

# Paperweight Perspective

## Shared responsibilities



BY DAPHNE SCHOGGER

I have been a volunteer for Paperweight for over 7 years initially as a Caseworker and after a while joining the front-line team fielding calls from new

and often frightened potential clients. We have a very brief window of opportunity to gain their trust and record the key issues with which they need attentions. Thereafter, we have a key role in ensuring detailed records of the progress of the assistance are maintained. With over 450 active clients nationwide, we are kept busy!

I must say that I was attracted to volunteer for Paperweight as I wanted an ongoing commitment and Paperweight certainly does this. Before joining Paperweight, in my naivety I had no idea that so very many crises present within the Jewish community. Perhaps we lead such cosseted lives that despite regular advertisements from Jewish charities, we don't really believe that demand is actually on our doorstep and that it is our

friends, our neighbours, our family, who are seeking help.

Paperweight as a proactive organisation, is at the forefront of social action within the Jewish community and addresses the needs of many through help with budgeting, benefits applications, general bureaucracy, advocacy, financial and legal queries, guiding people through the divorce process and ever so much more.

Many people rely on their spouse to manage the family finances, take charge of passwords, pay bills. They have been quite happy for this status quo to continue indefinitely thinking, mistakenly, but not uncommonly, that nothing will ever change and believe "that in good time we can have the conversation". Paperweight's experience, again and again (for many

reasons), is that events overtake intentions, and the discussion never happens

What happens when the spouse with the financial responsibilities dies or becomes unable to continue their role?

Well those left holding the fort are left in crisis and often have no idea how to pay a bill, how to access accounts, how to go online etc. All these new and seemingly imperative demands arrive at a time when they are assimilating a devastating change in their lives : chronic illness, a new and incoherent Care system or, alas, mourning.

This is where Paperweight plays a vital role. We can guide our clients through these traumatic times and help them to navigate the bureaucracy that inevitably comes with such situations.

Does the imbalance in responsibilities

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in your household sound familiar? Try to find the time to redefine family and household responsibilities, currently not shared - then make a list! Who has been doing what, who can share a role, where to find the original paperwork. It needn't be a morbid activity. Detail where everything is kept, passwords, the Will, what the bank accounts are for, which savings accounts are current. This will save your partner such a lot of grief when they really do not have the capacity for it. In fact, Paperweight have just published a new Guide entitled "It's Time to Have the Conversation" which does exactly what it says on the tin, and we would be happy to post it to anyone who would like a copy.

And please don't forget to have Wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney in force, whatever your ages. And follow through with signing and submitting them.

Paperweight can help you now, and would much rather assist when you are bobbing along through life, however bumpy, before it tips over the waterfall of calamity.

For a copy of our guide, please email [chaniecooper@paperweight.org.uk](mailto:chaniecooper@paperweight.org.uk)

**We can't  
take away  
the grief,  
but we can help  
with some of  
the chaos that  
comes with it.**



**paperweight**

**Guide. Advocate. Resolve.**

After a bereavement, whatever your administrative, legal or financial problems, our caseworkers, based in London, Manchester and Gateshead, have the expertise to help. And it's all free of charge.

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