories of a number of its story-tellers.

Seven survivor profiles were chosen to represent the enormous variety of stories recorded in the project. Extracts from the books can be viewed on our Facebook page.



Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway!

With all the rumours and uncertainty swirling around online, in print and in conversations between friends, it's no wonder that some people found the prospect of receiving a Covid-19 vaccine daunting.

Fortunately, mountains of science backs up the case that the vaccines are very safe, and an essential weapon in, not only, fighting Covid-19 away from our doors, but banishing it forever!

For some staff members at The Fed, it has been a personal battle which they wanted to share here.

"I have a phobia of injections and was worried about possible long-term side-effects," said Natasha Sarak, from the Fundraising department.

"I knew it had to be done to protect myself and lower the risk for everyone around me."

"The bottom line though is that any possible risk presented by the vaccine is massively outweighed by the benefits it provides – a protection against Covid-19. I know too many people who have passed away or been seriously ill due to this terrible disease, and I wasn't going to let my personal problems get in the way of doing my bit."

That sense of wanting to 'do my bit' – standing together as a team – is a theme that has been highlighted through the pandemic, and never more than now, with the glimmer of hope on the horizon.

"I knew it had to be done to protect myself and lower the risk for everyone around me," Natasha continued.

"I would also do absolutely anything in the hope that I can see my grandpa again soon and give him a hug."

"The support from my colleagues was a huge factor. I simply couldn't have it done on my own and so waited until someone could come with me. That helped massively."

"I cried for weeks before. If I can do it, anyone can!"

For Chrisden Williams, our D2A Team Leader, the anxiety was less about personal safety and more knowledge-based.

"I knew from the beginning I only wanted the Oxford vaccine. I have been following Professor Sarah Gilbert – the lady who in large part designed the vaccine itself – and her team throughout the pandemic, and I put my trust in what they were doing."

"Ultimately, I would tell anyone who is worried about it that any flu-like symptoms that you might get from the injection, such as headaches and aches and pains, all pass in a few days and are a small price to pay in the long run. I am someone who has never even had a flu jab in the past. This was my first year. I had no symptoms afterwards at all, aside from a slightly tender arm for a couple of days."

"My driving force in getting the jab was knowing how crucial it is – this year more than any year in our history – to do everything we can to protect our residents, ourselves, our elderly or ill relatives, and our friends."

"Whilst we know that you could still catch the virus after having received the vaccine, the evidence suggests that symptoms are much more mild, meaning you have a much stronger chance of battling the disease and avoiding anything worse. We have seen first-hand what this virus can do and it's something I don't want to see again – none of us do. Do your bit!"

For others, the notion of the vaccine was a welcome one from the very beginning, with some staff members encouraging everyone to book an appointment as soon as they could.

"My support for the vaccine was formulaic," said Ian Johnson, RGN and Unit Manager on our Oakwood household.

"If everyone in the world had the vaccine, the virus would be much more likely to go away. If Covid-19 is on one side of a seesaw and the rest of us are on the other, one by one we could get the sides balanced out... and ultimately, we'd win."

"In all honesty I was a little afraid before having my injection, but once I'd had it done, I realised there was nothing to it and felt fine. I hoped my encouragement would ease others into getting theirs."

"I'm over the moon that 87% of our staff have now had their injection – it's exactly the kind of 'esprit de corps' I love about this great organisation!"

Karen Johnson, Clinical Director, was effusive in her praise for the support The Fed has received from the Fairfax Group Practice in Prestwich:

"We have had such a positive experience with the practice. They were absolutely wonderful with getting our residents vaccinated, coming back on repeat visits for a few more residents and staff too. And lots of staff visited the pharmacy to receive their injections. It has been a superb operation."

"We have seen first-hand what this virus can do and it's something I don't want to see again – none of us do."

"It is so vital that our staff – and in all care homes across the country – have the vaccination. It helps protect those we care for who are so vulnerable, and each other."

"Each of us has to do our bit to get the country back to some semblance of normality."

The message is clear: Do. Your. Bit.

TEN TO TACKLE

- with Susan Matus

The role of our volunteers has been turned on its head due to Covid. From pausing regular volunteering activities to taking up new responsibilities altogether, our service provision in the community has been bolstered by our wonderful army of volunteers. Here, 'Ten to Tackle' hears from one such dedicated individual - Susan Matus - on how the pandemic has affected her role with The Fed.

1. What is your current position at The Fed?

A volunteer

2. How did your involvement as a volunteer with The Fed begin?

When I retired, I wanted to do some volunteer work - and what better organisation is there to volunteer with?

3. Prior to Covid-19, what were your main volunteering roles and responsibilities?

I was involved with organising the monthly Thursday Coffee Stop at Maccabi. I phoned all the clients to invite them which was a really nice full day's job speaking to more than 50 clients. What is lovely is that even if they could not attend the Coffee Stop it gave them a nice friendly call from The Fed. On the day of the Coffee Stop, I helped with the afternoon tea - but more importantly got to chat with many of the clients. This would sometimes highlight problems that they were struggling with in day to day to life, information I could then pass back to the Volunteer Services team. Through this simple act of friendship and conversation, we could make a difference to Fed clients.

4. With the onset of the pandemic, we know that many of our volunteers saw their work with The Fed come to a halt. How was your volunteering impacted, and what are your duties now?

Well... no more Coffee Stops! I was given a list of 17 Clients who I now phone every Monday. This call is firstly to see if they need a volunteer to go shopping for them that week, but also means that those 17 Clients are getting a weekly call – in some



cases the only call they may receive. I have forged a wonderful relationship with my clients over the last year - they now all recognise my voice and are expecting my call. As many of these people have not been out of their homes for 12 months this call has been vital. I send a full report back to the Volunteer Services team who then deal so brilliantly with any problems.

5. Before becoming a volunteer, what did you know of The Fed and Heathlands Village?

My mother lived in Eventhall House for many years, and so my relationship with the organisation goes back many years.

6. Favourite film or TV show?

Strictly Come Dancing

7. Favourite holiday destination (for the future!)

Mallorca – hopefully in July where we plan to have our daughters wedding - only one year later than planned!

8. What are your hobbies/what do you do in your spare time?

Pilates, Walking, Bridge.

9. Describe The Fed in less than 30 words

I don't need 30 words. Two will do – **A LIFELINE!**

10. Why is The Fed important to you?

As all volunteers know, we get so much out of volunteering ourselves. It is definitely a two-way process. We receive ourselves, and we make a difference to so many lives.

Parliamentary Vote for The Fed!

The Fed received an incredible vote of confidence recently, from nowhere other than the House of Commons during Prime Minister's Questions. During the session on 27 January, Christian Wakeford MP paid tribute to the army of volunteers who have played their part in the fight against Covid, highlighting The Fed for "... doing so much to protect the vulnerable and the needy in Prestwich" - adding that he had "nothing but admiration" for the volunteers and their organisations.

In response, the Prime Minister paid his own tribute, commenting that our volunteers have been part of "... a huge constellation of shining points of light across our country."

This was followed by a glowing endorsement of The Fed's work from Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, who took time during his talk at Manchester Limmud in February to highlight The Fed as "... a model of how all communities should organise."

Remembering his visit to Heathlands Village in 2018, Mr Burnham commented that "... we have to organise ourselves as best we can to create solutions - and The Fed feels to me to be an absolutely beautiful example of that: a community of identity, a place of safety, done as a partnership between community and government - both local and national.

It's a wonderful example to all."



Mark Adlestone appointed Honorary Patron

Mark Adlestone OBE DL, long-time supporter and former Chairman of The Fed, has been appointed an Honorary Patron alongside the Chief Rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, and Lady Beryl Steinberg, stepping down from his more-than decade-long role as a Trustee.

"We owe Mark an incalculable debt of gratitude for his many years of service to The Fed, from his early days as a mentor to my predecessor, Karen Phillips; through his appointment as Chairman in 2008 of the 'old' Fed; seeing us through the merger of that organisation in 2009 with Heathlands Village, and subsequent appointment as Chairman of The Fed, as we know it today, that same year," said CEO Mark Cunningham.

"Mark's contribution to The Fed, and by extension, to the welfare of so many people in need in the Manchester Jewish community has been invaluable."

Commenting on his new appointment, Mark said, "The Fed has been a central part of my life for more than a decade, primarily as Chair and latterly as a trustee. Now becoming an Honorary Patron allows me to continue my association with this wonderful

organisation and I am excited and honoured to take up my new role.

"I look forward to continuing to play an intrinsic role in supporting The Fed's work alongside my wonderful fellow Honorary Patrons, the Chief Rabbi and Lady Steinberg."



L to R Mark Cunningham, our CEO, Jane Black (then Mayor of Bury) and Mark Adlestone at the 2018 opening of Beach House

Daydreaming of the future

Throughout the challenges of the last year, it has been the small things that have kept people going, such as a picture, a quick message from a friend, or even a poem. Dave Hesk, acting Team Leader for Housekeeping Services, sent this short piece from A.S.J. Tessimond to us to share with everyone.

"It's my favourite poem," Dave said. "The last two lines are very apt for the times we live in, and for when Covid is finally over."

Day Dream by A.S.J. Tessimond

*One day people will touch and talk perhaps easily,
And loving be natural as breathing and warm as
sunlight,
And people will untie themselves, as string is
unknotted,
Unfold and yawn and stretch and spread their
fingers,
Unfurl, uncurl like seaweed returned to the sea,
And work will be simple and swift as a seagull flying,
And play will be casual and quiet as a seagull
settling,
And the clocks will stop, and no one will wonder or
care or notice,
And people will smile without reason,
Even in winter, even in the rain.*

"See how happy your gift made her!"

– a touching tribute to our Volunteers

The Fed delivered many hundreds of Chanukah support packages in December - including some to Jewish people living in non-Jewish care homes across the region.

We delivered a package to one lady and later received a gorgeous thank you message from her daughter, who lives abroad, which she has given us permission to reproduce here.

"Once again, I am overwhelmingly grateful to The Fed for remembering my mum at this time of year.

I am forwarding you a photo that the staff at the care home took of her so that you can see how happy your gift made her. In fact, they publicly thanked The Fed via their Facebook page for your act of kindness. (I know they lit all the candles at once - but it does look prettier that way!)

My best wishes to you all for a Happy Chanukah and let's hope that next year we will all be able to physically celebrate together again.

Keep safe and well."

Warmest wishes."

