

The Messenger

Update from the British Muslim Heritage Centre

August to December 2022 Edition



BRITISH MUSLIM HERITAGE



Introduction

Welcome to our August to December 2022 edition of The Messenger which provides an update on the work of the British Muslim Heritage Centre (BMHC) for our stakeholders, friends of the centre, strategic partners, service users, and our diverse communities.

In this edition of the Messenger, we will update you on existing and new initiatives which the BMHC has embarked upon in partnership with its stakeholders. We take this opportunity to thank you all for the support you have given to us during these unprecedented times.

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*Nasar Mahmood OBE
Chair*



*Maqsood Ahmad OBE
Chief Executive Officer*



*Saima Alvi
Vice-chair*

First Aid Training for Staff

As part of our staff and volunteers' development, we organised a First Aid Training on Wednesday 24 August 2022. We were joined by some of our partner's staff. The aim of the training day was to ensure that our staff and volunteers can help any of our users. The training covered several areas including:

- The role of the First Aider
- Emergency Life-Saving Procedures
- Blood loss and wounds
- Trauma and medical emergencies.
- Spinal Injuries
- Diabetes
- Heart attack and stroke

Participants had the opportunity to be involved through interactive and practical exercises on Resuscitation (CPR) focusing on Danger, Response, Airway Breathing and Circulation (DR ABC). This also included the use of Defibrillators which we have two at the BMHC. The session also covered:

Maintaining hygiene during resuscitation for known and suspected Covid-19 infections, recovery positions, seizures, choking, dealing with blood loss, shock, practicing wound packing and even insect bites.

The training also provided a good opportunity to compare our guidelines and policies including accident recording so to improve our health and safety.



Kate Green MP

As part of our building relationships with decision makers, it was a pleasure to host Kate Green OBE, MP at the BMHC on Friday 2nd September 2022. Kate is the Labour Party Member of Parliament for Stretford and Urmston.

Kate met with Maqsood Ahmad OBE (Chief Executive Officer), Elinor Chohan, (BMHC Trustee) and Mr Nasar Mahmood OBE (Chairman) as well as other staff at the BMHC. Kate was given a tour of the House of Wisdom (HoW) and the Stories of Sacrifice (SoS) exhibition. Maqsood spoke comprehensively about BMHC's community projects including the youth leadership programme, which provides leadership training for young people aged 16 to 25 from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Kate Green MP said, *"the programmes offered by the BMHC not only benefit the participants, by encouraging self-awareness and expression, they also have far reaching benefits for the wider community"*.

Maqsood Ahmad stated that all BMHC programmes, including the youth leadership programme, empower participants to develop productive ways of addressing issues they will ultimately face in British Society. The youth leadership programme equips them with the skills, enthusiasm, and courage needed to be the voice of their communities. As future community leaders, these young British Muslims will make an invaluable contribution to society. Maqsood and Kate also discussed the establishment of a European wide Network bringing together vulnerable communities to share good practices in promoting a better understanding within Europe.

Kate ended her visit by briefly joining Afzal Khan CBE, MP and Cllr. Naeem -Ul-Hassan in the boardroom to discuss various community issues including the devastating floods in Pakistan.



Strengthening relationship with Manchester Museum

On Monday 3rd September 2022, Dr Esme Ward, Director of the Manchester Museum, visited the British Muslim Heritage Centre where she was joined by her two colleagues, namely Professor Nalin Thakkar and Ms Nusrat Ahmed. The meeting provided an opportunity for Nasar Mahmood OBE (Chairman), Dr Hamid Al-Majid (Co-Chairman) and Maqsood Ahmad OBE (Chief Executive Officer) to bring Esme and her colleagues up to date with the progress of our programmes including their long-term vision. All the guests from the Manchester Museum were given a tour of the House of Wisdom (HoW) and the Stories of Sacrifice (SoS) exhibition.

Esme outlined that her role as Director of the Manchester Museum was one of the most interesting, challenging, and rewarding jobs that anyone in society could wish for. The duties of the Director included selecting artefacts (e.g. paintings) for the collection and managing their arrangement, description and conservation. Esme is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Museum, for the safe-keeping and enhancement of the collections, and for taking the lead on strategic decisions. Esme has responsibility for the overall organisation, management, and staffing of the Museum and its procedures.

Esme explained that she and her team have an opportunity to make a difference in Manchester's diverse community and the lives of the people who live across Greater Manchester and beyond. Esme explained her mission was to support the educational, recreational, and informational needs of the community. Providing a large number of services to meet the needs of a diverse population requires a dedicated team, members of whom must know their responsibilities and carry out their particular tasks diligently and sensitively. A very constructive discussion took place on how the two organisations can work together through a formal Memorandum of Understanding.



Annual General Meeting

The BMHC Trustees held their AGM meeting on Saturday 03rd September 2022.

Nasar Mahmood OBE, (the chairman) welcomed all attending board members, patrons and guests. He then updated the board on the efforts made so far to submit the planning permission for the new build project and gave a detailed update about all the background work done with the design team. **Maqsood Ahmad OBE**, Chief Executive highlighted the fact that despite the challenges and demands of the past two years the BMHC have managed to carry out all the work needed and has thrived to make great progress. The CEO then outlined the BMHC's Community Programmes which benefited all vulnerable communities Muslims and non-Muslims. This included the partnership projects such as tackling diabetes, supporting communities including young people through Covid-19, the inclusion project in Tameside and stroke prevention.

He also emphasised the BMHC efforts in the field of Influencing Policies through various projects and programs via engagement with decision makers such as the Local Authorities, NHS, Greater Manchester Police Service and other public institutions such as the Universities. He has also mentioned the important improvements and changes made to various committee structures.

Mohammed Umar Saleem presented the Education & related activities reports. He highlighted the fact that the Boys Youth Club was about to be stopped due to the lack of staff/volunteers but thankfully a local business made a commitment to pay for 2 dedicated workers and provide food too. GCSE religious studies went very well, and the results are excellent. **The vice chair Mrs Saima Alvi** (Chair of the Policy and HR committee) presented her report highlighting the main areas of work including staff structure, grievances, policies, redundancies and attendance reports. A new HR company has now been contracted.

Mr Farroukh Zaheer on behalf of Elinor Chohan highlighted the importance of the safeguarding policy. He informed everyone that BMHC staff had been trained in health & safety as well as first aid at work. He then presented the Treasurer's report which included the accounts for the last financial year. He confirmed that the Centre's expenditure is now fully covered by its income.



Improving Maternity Services

As part of our work with the Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire (GMEC), the Black Asian Maternity Advisory Group BAMAG organised an event to showcase the work that Black and Asian led VSCE organisations contributed toward improving maternity services and outcomes for BAME women. Special Guests included Sharmila Kar, Director of Workforce, OD & Inclusion, Dr Alison McGovern, Maternity and Children Lead, Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent OBE, chief Midwifery Officer in England and Dr Gloria Rowland, Chief Nurse of Southwest London Integrated Care Board.

Halima from the BMHC delivered a short presentation on the work which the BMHC was commissioned to undertake. She began with where the journey began with three focus groups with Muslim women and families (Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Middle Eastern) who have used maternity services in Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire within the last 3 years. The outcomes of the discussions helped the GMEC to create a Maternity Standards document. Halima then went through the resources co-produced to raise awareness of maternity services and cultural considerations for both maternity professionals and users. These included:

- Video Clips on the benefits of the Covid 19 Vaccination by Dr Yaara Mohammad in Arabic and English; the role of the Midwife by Beenash Nazmeen; call the midwife by Sundus Khalid and Healthy Mum Healthy Baby by Dr Naseem Zaidi in English and Urdu.
- Infographics include a Covid 19 vaccination flyer; a Pregnancy and Childbirth Myths and Facts flyer; a leaflet on Islam and Mental Wellbeing During Pregnancy and After Birth and a flyer on how to contact the Midwife and the importance. All flyers and leaflets will be translated into three languages.
- Video podcast with the Midwives Sundus and Beenash on Maternity Matters. The video podcast can be used as a video resource for our YouTube Channel and played on the radio as a radio podcast. This covers the role of the midwife, a career as a midwife, life during pregnancy, mental health, a healthy lifestyle, and dad's involvement. In addition, we did a live show on Radio Podcast: Well Sisters with Dr Ipshita. This covered mental health and well-being in pregnancy and a Webinar – Maternity matters with Dr Elinor Swift, Beenash Nazmeen and Nafisah Anwar chaired by the vice-chair Saima Alvi



Queen Elizabeth II

The Board of Trustees and staff of the British Muslim Heritage Centre were saddened by the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

HM Queen Elizabeth's life was one of dedication and public service. She made history as the first British Monarch to visit a Mosque in the UK.

For more than 70 years, the Queen has provided leadership, guidance and inspiration to many people in the UK.

Through great periods of change and upheaval, she has provided a steadying hand and leaves a legacy of dignity and integrity from which many have drawn great inspiration.

The British Muslim Heritage Centre extend its deepest sympathy and condolences to HRH King Charles III and all members of the Royal Family.

A book of condolences was made available at BMHC for those who wished to share their experience and thoughts with others.



Tackling Health Inequalities: Mental Health Training Sessions

The British Muslim Heritage Centre (BMHC) hosted and delivered a number of training sessions of The Mental Health First Aid Training course. So far it has benefitted 200 men and women, and was facilitated by our Chief Executive, Maqsood Ahmad. This training introduced the risk factors and warning signs of mental illnesses. The course helped to build an understanding of the impact of mental illness, and provided an overview of common support mechanisms.

The course was a 2.5-hour face-to-face session, led by Mr Maqsood Ahmad OBE, a qualified instructor. He spoke about how to offer initial help in a mental health crisis and connect people to the appropriate professional, peer, social and self-help care services. The training programme also included information on the common risk factors and warning signs of specific types of illnesses, like anxiety, depression, substance use, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. Participants were trained on how to support someone developing signs and symptoms of a mental illness or in an emotional crisis.

The Mental Health First Aid course prepared participants to interact with a person in crisis and informed them where to signpost when help is needed. First Aiders were informed that they do not take on the role of professionals nor do they diagnose or provide any counselling or therapy. Instead, participants were offered concrete tools and answers to key questions, like “what do I do?” and “where can someone find help?”



Muslim Medical and Allied Professionals Network

On Saturday 24th September 2022, the third meeting of the Muslim Medical and Allied Professionals Network (M-MAP-N) focused on areas in health and care that have long shown ethnic inequalities in access, experience or outcomes. Dr Amir Hannan MBE, Chair of the MMAPN, welcomed the speakers:

Dr Naresh Kanumilli and Sarah Whitehead (Novo Nordisk), spoke on tackling diabetes and how clinicians and other health professionals need to work together to reshape policy and engagement so that they support fair health and care for all. Maqsood Ahmad outlined the importance of grass root community engagement as part of the work in partnership with Dr Naresh and Sarah Whitehead.

Dr Rao, supported by Shahid Javeed and Melissa Addison gave a presentation on the symptoms of cow milk protein allergy which can involve the skin, respiratory system, gut, and circulation. The symptoms of lactose intolerance affect the gut with a stomach-ache, bloating, and diarrhoea. Cow milk allergy is common in infants and young children, usually developing before six months of age.

Dr Tariq Chauhan emphasised that the M-MAP-N was established to support the delivery of excellent healthcare and health improvement to the patients and public of England & Wales by ensuring that the workforce of today and tomorrow has the right numbers, skills, values and behaviours, at the right time and in the right place.

The Rt. Hon. Afzal Khan CBE, MP gave out Appreciation Awards to Dr Fassah Bibi, Dr Aamna Khan, Dr Mohammed Sattar, Dr Javed Bashir, Dr Somaira Wasty, Dr Abid Samy GP, Najma Khalid MBE, Mr Sarfraz Shafqat, and Aamna Choudry. The cumulative summary of the seminar was that Islamophobia, racism, racial discrimination are barriers to accessing healthcare and have led to huge health inequalities for Muslims and Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people in UK.





- Dr. Fassaah Bibi**
- Founder and CEO at Mustafia Sharif Charity International and Chairperson of Mustafia Jaan-e-Rehmat.
 - Dr Fassaah has been providing services for about 14 years on multidimensional grounds at national and international level.
 - The main focus of her services has been remained on education, food and clean water provision, construction of Mosques, women empowerment, fight against domestic violence, eradication of poverty, health facilities, climate evangelism and its impacts and to transform the trends of racism at large.
 - Her services through various platforms have helped over thousands of individuals and families in fulfilling their needs. She has remained consistent in providing assistance and support to deprived classes across 16 countries, at large.
 - The diversified experience in various fields has helped her to initiate projects that are the need of the time.



Dr. Amna Khan

Medical Director & Executive Board Director BARDOC

Dr. Amna Khan was born in Oxford then moved up North aged 10 Studied Medicine at the University of Birmingham, following which she has worked across Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire.

Career in healthcare management has gone from strength to strength after joining BARDOC as a Clinical Lead in 2018, and earlier this year BARDOC. Recent accomplishments include:

1. Playing an active role in leading BARDOC's response to the pandemic across Greater Manchester.
2. Running the Greater Manchester Excess Death Certification Service Representing BARDOC and actively participating in the Afghan refugee airlift operation last year.
3. Supporting the medical training of Junior Doctors in the Pennine area Since July 2021.
5. Just last week, was appointed Clinical Lecturer at Manchester Medical School



Amna Choudry

- Amna has an extensive careers spanning over 2 decades in Psychology, Forensic psychology, mental health and psychological therapies.
- She has worked in prisons, secure units, magistrates and crown courts with place, probation, and various teams.
- Been a mental health commissioner where she managed the needs identified in the PCT's commissioning strategy.
- Wellbeing Lead for her service, offer peer support and new starter support, set up a Peri menopause / menopause support group for staff.
- She has worked in several schools and offered psychological support to staff and students spanning over a decade.
- Currently, she is training in Psychosexual Therapy in order to offer a sensitive therapy to diverse communities.
- She and her family have set up and successfully run their own charity, Mushtaq Welfare Trust, to offer a fully funded and free education to orphans and underprivileged girls in Khanewal, Pakistan.
- She is a previous recipient of the Aisha Uth award for outstanding work in research.



Dr Naseer Ahmad

Vascular Surgeon and Director of AAAS.

Naseer qualified in 2002 from Liverpool and undertook his Clinical and Academic training in Liverpool. At present he specialises in limb preservation surgery and co-chairs the Lower Limb Preservation Team that has received major accolades by the Royal Society.

His Clinics are in Salford Royal Infirmary where he receives patients from across the North of England. His award winning research is limb preservation and he, for the first time, described regional, gender and ethnic inequalities in limb loss.

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Mr. Sarfraz Shafqat

Clinical Pharmacist, NHS PCN Lead for North Manchester

A senior executive with 10+ years of proven track record of delivering exceptional results within the Healthcare Sector.

Respected for a collaborative approach and has developed high performing teams.

Delivered large transformational change across a multi-site healthcare and retail environments, leading change effectively and delivering results ahead of the market.

Managing Director of Wellfield Healthcare Ltd he has applied leadership approaches that ensure successful service delivery in our pharmacies and health centres with the focus patients.

Due to his leadership and the team he developed with his colleagues, Wellfield Healthcare Ltd is in the top 5 companies nationally providing the Covid-19 Vaccination Programme, delivering over 15,000 vaccines per week at our sites during the peak of the pandemic.



Urging the Home Secretary to investigate the tension in Leicester

We wrote to the Home Secretary to express our deep concern and sadness about the tensions between Hindus and Muslims on Green Lane Road in Leicester. Muslim and Hindu communities have lived side by side in East Leicester as friends, colleagues and business partners for decades and that is why we have been concerned about reports of violent assaults, including religious symbols being attacked and antisocial behaviour directed at both mosques and temples in recent weeks, with growing anger fueled by social media speculation.

These serious tensions required immediate action from the Home Secretary, the Chief Constable of Leicestershire and other Chief Constables across the country to avoid the conflict spreading to other regions such as Greater Manchester.

We urged the Home Secretary to investigate the disturbances and ensure that those who initiated the tension are dealt with appropriately within the law. Meanwhile, we continue to promote good relations between Hindus, Muslims and other faith groups in Greater Manchester and beyond.

Sadly, in the same week, we had racist emails to BMHC, and racist graffiti also appeared within Greater Manchester on houses and religious institutions. We advised all faith groups to be vigilant and take additional security steps to safeguard their users and those who go for prayers in their religious institutions.



Greater Manchester Genes Project

On Saturday 1st October 2022, the British Muslim Heritage Centre (BMHC) hosted a seminar to encourage Greater Manchester (GM) residents to take part in a major genetics study designed to improve health outcomes for people from Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds. People from South Asian communities have historically been under-represented in the large genetic data sets used by scientists, doctors, and policy makers to guide decisions about healthcare. The Seminar addressed the issue of recruiting volunteers from British Pakistani and British Bangladeshi heritage.

The study is being delivered across GM by Professor Bill Newman and his team at the NHS North West Genome Medicine Service Alliance. At present, the study is recruiting only adult volunteers from across GM who regard themselves to be of Bangladeshi, British-Bangladeshi, Pakistani or British-Pakistani origin from parts of the UK and other countries.

“We know that, unfortunately, South Asian people have some of the highest rates of heart disease, diabetes, and poor health in Greater Manchester and across the UK. Genes & Health is a study that is making real progress in reducing these health inequalities and providing a very accessible way for people to be part of research that can benefit so many people.” Professor Bill Newman, Consultant in Clinical Genetics.



Strengthening links with the Greater Manchester Chambers of Commerce

On Tuesday 4th October 2022, Mr Clive Memmott OBE was the chief guest at a meeting entitled, *'British Muslims Investing in the City of Manchester'*. The meeting had two objectives: To raise awareness on the issues surrounding Muslim entrepreneurship across Greater Manchester. How the GM Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the British Muslim Heritage Centre, can help to empower Muslim entrepreneurs with role models and resolve any challenges related to their businesses through the possibility of establishing a Muslim Network.

It was noted that British Muslims account for nearly a third of entrepreneurs in Greater Manchester; but they continue to face persistent barriers to launching and growing their businesses, including a lack of access to financing, information and support services as well as discriminatory socio-cultural norms. British Muslims face prejudices; but, in order to be successful entrepreneurs, they must also conquer barriers that prevent their full participation in the economy and society.

Discussions included GMCC and the BMHC exploring the possibility of forming a network that will meet with local entrepreneurs and invite them to join practical, hands-on business workshops held within an empowerment framework.

The meeting helped to raise awareness of the situation of Muslim entrepreneurs, deconstructing stereotypes and how to amplify their voices. The success of Muslim entrepreneurs is a testimony of their role as job creators in a region which has historically been plagued by unemployment and degradation.





Strengthening links with North-West Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

The British Muslim Heritage Centre held a session with the Chief Crown prosecutor, Martin Goldman and his team on Wednesday 19 October 2022. Maqsood Ahmad, Chief Executive of the BMHC introduced Martin and his team, and he thanked them for taking the time out to come and meet the Muslim community. He also welcomed everyone and went through the aims of the session:

1. to increase participant's awareness of the work, role and responsibilities of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).
2. to increase the awareness of CPS staff of the challenges facing the Muslim Community.
3. how both CPS and the Muslim community can support each other through exploring a joint partnership initiative.

Maqsood also took the opportunity to present the work of the BMHC including its mainstream programmes focusing on tackling inequality in society and particularly within public bodies that make up the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

Martin Goldman, Chief Crown Prosecutor (NW) The Crown Prosecution Service

Martin Goldman expressed his delight at the high turnout and praised the good work of the BMHC. He went onto describe the CPS as a vital part of the CJS and one which is constantly striving to be an equal opportunities employer.



Martin Goldman explained that the CPS prosecutes criminal cases that have been investigated by the police and other investigative organisations in England and Wales. He said that the CPS is independent, and makes decisions independently of the police and government. The duty of the CPS is to make sure that the right person is prosecuted for the right offence, and to bring offenders to justice wherever possible. The CPS:

- decides which cases should be prosecuted;
- determines the appropriate charges in more serious or complex cases, and advises the police during the early stages of investigations;
- prepares cases and presents them at court; and
- provides information, assistance and support to victims and prosecution witnesses.

Martin Goldman emphasised that CPS lawyers must follow the Code for Crown Prosecutors who must be fair, objective and independent when deciding whether to prosecute a criminal case. This means that to charge someone with a criminal offence, prosecutors must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction, and that prosecuting is in the public interest. Martin Goldman said:

“I think Crown Prosecutors take their function very, very seriously, and I think they will always do their best to ensure that equality and fairness is always on the top of their minds when prosecuting racially and religiously aggravated offences”





Martin Goldman said that he and his colleagues were committed to attracting and retaining people from across a full range of backgrounds and enabling flexible ways of working. He also described the National Black Crown Prosecution Association (NBCPA), which is a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Peer Support Network. The NBCPA is a staff network providing support and guidance for BAME colleagues within the CPS and wider CJS.

Martin Goldman concluded by stating that all CJS agencies, including the CPS, have now adopted equality measures to welcome BAME applicants. His staff pay particular attention to the cultural and religious needs of potential and existing employees. However, the decision to select someone is always based on merit, and there is still a good deal of room to accommodate the needs of Muslim and BAME persons within the CPS



Yusuf Tai highlighted that his role was to promote race equality and diversity within the CPS and that he advocates for a fully inclusive and fair working environment where all staff, including trainees, can thrive.

“I hold regular community meetings to discuss important and emerging issues in the criminal justice sector. It is one of the key ways that the CPS engages with community and faith organisations to improve policies and the way the CPS works”

Yusuf works collaboratively with staff networks on engaging with diverse communities served by the CPS, and he works tirelessly to challenge racism, inequality and under-representation.

Questions & Answers

Q: Why is there an under-Representation of British Muslims in the CPS?

A: Our new campaign is intentionally very direct for the simple reason that the CPS must become representative of the communities that make up modern society.

Q: Why is there an over-representation of British Muslims in HM Prison Service?

This is a big question. Although it is more relevant to the Judiciary, it is nevertheless vital that the CPS prosecutes ALL cases fairly and without any form of racial or religious bias.

Q: Why are there so many barriers for working class people to enter a career with the CPS?

I am Jewish myself and therefore have some understanding of the difficulties that people of faith and people of colour face when trying to join the legal profession as a solicitor or barrister. The CPs is working very hard to improve access for people from diverse backgrounds to join the CPS as a member of staff.

Maqsood thanked everyone for a very constructive discussion and Martin and his team for their honesty. Maqsood saw this as a joinery of a partnership between the CPS and BMHC. He looked forward to meeting martin and his team again to take forward the number of issues identified in the session.



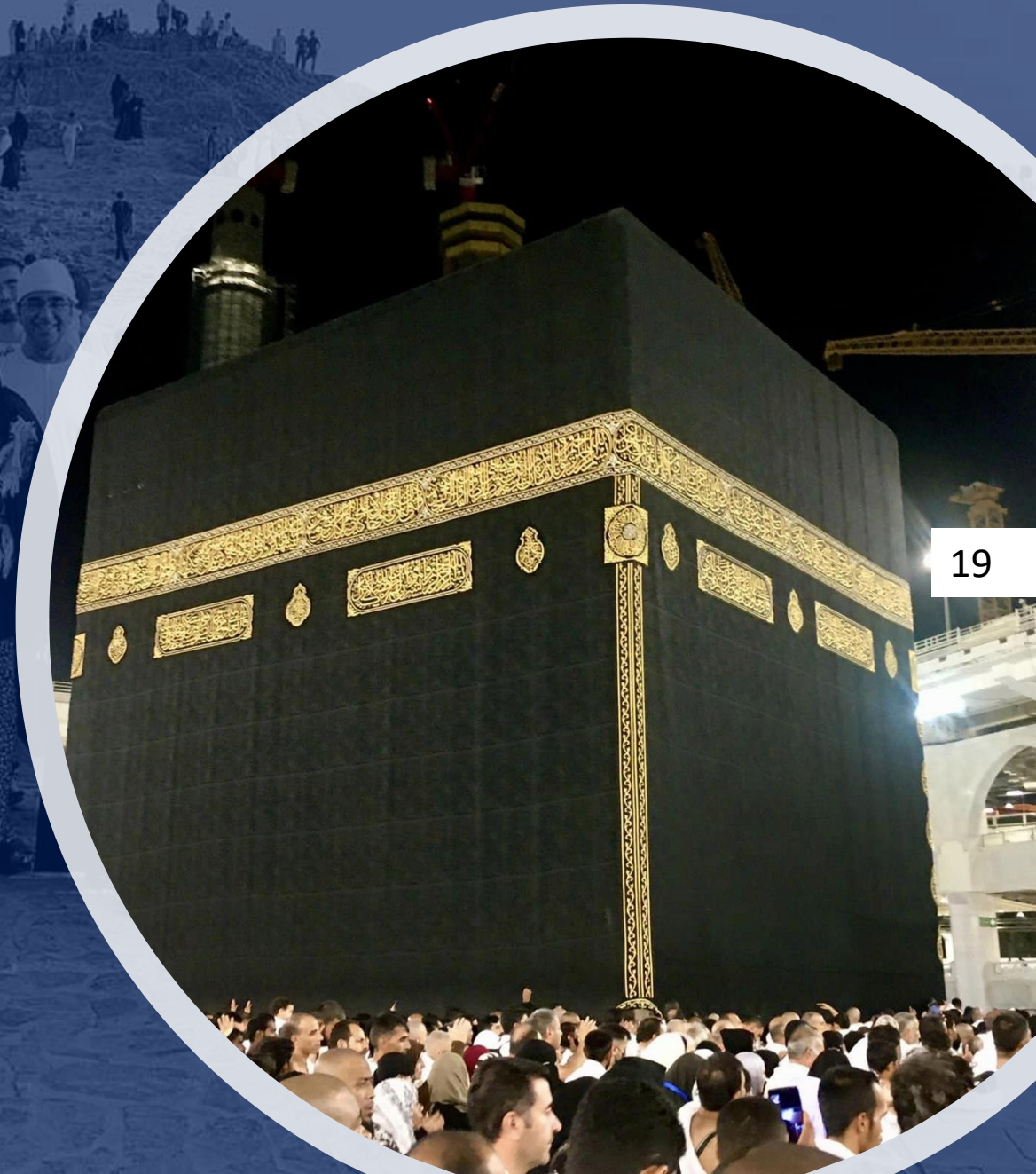
First Heritage Umrah

Over the years many people have requested the BMHC to arrange religious Umrah trips to Makkah. In early July this year, we launched Heritage Umrah, an opportunity for Muslims to perform pilgrimage and visit the Holy cities of Makkah and Madinah accompanied by religious guides from the BMHC. Within three weeks of launching the new initiative, we were fully booked and sold out. The demand was huge, and a waiting list of over 25 people was created.

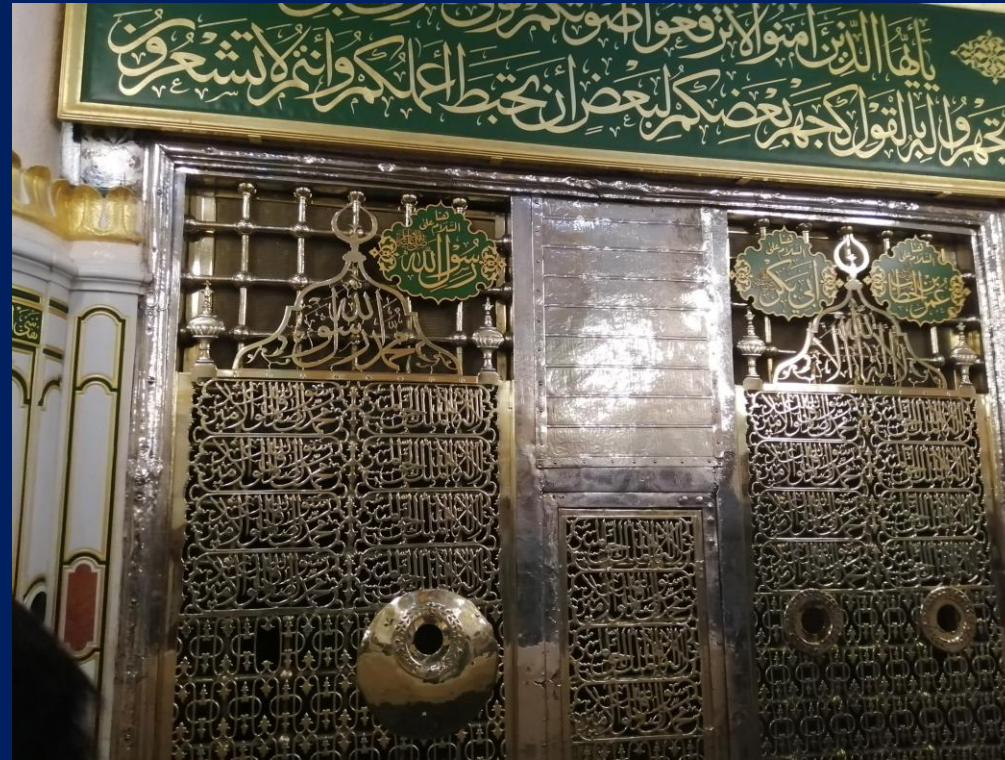
The first Heritage Umrah trip took place at the end of October, with approx. 30 people from various backgrounds. The Heritage Umrah trip was accompanied by Shaikh Anis and Imam Shafiq from the BMHC, who managed the group, delivered inspirational Islamic reminders, and guided tours of historical sites. They also helped attendees to perform the Umrah pilgrimage according to the correct Prophetic traditions.

Highlights of the trip included praying in the Mosque of the Prophet in Madinah, visiting the first ever Mosque, Masjid Quba, a trip to see Mount Uhud, as well as seeing the magnificent Holy Ka'bah in Makkah, which was originally built by Prophet Ibrahim. And also drinking from the sacred well of Zam Zam and performing the Friday prayers in the Grand Mosque in Makkah.

It was a very inspirational and spiritual journey for everyone, and we have been inundated with enquiries about the next Heritage Umrah trip that will be take place in February 2023 Insha'Allah. Please keep a look out on the BMHC website for details of the new trip.







Tackling Islamophobia

As part of Islamophobia Awareness Month in November, we have been working in partnership with various organisations in supporting them to organise Islam Awareness Month. Examples included the tackling Islamophobia Conference in Bolton.

Our Chief Executive, Maqsood Ahmad presented on The four strands of Islamophobia and the BMHC is tackling Islamophobia and Hate crime in partnership with the Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester Police.

In addition, we also organised a khutbah on tackling Islamophobia given by one of our Imams on Friday 18 November 2022 at the British Muslim Heritage Centre. The Imams discussed a 3-point plan on how the Muslim community can get involved and reminded people that remaining silent when injustice occurs is not an option.

We are also pleased to report that we have completed our tackling hate crime and Islamophobia project which comprised of producing a training manual to train our communities and training several organisations to become third party reporting centres including the BMHC. This was a partnership

Project with Greater Manchester Police and Manchester City Council. Our thanks to All the participants and organisations who took part the training.



Lord Wajid Khan

On Friday 11th November 2022, Lord Wajid Khan visited the British Muslim Heritage Centre (BMHC). He was joined by The Rt. Hon Afzal Khan CBE, MP as well as Councillor Naeem -Ul-Hassan JP.

The Chair, Nasar Mahmood OBE and Chief Executive, Maqsood Ahmad updated Lord Wajid on the BMHC's activities and programmes including the strategic approach to working with communities to achieve community cohesion, development and meaningful engagement with communities and mainstream services.

Lord Khan spent some time with senior leaders from the BMHC hearing about the challenges and opportunities for the British Muslim Community residing across Greater Manchester. After a tour of the building, there were presentations and discussions led by Maqsood Ahmad OBE around building strong communities. Topics discussed included how well British Muslims interact with public bodies and understanding the problems they face. It was noted that people on the ground know best about the issues that communities face and that the BMHC has a proactive approach to working with communities to make the best use of local assets.

The Rt. Hon. Afzal Khan CBE, MP, who is the Patron of the BMHC, said:

"It was good to hear from Lord Wajid Khan that BMHC is ahead of the game with regard to working together creatively. We will use the learning from this visit to develop future Community Cohesion even further"

Central to discussions was understanding how plans for future buildings could be more efficient and effective for both residents and the wider Muslim Community across GM. The discussion also explored short term projects/funding and community activities. Lord Khan agreed that it is important to ensure that projects have longevity and do not simply close after the funding ends or rely on grants after. Further discussions covered how community organisations become social enterprises and become self-sufficient.

Lord Wajid was very keen to support the BMHC aims and objectives and suggested that other Lords be invited to learn and share ideas as he has had the opportunity to do so. He would be happy to work with the Chief executive to explore the possibility of bringing key decision makers to BMHC in the New Year.



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Tackling Health Inequalities

Our second partnership project with Rochdale Council was held on **'Tackling Health Inequalities'**, Wednesday 23rd November 2022 at the Deepish Community Centre in Rochdale. The focus was on Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) which lead to heart attacks and strokes – the main causes of death. It is predicted that they will remain to be so until 2030. The largest increase in the percentage of deaths attributed to CVD is expected to occur amongst the most deprived communities in Greater Manchester. These are populations that consist of a significant number of Muslims from Bangladeshi, Kashmiri, and Pakistani Communities.

There are critical factors influencing the development of CVD within these communities, namely diabetes, high cholesterol, poor diet and lack of exercise. To further emphasise the importance of addressing these factors, especially within the Muslim Community in Rochdale, the following facts should be considered: -

The prevalence of cardiovascular disease amongst Muslim men in the population is 60-70%, greater than that of men in the general population. South Asians are 1.5 times more likely to suffer from heart disease and strokes compared to Europeans in Rochdale.

"Excellent, amazing, very organised and useful and practical, this was one of the best seminars I have attended this year." **Aisha Malik**

"Heart and circulatory diseases are a major driver of health inequalities in the UK. Certain populations are already at higher risk of developing risk factors for heart disease, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Our ethnic origin can significantly increase our risk of developing the disease. This seminar is an excellent start to engaging with the local people to help us to help them to implement the CVD Strategy. My thanks to Maqsood Ahmad, CEO of the British Muslim Heritage Centre for making this happen. I look forward to work with him and his team." **Amit Gaokar, Public Health Specialist, Public Health & Wellbeing**



Promoting Diversity

We were delighted to attend the Rochdale Diversity Celebration evening, where we shared our work of promoting better relations between different groups. Our Chief Executive Maqsood Ahmad took the opportunity of highlighting the partnership work with Rochdale Borough Council and our programmes designed to bring people from all experiences and backgrounds together. Maqsood Ahmad acknowledged the contribution of different people of colour naming two local individuals who worked tirelessly to promote diversity and fairness: the late Abdul Hameed Salik and Cllr Abdul Chowdry. They were pioneers who used their skills and influence to build bridges. Maqsood also acknowledged the current influencers within the room and thanked them for their continued commitment to promoting diversity which is essential in the current climate.

There were several fantastic winners all contributing towards bringing people together, ranging from finding employment for young people, health sessions (dementia and mental health) for local people, using art and education to bring people together.

In attendance were the local Mayor, Senior Police Officer, Directors and community managers from various organisations.

Our congratulations to all the winners and all those that were nominated, you are all winners.

Thank you for the wonderful work you are doing in bringing people together.



Mrs Diane Hawkins DL, JP

Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester

On Monday 12th December 2022, Mrs Diane Hawkins DL, JP visited the British Muslim Heritage Centre (BMHC). Diane was appointed as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Greater Manchester on the retirement of Sir Warren Smith, KCVO, on 4 July 2022. Diane practised as a solicitor in Manchester for many years before becoming a Presiding Justice in the Family Court. She is also the current High Sheriff.

Maqsood Ahmad OBE, the Chief Executive Officer, presented the work of the BMHC including the main programmes being delivered in partnership with mainstream institutions such as the NHS, GMP, Local Authorities etc. He also highlighted that the BMHC is supporting more than 50 formerly homeless people.

Nasar Mahmood OBE, Chair, went through the upcoming plans of the centre and took the Lord Lieutenant on a tour of the building and the House of Wisdom (HoW) and the Stories of Sacrifice (SoS) Exhibition.

"It was a fabulous visit to a fabulous charity, and I want to thank, the Chair, Nasar Mahmood and Chief Executive Officer, Maqsood Ahmad for showing me around their historic building including the House of Wisdom, and Stories of Sacrifice. There is a wealth of information here that our diverse communities can be proud of and learn about the contribution that the Muslims made in the past. The work of the charity is inspirational as it inspires British Muslims to secure a bright future and I look forward to working with the Board of Trustees and Staff" Mrs Diane Hawkins, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant, Greater Manchester



Heritage Radio Presenters Meeting

Our new radio manager, Anjum Rafiq held his first presenter's meeting outlining his plan for the next 12 months. There will be regular meetings of the presenters allowing them the opportunity to meet and discuss issues affecting them. Our Chief Executive Officer, Maqsood Ahmad OBE thanked all the presenters for the fantastic work they do voluntarily. Without them, the radio station would not survive.

Anjum explained to the team that Radio has diversified from its traditional form and has morphed into different platforms which are now available for people to consume Radio. Heritage Radio is now on a personalised radio App which is free to download from Apple's App Store or Google Play store. The App will also provide listener statistics for Heritage Radio on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. Anjum also explained that he was working on getting Heritage Radio on Alexa Smart Speaker which should be done over the next week or so and will also increase listenership through these added platforms.

Anjum explained that Heritage Radio is a very special platform that is designed to take the positive message of Islam to the community, and the broadcast is a great responsibility. The presenters were encouraged by the individual training initiative Anjum had proposed.

Both Anjum and the CEO explained to the presenters that everyone could assist in bringing revenue into Heritage Radio through their contacts by having regular advertisements played on the Radio. Anjum explained to the presenters that there will be a meeting every 12 weeks so that they can keep up with the development of Heritage Radio and any updates.



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Professional Business Muslim Network (PBMN)

On Thursday 15th of December, we held a Professional Business Muslim Network (PBMN) event. The PBMN was established to provide a platform to empower professional Muslims by bringing them together, connecting and creating opportunities

Our Vision is to develop trusted relationships between PBMN members and our wider network, which will improve relationships and enhance individual and business success.

Our Mission is to attract like-minded professionals in the community to grow, whether that's in their individual career or their business, and network together.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone that attended and made the event a huge success.

Thank you to our excellent speakers Maqsood Ahmed OBE, CEO of the BMHC, Afzal Khan MP and Patron of the BMHC and Lord Wajid Khan, Shadow spokesperson for levelling up, Housing and Communities. We appreciate their time and invaluable insight on the night, and covering some important topics on leadership, challenging a lack of Muslim representation in influential & high achieving roles as well as sharing their own success stories and tips on how to replicate their success.

We hope that we can continue this impactful community initiative with your continued support!

