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SPARKLING AWARDS TO TWO SPECIAL LADIES!

Late autumn 2021 has brought wonderful accolades to the charity for two remarkable individuals.

CHAIMAE IS CLIENT OF THE YEAR...Former client Chaimae Baqqari, who recently took up a staff post, was so convinced she wouldn't be overall winner of **Client with the Most Transformational Story Award** at the prestigious Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland online event, she didn't send her family the link!

"I dressed up and watched the awards ceremony at MAF, but truly was taken aback," says Chaimae. "Even though Project Co-ordinator Janine Lamont had repeatedly told me how much I've progressed as an individual over the last few years, it had not sunk in. It didn't even cross my mind I would receive it when we heard I was shortlisted. On the night, I suddenly gulped... oh, this is REAL!"

On a great night of success for MAF, our Positive Steps Project was shortlisted for the **Digital Innovator Self-Management Award**, and we were also up for **Project of the Year 2021**, but Chaimae's Individual Award carried off the Honours, and it was the icing on the cake for Janine and the team.

Chaimae's story is indeed inspiring. Around 2013, when a Mental Health Community Nurse who knew our services well, suggested MAF's specialist support might help her, she was referred.

"Little did I imagine when I came through the door, I'd ever reach this high point, never mind win an award. I was so overwhelmed by past events then that I needed a family member with me 24/7," she confides quietly. "No way is that sustainable, but now I believe memories of the abuse were triggered by my son's birth- it brought all my emotions and suppressed anger to the surface."

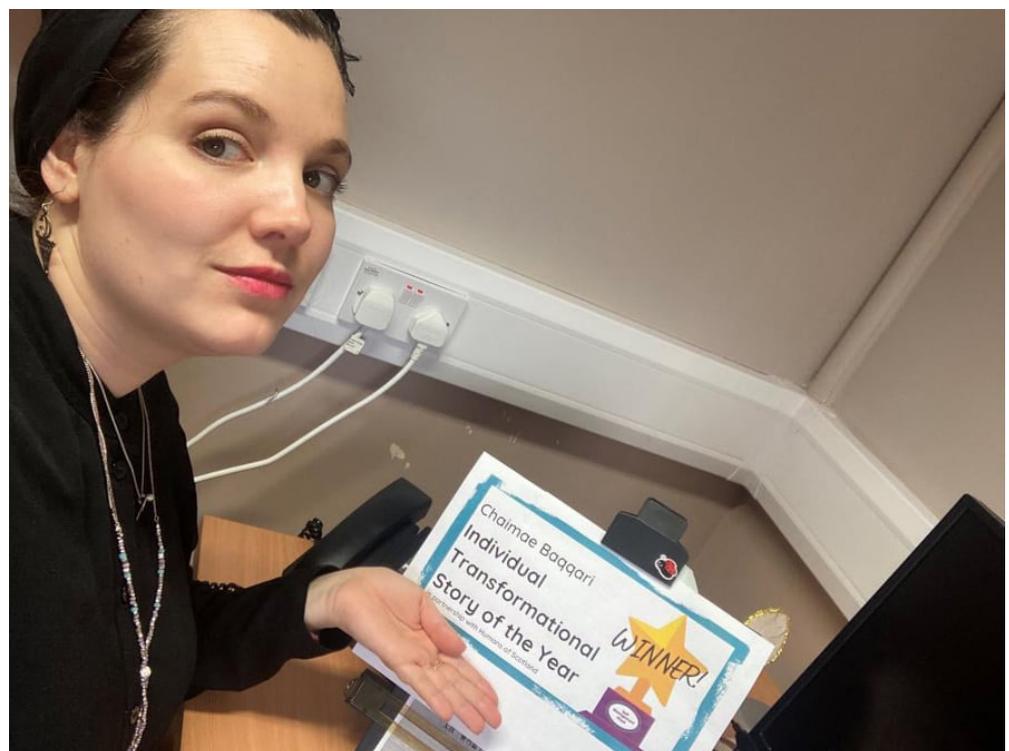
Her abuser, an adult relative, had hidden his tracks. "No way was my family aware of the trauma I'd carried till suddenly I'd a meltdown and needed professional help. For far too long I'd minimised it all. Only with support was I able to see how much of my life and

relationships had been affected."

Chaimae's support included Thoughtfield Therapy from longstanding MAF professional, Dr Brian Venters. Several sessions proved invaluable as it became clear she had been groomed by the abuser.

"Talk about a lightbulb moment! I changed my mindset immediately from excusing this adult's behaviour as something he perhaps couldn't help to repeating loudly to myself: You did nothing wrong. You were a child." Chaimae adds. "MAF's not just supported me through the bumps in the road, it has ensured I gained self-confidence as a person with a lot to offer. Without that mentoring, doors might not have opened to me getting my first job, and going on to work with asylum seekers."

Now it is full circle for this young woman and her incredible story. "Seven years down the line from that very first appointment, here I am on the MAF staff team, and using my counselling skills to help others. I say to anyone in that same position, there is NO sense of shame in speaking up about what happened. Getting help is what really matters, because then you can start to heal on your journey."



An amazing tribute to Chaimae



MAF NEWS

SANDRA WINS GOLD AT WEMBLEY!

Founder Sandra Brown has won several accolades over the twenty one years since she established MAF in memory of Moira Anderson to support those affected by CSA (Child Sexual Abuse) assisting all age groups and genders, and seeking to build trust and lessen the trauma. Scotswoman of the Year in 2005, she received her OBE for services to Child Protection in Scotland in 2006.

However, she has always been adamant that charities must be run as all good businesses should be. Sandra was named as a Woman of Inspiration pre-pandemic by the Scottish Businesswomen's Association. That tribute then led her all the way to Wembley in November for the National Businesswomen's Ceremony, where she received the Gold Winner Lifetime Achievement Award.

"Some folk still don't regard charities as businesses, which couldn't be further from the truth, so it's a terrific honour personally," comments Sandra. "It also acknowledges the tremendous team efforts we've put in over the long-term. It's no coincidence that over the past 7 years we've had an ideal working relationship between our diligent Board, led by Chair Maggie Docherty, and leader of our brilliant staff, therapists and volunteers, Director Gillian Urquhart. Gillian ensures that the glue of excellent workplace practice mixes well with the cohesive good governance Maggie advocates, and the adept balancing of accounts that Treasurer Sheena Pollock delivers to top quality standards."

Sandra was delighted

to have MAF's International Ambassador Dr Matthew McVarish as her wingman at the prestigious event. Both enjoyed networking in the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel with many of the 300 attendees, and had a great night.

"Not too many Scots leave Wembley with a trophy," laughs Sandra. "So this one IS special!"



Sandra & International Ambassador Matty McVarish in London



BUT THAT WASN'T ALL.....!

November also saw MAF absolutely staggered to be nominated for another remarkable accolade.

Due to our achievements over some 7 years, we were put forward by Scottish Investors in People to the online National Finals on Nov 23. Our journey with Investors in People has been almost as transformational as Chaimae's story, with MAF progressing from Silver (2014) to Gold (2017) to Platinum (2020). We're told that it is almost unheard of for a charity of our size to make such strides and to progress so significantly after every independent assessor review. To find ourselves up for the award of UK Employer of the Year 2021 (Small Businesses with under 50 staff) was surreal. In fact, our assessor, Nicola Dillon, is thrilled, and told us it's the first time in her experience she has seen an agency do this.

The event recognises the very best work practice and good employers, and it is worth mentioning that of almost 250 agencies making the shortlist in different categories, only 41 take a trophy home.

"So with bated breath, we went online," says Director Gillian. "The result was we were a **Top Ten UK Finalist**, though not overall winners. As the only Scottish representatives in our category, however, we were thrilled with this level of recognition and see our name in lights. It's a great way to raise our profile across the whole UK, and winning doesn't always mean being first. This achievement tells us we're doing better than we've ever done before, and to pick up 2 out of 5 major awards over a few weeks is phenomenal. The only question is: where to next? The sky is the limit for MAF!"



MATTY'S MOVE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST KIDS BY 2030

Sandra and Matty hooked up in London for several reasons, including the Awards Event.

They visited Westminster by invitation of Airdrie and Shotts MP Anum Qaiser Javed for a tour of Parliament and to watch Prime Minister's Question Time. A major aim however was to let Anum and other MPs hear about Matty's launching November 18th in the UK as a World Day of Action to end sexual abuse. He has helped form a progressive activists group following his work with the UN since his amazing Road to Change Project. (That was when Matty walked 10,000 miles around 32 EU countries to highlight CSA and the anomalies around the Statute of Limitations across European states. The project led to Matty being voted Top Scot, and SCVO's Scottish Community Champion.)



Matty McVarish with MP Anum Qaiser Javed & Sandra

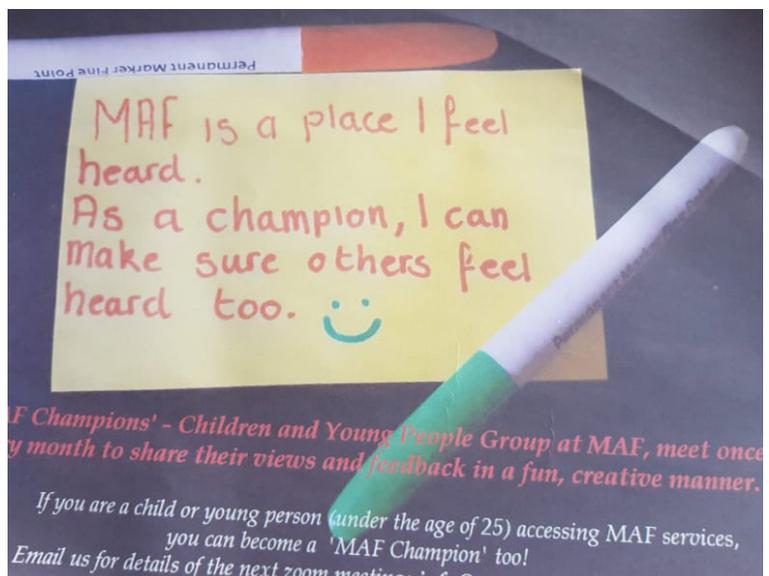
Sandra and a small team gave Matty help with distributing 1000 free copies of his book *The Truth No One Tells Teenagers* to mark the start of this strategic initiative at Piccadilly Circus.

"This is a new globally funded movement. 15 of us are across 5 continents; we believe it's not enough to have buildings floodlit in purple to remember survivors- though that's an important tribute- but to mark Nov 18th annually with action- a march, a launch, whatever, as long as the emphasis is on a mutual wish to see it as End Sexual Abuse Day... with our target 2030," says Matty. *"It was encouraging to speak to several key politicians such as Ian Blackford, the SNP's Westminster leader about the highly important work MAF does and also Bambos Charalambous, MP and Labour's Shadow Immigration Minister. As Vice-Chair of the All Party Group on Missing Children and Adults, he was keen to know more on global development around these issues."*

Sandra agrees it was a very worthwhile visit. "2030 as a deadline may sound unrealistic to some, but a good parallel is the set up of World Polio Day for ending that disease, with a time scale too. In 2021 worldwide cases are single figures and in only two countries, thanks to the efforts of International Rotary and the help of Bill Gates," she declares. "We're very grateful to Anum, who has visited MAF. She was struck by the high number of referrals we deal with, and as a former high school teacher, wants to do all she can to highlight our services. We very much hope she can support Matty's book for survivors, but particularly teens, to go to every single Lanarkshire school pupil. Our volunteers have recently distributed Safe Hands resource packs to High Schools by kind permission of Derek Brown, Director of Education and Families, and we regard Matty's book as a useful additional tool."

BAIRNS HOOSE UPDATE

MAF has campaigned for years for children and young people giving evidence to be in a safe setting outwith court. We were glad to facilitate a group of them to hear their views on the service we provide, thanks to The Listening Fund. The members met face to face and then on Zoom monthly, naming their group 'MAF Champions.' All were service users, and were guided by Maria Hanlon, Service Delivery Manager, Margaret Mills, Client Support Officer, Kim Coutts, Art Psychotherapist, and also Dr Javita Narang, Research Consultant and Psychologist. MAF awarded the attendees a certificate and souvenirs for their contributions on what a Barnahus could mean for them. Workshops done in a fun, creative manner with the group also informed Health Improvement Scotland with their collation of National Standards for a Barnahus model to be piloted; a special presentation by Kim and Beth from the Glasgow Initiative of Facilitation & Therapy (GIFT) was delivered at a September Symposium with 300 attendees. MAF's partnership with GIFT 'providing a building block for developing a standards document' was highlighted in the Ministerial Address .



MAF Champions' - Children and Young People Group at MAF, meet once a month to share their views and feedback in a fun, creative manner.

If you are a child or young person (under the age of 25) accessing MAF services, you can become a 'MAF Champion' too!
Email us for details of the next zoom meeting: info@mafs.org.uk



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CASH BOOSTS ENSURE A FULL UPGRADE & MORE CLIENT UPTAKE

While we don't have space to mention all grants we received across 2021, 2 stand out. Spring saw a major award from the Big Lottery come our way, when we secured £386K over a period of 3 years. It allows further roll out of our Positive Steps programmes for clients, and also funds 4.5 posts. We were also greatly helped by corefunding from the Scottish Government of £836k over 4 years which commenced in April 2020.

Our 2020 Campaign to refurbish existing premises and see us linked to the 2 storey building next door may have taken longer due to Lockdowns but it proved a resounding success, with our own fundraising activities run by MAF's fantastic volunteers contributing to the brilliant total of over £50k. Despite no large events, they devised more excellent ideas. We saw a round of teaparties, curry nights, garden fun and games, Munro climbs and walking challenges. What super teamwork.

The staff also pulled out all the stops to keep premises open during a major re-fit, as well as ensuring Covid-compliant measures were in place always. Hats off to them too! We now have an excellent reception, 6 counselling rooms, 2 state of the art play therapy suites, a teen space/art room, fabulous staff bases, meeting areas and training suites, as well as a brand new disabled loo! All crucial facilities when we are currently supporting an average of 225 clients per month with a further 230 receiving therapies both in-house and by outreach. During 2021 we were sad to say farewell to Client Support Officers Lynne Thomas and Liz Sloan to new career opportunities, but we're delighted Liz will continue to provide her stunning voice for future fundraisers. We welcomed Vicki Arnold, Gillian Wardhaugh and of course, Chaimae. As well as counselling, Chaimae's other vital remit will be to promote MAF's work to the BAME community.

The official opening of our new adjacent premises will take place **Wed 23 February 2022** with the Minister for Children and Young People Clare Haughey, MSP, cutting the ribbon at 11 a.m. Other special guests we hope to invite are Clare Higgins, age 13 our youngest fundraiser ever who has held many bake sales to help MAF, and Anneliese McDaid, a former client whose recent book Grief (available from Amazon) describes a journey which is equally as dramatic as that of Chaimae. Anneliese writes very movingly of the help she and her mum received from us when she was a child. Copies of her book on abuse and bereavement will be available to clients at MAF. Sandra's bestseller about the Moira Anderson case Where There is Evil, is always available to purchase, and we will be distributing free copies of Matty McVarish's **The Truth That No One Tells Teenagers**. Even if just one copy of any of these books helps a survivor find their path, it is a fitting tribute to Moira.

The 23 February date is the 65th anniversary of her disappearance. We hope that a special memorial stone selected by Moira's sister, Hon. Patron Janet Hart, will be placed in the new garden which our wonderful clients and volunteers are keen to tend. They will do a great job, every bit as caring as the work therapists and staff do with our clients. As we move into what will hopefully be happier, more joyous times, let's remember those still feeling the after-effects of the pandemic. Many lives have not returned to what they were. Our best wishes for 2022 and may it bring all health and prosperity.



Volunteers and fantastic flappers Edna & Anne at the Great Gatsby themed fundraiser



Margaret Ann raised a super £700 from her 3 Peak Challenge, and is seen here bottom and top of Ben Nevis



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

WEDNESDAY FEB 23 2022 with a chance to tour our new look hub 12-2p.m.
Spaces are limited, so please arrange by phone.

Date for our famous **LADIES LUNCH**, Tudor Hotel, Airdrie, N. Lanarkshire **SUNDAY AUG 28, 2022** with special guest Viv Lumsden, former news anchor and presenter at BBC Scotland, and fabulous musical entertainment. Ticket price is only an amazing £35. All proceeds go direct to the charity. To book a table, or to ensure your place, e-mail: volunteers@moiraanderson.org