

## IN CONVERSATION WITH THE CHAPLAINCY

June 2022 VOL 5:5

Canary Wharf  
Multifaith Chaplaincy



### Editorial

We can't believe it's half way through June already! We are almost half way through the year and the longest day is next week. It is just over a week ago there were celebrations around the 4 day weekend for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. I guess we are returning to some kind of normality and the Canary Wharf estate is certainly a lot busier, it is wonderful bumping into familiar faces. We are also enjoying face to face meetings and seeing people in the flesh as it were.

Recently Fiona was invited into the new offices of JLL in Water Street, they are very smart. She was asked to chat about the role and work of the Chaplaincy, and they were delighted to hear about all the chaplaincy team can offer both individuals and companies. We look forward to building a relationship with them.

During last month's Mental Health Awareness week, we carried out an interview with Dean Whitworth from Canary Wharf Construction talking about his role and how chaplaincy supports construction workers in particular. The interview is below. Over the next few editions of our Newsletter, we will be interviewing representatives from different sectors on the estate to explore with them how they feel the chaplains support and care for their workers. Hopefully to help our readers and their colleagues have a more informed understanding of what we actually do and give insights to how we can support our readers and their companies. Please do spread the word!

*Fiona Stewart-Darling*

During Mental Health Awareness Week Dean Whitworth Senior Health & Safety Manager at Wood Wharf was interviewed.



Chaplaincy is involved in all the different sectors on the estate, including those working in construction. This past week, chaplains had the opportunity to visit the Wood Wharf construction site to see the incredible efforts they're making in helping to support construction workers.

We spoke to Dean Whitworth who is the Senior Health and Safety manager on the site. Dean has been instrumental in a project to encourage his co-workers to sign up to undertake a set amount of cycling or rowing, while also raising £3,000 for the UK Mental Health charity Mind. In a room set aside at the site, workers from across the estate could be seen pounding away on rowing machines and exercise bikes. Deans goal was that by the end, teams of co-workers would have effectively cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats and back again and

rowed the length of all eight rivers of the British Isles.

We interviewed Dean to understand the motive behind the project.

"Mental health in construction has been an issue for a while. On the day of the Covid-19 lockdown we had around 1,800 people working on the site. We were fortunate that we could work, but we had to cut that down to around 900 people."

Dean mentioned that people who work in construction are less likely to take time off if they have a physical health challenge. They are the kind of people who will come in to work in all weathers and get their work done no matter what.

"But what people do tend to forget is that they are still human beings with human problems. They've all got marriage break-ups, deaths in the family, illness. All this stuff is going on and they're still coming to work in environments which sometimes are not very good, [such as] really bad wind, cold, rain etc."

Dean went on to explain that this is where there is a connection between Mental Health and the physical safety of construction workers. "Although they have to come in to work to get their wage – which we all do – in this industry people feel they have to be more resilient to what's going on – they have to go into work to get it done because that's how the money comes in. A lot of these people are self-employed. If they don't turn up and clock in, they're not getting paid."

One of the issues raised by Dean was the continued stigma that surrounds mental health. To combat the negative associations with mental health Dean said, "I wanted to do something that gets people together" He continued, "We set a fitness goal of 5km and 8km, not to merely achieve it but to get people sitting in those seats – that was the achievement. ... We chose that for the interaction [between colleagues]."

As one of the safety team, Dean has trained as a mental health first aider. But he added, "We're not trained enough to sort out people's issues, but we are trained to listen. Sometimes people don't want to talk but sometimes they do." ... "The hardest problem is getting the message through to individuals. ... But when you're in a closed environment it's relatively easy." Dean explained the

relationship he and his colleagues at the safety team have with Fiona and the chaplaincy team. "Since I've been here and got to know Fiona, I've felt that it's been very helpful. I was sat with her for around half an hour or an hour talking about all sorts. But within a couple of minutes about one subject, she said, 'well it could be this' and it hadn't even crossed my mind. Somebody with the proper training and proper experience, who knows all the issues can pick up on something like that straight away. ... I know I can phone Fiona and if she doesn't answer within a couple of hours, I will normally have a message back to me, so I know we have the support there."

The chaplaincy is deeply indebted to Dean and his team for the interview, and all the work they do

### The Hajj and its importance for Muslims - Ibrahim Mogra



The Hajj this year is taking place from 7-12 July. It is one of the pillars of Islam and is performed in Dhu al-Hijjah, the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. This pilgrimage to Makkah must be taken at least once in a lifetime by healthy Muslims who can afford the journey.

Pilgrims start by taking a shower. Men wear two unstitched white sheets and women wear their own traditional clothes to perform rituals in the footsteps of Prophet Abraham and Hagar, over five to six days. They are now in the state of *ihrām* (prohibition) and are not permitted to use perfume, cut their hair and nails or have intimate contact with their spouses. They are also not allowed to swat flies and insects. Pilgrims perform the *tawāf*, seven anti-clockwise circumambulations around the Ka'bah, a tall cubicle structure built by Abraham and his son Ishmael. They walk briskly seven times between two hillocks, Al-Safa and Al-Marwah, where Hagar ran up and down looking for water for her little baby Ishmael. God blessed her with a spring, and to this day pilgrims drink the piped water called Zamzam. A day is spent in the plains of Arafat where pilgrims stand and ask for God's forgiveness. A night is spent under the stars in Muzdalifah where they rest, pray and collect pebbles. In the morning, pilgrims move to the tent city of Mīnā. Over the next two to three days they travel to the *jamarāt*, three very tall and wide walls, used for the symbolic pelting of satan. Thereafter, an animal is sacrificed on behalf of every pilgrim and the meat is distributed to the poor. It is also canned and sent to other countries to help the needy. Thereafter, men shave their heads and women clip a lock of hair. They now end the state of *ihrām*, and all the previous prohibitions are lifted and their Hajj is completed. They believe all their sins are forgiven and now they have an opportunity to start fresh and lead a righteous life.

I performed Hajj with my wife, son and daughter-in-law and it was a most spiritual and exhilarating experience to join millions of Muslims from all over the world.

## Up Coming Faith Events

### June Faith Festivals

**24<sup>th</sup> Midsummer's Day:** A celebration of the sun's power on the longest day of the year.

**Christianity 29<sup>th</sup> Feast of Saints Peter and Paul:** Observed by Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Lutherans.

### July Faith Festivals

**Hinduism 1<sup>st</sup> July Jagannath Rath Yatra:** Public procession and chariot festival.

**Islam 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July The Hajj:** Once in a lifetime pilgrimage to Makkah; is the largest gathering of Muslims anywhere in the world.

**Islam 8<sup>th</sup> July Yawm Arafat** 2nd day of Hajj: Day of repentance and acceptance of supplications, many non-pilgrims fast on this holiest day in Islam.

**Bahá'í 10<sup>th</sup> July Martyrdom of the Báb:** Commemorates the Báb's execution in 1850, after which his teachings continued to spread.

**Islam 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> July Eid al-Adha:** Marks the sacrifice made by Prophet Abraham.

**Hinduism 13<sup>th</sup> July Guru Purnima Day:** An Indian and Nepalese festival dedicated to spiritual and academic teachers.

**Buddhism 13<sup>th</sup> July Asalha-Dharma Day:** Commemorates Buddha's first teaching to the five ascetics in the Deer Park near Benares, India.

**Rastafarianism 23<sup>rd</sup> July Birthday of Emperor Halle Selassie I** A holy day of commemoration for Rastafarians.

**Islam 30<sup>th</sup> July Al-Hijra:** The Islamic New Year. First day of Muharram. Start of Islamic year 1444.

If you have been forwarded our Monthly Newsletter by a colleague, why not subscribe for yourself so you don't miss out on the next issue. [Click to Subscribe](#).