

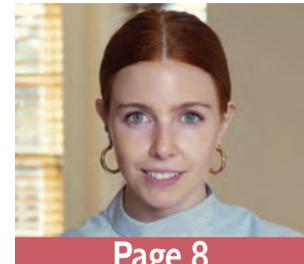
# ESSEX JEWISH NEWS

NEW YEAR ISSUE 5782/2021

THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER FOR THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ESSEX & EAST ANGLIA

Inside your 36-page Community Newspaper

Stacey's Essex sleepover



Page 8

Jewish boom in Epping



Page 10

A tribute to Leslie Kleinman



Page 31

DOUBLE DELIGHT FOR THE YOUNG AND ELDERLY IN REDBRIDGE

## We've made it, at last! We're open, at last!

BY PAT LIDIKER

THE Dennis Centre, for people living with dementia, had been yet another sad victim of enforced closure by the pandemic.

But now, with balloons, banners and all-round smiles, Jewish Care is happily welcoming back members to its brand new premises at Ilford

Federation Synagogue (IFS) in Beehive Lane.

This is just across the road from the Centre's previous home, which is now being used as the hub of Jewish Care's Home Care Services and Meals on Wheels.

David Hiller, chair of IFS, told the *Essex Jewish News*: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with Jewish

Care, which represents part of our intention to get back to a much more fully active status following the COVID pandemic.

"We always had the idea that we would like to be more involved with the wider community, so it's exciting for us that the Dennis Centre will be running from our shul. It will initially open every Tuesday,

but hopefully this will increase to two days a week."

This is hugely welcome news for those living with dementia, and their families, in Redbridge.

Programme assistant Denise Robertson says: "It's been very emotional and heart-breaking. One minute we were there supporting our members and then it all stopped. I'm just so happy to see them and be with them again."

Richard Shone, Jewish Care's director of community development, added: "It's wonderful news. We have all really missed seeing our members in person. While so many older people have been isolated at home for many months it's especially hard for those living with dementia.

"The reopening allows older members of the community to connect, enjoy stimulating activities and socialise with one another again. We now know more than ever before how vital this is for everyone's wellbeing."

Health and safety is, of course, an ongoing priority. The organisation will follow enhanced hygiene in training and practices with regular COVID testing for staff and volunteers, who will be wearing masks indoors throughout the Centre.

Jewish Care's online programme and events, attended by hundreds of older people, will continue along with befriending services and Meals



Henry and Roberta on the first day of the Dennis Centre opening at Ilford Federation Synagogue

on Wheels.

Roberta, whose husband Henry is a member of the Centre, explained how much this all means. She told us: "Henry's been looking forward to coming back, it's been hard for everyone to be home for such a long time. It's good to know that he can do a few things without worrying about him."

Ilford Federation are also gradually reintroducing other activities during the week, such as a weekly games club and JACS.

David added: "Although we are still careful about maintaining a degree of social distancing and the wearing of masks, members are becoming

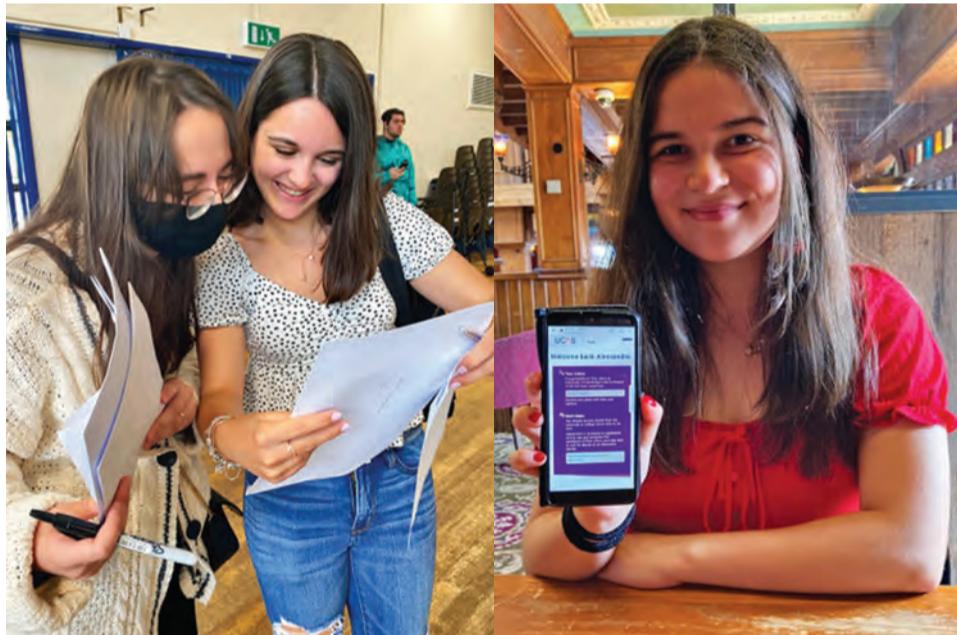
more confident about coming back to the synagogue.

"During the pandemic we successfully maintained both Sabbath and weekday services and, thanks to the vigilance of our COVID committee and co-operation of members, there have been no outbreaks originating from the shul.

"While continuing to be watchful, we know how important it is for everybody to meet either in prayer or social activities."

*Anyone wanting to find out more about the Dennis Centre can phone Jewish Care on 0208 922 2222 or email them at [helpline@jcare.org](mailto:helpline@jcare.org)*

## KKS pupils' A Level joy



Left: Laila Schiffman and Dorina Bitca finding out their great GCSE results.  
Right: Alessandra Catana who will be going to Cambridge University

BY SIMON ROTHSTEIN

PUPILS at Kantor King Solomon (KKS) High School will be heading off to Cambridge and other major British universities after the school recorded a sterling set of A Level results.

Overall, 90% of grades received by pupils were A\*-C, with nearly 7 in 10 being A\*-B.

The sixth formers will now be going to universities including Cambridge, Leeds, Nottingham, Manchester and Birmingham to study medicine, sciences, English, philosophy, history, maths, engineering and a wide range of other courses.

Top grades were received by Joseph Barthram, Essa Bhadra, Stephen Burack, Alessandra Catana, Jonathan Chamberlain, Amaan Dad, Dinuka Iddamalgoda, Dylan Karrass, Abi Marcovitch, Noah Santaub, Jack Schiavi, Natasha

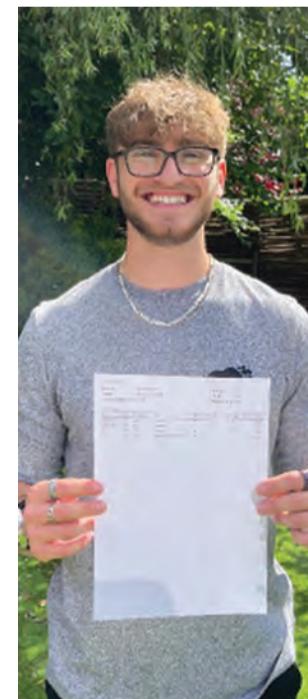
Schiffman, Jasmine Sehmby and Nicoleta Vilbara.

Headteacher Hannele Reece said: "I'm so proud of all our students in Year 13. So many have faced personal challenges, bereavement and disadvantage as a result of the pandemic.

"Congratulations to all our students and the team of staff that supported them in achieving these wonderful results. I wish all our students the very best in their next steps and look forward to hearing about their future successes."

"The school also received a fantastic set of GCSE results, which reflects the hard work and effort put in by all our students and staff".

Overall, 81% of GCSE grades were 4-9 with 27% at 7-9. More than three quarters of students achieved five 4-9 grades, including English and maths. The highest scores came in English language, computer science and religious studies.



A level results bring joy for Stephen Burack

## Hello and goodbye

EAST London & Essex Liberal Synagogue's (ELELS) Rabbi Emeritus David Hulbert held a garden party for the local Progressive rabbinate as it undergoes some major changes.

Toasts were made to Rabbi Lisa Barrett, who is leaving South West Essex and Settlement Reform Synagogue (SWERSRS), and Rabbi Dr Tali Artman-Partock as she joins Sukkat Shalom.

The party was also attended by ELELS' Rabbi Richard Jacobi and Rabbi Irit Shillor of Harlow Jewish Community.

Rabbi Jordan Helfman, currently at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, will take over as SWERSRS' new rabbi in January, with Student Rabbi



Lev Taylor undertaking a placement with the community throughout the academic year, including the upcoming High

Holy Days.

For more on Essex's new Reform rabbis, please turn to page 9.

# ESSEX JEWISH NEWS

The Essex Jewish News is the newspaper of the Jewish community in Essex and is published by Essex Jewish News Ltd.

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<b>Chai Cancer Care</b> 0808 808 4567	<b>Redbridge WIZO</b> 020 8551 1301
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<b>Citizens Advice Bureau</b> 0870 126 4140	<b>Southend and Westcliff JACS</b> 01268 771978
<b>Empathy</b> 07765 191 067	
<b>Gants Hill JACS</b> 0208 550 9450	
<b>Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade</b> 020 8989 8990	
<b>Jewish Bereavement Counselling Service</b> 020 8457 9710	
<b>Jewish Blind and Disabled</b> 020 8371 6611	

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# The anti-Israel variant!

## COMMENT

READERS may well recall seeing newspaper reports, of little more than a month or so back, about an identifiably Jewish (chassidic) man who was menacingly abused and threatened in two separate, antisemitic incidents late on a Saturday night in central London ... the first whilst on a bus, the second (by another antisemite) on an escalator in the Underground. (In both instances, apparently, no bystanders intervened.) Such racial maltreatment, you (or any Jewish person) might be thinking, sadly isn't that unusual nowadays. True ... though a double antisemitic whammy experienced by a Jewish person, and within an exceedingly brief period, may not be that common. As surely, however, it's indicative of the current state of affairs regarding increasing antisemitism; and would've been really appalling for the particular victim.



Perhaps one's Jewish senses are becoming somewhat dulled now by the regular, and continually expanding, statistics (in the UK, and also overseas) of antisemitic abuse and physical assaults. As well as of habitual, antisemitic criminal damage ... such as the daubing of, and window-smashing at, Jewish buildings; and the fracturing of memorial stones at Jewish cemeteries. But Jewish minds shouldn't become numb to these vicious acts; and especially bearing in mind that we're still within living memory of the Nazi Jew-hatred that led to the Holocaust in what had been considered, generally, as a civilised and cultured Europe. Across subsequent times (notably after the State of Israel was declared in 1948) - and rather analogous to the global, mutating Covid-19 pandemic virus - we've been witnessing (as, unfortunately, our Jewish predecessors had so done throughout history) a dreadful, and sometimes abysmally fatal, variant of antisemitism.

Shockingly, we've observed on (near enough) our own doorsteps recently - and with many members of Jewish communities becoming justifiably apprehensive in consequence - a terribly intimidating outcome of the post-modern, 'anti-Israel' variant of the pandemic antisemitism virus. That was perceived during (and for a while after) the 11-day Gaza-Israel conflict of last May. Large-scale, pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel (if not antisemitic) marches and demonstrations - accompanied by demonising-of-Israel placard-slogans and chants - took place in central London and other cities, both in this country and abroad. There was a counter, pro-Israel rally in the UK capital; but, in comparison, it was much smaller in size ... doubtless due to the Jewish population of Great Britain - and, indeed, of the world - being so minute, and further decreasing, a proportion of the global demographic total (just around 14 million out of some eight billion) with its nonetheless growing antisemitic elements.

Following on from the Gaza-Israel clashes, British Jews were often verbally abused - including from passing cars displaying Palestinian flags - and even (as with, for example, a Chigwell rabbi) physically attacked on the street; and which despicable acts were especially evident in certain London suburbs. Of course, and as always, Jewish communities will hope and pray for better times (and not exclusively regarding the coronavirus pandemic's continuing uncertainties); as well as for an enduring peace in the Middle East.

However, we do need also to live with the realities on this planet; and to continue with such safeguards as are vitally necessary. Double vaccinations – and doubtless future annual, adaptive boosters akin to the yearly flu jabs – will largely, and

essary, ongoing research and applicable work and activities (whether in relation to the curriculum at schools, further academic institutions or otherwise). And despite, if not because of, the wretched fact that extensively contrary (antisemitic) instruction is constant, continuing and expanding in various areas of society generally. As such was manifestly evidenced by the earlier noted, mass 'anti-Israel' gatherings, which had incorporated large numbers of younger people.



Regrettably, just as life needs to adapt and adjust, accordingly and appropriately, to the pandemic coronavirus - which, as advised by the relevant scientific and medical experts, will persist (in one form or another) on Earth - so Jewish people will need to be aware that the pandemic virus of antisemitism is also unlikely to



## We do need to live with the realities on this planet; and to continue with the safeguards as are vitally necessary

hopefully, help make us immune to the coronavirus onslaught. But what further can be done to protect Jewish inhabitants, both in the UK and elsewhere, against the (at least very concerning) rise, spread and potentially problematic consequences of today's antisemitism? Of course, we have the Community Security Trust; its important, contributory security work remains essential for the continuing wellbeing of Jewish citizens across the UK.

It's also significant to consider the kind of evolutionary development of a seemingly perpetual antisemitism as a concept; and how that can be challenged, and countered, for the good of all Jewish people on Earth. Without doubt and requisitely, thought has been - is being and will be - given, by those involved with the subject, to this crucial matter, including its actively connected and eclectic, educational processes ... whether dealing with the Shoah and Holocaust denial, mutating tropes, stereotypical assertions or whatever. Essentially, indeed, much emphasis should be accorded to such crucially nec-

ease to exist. Nevertheless, 'Hope' has always been a primary motivation within the Jewish faith. Similarly to Covid-19 precautions needing to be sensibly ongoing and implemented at relevant times (notwithstanding any major reductions in the government's law-based, safety requirements), Jewish communities will need to be basically and continuously wary of antisemitism in surrounding society.



But in the case of either pandemic virus, and in all the prevailing circumstances, members of the Jewish faith should seek positively to live their lives as happily, enjoyably, sociably, spiritually, productively, creatively and, as safely as possible, to the best of their abilities and outlooks. This is how the Jewish people have survived many potentially overwhelming scenarios over thousands of years; and it is how they will continue to survive, determinedly and resolutely ...

## WHERE YOU CAN PICK UP THE ESSEX JEWISH NEWS

### SYNAGOGUES

Chabad Buckhurst Hill  
Chabad Epping  
Chabad Gants Hill  
Chelmsford Jewish Community  
Chigwell Synagogue  
Chingford Synagogue  
Cranbrook United  
East London & Essex Liberal Synagogue  
Harlow Synagogue  
Ilford Federation  
Loughton Synagogue  
New Essex Masorti  
Romford Synagogue  
Southend & Westcliff Hebrew Congregation  
Southend Reform  
South West Essex and Settlement Reform

### Sukkat Shalom

Woodford Forest  
**CAMBRIDGE**  
Cambridge Synagogue  
Beth Shalom Synagogue  
**SCHOOLS**  
Kantor King Solomon  
Clore Tikva  
Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary  
**COMMUNAL**  
Aish Essex  
Redbridge Jewish Community Centre,  
Sinclair House  
Jewish Care's Vi and John Rubens House  
Jewish Blind & Disabled Aztec House  
Jewish Blind & Disabled Hilary Dennis Court

### Jewish Blind & Disabled

Milne Court  
Spire London East Hospital  
Holly House  
The Shop, Southend  
Day Centre, Cobham Road,  
Southend  
Holiday Inn, Southend  
**RETAIL**  
V&V, BarkingSide  
Sandra Davidson, Redbridge  
Gary Green, Clayhall  
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Delicacy, Chigwell  
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Just Kosher, Clayhall  
Derby Stores, Cambridge  
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### SUPERMARKETS

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Sainsbury's South Woodford  
Sainsbury's Westcliff  
Tesco BarkingSide  
Tesco Epping  
Tesco Westcliff  
Tesco Woodford Avenue

### LIBRARIES

BarkingSide, Gants Hill.  
Clayhall and South Woodford

Due to the pandemic, distribution to all the above venues cannot be guaranteed

# Clore kids enjoy Shabbat with Countdown star



Rachel Riley (centre) with Laurence and Yochy Davis at the Clore Tikva Shabbat fundraiser

BY SIMON ROTHSTEIN

CLORE TIVKA Primary School put on a special Shabbat dinner with Countdown star and antisemitism campaigner Rachel Riley.

The dinner was hosted by Yochy and Laurence Davis, who have a grandchild at the school, in order to raise funds for the investments needed to continue delivering high quality education during and after the pandemic.

Yochy said: "My son was one of the first years when the school opened, and to see my grandchildren now attending is wonderful. The school is so important to the community, and we all want to do all we can to ensure its success in the long-term."

"For those that follow me on social media, you will have noticed my Shabbat Dinners and my Made with Love Chicken Soup run over lockdown, which have become popular attractions. It was, therefore, a pleasure to host a dinner for a school that means so much to us personally and the community."

On the evening, Rachel spoke about her career, passion for education, stint on Strictly Come Dancing and her work to combat the rise in antisemitism across the country.

She told the Essex Jewish News: "It was a pleasure to attend the Shabbat dinner, as I am always very keen to support our schools. Clore Tikva is very close to where my mother grew

up and I wanted to give back to the community."

The school's head, Margot Buller, said she was especially excited to host the TV star, due to Rachel's passion for supporting STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) among young people.

She added: "The dinner has been an ideal opportunity to celebrate Shabbat together, recognise the unique community of which Clore Tikva is the heart, and help us raise significant funds to help support us through what has been an incredibly difficult year for our pupils, staff and community."

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ב'ג'

## How does Chai care?

"Pomegranates are known for their goodness and energy giving properties.

Even though we have not been able to meet together physically, through each virtual art workshop, we always feel a boost of energy, wellbeing and camaraderie.

These sessions recharge us all with the nutrients of mutual support and understanding, which carry us through the week ahead."

**The Chai Art Workshop Group  
(Artist Carmella Ovadia)**

שנה טוביה ומתוקה



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# Why I twinned my special day

**READ ELLIE FRANKEL'S MOVING BATMITZVAH SPEECH ON THE YAD VASHEM TWINNING PROGRAMME**

SINCE my grandpa Harvey became involved with the Yad Vashem twinning programme, I had been eagerly awaiting my turn to be twinned.

I specifically wanted to be twinned with a child who came from Berlin, Germany. You may wonder why I chose Berlin. Well, my great grandfather, Nannan Queenie's husband, came from Berlin. His name was Heinz Max Karfunkelstein.

Like all Jews under Nazi occupation, he was forced to wear the Yellow Star. He was 19 when he escaped Germany in 1939. During the persecution of the Jewish people, he had witnessed many horrific scenes – including Kristallnacht and women and young girls being tarred and feathered, to name but a few – that no one, let alone children, should have to witness.

On his arrival in the UK, he changed his name to Henry Carson; but, for some reason, he was always called Bob! He joined the British Army and requested to be sent back to Germany to fight the war there. His request was denied and he was sent to Burma, where he joined the SAS and became a paratrooper. Sadly, he died in 1975 of cancer.

I have the honour of being twinned with a 10-year-old girl called Elza Neumann. She was born on 16 June 1933. Elza's father was called Moses and her mother was called Lucia. Elza also had a brother called Chaim; they lived in Berlin.

Moses was born in Tarnow, in South-East Poland, in 1887, and he moved to Berlin sometime later. Before the war, Moses was a tailor. Grandpa Bob was also a tailor. Moses, at



some point early in the war, was taken to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. It is possible he was a political activist as this camp held many outspoken and political prisoners. He was murdered on 11 February 1941 at Sachsenhausen.

Elza's mother, Lucia, was born in 1893 in Berlin, where

she later met her husband. On 3 March 1943, Elza and her mother were forced out of their home and boarded Transport 33 together with over 1,700 others. They later arrived at Auschwitz concentration camp, where they were probably murdered together on arrival.

Elza's brother, Chaim, sur-

vived the war and, in 1999, gave testimony to Yad Vashem as to what happened to his parents and sister. At some point after the war, Chaim moved to Israel and took up residence in Netanya. After extensive research by family and friends, we were unable to locate Chaim or any of his family.

I have tried to compare my time in lockdown, not being able to see my family and hugging my loved ones, to what Elza had to endure, under a forced lockdown, in fear of her life, having to watch her father being dragged away, never to be seen again.

Of course, there's a massive difference between the two experiences, but this past year has given me time to reflect on how fortunate we really are.

Being twinned with Elza and sharing my special day means a great deal to me. I will now become the Guardian of her Memory and light a candle for her on Yom Hashoah and Holocaust Memorial Day. I shall also at this time remember my great grandpa whom, sadly, I never met.

Over 10 years ago, Yad Vashem started the twinning programme. Since then, over 800 children have been twinned; which seems a lot, until we remember 1.5 million children were murdered by the Nazis in the Holocaust.

As grandpa said to me, "there's a long way to go before every child is remembered in this way". My family are taking me to Israel later this year, if we are allowed, where I will visit Yad Vashem for the first time.

The pin I wear today is the Yad Vashem pin. It is a barbed wire stem with leaves stemming from the top. The wire represents the pain and suffering, while the leaves symbolise the rebirth and hope that emerged in the wake of this unparalleled tragedy. I will wear this pin with pride and honour.

## Rabbis pledge support for local mosque

BY MANNY ROBINSON

FOURTEEN local rabbis have sent a letter of support to the Ilford Islamic Centre in Albert Road, Ilford, after worshippers there were reportedly pelted with eggs while attending prayers during the holy month of Ramadan.

Woodford Forest United Synagogue's Rabbi Mordechai Wollenberg organised the letter with other local rabbis, expressing the Jewish community's "support and our solidarity following the deplorable and indefensible Islamophobic attack".

The rabbis said they hoped Muslims "will not be discouraged from going about their lawful practice of their religion and worship unhindered".

Saying Redbridge's religious communities "co-exist in harmony and mutual respect for one another and for the rule of law", they said nobody "should have to fear attack simply for attending a place of worship. There can be zero tolerance for any hatred of this kind".

Signatories include Rabbis Yanki Abrams (Loughton Synagogue), Odom Brandman (Buckhurst Hill Chabad),

Steven Dansky (Cranbrook), Boruch Davis (Chigwell & Hainault), Rafi Goodwin (Chigwell & Hainault), Avraham Kahan (Highams Park & Chingford), Yossi Posen (Chabad of Epping), Rev Stewart Myers, Rev Gary Newman (Cranbrook), David Singer (Ilford Federation), Yaakov Singer (Redbridge), Aryeh Sufrin (Chabad Ilford), Lee Sunderland (Romford & District (Affiliate)) and Mordechai Wollenberg (Woodford Forest United).

Sam Tarry, Labour MP for Ilford South, said: "I am shocked and saddened to hear of this Islamophobic attack against Ilford Mosque. These disgraceful acts of violence and hatred have no place in Ilford, and I hope that the perpetrators face justice as soon as possible."

Jas Athwal, Labour leader of Redbridge Council, echoed Tarry saying: "Racist incidents like this have no place in our borough."

Detective Chief Superintendent Stephen Clayman added: "Incidents like this will not be tolerated and my officers will be undertaking enhanced patrols in the area to provide reassurance."

## Essex start-ups helped at Work Avenue event



**Marc Southern**

BUDGING entrepreneurs and businesspeople from Essex were among the 100 delegates at Work Avenue's Start-Up Central event.

The online conference had the theme of Innovate: Inform: Inspire – and saw speakers share their experiences and tips on everything from the basics of starting a business to being able to pivot and grow in tough situations, such as the pandemic.

The keynote discussion was between Rachel Anticoni, COO of the NHS Royal Free Hospital, and Marc Southern, a member of Work Avenue's WE Hub shared working space, who went on to co-found bob.health to help health and social care staff tell their stories.

Marc spoke about the 'leap of faith' he and his co-founder took in quitting their day jobs and cashing in their savings to launch the business. He discussed the challenges they faced, how they broke through and the four values they based their business on, as they have grown and hired staff.

Marc said: "We launched last April, building our web-

site in just three weeks so we could be online for the first wave of the pandemic, as we believed we really could help the NHS.

"We have faced many challenges along the way. The key to tackling them is resilience and always sticking to your values and culture, even as you grow."

Former BBC reporter and Virgin Atlantic executive Paul Charles gave advice on taking the leap from corporate life to starting your own business. He also spoke about how his travel consultancy, The PC Agency, survived the pandemic, including the very public Save Our Summer campaign he created to help the entire industry.

Other speakers at Start-Up Central included Kate Hofman, who co-founded sustainable food company Grow Up Farms, Pizza Hut Europe's Head of Insights Nick Rabin and Sasha Frieze, who successfully pivoted her conference organising company, The Business Narrative, to develop online events during the pandemic.

The event ended with a chance for delegates to network with each other and make new contacts as they develop their own business journeys.

Work Avenue Interim CEO Emma May said: "As lockdowns have eased, we are seeing more people from the Essex Jewish community approach us with regard to starting or growing their own small businesses. This event gave them the chance to hear from people who have done exactly that – giving a unique chance to learn from both the successes and the mistakes of others who were once in their position."



**RUTH SEAGER, East London & Essex Synagogue member and the chair of Liberal Judaism, held a Cheese Cake Cook-A-Long for the community.**

Ruth demonstrated how to make her late mother's traditional cheese cake recipe, joking: "Please don't let it be known how easy this cake is to make ... it has been my family secret for years!"

01

# BEHIND EVERY DOOR IS A CHANGED LIFE TOGETHER WE CAN OPEN DOORS AND TRANSFORM LIVES



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Michael, Jewish Blind & Disabled Tenant

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# Jewish penicillin anyone? How kosher hospital food has taken on a new flavour

**PAT LIDIKER**

TALKS TO  
**ARI FEFERKORN**  
WHOSE CHARITY IS  
BREATHING NEW  
LIFE INTO OUR  
HOSPITAL WARDS

**N**OBODY ever wants to be in hospital, especially when COVID visitor restrictions keep them isolated from their families. This can be even more upsetting for Jewish patients as we approach the High Holy Days.

However, the good news is that Bedside Kosher, a charity founded in Stamford Hill 18 months ago by Ari Feferkorn, sets out to alleviate this with distribution of daily kosher meals across the UK. These are available, on request, to the whole Jewish community, however observant, including children.

Bedside Kosher has expanded its activities to Essex – including King George's and hospitals in Canvey Island and Southend – and liaises with the Nutrition and Hydration Committee for Barking, Havering and Redbridge NHS Trust.

Ari told the *Essex Jewish News*: "We believe that this is the start of a wider adjustment on how the NHS approaches cultural diets, bringing menus into line with its standard food options."

It is hoped that leaders of local synagogues will pass on requests for those not yet aware of the service, which is committed to ensuring every Jewish patient can enjoy fresh, delicious meals in hospital with a taste of home.

More details on how to order your meals can be found on [www.bedsidekosher.co.uk](http://www.bedsidekosher.co.uk)



The launch of Bedside Kosher in March 2020, just before the pandemic struck and hospitals were locked down, helped so many.

As Ari told us: "We heard of Jewish patients without any meals or even hot drinks, soon realising we weren't just filling a gap in the cultural menu but also the empty bellies of vulnerable people.

"People with no access to fresh, comforting home cooking could now receive that secret ingredient to help put them back on the road to recovery."

While his tireless team of volunteers has managed to deliver 50,000 meals during the pandemic, Ari is particularly proud of how everyone rallied for Shavuot with cheesecake, blintzes and other festive

treats. "It was an emotional time for us, seeing so many happy faces," he added.

Ari knows Rosh Hashanah will be even more challenging as word gets around and demand continues to increase, saying: "The pandemic has been very tough, but has also shown the generous spirit that exists in our community. So many people have freely given up their time and money to help those in need to get access to a proper hospital diet. It's truly something special to be part of that."

Such is the support from members of the public, too, that a recent fundraiser raised over £370,000, something Ari and his team found very humbling.

"Unfortunately, our overheads are huge," he revealed.

"But because our army of volunteers give their time unstintingly, every penny raised goes into providing these vital hospital meals."

Figures are daunting, as it costs Bedside Kosher £650,000 a year to run the service, catering to more than 70 UK hospitals across London and further afield. The charity is constantly looking for sponsors and volunteers at all levels and can be contacted on the links shown below.

It had been found that for many Jewish patients, stranded in hospital on their own due to COVID rules and without visitors providing food parcels, their only option has been limited to frozen meals and no breakfast at all.

Compare this with Bedside Kosher's plans for a spe-

## Bedside Kosher.

cial Rosh Hashanah menu – a traditional hot Yomtov meal, challah, Kiddush cup, grape juice, apple and honey and sweet treats.

Friday night and Shabbat meals, too, offer a true home from home flavour – including that famous Jewish penicillin of chicken soup – while menus for the coming chagim are designed to reflect the different seasonal specialties enjoyed over the ages.

Ari concluded: "Thankfully, because Bedside

Kosher's phone lines are open around the clock, the team is primed and ready to go the extra mile. No Jewish patient will ever have to worry about what they will eat for breakfast or whether their Shabbat meal will be kosher."

For more details on Bedside Kosher:  
Instagram: [BedsideKosher](https://www.instagram.com/bedsidekosher/).  
Facebook: [bedsidekosher](https://www.facebook.com/bedsidekosher/).  
Twitter: [@bedsidekosher](https://twitter.com/bedsidekosher).  
Website: [www.bedsidekosher.co.uk](http://www.bedsidekosher.co.uk)

### ARI FEFERKORN FACT FILE

\* Born in the United States, Ari began his working life as a butcher before launching a construction trade fair, J-Trade, which led to him making his living strengthening business links across the community.

\* He moved to Stamford Hill as a young man to be with his wife Goldie, who he met while she was on vacation in the US – they now have three children.

\* Goldie's US holiday unfortunately ended up as a prolonged hospital stay where she was served unappetising, substandard frozen fare. But when a wonderful organisation stepped in providing delicious fresh meals, she could look forward to. It changed everything.

\* Inspired by this experience, the Feferkorns decided to set up a similar project in the UK and hence Bedside Kosher was born.

### Masorti community comes out of lockdown in style

BY SUSAN GEIST

AS we all emerged from the Covid restrictions, New Essex Masorti Synagogue (NEMS) members were treated to a fantastic celebration to welcome them back to the synagogue in person.

'Afternoon Tea on the Terrace' was laid on for members of the synagogue, courtesy of the NEMS Executive. It was held in a beautiful outdoor setting in the grounds of the shul, which they share with South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue (SWESRS).

NEMS member Juliette Carter commented afterwards about how she felt about everyone being able to be together again after such a long time. She said: "I was very nervous about coming, but it was lovely and I soon relaxed. It was so good to see people, my NEMS family. I've missed everyone. It was very well catered and extremely well worked out, so it was as safe as possible. I hope this type of outdoor event can happen again. None of us wanted to leave in the end!"

The tea party came as NEMS Shabbat services started to commence again fortnightly in their brand new facility on the site of

SWESRS, in Newbury Park. For those who still feel that they are not quite ready to attend in person, NEMS Rabbi Zahavit Shalev is still running a Zoom service and learning session every other Thursday, so they can say Kadish and feel part of the community.

To find out more about upcoming NEMS events or for membership enquiries, please visit [www.nemsynagogue.co.uk](http://www.nemsynagogue.co.uk) or call 07922 090180.

Michael re-elected



MICHAEL GOLDSTEIN, who spent his formative years as a member of Ilford United Synagogue and Ilford Jewish Primary School has been elected for a second term as United Synagogue president.



**Jack Mathews (pictured) celebrated his second barmitzvah on reaching the age of 83. It took place at South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue. Because of coronavirus restrictions at the time, only 15 people were allowed into the synagogue; but there were more than 100 others joining the event on Zoom.**

# WIJPS leavers still celebrate despite restrictions



BY SUSAN GEIST

THE year 6 leavers at Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School (WIPJS) might have had an unusual end to primary school in

the midst of the pandemic, but they were determined not to let that stop them celebrating.

Staff and parents found innovative ways to make the end of term and the end of

their time at the school feel special, even though some of the usual activities couldn't go ahead.

Instead of a residential activity day at Fairlop Waters; they were still able to perform in a 'virtual' end-of-year show for parents, and even managed a Covid-safe Leaver's Prom.

# Hybrid simchas



The community at East London & Essex Liberal Synagogue (ELELS) have introduced hybrid services to welcome members back to the synagogue, while keeping many of the advantages that technology brought during lockdown.

One highlight of the new way of doing things was the batmitzvah of Naomi, who had grown up in the community.

Naomi (pictured) was joined by her two older brothers, parents and grandparents along with Rabbi Richard Jacob and her batmitzvah

teacher, Nick Young.

The rest of the congregation were then able to zoom into the service, and complete a morning of activities from the comfort of their own home.

Ben Glassman, the new chair of ELELS, said: "We are delighted that we've been able to hold our first in-person services for more than a year.

"We are working hard to offer a service that mixes something new and something familiar for everyone joining us, in whatever medium they choose. These first steps have been very well received."

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# Stacey Dooley's Essex sleepover



**Stacey Dooley with Rabbi Mordechai and Rebbetzen Blima Wollenberg and their nine children**

BY **MICHAELA BLITZ**

RABBI Mordechai and Rebbetzen Blima Wollenberg, of Woodford Forest Synagogue, showed the very best of our Essex Jewish community when they appeared on Stacey Dooley Sleeps.

The popular TV show sees Strictly Come Dancing winner Stacey spending the weekend in various households across the UK to show a cross-section of modern British family life.

The Wollenbergs, along with their nine children, were keen to welcome Stacey into their home to show her their way of life and dispel some of the "mystery that often surrounds religion and religious people".

They told the *Essex Jewish News*: "Stacey was a lovely guest and a real pleasure to work with. We showed her the same level of hospitality during her stay as we would do with any other guest who comes to our home. Obviously in this case, the main difference was that she stayed with us for 72 hours and brought a film crew!"

During her time with the family at their Essex home, the TV star got to see first-hand what every day life for a modern Orthodox family of 11 looks like, from busy mealtimes to preparing for Shabbat.

She also accompanied Reb-

betzen Wollenberg to a mikveh to find out more about modesty and the laws of family purity. Throughout filming, Rabbi and Rebbetzen Wollenberg were very open in their discussions with Stacey, and were happy to answer any questions she had.

With the rise in popularity of shows like *Shtisel* and *Unorthodox*, the Wollenbergs hoped that the programme would give viewers a more realistic insight into the life of an Orthodox Rabbi and "show the human face of Judaism and Jewish life".

As Rabbi Wollenberg added: "Judaism is about asking questions, and I think that it is better that those seeking an-

swers find out from reliable, proper sources instead of seeking knowledge elsewhere that may give mis-information and cause even more confusion and misunderstanding."

Being with the family for such a long period meant that Stacey developed a relationship with them and had to adopt a slightly different interview style than she would in a normal documentary situation.

She explained: "I have to ask the questions; but I also have to sit down and have dinner with them an hour later. And I have to ask them how to use their shower. So, there's no denying that it sometimes feels very awkward. But that's my job!"



# KKS award winners



**Award winning KKS pupils Jake and Maria**

BY **LAURA MARKS**

PUPILS at Kantor King Solomon (KKS) High School triumphed in a Dragons Den style competition, which invited Jewish schools all over the country to pitch projects aimed at improving their peers' experiences post-lockdown.

KKS came joint first with JFS in the online event, which was run by Partnerships for Jewish Schools and supported by Genesis Philanthropy Group.

The KKS project, to create a quiet outdoor space to help improve mental health and wellbeing, was successfully

presented by students Jake Levy and Maria Chicu. The school will now receive £6,000 towards turning it into a reality.

A spokesperson for the school told the *Essex Jewish News*: "This is the second year we have won and couldn't be prouder of Jake and Maria, the youngest students to ever represent our school."

The two-hour event was compered live from JW3 by its CEO, Raymond Simonson, a former Essex resident.

Raymond said: "I was blown away by the quality of the students' proposals, as well as by how articulate and engaging their presentations were."

# Harlow's helping hand

A PERFORMING arts group, for people with and without disabilities and learning difficulties and which has performed for Harlow (Reform) Jewish Community, is using a £749 donation from the community's Kol Nidre Appeal to organise small focused outings for its members.

Razed Roof has played an important role in the synagogue's Holocaust Memorial Day events in recent years. The group provides theatre skills training and opportunities for performing publicly. Building social skills and confidence is an integral part of the work.

Its artistic director, Annette Lidster, said: "In the light of the difficult last 18 months we've decided that the best use of Harlow Synagogue's generous donation will be to arrange meetings and outings of small groups of our students.

"Their moving performances have added a valued extra dimension to our HMD events, and we look forward to seeing them again in the coming months."

periods of isolation. Some haven't been out for 15 months and don't have, or can't use, technology.

"Anxiety about elderly, vulnerable parents has compounded all other anxieties; so to help with this, we're organising small, focused outings.

"The aim is to encourage our students to re-engage in social activities in a safe, supported way and to re-build confidence. Working in smaller groups allows each participant to have support targeted to their particular needs."

Synagogue chair Alan Cohen added: "It's extremely gratifying to hear that our appeal will be helping Razed Roof to start going out and about again, building their confidence and enjoying themselves."

"It's been tougher for some due to additional challenges, such as bereavements and long

# IT'S ALL CHANGE FOR TWO REFORM SYNAGOGUES

## Toronto rabbi joins SWESRS

The South West Essex and Settlement Reform Synagogue (SWESRS) has appointed Rabbi Jordan Helfman as the community's new rabbi.

Rabbi Jordan is currently associate rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto and will be joining SWESRS on 1 January 2022. He will replace Rabbi Lisa Barrett in the pulpit.

He told the *Essex Jewish News*: "While we are still a few months and an ocean away, I am very much looking forward to joining the SWESRS community. Rabbi Lisa has spoken so highly of the community – as has one of my current Rabbis Emeritus, Dow Marmur, who recalls his time there exceedingly fondly."

Rabbi Jordan was born in Detroit and grew up in New Jersey. While at university, Progressive Jewish values became increasingly important to him and he began leading services for the Reform student group and taking weekend trips to the rabbinical school in Cincinnati.

He continues: "One of my mentors at the rabbinical school recommended that I take a few years working in the Jewish community between university and applying, to make sure I was on the correct path, which led me for the first time to work in the Jewish community in the UK. I spent almost two years in the UK, working as the Oved



**Rabbi Jordan Helfman**

Chinuch (Educator) for Liberal Jewish Youth / Reform Zionist Youth, from the Montagu Centre.

"During this time in the UK, I made some of the strongest friendships in my life

- including with my wife, Dr Jemma Helfman, a clinical psychologist.

"Since my ordination, I have been serving Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto - a truly amazing community where I have had the opportunity to

learn and grow under the tutelage of Rabbi Yael Splansky. At Holy Blossom, I have helped reinvigorate the 20s and 30s program, and supported new avenues in youth education, social justice and interfaith work. I

have taught some, and learned much.

"I am very much looking forward to continuing my journey with the SWESRS community. I know there are so many stories of love and affection for the SWESRS community – and I look forward to learning them, as we help draw each other closer to Progressive Judaism, the rhythms of Jewish life, and all of the sorrows and joys contained within a thriving Jewish community."

Rabbi Jordan and Jemma have four children – Toby (9), Mollie (7), Henriette (5) and Dov (2) – and a cat, Lola (13).

SWESRS has also appointed Student Rabbi Lev Taylor for the coming academic year, including for the High Holy Days.

Student Rabbi Lev grew up in Reading as an active member of Reading's Liberal Jewish community, and previously has worked in the charity and education sectors. He is in the last year of his rabbinic studies at Leo Baeck College and has just completed a very successful stint as student rabbi at Newcastle, and Edgware & Hendon Reform communities.

A spokesman for SWESRS said: "We are delighted that, in addition to his studentship, Student Rabbi Lev has also accepted an additional bursary



**Student Rabbi Lev Taylor**

placement with us, meaning that he will be coming to SWESRS for an additional three days a week for a year. We know he will be a very welcome asset to us.

"Until Rabbi Jordan joins us in January, we will also be supplementing our rabbinic support on an ad hoc basis as it is needed, and are grateful to those rabbis who have offered to step in, including Rabbi Lisa.

"This all heralds an exciting time for SWESRS' future. Council has listened carefully to what you the community were telling us in the consultations on rabbinic recruitment, and are thrilled that in Rabbi Jordan we have found the rabbi that SWESRS is seeking.

"We know that Rabbi Jordan, supported by Student Rabbi Lev, will actively help us build, develop and go from strength to strength."

## ... and award winning Tali comes to Sukkat Shalom

RABBI Dr Tali Artman-Partock has been appointed as the new rabbi of Sukkat Shalom Reform Synagogue. She started work in August and succeeds Rabbi Larry Becker, who retired at the end of June.

Rabbi Tali grew up in Israel and obtained a BA in psychology and Hebrew literature, and a PhD in Rabbinic literature, from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She moved to England in 2014 to become a lecturer in the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge University and at Leo Baeck College.

Rabbi Tali has won several awards and fellowships and teaches regularly for the Open Talmud Project, Limmud and other public events. She wrote regularly for the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, both as a book reviewer and about her own research. Her own book will be published later this year.

Rabbi Tali said: "Judaism has always had a big brain, but it could not have survived if it did not also have a big heart. This Judaism, that involved mind, body and soul, is what makes Sukkat Shalom so special.

"I hope that, in my years there, I will be able to support the community in becoming a home for as many Jewish people and Jewish experiences as possible, and follow Rabbi Larry's footsteps of interfaith



**Rabbi Dr Tali Artman-Partock**

dialogue and care for the wider community."

Sukkat Shalom is based in Wanstead on the East London / Essex border with more than 470 adult members and around 90 children. In 2021, it is celebrating its 40th birthday.

Chair Jeff Soraff said: "The Congregation would like to thank Larry for his great leadership, partnership and inspiration over the past 13 years, to wish

him happy retirement and to warmly welcome Tali to the community."

Larry now becomes Emeritus Rabbi of Sukkat Shalom. He said: "Everyone wants to have the person that follows them to be better than they are, and I think in this case it's a done deal. I think Tali will be absolutely brilliant, in so many different ways, and I look forward to having her as my

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# Meet Epping's growing Jewish community

BY JONATHAN WEINBERG

IT was on 28 August 2019 that Rabbi Yossi Posen and his wife Rivka, along with three of their – now four – children, landed in England for a new life in Epping... their dream to create a community from scratch.

Just over two years later that initial mission has been realised and it isn't hard to see why. With his good humour, welcoming nature and high energy levels, Rabbi Posen has swept through West Essex like a Jewish whirlwind.

Epping Chabad is now a much-loved part of the Essex Jewish scene, swelling the numbers active in its events, celebrations and services from around 20 families in 2019 to more than 150 today. Jews come not only from Epping but also from further out; in Harlow, Ongar, North Weald and Sawbridgeworth.

The Epping community began out of a small house in Bridge Hill, before moving six months later to a property on Station Road, just two weeks before the first lockdown in March 2020.

Rabbi Posen told the *Essex Jewish News*: "This is our life's mission; to try and build a community."

"Lockdown got in the way of everything you would regularly associate with this task. However, I realised a community is a whole bunch of individuals, and you only create a much bigger one through personal relationships. Lockdown in a weird way helped, as I was reaching out and knocking on doors."

"Phone calls could take an hour. Before the pandemic you'd be happy to speak to someone for two minutes. We built the deepest relationships through the toughest of times."

## Delivering the community message

One way the Posens achieved their 'mission' was delivering 10 Shabbat parcels on a Friday, comprising of Rivka's homemade challah and the Rabbi's homemade hummus, plus candles – asking each recipient to nominate someone else to receive a parcel the following week. (*Writer's Note: The challah was amazing!*)

With the help of a huge



**The young people of the new and popular Epping Cteen Club**

team of volunteers, parcels were then also sent to dozens of homes for Rosh Hashanah 2020, and then a full seder plate of goodies was delivered at Pesach 2021.

"Every front door was like a half hour visit," Rabbi Posen, 27, said. "We just got to know so many people and those people now come on a weekly or monthly basis. We met more than 100 Jewish families this way."

For the past 18 months, Station Road has served as the epicentre of all communal activities, including Friday night and Saturday morning services, an annual community BBQ, baby and toddler groups, a Purim drive-through party, teenage group gatherings; and it will house Epping's forthcoming cheder. Rabbi Posen is overjoyed that 10 children are already signed up.

Other notable successes have included conducting two educational courses on Zoom, hosting a virtual weekly wine and chat and offering themed takeaway Kosher food nights, which have drawn 100 people each time.

The rabbi has also connected two Jewish neighbours who live on the same street, but didn't know the other existed, and helped a lady whose husband was in the local St Clare Hospice to access kosher food.

It is also a mark of how inclusive and welcoming the

community is that Rabbi Posen tells the story of a lady who was overjoyed when her non-Jewish husband was invited to Station Road for Friday night dinner. He also enthuses about the young girl who wanted to be Turkish because they had big festivals, but was then able to finally celebrate Jewish festivals and tell her friends at school about it.

have a passion for youth education and programming. I relate to young mums, being one myself, and I know how important it is for us to be able to get out and socialise, plus the children having other children to play with.

"The pandemic definitely made it even more important, as people are desperate to be part of a community and they want



**The Epping community's first chuppah – Hannah Simons and Luke Scott**

## Balancing family life with community needs

Having grown up in Golders Green, Rabbi Posen arrived in Epping, with Rivka, via his yeshiva in Manchester and Israel, and then a stint in New York – where Rivka is from and where the pair married in 2015 – and then four more years back in Israel as a couple.

Rivka explained her own biggest challenge has been juggling family – daughter Zelda was born at home during the 2021 lockdown – and community, but said people, being so inviting and friendly, had made adjusting much easier.

Her own Jewish whirlwind has seen Rivka establish groups for women as well as young mums, and she told us: "I was in the education field so naturally

purpose and meaning."

One young mum, Hannah Phillips, added: "One of the biggest worries when moving out to Epping was losing the Jewish community feel, but we should not have worried as we feel more part of a community than ever."

With this year's High Holy Days and festivals approaching, there will be less restrictions compared with last time. Back then, a large marquee complete with heaters was erected in the Station Road garden, with socially-distanced services and a shift system. This month, a new marquee will arrive, after community members requested it, saying how lovely a setting it was compared to hiring a hall.

## Visions of a new Epping Synagogue

However, the next step is for the community to have its own

synagogue and Rabbi Posen is dreaming big. He wants a large building, as central as possible, ideally on, or very near, Epping High Street, but admits it will depend on fundraising and local philanthropists. In February 2021, £70,000 was raised during a funding drive.

The area might not be one you'd usually associate with Jews but the rabbi has found so many people locally are fascinated to know there's now a Jewish community, and they regularly come up to him in the street to ask questions.

A Star of David window was also recently found on an Epping building and a local historian is trying to discover its significance.

One Epping resident, extremely happy by the growth in a Jewish community, is 86-year-old Sidney Green, who has lived in the town for 41 years. At Chanukah, Epping saw its first Menorah on the High Street, with daily candle lightings. One was also installed in Harlow's shopping centre.

Sidney said: "It is very comforting to know that there is a strong Jewish presence in the Epping area."

A keen user of social media in his efforts to boost community numbers and cohesion, Rabbi Posen has gone on to build strong bonds with local clergy and other religious lead-

"Spain was once an option, but Epping was extremely attractive because of the total lack of Jewish infrastructure on the one hand and, on the other, the amount of Jewish people living here or nearby."

"We realised there was a movement from Gants Hill, Barkingside and those areas. The younger families certainly wouldn't have been going anywhere else, so it's amazing to be able to provide this for them. It is a unique and warm community, based on friendships and recommendations."

## Serving the community's religious needs

Each week, Station Road is the venue for regular Friday night services – lasting around an hour with prayers, much chat, cake and a whisky – with a minyan in attendance. On a Saturday morning, 20 to 30 enjoy a service and large kiddush.

One regular congregant, Malcolm Rothstein, 68, (*Disclaimer: EJN editor Simon's dad*), said: "I think the rabbi and his wife have been a breath of fresh air."

"Friday night and Shabbat morning can be easily followed, whatever level of Hebrew you have. Also, it has enabled us to reunite with, and also meet new, people of our age who previously lived in the Clayhall and Barkingside areas. The next big target is for premises to be found to rival Buckhurst Hill."

Having overseen the community's first wedding, bar-mitzvah and bris, Rabbi Posen's work continues. "There were a few months in the beginning when I really got this kind of feeling that Epping is only for retired people," he joked.

"However, that's not true at all. We have built a vibrant community of all ages and people are so receptive, they really want this. What gets me out in the morning is the feedback I'm hearing."

"We are not only here to do Friday night dinners or services. We are here for the long run."

Addressing anyone keen to join the Posens and the West Essex community, Rabbi Posen added: "Allow yourself to celebrate your Judaism, your Jewishness, and don't be scared to take the first step to become part of the community. It is there only to benefit you."

"Get involved. It's Jewish pride and that's what is important and gets us together."



**Rabbi Yossi Posen and his wife Rivka have grown Judaism in Epping**



**Malcolm Rothstein (left) arrives for an Epping Chabad Friday night service**

# My journey from student to assistant head



**KELLY BURACK CHATS TO LAURA MARKS ABOUT HER CAREER**

**K**ELLY Burack has worked at Kantor King Solomon (KKS) High School since 2014. After attending the school as a pupil, Kelly went to the University of East London in 2000 to study psychology.

She returned to KKS first as a learning support assistant, during which time she also spent two and a half years training to be a science teacher. Kelly then quickly progressed to assistant head of year, head of year and earlier this year was promoted to assistant headteacher of safeguarding and pastoral.

*For the benefit of our readers, many of whom went to school with no mention of the words 'safeguarding' and 'pastoral', can you tell us what your job title means?*

Every school should have a specific focus on safeguarding their students. Safeguarding is the action that is taken to pro-

mote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. That harm can be anything that can affect their physical, mental, social or emotional well-being. Any of them, if not identified, can affect the success of any student in any school.

Pastoral is a specific focus on behaviour, both positive and negative, and looking at their personal development and growth. Both safeguarding and pastoral care cross over constantly, which is why both teams work so closely together.

*What does your role entail on a day-to-day basis?*

"When you work in a school, no two days are the same. One day I could have back-to-back meetings with parents, counsellors and other external services. This is to ensure effective support and provision is provided, not only internally but outside of school too. On another day, I could be teaching science, running training programmes for staff, looking at the latest safeguarding policies and procedures, keeping staff up to date with

priority students and conducting learning walks around the school."

*How do you identify a child that needs additional support from the safeguarding team?*

The reason why Kantor King Solomon is so unique is how closely we work as a community. Every member of staff (not solely the safeguarding team) is responsible for safeguarding our students. Teaching staff in particular get a unique insight into how children are developing, behaving and interacting with others. Therefore, if something doesn't seem right, perhaps a change in behaviour or engagement within lessons is necessary; we have robust systems in place to ensure the student is identified and spoken to, and based on that conversation, specific support can be put in place.

*What type of support is available at KKS?*

Depending on the needs of the child, Kantor King Solomon can offer a variety of

different support services, some are internal and others external. For example, we have a sixth form buddy programme. This involves the sixth former meeting the student on a one-to-one basis and the student being able to express their thoughts and feelings.

We provide two different mentoring programmes, one of which is mental health specific and are run by external companies. We work with four counselling services: Edens Trust (specifically for bereavement), Norwood and two independent counsellors on site, which means collectively we provide full-time counselling.

In addition to all of this, day-to-day support can include: a Time Out card (a student is able to have a five-minute break outside of the classroom), well-being check-ins by the heads of year and our well-being hub, where students can drop in before and after school, during break or lunchtime to talk with myself or Miss Cohen (the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

*Can you tell us more about the external services that the school works with?*

We aim to build positive and productive working relationships with many different organisations. To name a few, we work with JAMI, Streetwise, Jewish Women's Aid and Keshet UK continuously to help educate our students on important themes that are vital to our curriculum and also for students personal development such as 'body image', 'anti-semitism and discrimination', 'healthy relationships' and 'online safety'.

*What do you enjoy most about your role?*

The job satisfaction aspect has always been a priority in my life. I went into education because I want to inspire the future generations and ensure every child has an equal chance of success in life, but not just academically, success is measured in many different ways.

Giving our students the necessary tools to develop into well-rounded young adults is just one factor that can help them build a successful future.

# Skeet becomes Europe's first kosher eco-hotel

BY MICHAELA BLITZ

WITH foreign holidays pretty much on hold this year, the opening of the first kosher eco-hotel in Europe, in May, was a welcome staycation option.

Sadeh Farm Hotel in Orpington, Kent is a not-for-profit boutique hotel surrounded by seven acres in the countryside. The 17th century manor house opened to guests at the end of May in line with government guidance.

For many, the site that this new hotel is situated on will be very familiar. Originally purchased in the 1940s by the Jewish Youth Fund for the Brady Boys' Club, as a place for respite from the war-torn East End, it later became known as Skeet Hill House and was used by youth groups from across the community.

Since changing its name to 'Sadeh', which means 'field' in Hebrew, it has undergone a major renovation and now boasts five beautiful new family suites, each with their own personality; and each based on the seven fruits and grains native to Israel (the Shivot Ha'Minim).

The name reflects the values of promoting wellbeing of people and the planet by encouraging people to spend time in the countryside.

Director of Sadeh Farm Hotel Naomi Verber said that the hotel offers a more accessible option to get away from it all without travelling too far. She added: "Being situated just an hour away from the Jewish communities of north London, Essex and Hertfordshire makes us the ideal staycation."

The hotel accommodates up to 25 guests in total, across suites and double suites. All food is included in the booking, and which is prepared in the hotel's kosher certified restaurant.

Guests can enjoy freshly prepared vegan, dairy, fish and gluten-free meals using ethically sourced produce, including organic fruit and vegetables that are grown on site. It also works with local farmers to source produce to ensure a low carbon supply chain.

There are a wide range of daily activities available, which are also included in the booking, such as Farm and Forest foraging tours, tractor rides to honey-making workshops, and vegetable picking, catering for

all ages and abilities. Other activities, including outdoor cinema evenings, bonfire nights, magic shows, face painting and discos for children, will also be offered as part of a seasonal programme. There are also experts on site who can guide guests through nature walks, helping them to learn more about the environment from a Jewish perspective.

For those wanting more physical activities, there are also tennis and basketball courts, a zipwire and obstacle course, two playgrounds, a children's playroom and even an indoor pool. Older guests can enjoy the onsite microbrewery; and the property also boasts a large library and lounge, grand dining room and complimentary Wi-Fi and parking.

Bookings are currently being taken up to summer 2022, and autumn and winter adult-only breaks are also being offered; as well as special Shabbat and Jewish festival packages. The hotel is also available for exclusive hire for simchas, private events and parties.

The ethos of protecting the environment is at the heart of the hotel's operations, from the food that they supply down to the toiletries they supply to guests. The hotel has been established as a social enterprise run by environmental charity Sadeh, which aims to educate Jewish people about the environment. All proceeds from the hotel will go back into the charity for future projects.

Naomi feels that the hotel is "the perfect place for couples and families to unwind, connect and regenerate."

*To find out more, please visit [www.sadehfarm.co.uk](http://www.sadehfarm.co.uk)*

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FROM THE  TEAM



# Steering Redbridge through a decade of changes

**PAT LIDIKER**  
SPEAKS TO  
**CLLR JAS ATHWAL**  
ABOUT HIS EVER-CHALLENGING ROLE AS LEADER OF REDBRIDGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**O**N arrival in Ilford 51 years ago, from the Punjab, nothing could have been further from one little boy's mind than that sometime in the future he could be running the Council.

But today, at the age of 59, Cllr Jas Athwal has been leader of the Redbridge Labour Group since 2011 and became leader of the Borough Council in 2014 following the local election.

In an exclusive interview with the *Essex Jewish News*, as part of our series of chats with local politicians, Cllr Athwal smiles at the thought, telling us: "In those days I saw the Town Hall as a big place where only really important people made decisions for everybody else!"

He says he remembers very little of his childhood before coming to the town which has shaped his life. It was here that he went to Mayfield School, met his wife and where their four children were born at King George's Hospital. And, as an avid supporter of Essex Senior League side Woodford Town FC, he was naturally over the moon when last year they named the stand at their new ground after him.

He studied at LSE and, following graduation, started his own children's nursery business. He moved into politics in 2010, taking his seat in Ilford Town Hall, where a year later he was elected Redbridge's first ever Labour leader, with Wes Streeting as his deputy.

The two men formed a close, lasting friendship and shared the same values, so when Wes stood for and was elected MP for Ilford North, was Jas tempted to follow in his footsteps to Westminster?

"If the right chance came then I would take it," he says. "But I would only stand in Ilford where I understand the people, their problems and issues and what they stand for so well. This is where my heart is."

Cllr Athwal tried to become an MP in 2019. His bid was derailed by a claim of sexual harassment on the eve of the selection process. He was completely exonerated of any wrongdoing and continues as leader of Redbridge Council with full support. Wes Streeting described the allegation as "malicious" and "a stitch up" and Cllr Athwal told us of the pain it had caused. Sadly, it also meant he was denied the chance to compete for the safe seat, which ended up being won by left-winger Sam Tarry.

Despite this, he remains a Labour man to his core and has great respect for new leader Sir Keir Starmer. "The dark days are gone under his new man-



agement," he maintains. He also enjoys a strong relationship with London Mayor Sadiq Khan, adding: "We have been good friends ever since he was with us in Redbridge in 2014, when Labour won the Council for the first time in history. Together with other London leaders, we have all worked as a team supporting each other during this very difficult time, sharing ideas, sources of PPE, test, track and trace procurement, vaccinations and sadly excess death planning."

On the home front, he is all too aware of how much things have changed in Ilford in recent years; and not always for the better, mainly due to the lure of out-of-town shopping.

He said: "Redbridge had been shaped by generations of immigrants, benefitting enormously from its Jewish community in particular. Moving from the East End into leafy areas like Gants Hill, they brought prosperity to the area when it most needed it, for which we owe them a debt of gratitude."

Like his own Sikh community, which is gradually moving out to areas like Emerson Park, many Jewish families have been heading for

Loughton, Epping and beyond. Not that Cllr Athwal has any plans to move, as he has family ties here, including his brother, sister and mother-in-law living nearby. He is also overseeing impressive improvement projects in Ilford itself.

This includes The Spark, an exciting new eating and cultural experience by Mercato Metropolitano, based on their others in Mayfair and Elephant and Castle. The Exchange, too, is to be upgraded with additions such as a cinema, big stores and a brighter shopping area.

On a less optimistic note, Cllr Athwal worries a great deal about the renewed acceleration of antisemitism, which he sees first-hand through his many ties and friendships within the local Jewish community.

He told us: "I saw the fear on people's faces when many told me how frightened they were during the last election, when it looked as if Corbyn could gain power. They felt they couldn't move freely anymore and may even have to leave this country. When Rabbi Rafi Goodwin was violently attacked outside Chigwell Synagogue, I

went to visit him and he was in a terrible state.

"Racists will use any excuse to blame the Jews for everything, but are also Islamophobic and have lost tolerance for their neighbours. All faiths must stand together in solidarity against this," says this turban-wearing Sikh who has suffered racist abuse of his own.

It's never easy being the leader of the Council, but never more so than during the restrictions of the pandemic, meaning he frequently works 16 hours a day to keep all the balls in the air.

"Covid has had a huge impact on the way we work as a Council," he admitted. "We had to immediately adapt to virtual meetings for all our public, Cabinet and full Council meetings, which meant teaching all councillors to use to use Team and a new sound system in the chamber. The Town Hall was closed to visitors, and all staff who were able to have been working from home.

"It has been very hard. We miss seeing colleagues in person and I have really missed knocking on doors for the first time since I became leader.

"New ways had to be found for delivering key services, speaking to local people and providing support. This includes delivering food parcels, medicines etc to vulnerable residents, those unable to leave their homes, school children and older people in need. We set up a call service with Council staff drafted in to phone people over 70 once a week, to ensure they were ok and co-ordinate any support they may need.

"The government let us down with PPE, so we knew we had to step in. We hired a team of fantastic Covid Marshalls, who have been going from door to door in areas of high infection providing tests and information; also creating and supporting a vaccine bus and three permanent local test centres."

Like all of us, he has found it hard not seeing his large, close-knit family and friends, except over Zoom or through front windows – and says he is still haunted by some of the tragedy in our region.

Cllr Athwal added: "My main memory from the worst days, which will stay with me for a long time, was the endless work, meeting upon meeting on topics and issues you never think of as a Council leader. Like mortuary, crematorium and burial space, which were genuinely bone-chilling. It has honestly been an incredibly difficult time."

Finally, I asked if, through good times or bad over the past decade, he sees this as his job for life?

He concluded: "It ultimately depends on whether we retain our Labour majority next year. We live in a democracy and it's up to the voters to decide, not me, so we just have to wait and see."

# New year, new start, new CEO



**WORK AVENUE, THE JEWISH COMMUNITY'S LEADING EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANISATION, LOOK AHEAD TO 5782**

IN accordance with the cycle of the seasons, the autumn brings many fresh starts.

It's the start of the new school year and, for our community, it's Rosh Hashanah – signalling a new year and new beginning.

The High Holy Days are a time that prompt us to think about the changes we wish to make in ourselves and our lives. This could be to the ways we live or our relationships and interactions with others.

For many, as we finally emerge out of this pandemic, this will also be a time to ponder what lies ahead career-wise.

There will be thoughts about learning new skills, finding a new job, changing careers or maybe realising a long-cherished business idea.

At Work Avenue, our role is to help you turn those thoughts into reality.

Whatever your situation, as the Jewish community's leading employment and business support organisation, we can help.

We have a dedicated team of one-to-one advisors who can assist with everything from CV creation and mock interviews to building start-up plans and developing existing businesses.

This is complemented by a range of year-round courses, workshops and webinars on all aspects of job hunting, employment, upskilling and business. Best of all, it's all free.

We are also pleased to have added two new services for those looking to enhance or change their careers – the Richard Mintz Bursary Fund (RMBF) and WAGE, our first ever social enterprise.

The RMBF, named in honour of our late trustee, will allocate substantive grants to those who wish to undertake a vocational training course but cannot afford the often very high cost.

Examples of courses the fund will cover include child-minding, plumbing, electrical installation, beauty therapy, cyber security, content writing, programming, interior design, video editing and fitness instruction.

And, of course, everyone applying will also receive our expert advice in selecting the right course, undertaking any additional training and then finding a job or setting up a business at the end of it.

WAGE (which stands for Work Avenue Generating Employment) aims to both create employment and grow businesses by training those seeking work in the key areas that small businesses require help in.

For those seeking work, it provides heavily subsidised training in a number of in-demand fields – including book-keeping, graphic design, IT admin, digital marketing, web design, sales and customer service – bolstered by paid real work projects.

For small businesses, it allows them to utilise a bank of fully trained WAGE members to work on individual projects in an affordable and timely way.

Meanwhile at Work Avenue, change is also afoot. Around Pesach time we said goodbye to our long-serving CEO Debbie Sheldon – as she fulfilled her own lifelong dream to make aliyah and start a new life in Israel.

And, for Rosh Hashanah, we are delighted to welcome our new CEO, David Arden. David has held senior positions throughout government and the civil service and was previously chief executive at the S&P Sephardi Community.

He said: "The poignance of Rosh Hashanah, combined with the excitement that a recovering economy brings, means this is the perfect time for me to be starting with Work Avenue.

"I am looking forward to working with the team to make sure all those in our Jewish community are able to make the most of new opportunities in employment and business."

As David settles in to his new role, Work Avenue will also be making some changes to enhance our offerings. Watch this space or visit [www.the-workavenue.org.uk](http://www.the-workavenue.org.uk) to find out more.

# A Jewish revival in Brighton



**Left: A CGI aerial shot of what the new Brighton community hub will look like. Right: How it looks now with construction well underway**

## WE STEP OUT OF ESSEX TO TAKE A LOOK AT SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPENING FURTHER SOUTH

THERE'S something special happening in Brighton and Hove.

Brighton has 250 years of Jewish history, with many of the city's major landmarks owing their existence to individuals from the Jewish community. The world famous Brighton Palace Pier is just one among them.

However, like Essex, in the last few decades Brighton has experienced falling numbers of Jewish residents, and in an ef-

fort to change the dynamic BNJC (Brighton's Jewish community) embarked on an ambitious programme in 2017 to revive Jewish life in Brighton and Hove.

The ambitious development is 18 months into construction and due to open its doors in the spring of 2022. This vibrant community hub will host 45 outstanding new homes (with underground parking), a synagogue and mikvah, a kosher café, restaurant, bakery and shop, plus social areas to host their daily programme of events and workshops. There will also be co-working space and educational amenities, including a

Jewish nursery.

The core mission of this revival project is to provide the infrastructure to support Jewish life and build the facilities to ensure it will continue to thrive in the years to come.

Speaking about the development when visiting Hove, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis said: "This hub of Jewish life will be a beacon of Jewish identity, with the power to cultivate interfaith relationships and make a lasting impact on the entire city. I hope that it will put Brighton on the Jewish map and the Jewish community on Brighton's map."

In July, representatives of



**the Brighton and Hove Jewish community and dignitaries from the city came together for a Topping Out ceremony to celebrate reaching the highest point in the build.**

Attendees enjoyed amazing views of the sea and the South Downs from the tallest part of the site, on a delightfully sunny day.

CEO Marc Sugarman was joined at the event by Peter Kyle, Brighton and Hove's Labour MP, and Jewish community leaders to mark this milestone moment in the construction.

The ceremony marked the official launch of their outstanding on-site residential offer,

Sapphire Hove, which presents a diverse range of 45 homes just 500 metres from the beach.

From spacious mews houses and penthouses, with stunning sea views, to affordable and stylish apartments, these homes have been built to suit a range of budgets and life stages. Some apartments also qualify for Help to Buy support for first-time buyers, and others will be available for rental.

Addressing attendees, Marc commented on the unique opportunity Sapphire Hove offers Jewish families, saying: "In property the adage is location, location, location -

and we have just that! A beautiful part of Hove, right by the seaside, the South Downs, and less than an hour from London. Our stunning homes offer an opportunity for purposeful living in a wonderful community, with incredible facilities and outstanding kosher food.

"We hope people from across the UK will consider Brighton as a place to live and to bring up a family".

*Those who are interested in joining a vibrant seaside Jewish community on the brink of a new chapter are encouraged to register their interest by visiting [www.sapphirhove.co.uk](http://www.sapphirhove.co.uk)*

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# Life opens up at Jewish Care



Jewish Care's Frances Nathan loves having her nails manicured by Activities Organiser Tracey Mustin at Vi & John Rubens House

LIFE has opened up for all those who use Jewish Care services and homes in Essex.

The residents at Jewish Care's Vi & John Rubens House have been so pleased to see their families again and staff are working hard to keep everyone safe.

Jacklin Stephenson, activity coordinator at the home, said: "We're having a lot of room visits and garden visits and our relatives are really happy to have a good chat and to see the residents. You can see the happiness on their faces after a visit – it's like the cloud has lifted and normalcy is slowly coming back."

"Last week, we had a marvellous end of year concert with Music for Life, which included a singalong, poetry reading, improvisation, with a special cream tea in the garden.

"Residents are getting involved and enjoying activities together again. There's arts and crafts, gardening, reminiscence and the cookery group run by a volunteer, where the residents enjoy making challah. We've also been preparing for Rosh Hashanah, making cards and honey cake."

One resident, Frances Nathan, told of her joy in the changes, saying: "I love

Tracey's bingo and quizzes and being in the garden. My hair's just been done and Tracey has given me a beautiful manicure today too. It feels like things are back to normal and I feel happy."

There was also happiness by the seaside as Jewish Care's Southend & Westcliff Community Centre re-opened in August.

One delighted member is Janice Field. She said: "It's so exciting to see everybody. It feels like it was only yesterday instead of 18 months that we were here and I can't wait to start back with the choir too."

Laura Johnson, who is the tenant support manager at Jewish Care's Shebson Lodge Retirement Living apartments, added: "It was wonderful to be part of the community centre re-opening and for the staff and volunteers to share in the

happiness and excitement of the tenants and members returning. It really made our year being able to open the doors so that everyone could be together once again in person."

Jewish Care's Southend & Westcliff Community Centre is a great place to socialise with friends and enjoy a range of stimulating activities as and a hot meal. As well as members from the local community, the Centre also has members who are tenants at Jewish Care's Shebson Lodge Retirement Living apartments, which is on the same site, making it easy for them to participate in activities at the Centre now that it's reopened.

*For more information about the reopening of Jewish Care's community services, please email [helpline@jcare.org](mailto:helpline@jcare.org) or call 020 8922 2222.*



Jewish Care's Southend & Westcliff Community Centre members Sheila Levy and Maureen Hyman enjoy time with programme assistant Jackie Davies

## RJCC update

### JEWISH CARE UPDATES EJN READERS ON THEIR EXCITING PLANS FOR SINCLAIR HOUSE

JEWISH Care is now edging closer to the new campus and remain as committed as ever to delivering this much needed, state-of-the-art campus to the community on the current Sinclair House site.

For us, this is not just about physical infrastructure but the development of the right services to meet current and future demand for all Jewish Care services and the local community in Essex.

Following a successful initial pre-planning advice application meeting with the London Borough of Redbridge in June 2021, we are now making small revisions to our plans as requested by the London Borough of Redbridge, to be shared at a second pre-planning application advice meeting.

The site in Redbridge is planned to consist of a community centre space, a dementia day centre, and a 60-bed

care home, to which Vi & John Rubens House in Gants Hill will relocate.

Recent research into Retirement Living options across the area shows that there is an ample supply of developments that support the local community there. This means that we will no longer be building retirement living flats on the site.

The site will be Jewish Care's fourth hub, also housing our homecare and social work teams for the area. It will be the final development to complete our four strategic hubs across London and the South East.

While we continue with the planning application process, we are thrilled to enter into new partnerships with synagogue halls and community spaces across the Redbridge area, allowing us to resume in-person activity for many of our members, after the High Holy Days.

*For more information about services in the East London and Essex areas, please contact the Jewish Care Direct helpline on 020 8922 2222 or email [helpline@jcare.org](mailto:helpline@jcare.org).*



# RedbridgeJCC

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THE Tikvah Chadasha community in Brentwood has officially become a member of the Movement for Reform Judaism.

Formerly known as Shenfield and Brentwood Synagogue, the congregation left Liberal Judaism two years ago feeling it wasn't traditional enough for them.

Now Reform Judaism have announced that both Tikvah Chadasha and the Isle of Wight Jewish Society have joined the movement, taking its number of communities to 44.

Tikvah Chadasha has around 100 members and is a lay-led congregation assisted regularly by visiting rabbis, including Rabbi David Hulbert, and student rabbis from Leo Baeck College. It began

as a small satellite group from the former Bet Tikvah Synagogue in Newbury Park, after key members moved out to Brentwood and realised there was no Jewish community.

Community leader Natasha Radford said: "I am enormously proud of the way things have developed in recent years. We have our own rescued scroll which we reckon is at least 150 years old. We had it shipped over from the Czech Republic, carried out extensive repairs and it now takes pride of place in our ark, which is based in my parents' conservatory!"

"We're conscious of the age of our group, so we include the children in our services as much as possible. We want them to grow what we have started here."

# Legendary JLGB summer camp returns

AFTER the disappointment of having to cancel last year's JLGB's 125th Anniversary Summer Camp, the organisation were delighted to welcome around 400 young people back to camp this August.

The event, which took place in Colchester, Essex, saw young people from Jewish communities across our region and the entire country coming together to take part in an action-packed week of fun, entertainment and learning.

Participants had the opportunity to try a wide range of adventure activities including zip wire, mountain biking and archery. They also got to develop new skills such as steel drumming, as well as discussion groups regarding

issues such as leadership, identity and mental health.

Essex-based JLGB Chief Executive, Neil Martin OBE, felt that being able to have summer camps back this year was "wonderful" and paid credit to those involved with the organisation who made it all possible.

He said: "The dedication and inspiration of the most amazing volunteers and staff, uplifting the next generation to be their best selves."

The evenings saw nightly performances where members and leaders took to the stage to express



their inner creativity through song, dance and music, as well as an 'epic' quiz, which helped to get the

grey matter moving too. Seventeen year old Ethan Fox, from Redbridge, really enjoyed the whole experience,



and felt that the best part was being able to see friends after such a long time apart.

He said: "After such a difficult period, it was incredible to see camp run so seamlessly, from the organisers to the participants; everyone had such a great time."

"I t was an excellent experience for me, as I

look forward to helping with the running of JLGB camps in the future and for them to improve on this excellent camp year after year, and for them to become bigger and better."

With the new school term starting soon, it is hoped that, after an enforced hiatus due to the pandemic, weekly groups will be able to get back to normal as much as possible. A new centralised system called JLGB FUEL will power local groups, providing them with shared themes, resources and programmes.

*To find out more about your local JLGB, call 020 8989 8990, email [hello@jlgb.org](mailto:hello@jlgb.org) or follow @JLGBHQ on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.*



## WHAT IS VIOLET LOOKING FORWARD TO MOST IN THE NEW YEAR?



"I've already chosen my favourite outfit for when I can see all my friends again at the Michael Sobell Jewish Community Centre."

Violet lives on her own. But she's not alone.

Violet, along with other members of our community centres was supported over the pandemic through our online virtual programme. Violet said it was her highlight week after week.

But now Violet is waiting in anticipation for her centre to reopen to see old friends and the new ones she has met online; "it will be a real party".

So, whilst we are continuing to support the community through our virtual programmes, Meals on Wheels and telephone befriending service, we can't wait to welcome back Violet and thousands of others in our community who both deeply rely on our centres – and miss them. **But we can't do it without your help.**

We rely on generous people like you to ensure we can continue to provide all our vital services and bring sweetness and joy to more people like Violet this Rosh Hashanah.

**To make your gift please call 020 8922 2600 or visit [jewishcare.org/donate](http://jewishcare.org/donate)**

**JEWISH CARE**

# CAMBRIDGE DIET

MARK HARRIS



FOR MY 'Cambridge Diet' feature in last Pesach's EJN issue, I'd surveyed the myriad of ancient (up to 800-year-old) and architecturally handsome 'doors' – closed during the Covid-19 'lockdowns' – of this world-renowned university city's colleges, and a few other historic edifices. The Passover column was illustrated with several of my 'door-to-door' photographs (taken en route whilst indulging in various permissible 'exercise walks').



However, these images were nowhere near exhaustive of the numerous such portals, albeit generally and visually more modest as compared with the grander and more impressively ornate, main 'gateways' of, say, the better known King's, Trinity and St John's Colleges at the geographical hub of Cambridge academia. But the last sentence of my Pesach article expressed the sentiment that these long-surviving, though now locked shut doors will (like the doors of our faith) "continue to endure, opening up to allow ingress to their internal illumination".



On subsequent, coronavirus-isolationist 'fitness treks' – and maybe fol-



lowing logically my earlier, specific focus principally on striking (in more than one sense) college 'doors' – I resolved to focus my attention on equally imposing, historic and charming college 'windows'. And I did feel that writing about windows would be somewhat more transparent than my words about



closed doors. Also, verses including the word 'windows' – but just like with 'doors' and as mentioned in my Pesach feature – can be found in the Old Testament.

In Genesis, and elsewhere in the Pentateuch,

# Look out! It's a window ...



there are references to the 'windows of heaven'. Aside from the early pouring forth of rain from the opening up of such "windows", subsequent allusion describes the Almighty giving His blessings. So that we may gaze up – into the spiritual, as well as physical, light radiating through our windows – to witness His Creation and, hopefully, deserving of any such blessings.

This page's pictures are of only some of the thousands of college windows



that serve to help shed light on students, academics and staff going about their studies, callings, teaching and other work, activities and responsibilities. And whether (during 'normal' times) in lecture halls or seminar rooms, studies or libraries, laboratories or archives, re-



factories or residences. How many times have we been sitting thinking, at our desks or tables at work, college or home then looked up earnestly, even yearningly (and perhaps also languorously) through a window to seek (and hopefully gain) inspiration? Though if you look out of an open window,



do make sure beforehand that it's secure; if it fell on you, it could be paneful ... sorry, I mean painful!



Almost all of this Cambridge Diet's accompanying pictorials derive from a number of colleges and their associated edifices which,

design-wise, extend back across eight centuries to the founding of the university in 1209 (serendipitously, we actually moved here from London in its 800th anniversary year of 2009). The snapshots include windows at Corpus Christi College, Christ's College, Emmanuel College, Gonville and Caius College (where the late Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks studied), King's College, Pembroke College, St John's College and Trinity College.

See you ...



## Princess Anne at Woolf Institute

BY MARK HARRIS

HRH Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, visited Cambridge on 20 May 2021 to attend a special event marking a transition regarding the executive headship of the Woolf Institute, whose objective is to improve relations between the Abrahamic faiths, and between religion and society, through education.

The occasion, attended by many dignitaries and other guests, was held in a large marquee (complying fully with the government's Covid-19 guidance) in the grounds of the Institute's attractive new £9m building, formally opened by HRH Princess Anne – who is a Patron of the Institute – in April 2018. Last May's event marked the imminent, June transfer of the Institute's executive directorship from its Founder-Director Dr Edward Kessler MBE – who had established the now globally-acknowledged, independent institution in 1998 – to Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner.

Dr Kessler has now become the 'Founder-President' of the Woolf Institute (named for one of its original and now long-standing Patrons, Lord Harry Woolf CH PC and former Lord Chief Justice). And Dr Kessler will continue to contribute to, and support, the Institute's important work with his well recognised expertise in inter-faith relations.

Following her time as Research Associate at Cambridge University Library's Taylor-



**Princess Anne, Dr Kessler and Dr Wagner**

PHOTO COURTESY OF WOOLF INSTITUTE

Schechter Genizah Unit, Dr Wagner joined the Woolf Institute some eight years ago to pursue her studies in Muslim-Jewish relations, then increasingly to participate in its research, educational and leadership contexts.

Dr Wagner has observed that Dr Kessler's "vision has provided a home to create extraordinary encounters between multi-disciplinary academics and leaders from all sectors of society". She added: "The result is outstandingly innovative insights, based on novel research, that I have had the honour of witnessing making life better for people and helping to ease some of our social ills ..."

Dr Kessler has remarked: "I want to express my profound gratitude to all the partners, students, scholars, supporters,

staff, trustees and advocates, especially Lord Woolf and my wife Trisha. Each has helped the Woolf Institute to build understanding between religions and contribute to creating a more peaceful and productive future for humanity." He continued: "Chief amongst my partners for the past decade has been Dr Wagner. Her talents as a visionary, a scholar and an administrator are world class. It is with utmost confidence in her abilities to further the impact of the Institute that I move to a non-executive position."

During her May visit to the Woolf Institute, HRH The Princess Royal paid tribute to its ongoing excellent work, praised its staff and students and welcomed Dr Wagner to her new position as Executive Director of the Institute.

# POSTCARDS FROM SOUTHEND

A ROUND-UP OF STORIES AND NEWS FROM OUR SEASIDE COMMUNITY.  
COMPILED BY GEOFFREY PEPPER

## A new era begins



The new new multi-purpose Beis Hamedrash at SWHC

HERE at Southend and Westcliff Hebrew Congregation (SWHC), where this year we are marking our 115th anniversary, a new era came to fruition when we took the opportunity,

during lockdown, to redecorate and refurbish parts of the synagogue and banqueting hall – as well as complete the modernisation of a their multi-purpose Beis Hamedrash.

## Celebrating Jerusalem

ON the SWHC Facebook page, with nearly 500 views from near and far, President Michael Nelkin introduced the evening programme for Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day).

The unification of Jerusalem was marked, united as one, free and unfettered access for 54 years since the 1967 six-day war. Messages were celebrated from members of the community and various charitable organisations in the town, all with a connection to Israel.

There was a short virtual tour of Jerusalem and some footage of pre-1967 of the City, and all listened to some wonderful music. During the 19 years from 1948-1967 of Jordan occupation, 58 synagogues were destroyed or desecrated. The evening ended with Hatikva. All religiously put together by Yael Bebb and host Marilyn Salt.

## Welcoming a new mayor



Cllr Margaret Borton has become the 100th Mayor of Southend

## Sightseeing tours

THOSE families thinking of relocating to the coast for a better quality of life with a good selection of reasonably priced freehold and rental housing, with more space and lovely clean air, can now enjoy free sightseeing tours in and around Southend and Westcliff.

This will be undertaken by a small group of Jewish Friends

from Southend and Westcliff and also some of those who in recent years made the move to the area.

The guided tours will cover what the town has to offer, including communications and commuting, schooling, shops, synagogues, regular services and kosher facilities. Each tour will last one to two hours.

CLLR Margaret Borton was voted as 100th Worshipful Mayor of Southend for the municipal year of 2021-22. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions physical attendance at her inauguration was limited with the ceremony watched virtually.

To find out more about the growing and vibrant community in Southend, please visit [www.swhc.org.uk](http://www.swhc.org.uk)

## The bravest pier in the world



A view of Southend's world famous pier back in 1948

VICTORY in Europe Day launched as a new interactive experience to show Southend's key role in the Second World War. Southend's iconic pier played a huge role in the evacuation of Dunkirk, the protection of

London and preparation for D-Day.

The event was originally planned for May 2020 but has been extended through this year with the help of Southend Council. The organisers collected histories of

some of those who served on HMS Leigh, as the pier was called during the war.

The 1.3 mile long pier was transformed into the Naval Control Centre for the Thames Estuary, with the surrounding shore names HMS.

## Younger generation gets involved

FOLLOWING the Southend and Westcliff Hebrew Congregation's Annual General Meeting, the position of the Honorary Officers and Board of Deputies Representatives remain unchanged under the

Board of Management.

In addition, there are eight General Members plus two Wardens and now among them, four new General Members, who were elected for the first time. Among them, three

from the younger generation.

It is expected these younger members of the community will bring in a fresh vibrancy with lots of enthusiasm, new ideas and creativity.

**When dad could no longer live alone  
Jewish Care was there**

Charity Reg No. 802559

Joseph, care home resident with his daughter, Daniella

As someone who was so dedicated to his community, dad wanted to be cared for by people who understood and respected him and everything he believed in. He has now happily lived at one of Jewish Care's care homes for over four years.

With a gift in your Will to Jewish Care, you can make sure that future generations of our community get the care they need that respects their heritage – when they need it most.

For more information about leaving a gift in your Will and our free Will Writing Service please call the legacy team on 020 8922 2833, email [legacyteam@jcare.org](mailto:legacyteam@jcare.org) or visit [jewishcare.org/legacy](http://jewishcare.org/legacy)

**JEWISH CARE**

# Choo choo choosing a love of steam trains

## BOOK REVIEW

### A NICER TYPE OF JB By ALLEN LEVY

Published by Ladbroke Grove Books. £12.95 inc. UK postage  
Review by Manny Robinson

**W**HEN Allen Levy was asked why he had written his autobiography, he replied: "I don't know."

But there is little doubt that the man who describes himself as a subterranean Jew of the Jonathan Miller ilk – "We were Jew-ish but certainly never went the whole hog" – had, apart from his family which involved three marriages, two other major loves in his roller-coaster life. They were steam trains and the Brady Jewish youth club in Whitechapel, where he was first a youngster and then a manager.

He has written with great depth about both in this autobiography, *A Nicer Type of JB*.



In 1941, Allen Levy's mother informed him that the family would be leaving their home in Lauriston Road, Hackney, and relocating to the 'country'. The 'country' turned out to be one of the garden cities built before the war and served by rail by the LNER and the A1 trunk road.

Levy explains how the sight and the smell of those



...a nicer type of JB...

ALLEN LEVY

#### Allen Levy ... a train enthusiast

"grimy, un-cleaned wartime workhorse locomotives waiting for the whistle at King's Cross" led to his love affair with steam railways.

There can surely be few people in Britain who know more about steam trains. Indeed, in a French edition of a book on model trains written by Clive Lamming, Levy is credited as "the person who refused to let the legacy of Hornby Trains die" by publishing a book about Frank Hornby, the boy who made a million dollars with a toy.

Levy maintains that

model trains are not the province of sad men in garden sheds, as so often portrayed, but a fascinating international sub-culture combining nostalgia, historical triumph, design and the classless appreciation of the beauty and absolute utility of steam locomotion.

After being demobbed, Levy's father was granted a council flat in Stamford Hill. The author's love of steam trains was rekindled when an LMS 2-6-4 tank locomotive took the family from Fenchurch Street to Southend. It was while they were living

in Stamford Hill that Levy joined the Brady Boys' Club in Whitechapel. The family then bought their first house in Clayhall Avenue, Redbridge.

Levy became a chartered accountant but, after writing a book called 'A Century of Model Trains' in 1973, he switched careers and went into publishing, founding a new company, New Cavendish Books. His company published, among many about model trains, two books: *Skeet – a House In The Country*, the former Dowager house in Orpington, Kent, where Brady boys and girls spent many weekends, and *A Club Called Brady* written by Michael Lazarus. After his period as a club member, Levy became a manager at Brady.



When he was in his 30s, Allen Levy became part of a group named 'The Monday Nighters' consisting principally of ex-Brady boys. They continued to meet for more than 40 years; a tradition only brought to a halt by Covid-19.

The group was remarkable in that the sons of former members, who had died, often joined the group in their place and, in one case, a grandson of an existing member became a very active participant.

This book shows clearly how a young man, who honed his skills at a Jewish youth club in the East End, became so fascinated with steam locomotives that the love of it has stayed with him throughout his life.

## Holmehurst story is marked by a plaque



A BLUE plaque has been installed at a historical location in Essex that played a major role in the British Jewish story.

The plaque at Holmehurst, a large property on the corner of Manor Road and Epping New Road, commemorates three different events.

It was the place where, in 1940, Sudetenlanders who had fled the Nazis met to establish the Loughton Declaration – their plan that, after an Allied

victory in World War II, Czechoslovakia should be re-established as a federal state with Sudetenland as a nation within that federation.

Holmehurst was later used as a safe house for anti-Nazi VIPs and then, between December 1945 and January 1947, as a home to child Holocaust survivors.

Around 30 young men came to Holmehurst, where they became known as the Loughton Boys. An exhibition has been created, with National Lottery funding, entitled 'The Boys: Holocaust Survivors in the Epping Forest District', in order to tell their stories.

Councillor Nigel Bedford said: "The Holmehurst story is a little-known or forgotten piece of Epping Forest District history."

## Flooding can't stop Chabad camp



THE Chabad Summer Day Camp in Essex was dealt a huge challenge when the venue they had rented, Kantor King Solomon High School, was flooded the night before they were due to start.

Rabbi Odom Brandman of Chabad Buckhurst Hill, who directs the Camp with his wife Henny and with the assistance of Esther Jospeh, explained how his staff had spent the previous week bringing in supplies and organising the 12 rooms they were going to use.

He received a call from the caretaker on the morning of the first day explaining that 40 rooms had been flooded with serious water damage and they were going to have to cancel.

Rabbi Brandman responded

that "Chabad doesn't cancel" and they would find a way to make it work for the 100+ children attending.

The sun shone that whole day so the children could all play outside and WIJPS kindly gave access to their toilets. While the staff gave the children a great day, Rabbi Brandman and his team worked on alternative arrangements for the next two weeks – with Woodford Forest Synagogue really saving the day, by offering to rent out four large rooms and some storage areas.

Rabbi Brandman told the Essex Jewish News: "This year marks 51 years since Chabad started running summer schemes in Essex, and even this challenge was not going to halt that impressive record."

## What a wonderful world where black lives matter



BY PHILLIP SHAMPLINA

**B**LACK LIVES do matter as far as the Karnofsky family, a Jewish family from New Orleans, were concerned. A boy, the grandson of slaves, was born in an area known as 'Back of Town'. Abandoned by his father soon after his birth, he never had a role model which, in one way, did him a great favour.

With no form of income, his mother took up the oldest profession in the world – she

became a prostitute – and he and his sister went to live with their grandmother. To earn money, he sang on the street corners of New Orleans with three other children in the same predicament that he knew: in the neighbourhood where he was growing up. People threw coins into a hat, the proceeds of which they shared at the end of the day. It became profitable, and they met up every day on a regular basis.

The Karnofskys had emigrated from Lithuania to the USA. They had rachmonus (pity) on the now seven-year-old boy and took him into their home, initially giving him odd jobs to do and at the same time looked after him; and more importantly, fed him and gave him shelter and somewhere to sleep. This was in an anteroom at the back of the room, in today's terms an 'en suite'. For the first time in his short life he was treated with love and kindness.

When he went to bed, Mrs Karnofsky tucked him in and encouraged him to say his prayers; she recited the Shema, which he repeated with her. Before kissing him goodnight, she sang him a Russian lullaby and he would join in.

As time went on, he became like an adopted son and learned to sing other popular Russian and Jewish songs. As was the custom in Jewish families in those days, he learned to play an instrument like the violin, which was very popular. In time, they bought him a set of drums, which he took to immediately. They were very proud of his musical talent; they kvelled – oy. More about that later.

Later, when he became a professional musician and composer, one could recognise the Jewish melodies, which you can hear when the chazan (cantor) sings during the services in the synagogue, in his compositions.

The Karnofskys, who took



PHOTO COURTESY OF DOCTORMACRO.COM

him into their home and lives, wrote a book about the Jewish family who had adopted him in 1907 and, out of respect and in their memory, he wore a Star of David. From that family he had learned, with determina-

tion earlier on, it's a Yiddish word that means proud. The family who adopted him were certainly proud of him.

When a Jewish family are really happy and proud of a younger person in the family who has achieved success in whatever field they have chosen, the parents and especially the grandparents kvell, kiss and cuddle the youngster and, at the same time, pinch their cheeks; and this is what Mrs Karnofsky did to young Louis all the time.

The Yiddish word for Big Cheeks, and he certainly grew big cheeks from all the kveling, is Satchmo, a nickname that Mrs Karnofsky used when speaking so proudly about him to whoever she came across in the street or where she shopped.

Now the whole world knows who Satchmo is – what a wonderful story as, in the world of the Karnofskys, Black Lives do matter, as all lives matter, don't they?

What a Wonderful World!

# 60-second schmooze ... with Denise Phillips

**MICHAELA BLITZ**  
CHATS WITH  
**DENISE PHILLIPS**  
OF DENISE'S  
KITCHEN ABOUT  
COOKING, EATING  
AND FINDING LOVE

**D**ENISE Phillips has been a chef for more than 25 years. She runs her own business, Denise's Kitchen, offering classes and events for all ages. She has also written seven books on Jewish cookery and regularly contributes to many newspapers and publications.

**How did you first start out as a chef?**

A friend had been to Prue Leith's School of Food & Wine and was starting her own catering company.

She was looking for some help and, knowing that I was a keen cook, asked if I would be interested in being involved. I knew that I did not want to work for her, but rather 'with her', so I decided to take time off from my full-time job in Fleet Street to also study for a year at the Prue Leith School.

After graduating, I joined her as a partner and we ran a successful business together for a number of years. I never did go back to Fleet Street!

**Was your interest in cooking inspired by your own family?**

I'm the youngest of four daughters and my mother cooked for the family every night. Even now, at the age of nearly 91, she is still happy to do a traditional Friday night dinner. Her specialty is chopped liver, which I leave to her as it is the best.

**How do you think that the view of Jewish cooking has changed over the time you have been a chef?**

I think that traditional Jewish food has changed enormously. Firstly, the fat and sugar content has been greatly reduced in many traditional recipes. Secondly, I'm proud that books such as my Modern Jewish Cooking with Style have helped to move the image of Jewish food away from fatty kugels and brisket to more elegant, stylish and more healthy food!

There is also a huge variety of 'new' kosher supervised foods, which means that authentic dishes can be made using kosher ingredients, opening up our ability to enjoy more cuisines, such as Japanese, Mexican and Asian.

**Your Date on a Plate singles events have been running for over 20 years and successfully matched a lot of Jewish couples. What do you think is the secret to their success?**

As the saying goes, 'through diversity comes new experiences, successes and

new ventures'.

Well, my journey was certainly not planned. Unfortunately, back in June 1999, my first husband, Michael Phillips, died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of 44, leaving me a widow with three young children aged four, six and eight. Life had to go on and the school fees needed to be paid.

At the time, I was already teaching cookery classes and suddenly had this brainwave of linking cooking and dating. That was when 'Date on A Plate' was born.

It started as a monthly event for guests aged 35 to 45, but then expanded to all other age groups. I now run it every Sunday night.

I think one of the reasons it is so successful, compared to other singles events, is that cooking together is fun and requires people to communicate and interact with others. It provides a structure to make connections and, as they say, 'the way to anyone's heart is often through their stomach'!

Since the start of Covid, 'Date on a Plate' has been online via Zoom. I have a minimum of six men and six women; and using break out rooms, they each have a six-minute, one-to-one private conversation with each other. And at the end of the evening, I share email addresses with all the guests and then let the magic happen!

I am so happy that a lot of couples have met through these events, including myself. I actually met my second husband, Jeremy, at a Date on A Plate event in 2004 and we have been happily married for 17 years. So I can guarantee that it works!

**Any Essex success stories?**

Yes, over the years, I have had a lot of couples with an Essex-connection that have found love and gone on to get married and have children.

I think one of the positive side effects of Covid-19 is that I have moved the events online, which means that geography is less of a barrier than ever.

One couple, a man from Chigwell and a woman from South Manchester, met through a recent virtual event and have Zoom dinner parties together, facetime daily and are now planning to move in together, which is wonderful!

**What other events and classes do you offer?**

My cookery school offers classes for all levels of expertise; and is currently being run on Zoom. But from October, we will revert back to face-to-face classes, which I am excited about.

I also do cookery demonstrations, which are excellent fundraisers for charities, synagogues and schools. As well as that I also run hen/stag parties, as well as cookery classes for mother of the bride, bar/bat mitzvahs and

can create bespoke menus and themes for any type of event.

Corporate cooking classes are also very popular and great for team building and sharing experiences outside of the work environment. I think particularly at the moment, these would be a great way for people to connect after spending so long working from home and not interacting with their colleagues in the same way.

**What's your favourite thing to cook or eat?**

My go-to comfort food is a simple pasta dish with garlic and chilli. I really enjoy making challah and writing new recipes. Every six to eight weeks, I cook new dishes to be photographed, so that is always a good night to be at home.

**One final, but very important question: what is the correct pronunciation – bagel or beigel?**

For me, beigel is the correct way!

To find out more about upcoming events, go to [www.jewishcookery.com](http://www.jewishcookery.com) or check out @denises\_kitchen on Instagram.

**Top right:** Denise Phillips. **Bottom:** Her Date on a Plate (left) and cookery (right) events

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir

With reference to Manny Robinson's article on Hughes Mansions (EJN Passover edition), my father's parents lived at 32 Hughes Mansions. They died with my father's sister and niece. The names of my father's parents were Harry Rosenberg (aged 55) Janie Rosenberg (54), my father's sister was Miriam Fenton nee Rosenberg (24) and his niece Sandra Fenton (2).

I have copies of my father's parents' death certificates stating that they died due to war operations.

**Harold Rosenberg,**  
Barkingside

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**Prospective  
parents' evening**

SEPTEMBER 30TH 5-8PM OR  
OCTOBER 6TH 9-10:30AM

To book your place visit [www.kkshs.uk](http://www.kkshs.uk)

**KANTOR  
KS**

Join our Headteacher Ms Reece and find out all you need to know about our school. We will share with you our commitment to the Jewish values of learning, community and charity and how we use these to inspire academic excellence in our students. Meet our staff that offer the highest quality teaching, leading to results that place us above national average in both progress and attainment at the end of year 11.



## ROSH HASHANAH THOUGHTS FROM OUR COMMUNAL LEADERS

**BY CHIEF RABBI  
EPHRAIM MIRVIS**  
CHIEF RABBI OF THE  
UNITED HEBREW  
CONGREGATIONS OF  
THE COMMONWEALTH

**I**N 1968, social psychologists Bibb Latané and John Darley conducted a remarkable study, known as the Smoky Room Experiment.

Subjects were placed alone in a room and asked to complete a task. While they were doing so, smoke began to fill the room from a nearby air vent. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of subjects reported the smoke within a matter of minutes.

**BY RABBI ARYEH  
SUFRIN MBE**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHABAD LUBAVITCH NORTH EAST LONDON AND ESSEX

**A**S the Essex Jewish News goes to print, we are still not exactly sure how our High Holy Day services will look. How many attendees will feel comfortable enough to return to our services?

But what we do know and are most grateful for is that, a year on, we can look back and feel content that all that was thrown at us through the pandemic and its variations, with all of its challenges we did not falter.

We stood up, adapted as was necessary. Chabad continued to serve within our great positive communities across Essex and beyond.

Is this not what Rosh Hashanah – the New Year is all about? An honest stock take and then the action to respond

**BY RABBI REBECCA BIRK AND RABBI RENE PFERTZEL**  
CO-CHAIRS OF THE CONFERENCE OF LIBERAL RABBIS AND CANTORS (COLRAC)

**J**EWSH time is cyclical and yet also linear. Every year we celebrate, and commemorate events of our past, milestones of our personal and communal lives. They arrive like an alarm clock at the same day of our calendar. The liturgy, the music, even the food, are the same one year after the other.

And yet, each year is completely different. We grow older and – hopefully – wiser. The wider world changes constantly around us.

How did our ancestors feel when they celebrated Rosh Hashanah in 70 CE, looking at the smoking ruins of the Temple of Jerusalem? What was the atmosphere during Kol Nidre in 1492 in Spain, when our ancestors were expelled from their ancestral homes? How did they mark Sukkot in Auschwitz in 1943?

In a century from now, our descendants will ask the question, how did it feel to celebrate a new Jewish Year in 2021, still in the pandemic of Covid-19?

The Mussar practice, which teaches us how to live a meaningful and ethical life, may offer us a few keys to unlock the meaning of time. Let us examine three middot, traits of the soul,

However, when subjects were placed in the same room in groups, the results were dramatically different. Rather than reporting the smoke, the subjects looked to one another. If the others in the room seemed unmoved by the smoke, it was ignored.

The authors of the study observed that, if people are alone when they notice an emergency, they consider themselves solely responsible for dealing with it. However, when others are also present, they feel less of a responsibility for taking action.

As social beings, we often cannot help but use the actions of others as our frame of reference for the way in

which we choose to behave.

This poses a profound challenge to our society. Can we lead more environmentally sustainable lives or act cautiously to prevent the spread of Covid when those around us seem disinclined to do the same? Can we lead lives of responsibility and morality when those around us do not?

The Jewish answer to this challenge is our High Holy Days.

The Torah reading for Rosh Hashanah seems a surprising choice. On the anniversary of the creation of the world, we would surely expect to read about the creation from the Book of Genesis.

with positive change?

Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi (1745 – 1812), founder of Chabad Chasidism, referred to this preparatory month of Ellul as “the King in the Field”.

The King, A-mighty G-d leaves the Palace walls, where it is difficult for the general populace to gain entry, and goes on a ‘walkabout’ in the fields. All whom wish may approach and speak, whilst the King responds with a positive smile, happy to engage. In the field there is no hierarchy, we are all equal, we can all reach out, all we need to do is have the desire and willingness to do so.

What is a field? The Talmud says it is not a place for permanent residency, it’s temporary. Yes, we may enjoy a camping trip, connecting with nature, but it is not our natural habitat. The field represents most of us. Daily we have the need to balance between the mundane and holy spiritual activity, which we continuously juggle. However, within the

field environment, the holy is temporary and often left short.

It is here in the field that the King visits, and sends a reminder, that He is always there for us, whatever the circumstances maybe. He – the King – G-d comes to us in the field – where we are, He stretches out a hand and says, come let's re engage and strengthen our relationship. He responds in kind and smiles as He awaits our response, all we need to do is reach out.

So as the King – G-d, comes to visit us, what might I say to Him?



sis. Instead, we read the story of a person who was born into a world of idolatry and sacrifice.

Yet, Abraham, the father of our people, repeatedly demonstrated his commitment to Hashem without hesitation. He became the first parent in our tradition to circumcise their son and was even prepared to countenance sacrificing him.

While not hiding behind the standards and expectations of those around him, Abraham knew what Hashem required of him. No amount of social pressure could dissuade him from his life of truth and sanctity.

On the Yamim Noraim, each one of us stands, accountable for our deeds, before Hashem. As we recite so powerfully in our Musaf prayers: Just as a shepherd

appraises his flock; just as he passes every sheep beneath his staff; so too, every one of us is counted and evaluated by Hashem.

There is nobody for us to hide behind, nor anyone for us to blame. As such, our High Holy Days are a moment of the purest and most honest dialogue with our Creator. He knows every challenge we face as well as our capacity to rise to them.

The last 18 months have been a period of extraordinary adversity which has imposed challenges upon us all in ways that we may only be beginning to understand. As we enter 5782, the High Holydays provide a precious opportunity for each one of us to look deep within ourselves and reframe our attitude and our behaviour.

Let us be guided by our

eternal Torah values rather than the transient whims of others. In doing so, may we all be blessed with a future of spiritual fulfilment, joy and success.



**BY KATHLEEN MIDDLETON**  
CO-CHAIR OF THE ASSEMBLY OF REFORM RABBIS AND CANTORS

**H**AVE you heard the story of the little boy on the beach who was picking up starfishes one at a time and throwing them back into the sea? In the distance, a man who was having a conversation on his mobile phone spotted what the little boy was doing.

When his call was over, the man went over to the boy and said: “Why are you doing this? There are thousands of starfishes on this beach. Too many to make a difference. What you are doing is pointless!” The little boy simply grabbed another starfish and, before throwing it into the sea, said to the man: “It won’t be pointless for this one!”

The point of the story? The man looked at the whole beach and the great number of starfishes in terms of impact. The little boy looked at the value of his actions, one starfish at a time.

**BY RABBI RONI TABICK**  
RABBI OF NEW STOKE NEWINGTON MASORTI SYNAGOGUE

**T**HE most likely place you’d hear the Hebrew word cheshbon today, would be in one of Israel’s cafés or restaurants. When someone calls out: “Cheshbon!”, they are asking for the bill.

But in Jewish tradition, the word cheshbon is connected to the season of repentance around Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with the idea of cheshbon hanefesh, usually translated as ‘accounting of the soul’.

As it says in Pirkei Avot, Ethics of the Fathers: “Rabbi used to say... Apply your mind to three things and you will not come into the clutches of sin: Know what there is above you: an eye that sees, an ear that hears, and all your deeds are written in a book.”

Imagine that all your actions, all your thoughts, everything you did or said, was written down in a ledger.

up sword against nation, neither shall men learn war anymore”.

We have endured so much change in this past year and, throughout it all, we have kept our Judaism going by introducing new ways of communal prayer and developing creative responses to offer help and assistance to those in need, as we have always done.

Let us make this new year a year of blessing for all our communities as well as a blessing for ourselves.

And let us also pray, in our own small way, that the world around us will benefit.



What would it be like to read that book? What would an objective reader say about it? Would they see a lot of black ink or red?

This season is an opportunity to take stock of our lives, to examine that book and figure out where we stand to ourselves, before we have to stand in judgement before the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

While I’ve always associated this process with sin and guilt, looking at everything I’ve done wrong and hope to do better, this year I want to invite you to take the opportunity to be kind to yourself.

It’s been a very difficult year; with challenges we couldn’t have predicted just two years ago.

When you do your cheshbon hanefesh and calculate how you stand, try asking yourself some different questions.

Instead of just looking for the ways you failed, look for some of the ways you succeeded against difficult odds. Instead of looking for people you let down, look for

people you were there for. Ask whether you have been kind to yourself, and how you can get the strength you need to keep on going.

Most importantly, remember that the book of your life is still being written, and its ending not yet determined. If you were that objective reader, how would you hope your story would go from here?

Today you are given the chance to shape your destiny and write your own ending. Make it a good one!





## A Rosh Hashanah message from the President

**T**his past year has been a difficult one for the Jewish community.

Like the rest of the country, we have had to cope with disruption, and for many, the heartbreak of the ongoing pandemic. On top of this we have also had to deal with a frightening upsurge in anti-Jewish racism.

When there is conflict in the Middle East there are usually consequences for Jews in the UK but this year what we experienced was beyond anything I can remember. Antisemitic incidents rose by 500 per cent and none of us will forget the convoy of cars driving through our streets with shouted threats and misogynistic abuse plus other well documented attacks.

This is intolerable and the Board of Deputies acted quickly to ensure that the Government was aware and prepared to take whatever measures were needed. The Jewish community held meetings with Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Home Secretary Priti Patel. I called for the proscription of Hamas in its entirety. We also called for the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism by social media companies and their new regulator Ofcom. I am glad to report that the Government has now written to social media companies to request them to adopt the IHRA definition.

While the epidemic has ebbed and flowed we have worked with the Government to share important messages in order to keep everybody safe and we have advised on safe numbers for prayer and religious occasions. We have also had the sad but necessary duty of collating numbers of deaths. Our community has enthusiastically embraced the vaccine which is one of the main reasons why numbers of deaths has been mercifully few in the past few months.

Those who know the Board of Deputies will understand we work on a diverse set of issues. It is impossible to list everything in a short message. However, I will give a mention to the Commission on Racial Inclusivity which reported this year and which made 119 recommendations, with profound implications for UK Jews. I would also like to thank all the new organisations which have joined this year, making us even more representative of the community. We will continue to work just as hard on your behalf in the coming year.

Shana Tovah

**Marie van der Zyl**

**Marie van der Zyl**  
President of the Board of  
Deputies of British Jews

# FOCUS ON: THE PAPERWEIGHT TRUST

BY MICHAELA BLITZ

**T**HE pandemic has significantly affected people in many different ways. Some may have experienced job insecurity, redundancy or breakdowns in relationships, whilst others may have suffered from illness themselves or even loss of a loved one. Dealing with these sorts of issues can feel extremely overwhelming and stressful, and getting the right support can be difficult.

The Paperweight Trust offers a free, confidential service to help people in crisis across the Jewish community. The organisation, which was established in 2010, understands that often everyday situations can become worrying and overwhelming; and simple things like dealing with household paperwork, bureaucracy or legal issues can feel insurmountable.

Bayla Perrin, CEO of The Paperweight Trust, believes that their work offers a holistic approach, often working together with other organisations, helping people regain their confidence and effectively "get their lives back on track".

She told the Essex Jewish News: "Our main aim is to give people dignity and care in

dealing with their issues, whilst steering them towards gaining independence and a better quality of life. We want them to learn from their experiences so that they are confident in avoiding the same pitfalls in the future."

Initial contact for anyone needing help can be made via their website, either by email or by calling their emergency helpline. All information shared is completely confidential and dealt with in a highly professional and tactful way throughout.

After an initial assessment which helps to establish the client's personal situation, they will be allocated a suitable caseworker with expertise in a relevant area. The Trust works with around 200 expert caseworkers from a wide range of backgrounds, who all volunteer their time and professional experience to help others.

Often, there may be more than one issue that needs to be resolved, meaning that the client may require help from multiple caseworkers depending on their individual case. Caseworkers can also call upon the services and advice of the Trust's expert panel where necessary.

Prior to Covid-19, caseworkers would usually meet at

clients' homes or a mutually agreed location. The current situation has meant that this has been happening via Zoom or by phone, but Paperweight are hoping to resume home visits as the rules allow. During the session, the caseworker will discuss specific ways to deal with a particular issue and help the client create a strategy to resolve matters. It is this direct contact between client and caseworker that Bayla feels is essential.

She adds: "We're there throughout the process, holding their hand every step of the way. Whether it's organising a household budget to better manage finances, helping clients to fill out complicated documents, or even attending meetings with solicitors or court hearings, our clients feel supported from start to finish."

Since the start of the pandemic, the Trust has seen a

30% increase in calls; and with imminent new legislation regarding a rise in energy bill rates, as well as the end of additional Universal Credit, Bayla can foresee that even more people will need their services in the future.

Due to this increase in demand, the Trust is keen to recruit more volunteers, particularly those with expertise in areas relating to housing, employment, immigration, family law, welfare and benefits. Bayla and her team would also like to encourage volunteers from the Essex area to get in touch to help ensure that the Paperweight services are able to reach the largest area possible.

As well as those facing financial issues, grief has also been a significant factor during recent times. This may be due to medical issues, relationship breakdowns, illness or



**paperweight**

even bereavement. In addition, feelings of isolation and loneliness caused by Covid restrictions can further exacerbate the situation, making it feel impossible. Bayla feels that no matter what the issue, reaching out to The Paperweight Trust can make all the difference.

"Being able to pick up the phone and speak to someone who can help and understand can really help to lighten the load, and help you realise that you are not alone. We will always try to help in whatever

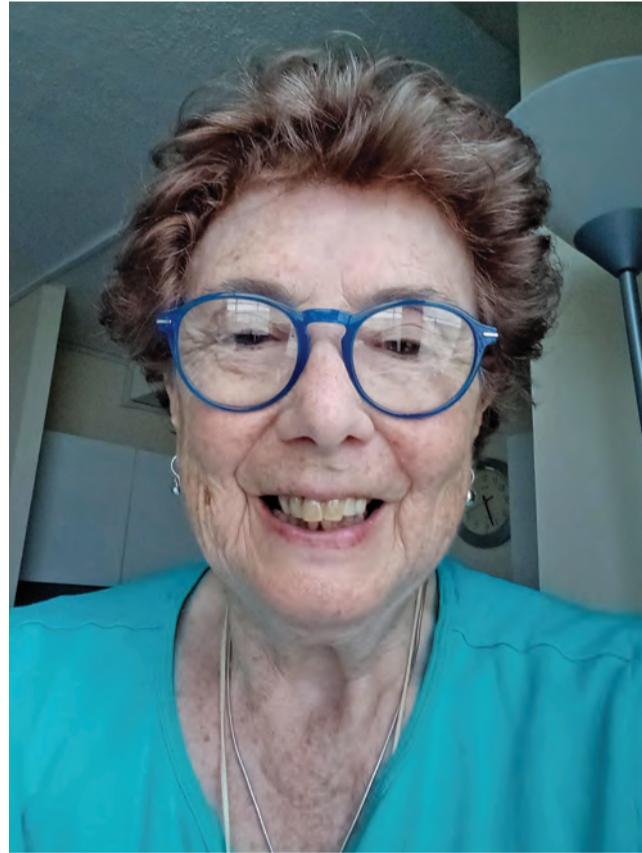
way we can or refer you to someone who can. It's definitely worth calling us, as there is always something that we can do."

To find out how The Paperweight Trust may be able to help you, or if you would like to volunteer with the organisation, visit their website – [www.paperweight.org.uk](http://www.paperweight.org.uk)

Contact can also be made via email [info@paperweight.org.uk](mailto:info@paperweight.org.uk) or on their Emergency Helpline at 0330 174 4300.

**We are there throughout the process, holding their hand every step of the way**

## NEMS art project inspires Southend members



NEW Essex Masorti Synagogue (NEMS) member and Jewish Care volunteer Ros



Southend.

The club ran during lockdown at the Jewish Care inde-

pendent living development, with the help of its senior warden Laura.

## COMMUNITY NEWS IN BRIEF

FORMER Ilford resident Rabbi Yossi Hambling and his wife Channah are Birmingham Central United Synagogue's new rabbinic couple, filling a two year vacancy. While living in Ilford and encouraged by his fam-

ily and local rabbi, he became involved in shul leadership through his teenage years and helped revive the local branch of Bnai Akiva.

THE Three Faiths Forum have returned to in-person meetings after a long break.

The first meeting back together took place in the large and well-ventilated community hall of the Ilford

Islamic Centre. Around 50 people attended for the launch of a new book written jointly by Dr Qadir Bakhsh MBE – who is a member of the local Three Faiths Executive – and his friend and colleague Maqsood Ahmed OBE. The meeting was also broadcast on YouTube.

YEAR three and four pupils

## Harlow goes online



HARLOW Jewish Community has launched a new website to help members stay updated and in touch with each other, and provide more information to those wishing to find out more about the Reform community.

Alongside a calendar of events and lots of news and photos, people can dive into the history of the community, learn about its ethos and discover how lifecycle events and festivals are celebrated.

Sergei Litvinov, who led on the project, said: "We're a welcoming and diverse community and I'm delighted that the new website will enable people to

find out more about us.

"It's been great fun putting all the material together and I've learned lots along the way myself. I hope it will prove a useful tool, both for community members and more widely."

Chairman Alan Cohen added: "Thanks to everyone who's helped with this project, we now have a smart fresh website to be proud of. We will be regularly updating it, so do drop in to have a look now and pop back from time to time."

The website can be found at [www.harlowjewishcommunity.org.uk](http://www.harlowjewishcommunity.org.uk)

## ESSEX JEWISH NEWS

The next issue will be published to coincide with Chanukah 2021

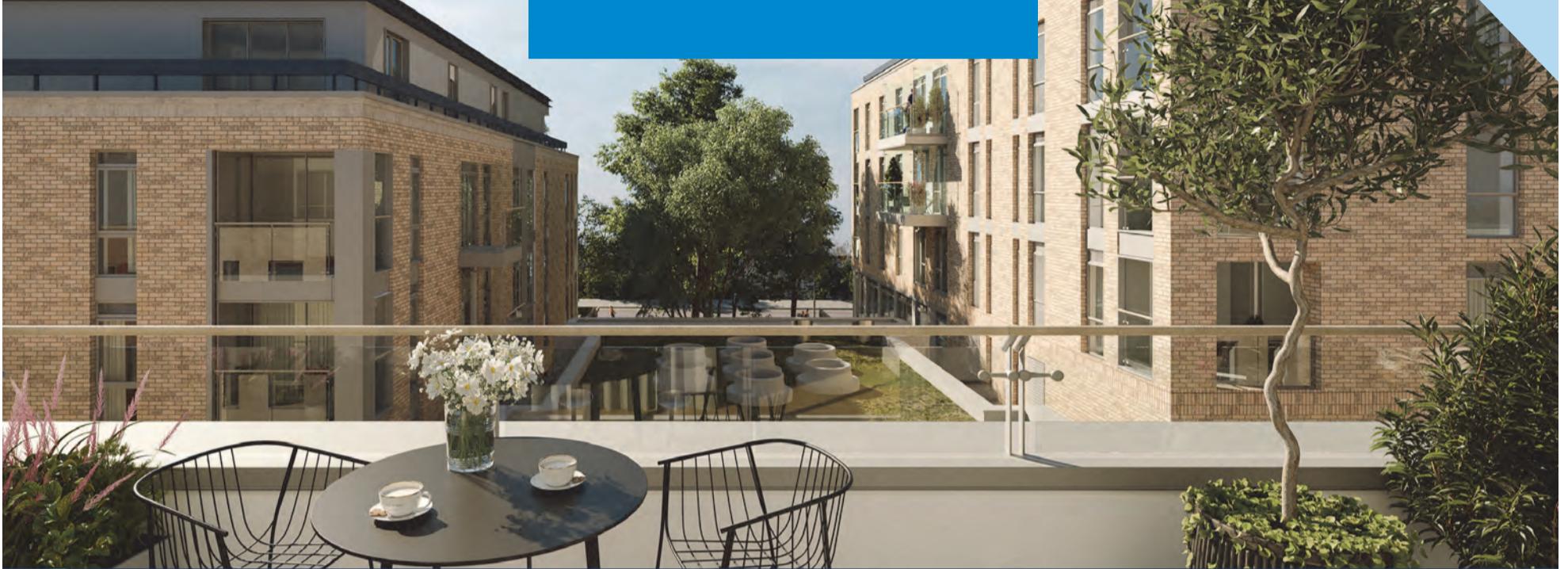
To send us your stories and pictures see our contact details in the panel on Page 2

Along with previous issues of Essex Jewish News, it will be available to download at [www.essexjewishnews.co.uk](http://www.essexjewishnews.co.uk)

# sapphire<sup>ej</sup> HOVE



45 New Homes,  
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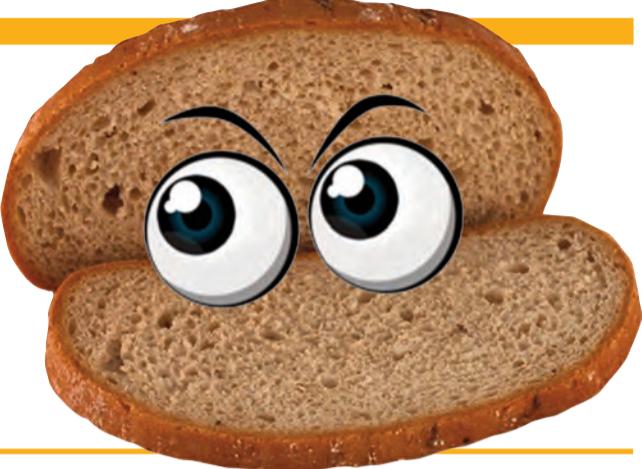
**Hamptons**

THE HOME EXPERTS



# Many happy returns?

## WATCHER IN THE RYE



### WATCHER DRAWS ON EXPERIENCES FOLLOWING CONGREGANTS GOING BACK TO SYNAGOGUE AFTER LENGTHY LOCKDOWNS

**A** PICTURE can speak a thousand words – that's what a lot of people say, and Watcher agrees wholeheartedly. Nevertheless, our 'community observer' isn't so much lost for words; though he is somewhat rapt on substituting this feature's accompanying images. And not only to preclude verbosity, but also to acknowledge the familiar old adage's truism.

Watcher well appreciates that the Jewish community – and, indeed, the UK if not the world generally – have been through some prolonged and

difficult periods because of the terrible, global pandemic and all its diverse and often sad elements, mutations or variants; as well as tough implications and developments. And he avers that deliberate cynicism, sarcasm or irony can be misplaced in all the melancholy circumstances.

For many community members, not being allowed to attend their synagogues for Shabbat and other services – down to necessarily government-imposed, lengthy lockdowns and requisite coronavirus restrictions, personal isolation or otherwise – was notably and variously problematic. Watcher believes that it's necessary to be properly empathetic in this quite sensitive connection.

But physically returning to

shul has not been entirely without its concerns, discomforts, complications and even confusions for certain congregants ... and potentially due to unavoidably obligatory and pragmatic changes, alterations or adaptations. (And the 11-day conflict in the Middle East in May added to the need for enhanced security arrangements.)

For sure, Watcher is also aware of the unfortunate, ubiquitously transformed and, hopefully, cooperatively-collective situation that has confronted returning shulgoers. Not least the specified maximum of permitted attendees, the safe distancing need, the enforced wearing of protective face masks, the utilisation of sanitisers, the singing veto (very depressing for synagogue choir members) and the forlornly absent, socialising kiddushim.

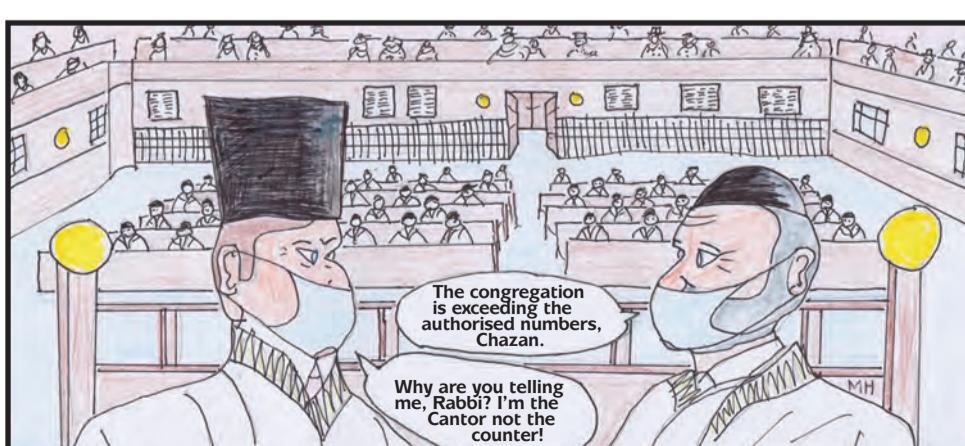
Hence, seemingly, our Watcher's rather equivocal headline; but one which doubtless recognises, inherently, what it may mean – and despite the potentially ongoing, contextual developments – to possess the spiritual solace and general gladness of attending synagogue services again. And

optimistically, Watcher feels, a 'Rye' (or, maybe, wry) smile can be justifiably sustainable, so as to help us going forward – hopefully, comfortingly and beneficially, though not complacently – to more normal and happier times.

## WATCHER IN THE RYE



ANY READERS HAVING COMMENTS ON THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF THIS ARTICLE SHOULD EMAIL THEM TO THE ESSEX JEWISH NEWS (SEE PAGE 2)



## BACK TO THE ARCHIVES

### A LOOK BACK AT THE STORIES IN THE EJN TEN YEARS AGO

#### EJN's 35th

"THE Essex Jewish News, which began life in the 1970s as a parochial newsletter called 'The Bridge' (for the Jewish community of Redbridge) and evolved into a nearly 20,000 readership and colour publication, celebrated its 35th anniversary with a dinner at the Aviv restaurant in Edgware.

EJN editor Manny Robinson and its director Stewart Cass welcomed more than 20 guests, including the award-winning community newspaper's editorial committee and others associated with its administration, advertising, distribution, typesetting and artwork.

Mr Cass paid tribute to the editor, Manny Robinson, who has been involved with the paper since its inception; and to all those who have contributed their time and effort to its success, many over a long period. He added his hope that 'the EJN would continue for at least another 35 years'."

EJN Passover 2011

#### Meeting Anne Frank's step-sister

"SHAKING hands with Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss, as I did last February, felt emotionally like touching the historic yet poignant past, writes Mark Harris.

Mrs Schloss, the 'posthumous' step-sister of the wartime (and now world-famous) diarist Anne Frank, visited Cambridge to open an interesting, month-long display of family photo-

graphs taken by the late Otto Frank, Anne's father.

I met the wonderfully articulate octogenarian (whose mother was Mr Frank's second wife, having wed him in 1953) at the end of her fascinating talk at the Michaelhouse exhibition launch. The building, which contains a chapel and a popular cafe, stands in the university heartland of Trinity Street opposite Gonville and Caius College (where Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks was an undergraduate).

In her Dutch accent, Mrs Schloss had spoken of her friendship with Anne, who died at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp; and of her own dreadful time in Auschwitz-Birkenau, where over one million Jews perished.

The many monochrome pictures in the exposition, which was organised by the Anne Frank Trust, were the results of Mr Frank's skilful work with his trusty Leica camera. The domestic photos, largely of Anne and her sister Margot, were snapped in Frankfurt and later in Amsterdam, which the family had made their home after fleeing Nazi Germany."

EJN Passover 2011

#### Lord Sacks praises Leon Schaller

"THE Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks spoke at the launch of 'The Gift of Life', the biography of Leon Schaller OBE – who lives in Clayhall – at Schaller House, London School of Jewish Studies.

Subtitled 'Leon Schaller's

Story', the book relates subjectively, in words (penned by writer Ann Rosen) and numerous photographs, the reminiscences of the eponymous businessman, philanthropist and devoted family man.

It tells of his birth in Cologne, his childhood years against a background of Nazi persecution of German Jewry, his escape to England in 1938, his aspiration to succeed in the world and, from within the warmth and security of his family, his active communal contribution and strong wish to aid others – individuals and organisations – both in this country and abroad, and especially in Israel.

Lord Sacks, president of the LSJS, said: 'Some of us, a few of us, have the privilege of living a life as Leon has done that is worthy of a book that everyone should read ... I most like the title ... When you see life as a gift that has been given to you, then your deepest desire is to give back to others. And that's exactly what Leon has done. He has lived a remarkable life, so much of it shared by his beloved late wife Freda.'

(Extract)  
EJN Passover 2011

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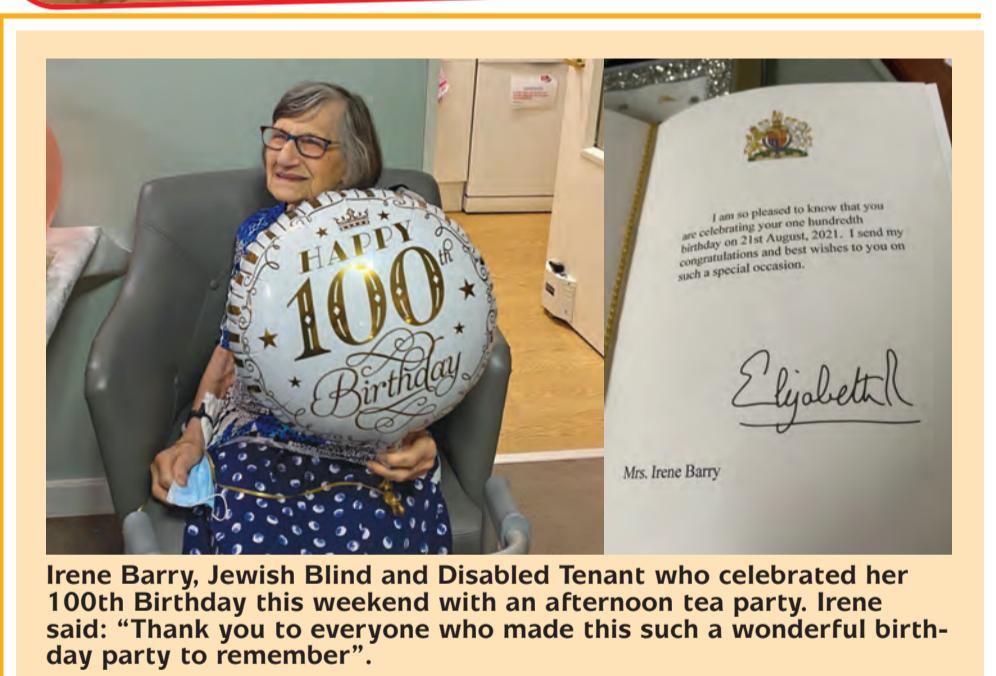
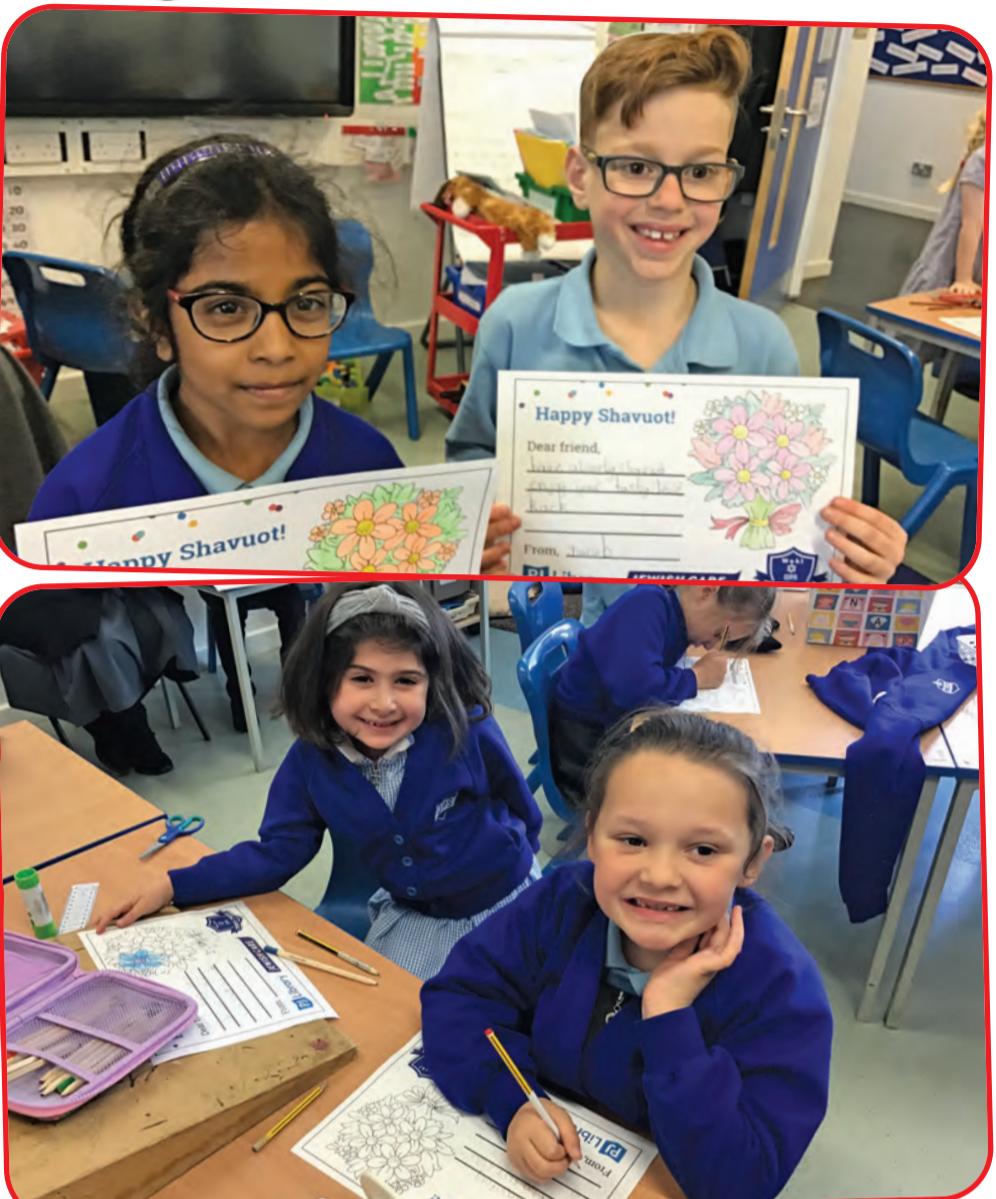
Also available on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn

# WIJPS children bring festival cheer

PUPILS at Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School (WIJPS) came up with a special intergenerational Shavuot project to bring cheer to older members of the community.

The students wrote notes and decorated flowers, which were then sent to Essex-based recipients of the Jewish Care Meals on Wheels service. The project was held in

partnership with PJ Library. Children enjoyed Shavuot-themed PJ Library stories in the classroom, which inspired their heartfelt messages and drawings.



Around 15 members of East London and Essex Liberal Synagogue gathered in the garden of Emeritus Rabbi David Hulbert to enjoy a talk about beekeeping and honey in the Bible. They then enjoyed tea, scones and some of Rabbi Hulbert's newly extracted honey.

# A Rosh Hashanah roller-coaster

WELL it has certainly been a rough ride since last year!

As I write this column the rules have been somewhat relaxed, but there is still major uncertainty about the situation. The guidance could be revised, and we could be locked down again, at any time.

Therefore, I have tried to plan dishes that are somewhat adaptable to the situation – a bit like the rest of us.

A chicken dish never goes amiss at Yom Tov and I've also provided a tarte tatin recipe that is lovely for lunch when you come in from shul.

Wishing you and your families a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year. Let's pray that next year we will be able to celebrate the way we would wish to.

## SLOW COOKED GARLIC AND TARRAGON CHICKEN

This will serve four people or you can increase the amount of chicken accordingly. The addition of the soya yoghurt definitely improves the flavour and enriches the quality of this dish. It's excellent served with plenty of mashed potato – use the soya yoghurt to make it extra creamy – and a green vegetable on the side.

2 tbsp olive oil  
4 chicken legs and/or

thighs  
1 large onion thinly sliced  
1 head of garlic – cloves separated and peeled  
3-4 fresh tarragon sprigs  
600 mls white wine  
500 mls chicken stock  
Chopped fresh parsley  
Salt & pepper  
Soya yoghurt – optional but an improvement

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees C/Gas Mark 6

Heat the oil in a large lidded casserole over a medium high heat. Season the chicken all over, add to the pan and fry in the oil until golden brown on all sides. Remove and set aside. Lower the heat and add the onion to the pan. Sauté gently until soft and golden. Add the garlic cloves, the tarragon, white wine and stock to the pan then drop in the browned chicken.

Bring to the boil then cover with a lid and transfer to the oven. Cook for 45 minutes then remove the lid and cook a further 20 minutes until the chicken is cooked through and very tender. Transfer the chicken to a service dish to rest then return the casserole to a medium-high heat and reduce the sauce further until it coats the back of a spoon.

Add two tablespoons of the soya yoghurt if using. Taste and check the seasoning then

## COOKING FOR YOMTOV

### SHELLEY POSNER



stir in the chopped parsley. Spoon some of the sauce over the chicken pieces and serve the rest separately in a jug.

#### TOMATO TARTE TATIN

I've always been a little nervous of tarte tatin, feeling it could be difficult to turn out, but this dish is actually very straightforward and caused no problems getting it onto the serving plate. It's best eaten warm rather than straight from the oven and can be used for a light starter, a main course for vegetarians, or for lunch with a salad. It should serve 6-8 depending on the size of the slices.

12 juicy vine or plum tomatoes  
10 shallots, peeled and halved  
2 garlic cloves peeled and finely chopped  
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
3 tbsp olive oil

3 tbsp caster sugar  
A few sprigs of fresh thyme  
75 gr/2½ oz Kosher Parmesan cheese plus extra for garnish  
A small bunch of basil  
240 gr/8½ oz ready-made puff pastry  
Salt & pepper

Preheat oven to 130 degrees C/Gas Mark 2

Halve the tomatoes and arrange in a roasting tray. Scatter the shallots and garlic around the edge. Drizzle with the balsamic vinegar and oil and sprinkle over the sugar. Bake in the oven for 1 hour.

Strip the thyme leaves from the stalks, open the oven and scatter the leaves over the top. Then bake for a further 15 minutes or so until the tomatoes have softened and slightly shrunk but still hold their shape. Remove the tray from the oven and increase the heat to 180 degrees C/Gas Mark 6.

Once the tomatoes are cool enough to handle, pack them cut side down into a 23 cm (9 inch) flan dish. Add the cooked shallots and grate most of the Kosher parmesan over the top. Add some torn up basil leaves, keeping some back for garnish. Season well with salt and pepper.

Roll out the pastry onto a board to the thickness of a £1 coin. Cut a circle 4 cm (1½ inches) larger than your flan dish and drape it over the top of the tomatoes. Tuck the excess pastry inside the dish well to create a border. Prick the pastry all over with a fork and bake for 25 minutes until a deep golden colour and puffed.

Cool on a rack for 10 minutes in the dish and then carefully invert the tart onto a serving plate. Serve scattered with the rest of the basil leaves and a few shavings of Kosher parmesan.

#### HONEY CUP CAKES

These little cup cakes are ideal if you are running out of time and haven't made a large honey cake that has had time to mature. The recipe makes about 24 and you need to keep them in an airtight tin so they don't dry out. They are delicious with a cup of tea directly after the fast!

Cook's Tip: It's easier to measure the oil out first and

then measure the honey over the top. That way it won't stick!

**First ingredients:**  
450 gr of plain flour  
2 tbsp ground ginger  
1 tbsp cinnamon  
2 tbsp mixed spice  
240 gr honey – just under 1 cup  
4 eggs  
2/3 cup of vegetable oil  
**Second ingredients:**  
1 cup of boiling water  
1 tbsp coffee  
2 tbsp bicarbonate of soda

Preheat the oven to 160 degrees C/Gas Mark 5

Place two dozen or so paper cases into jam tart or muffin tins. This helps to keep the shape of the buns. Combine all the ingredients from the first list in a large bowl and mix well. In a measuring jug combine the second set of ingredients and stir thoroughly until combined. The bicarb will froth up when it hits the warm water.

Pour the second set into the bowl with the first set and beat well to combine. Drop one tablespoon of the mixture into each paper case.

Bake in the oven for around 15 minutes until well risen and firm to the touch. Cool on a rack and then store in an airtight tin.

# Time to face the world again

## BEAUTY

### PAT LIDIKER



PAT EXAMINES WHAT'S NEW IN THE WORLD OF BEAUTY TO HELP US LOOK OUR BEST AFTER DISCARDING THOSE MASKS

At last, after 18 months of hiding away, it's time to whip off our masks and meet everyone face-to-face again. A mixed blessing, to put it kindly, for those of us who don't look quite the same as we did pre-COVID!

And we're not just talking about the naturally grey or white hair that many of us have decided we actually like; anyone can look great with this season's make-up trends. It's never a matter of looking younger, just better.

Baring neglected skin does, though, call for a serious assessment of what's lacking or past its sell-by date in our skincare and make-up

repertoire. Maybe this needn't include throwing out the mascaras, liner and shadows which have enhanced our eyes, the only feature on public view, for ages.

To kick start your skincare regime, the new buzzword is hyaluronic acid. If you don't know what it is or how to pronounce or spell it; me neither until I consulted the experts.

It's basically the same as the natural sugar in our skin and joints, which acts like a sponge to draw in moisture and keep us supple. Now we can apply specially formulated light, hyaluronic oil to our freshly cleansed faces to plump out creases and add a dewy glow.

Don't worry, this doesn't mean rushing out to buy costly new products from your high-end favourites (though many will still want to), as most serums across the

price spectrum already contain it.

Boots have their own simply-packaged range of oils, including hyaluronic acid (just £5) to use as a sleep mask or apply in the morning to damp skin.

Top with moisturiser and, hey presto, a smooth canvas for primer, concealer, foundation and make-up colours.

Yomtov comes early this year, while we're still enjoying our (occasionally) sunny gardens and parks or have been lucky enough to go on holiday, so it's not quite time to embrace the berries and reds forecast for autumn.

Instead, look for peach, coral and pink, whether shocking or rosy, for lips. Clarins have a collection of natural lip protectors in a tube to use on their own; or apply gloss on top of your usual colour.

For those lamenting their lips aren't as full they used to be, a stay-on liner can make all the difference and stop colour 'bleeding' into creases. Keep it natural by using a pencil just a shade darker than your lipstick or stain.

A pop of matching blush on cheeks, plus a sweep of bronzing powder or cream to



Julie Walters shows how make-up trends enhance any hair colour

sculpt contours, completes the late-summer effect.

Smokey eyes are still a focal point, whether wearing a mask or not. Save black mascara and liner for later. Instead, opt for brown and

grey to shape the eyes – aiming for a 'kitten' effect rather than more dramatic cats' eyes.

Swipe lids with grey, blue, violet, green or bronze shadow however the mood takes you; and define brows with a few flicks of a fine pencil to keep them natural.

It's well worth practising to get it just right before facing the world again and having the beautiful New Year we all deserve!



# **YOUR LEGACY? YOUR MOVE!**

Whether its wisdom or wealth, most of us want to pass on something positive to our own families and the next generation.

By leaving a gift in your will to a Jewish charity, you will contribute towards its survival and help families in future generations.



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# **ESSEX JEWISH NEWS**

## *2 pages of New Year Greetings to the Community 5782/2021*



**Shana Tova  
from everyone at**

### **WOODFORD FOREST UNITED SYNAGOGUE**

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[www.wfus.org.uk](http://www.wfus.org.uk)



Southend and District Reform Synagogue  
851 London Road  
Westcliff-on-Sea  
Essex SS0 9SZ  
Telephone 01702 711663  
[www.southendreform.org.uk](http://www.southendreform.org.uk)

The Executive and Council of Southend and District Reform Synagogue, together with Rabbi Warren Elf MBE, warmly wish the community and all readers a happy and healthy New Year

Due to Covid-19 Kabbalat Shabbat and Shabbat morning services are held weekly by Zoom and fortnightly in the shul..  
The services for the High Holy Days will be held (partly) in the shul and via Zoom.

You are welcome to join us.  
Please contact the synagogue for details.

**קהילה קדושה שיר חדש**  
East London and Essex Liberal Synagogue

Rabbi Richard Jacobi and Emeritus Rabbi David Hulbert, the Honorary Officers and Council send warm wishes to the community and all readers of The Essex Jewish News for a Happy, Healthy and New Year and Well over the Fast

All ELELS High Holy Day services will be streamed on social media and on Zoom. Click on [facebook.com/ELELSynagogue/](https://facebook.com/ELELSynagogue/) to watch the live stream, or contact our office for Zoom links

Telephone: 020 8989 7619  
[administrator@elels.org.uk](mailto:administrator@elels.org.uk)  
[www.elels.org.uk](http://www.elels.org.uk)



22 Beehive Lane, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3RT

Rabbi Steven & Rebbetzen Siobhan Dansky, Reverend Gary & Gillian Newman, the Executive and Synagogue Council wish the whole Community Shana Tova V'Gmar Chatima Tova. During these difficult times we wish you good health and hope that you keep safe.

**New Essex Masorti Synagogue**  
wishes the community a happy, healthy, peaceful & sweet 5782

We would be delighted to welcome you to our High Holy Days, Succot and/or fortnightly Shabbat services.

To find out more and to book yourself a place, please email: [nemasorti@hotmail.com](mailto:nemasorti@hotmail.com) or phone: 07922 090180

**New Essex  
Masorti  
Synagogue**

[www.nemsynagogue.co.uk](http://www.nemsynagogue.co.uk)  
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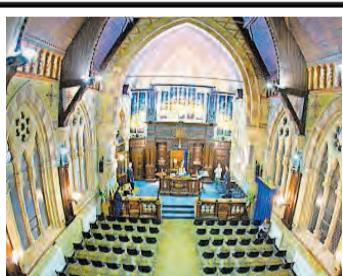


### **ILFORD FEDERATION SYNAGOGUE**

A thriving community

**2a Clarence Avenue, Ilford,  
Essex IG2 6JH**  
**Tel: 0208 554 5289**

Rabbi & Rebbetzen Singer, The Honorary Officers, Board of Management and our Community send greetings to all EJN readers for a Healthy and Peaceful New Year.



**SUKKAT SHALOM  
REFORM  
SYNAGOGUE**

1 Victory Road, Hermon Hill, Wanstead, E11 1UL

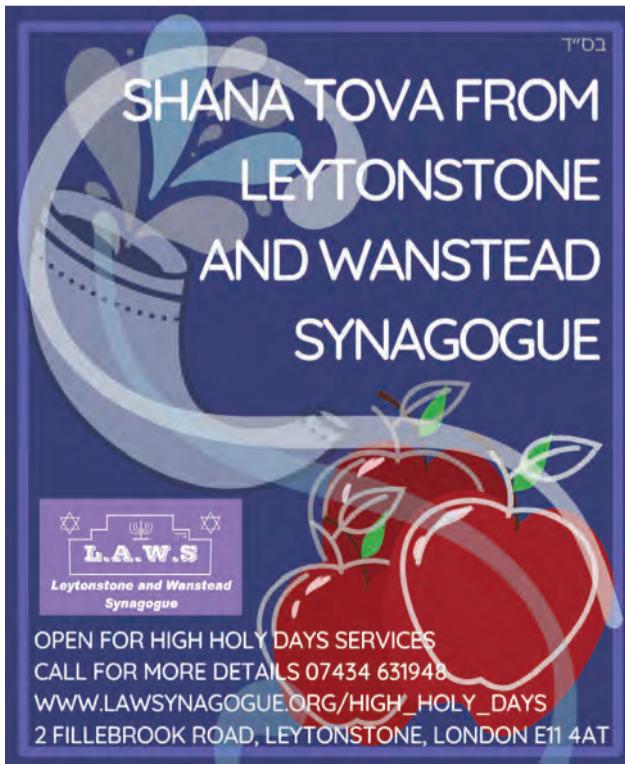
Rabbi Dr Tali-Artman Partock and all of our members wish you a happy and healthy New Year

Our Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services will be online via Zoom. Sukkah and Simchat Torah will be held in the synagogue.

All log in and booking details are on the website

If you would like more information about the synagogue please contact us on Telephone: 020 8530 3345

(Answer phone, please leave a message)  
Website: [www.sukkatshalom.org.uk](http://www.sukkatshalom.org.uk)



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Greetings from  
**ROMFORD & DISTRICT  
(AFFILIATED) SYNAGOGUE**  
(Incorporating Havering Jewish Ladies)

25 EASTERN ROAD, ROMFORD, ESSEX RM1 3NH  
01708 741690, 01708 748199 or 01708 765117

Rabbi Lee Sunderland, the Honorary Officers and Congregation wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year and Well Over the Fast



Headteacher:  
Mrs Margot Buller

Chairman of Governors:  
Mrs Louise Dorling

**Fullwell Avenue, Barkingside, Ilford  
Essex IG6 2JN**

Telephone: 8551 1097 Fax: 8551 2070  
email: [admin@cloretikva.redbridge.sch.uk](mailto:admin@cloretikva.redbridge.sch.uk)

The governors, staff and pupils wish the community a happy, peaceful and safe New Year and well over the Fast



### CHELMSFORD JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Council of Chelmsford Jewish Community wishes its members and Jews everywhere a Happy and Peaceful New Year and well over the fast.

You are welcome to join our vibrant and friendly community in celebration of the High Holydays and our varied programme.

For details, Email: [info@jewishcommunitychelmsford.co.uk](mailto:info@jewishcommunitychelmsford.co.uk)  
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### L'Shanah Tovah, uM'tukah!

All of us at South West Essex and Settlement Reform Synagogue would like to wish the entire Jewish community a very Happy and Healthy New Year for 5782.

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of Chabad Buckhurst Hill

Rabbi and Mrs Posen  
of Chabad Epping

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### ESSEX JEWISH NEWS



Rabbi Geoffrey & Rebbetzin Michelle Hyman  
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warmly wish the Community and all EJN Readers a  
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### Harlow Jewish Community

Most High Holy Day services will be held in the synagogue

Erev Rosh Hashanah at 7.30pm  
Rosh Hashanah morning at 10.30am.  
Tickets available through Eventbright.  
Kol Nidre at 7.30pm. Yom Nidre 11am followed by Yizkor at 13.15. Tickets available through Eventbright.  
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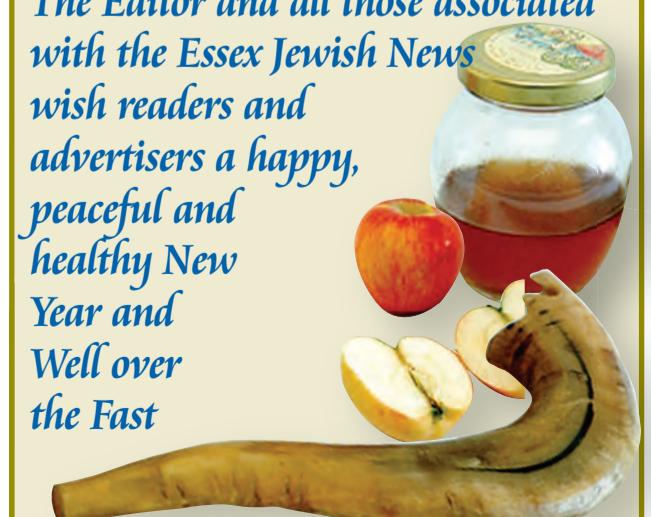
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*The Editor and all those associated  
with the Essex Jewish News  
wish readers and  
advertisers a happy,  
peaceful and  
healthy New  
Year and  
Well over  
the Fast*



# Versatile and transitional

THE KEY WORDS FOR HIGH HOLY DAY FASHION

If you live in the more temperate areas of the northern hemisphere, September is the traditional time to think about buying from the new autumn/winter collections. With the High Holy Days falling around this time of year, too, September is also the perfect time for Jewish women to go fashion shopping.

Or was... but with climate change giving us scorching

September temperatures, deciding what to buy now is more complicated. The High Holy Days falling so early in 2021 just adds another dilemma. One way to look perfectly on point in September – and for the yomtovim – is to find versatile, transitional pieces that can be styled in one way to work now and can be styled in a different way when temperatures drop.

## Midi dresses

An infinitely versatile midi dress makes a perfect transitional piece as it can be worn alone or over a T-shirt if it's warm, or over a sweater – or under an outer layer and with boots – later in the season.

Like those from the summer collections, many of the new A/W midi dresses are tiered, frill-trimmed and crafted in print, including all kinds of florals as well as geometric and animal prints of all kinds.

Find midis with this gentle Boho vibe at Rixo (£265); at Whistles (from £129); at Oliver Bonas (£80); River Island (£75); and lots at Zara at £49.99.

The new A/W collections also offer midi dresses with a more streamlined silhouette. These include a shirt dress in

light camel by Zimmerman (£550); a lime-green floral print by Essentiel Antwerp (£230) and a midi in monochrome spots (Joe Browns, £55).

## Midi and Maxi skirts

Midi skirts and maxi skirts, paired with a lightweight top or tee now and with a knit later, are also clever “transitional” purchases. Skirts with all hemlines, including short skirts, are coming through for the new season at all price points. New season details again include ruffles, tiers, frills, slits and wraps. Find an asymmetric crepe de chine midi by Veronica Beard, at Net-a-Porter (£310); a zebra-print bias-cut (£36) and leopard-print with ruffles (£38) both at River Island and high-waist floral-print at Zara (£29.99).

## Blouses

A super feminine ruffled or frilled blouse is not just a key piece in a fashionable A/W wardrobe but another clever “transitional” piece. A/W blouses feature lace, broderie and oversize Peter Pan collars often adorned with frills, embroidery or other embellishment. Find pretty blouses lace- or broderie-trimmed poplin or cotton blouses at Me & Em (£95); at M&S in blue ditsy print with V-neck and ruffles by Phase Eight (£79) and in pale green at Baukjen (£95).

## Twinsets

A cardigan paired with a matching vest, cami or tank-top – once known as a “twinset” – is another perfect “transitional”

piece. Find them at Reformation, including in cashmere, from £215; River Island has them in plains, in patterns and in the season’s hottest knit, fairisle; Zara has them, too, with cardis at £19.99; and matching vests or camis, at £17.99.

Square necklines are everywhere in A/W 21 while other new season details include crochet, smocking, Shirring, frills, embellishment of all kinds including embroidery, broderie and ric-rac braid; and all kinds of sleeve detail, from statement and decorative sleeves to splits, cut-outs and bows.

All colours were seen across the AW21 collections so the A/W palette again offers us an entire paint box of colours, from the “trend” shades that include yellow, teal, various greens and hot pinks, to vibrant jewel shades, pale hues and neutrals, such as black, camel and winter-white.

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1. Animal print silk midi, £159, over print blouse, £79, both Whistles ([whistles.com](https://www.whistles.com))

2. Puff-sleeve midi dress with Peter Pan collar, £79.50, Oliver Bonas ([oliverbonas.com](https://www.oliverbonas.com))

3. Dress with shirred waist and split, £48, River Island ([riverisland.com](https://www.riverisland.com))

4. Midi dress with square neckline and split, £248, Reformation ([thereformation.com](https://www.thereformation.com))

5. Flower-print midi skirt, £85, Boden ([Boden.co.uk](https://www.boden.co.uk))

6. Broderie frill blouse, £85, Boden ([Boden.co.uk](https://www.boden.co.uk))

4

# Faith, hope and duty ... the Holocaust survivor who told his story to the world

## OBITUARY

### LESLIE KLEINMAN BEM

Born: 29 May 1929  
Died: 30 June 2021

A TRIBUTE BY  
**GARRY STEEL**

JUNE saw the passing of Southend and Westcliff Hebrew Congregation's most esteemed character, Leslie Kleinman BEM, at the age 92.

Leslie was born in a village near the Satmar district of pre-war Hungary, now Romania, in 1929. His name then was Lazar. Satmar was overrun by the Nazis and the Jews were systematically deported to the camps.

First, they came for his father. Not long after, he, his mother and seven siblings were transported to the camps. Packed like sardines in a cattle truck without any proper sanitation, the family arrived at Auschwitz. Tragically, that was the last time Leslie would see any of his family again.

Jews had to line up before the infamous Dr Mengele. At a flick of a finger, Mengele would decide whether the Jews would live or die, depending on their fitness for work. In the queue, a young man standing behind Leslie asked him how old he was. "Fourteen," Leslie replied. "Tell him you're 17," the man said. Leslie was tall and fit for his age and could get away with it. When asked, he told Mengele he was 17 and was sent in one direction. The rest of his family were sent the opposite way, unknown to them, to the gas chambers.



Having survived the camps and two death marches, Leslie told me that, whilst experiencing near death, he made a silent pact with Hashem. "Please let me get through this. If I do, I promise I will study the Torah and live to be a devout and good

citizen." Leslie survived.

Leslie's liberators gave him a gun and told him they would turn a blind eye if he should 'accidentally' injure his captors. But that was not necessary. Despite the tortuous atrocity experienced, there was not an ounce of hate in his body, only love.

Leslie was accepted on a programme to transport a group, known as 'the boys', to the UK. He stuck to his word and went to yeshiva for a year. Leslie met his first wife, Evelyn, and they had two children. Sadly, his wife died through illness, after many happy years together.



Around 2008, by some quirk of fate, it was beshert that Leslie was to meet his lovely Miriam. Leslie had moved into our area and was looking for a shop to have some cards printed. Story has it, he passed a couple of printers then stumbled across another place that appealed. In the shop, he got talking to the Jewish husband and wife owners. The lady, Rosalind, invited Leslie to their home for a Shabbos meal. There he met Ros's mother, Miriam, ironically the widow of a Holocaust survivor of whom Leslie had been acquainted with sometime in the past.

A romance blossomed and, in 2011, they were married under the chuppah in Israel. The then Southend and Westcliff Rabbi Binyamin Bar flew out specially to perform the ceremony. The couple settled together in Westcliff and Leslie quickly became a minyan stalwart.

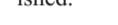


It was then that Leslie decided to tell his story to the world. Not for self-pity. He wanted to educate the younger generation about the atrocities by preaching love over hate. He became involved with the Holocaust Education Trust – giving talks to local schools and others around the country.

Leslie described to me the

uncanny phenomena of hundreds of squawking children amazingly turning silent as they were captivated by his story. He would say that if he could forgive and love after everything he had been through, then so could they; and it was within their power to ensure the atrocities never happen again by opposing antisemitism and racial hate.

Leslie was a member of Jewish Care's Redbridge Jewish Community Centre and Holocaust Survivors' Centre for many years, and was also active within JRoots – an organisation which facilitates today's generation of Jews with compelling Jewish journeys. Under the auspices of JRoots, he hosted groups on trips to Auschwitz. On one heart-wrenching trip, he sat shiva at the camp for each member of his family who perished.



I first met Leslie in 2014. The organising of these trips was taking a lot of his time. He got himself a computer to handle the necessary emails, letters and travel arrangements. Having not used a PC in any active way before, that aspect was difficult for him as it would be for anyone already in their eighties taking on a new skill.

A friend of his recommended he contact me through my IT business as a way to guide him through the difficulties with his computer. I did not have to think twice about taking him on.

We Jews are sickened by the Holocaust. Antisemitism continues to rise throughout Europe.

Here was an opportunity to make a contribution to Leslie's cause, however small. Keeping his computer equipment going, helping with emails and letter writing. That was the start of a loving friendship.

He and I spent many hours talking. He would talk about his childhood and the dramatic experience of being torn away from his beloved family; and his experience in the camps and life generally. Also, getting to know Miriam; one of the nicest Yiddisher



Above: Leslie Kleinman's family photo with his notes. Below: Leslie at age 15, after the liberation, at Kloster Indersdorf Displaced Persons Camp

Leslie's first language.

I get a call. "Garrrrry, that bloody computer's playing up again. I think it's got the kremlins."

Those immortal words "that bloody computer".

One day Leslie called me. "I've received a brocha and I can't open it." I say: "What do you mean a brocha, why would someone send you a brocha?" "I don't know, it won't play." I checked it out for him. It wasn't a brocha, it was a brochure. It's easy to forget English was not

Mammas I have ever met. I

have so many stories to tell, I

could write another 1,000

words. I'll finish with just a

few anecdotes:

few anecdotes:

Leslie was like a father figure to me. I will miss him greatly, as will everyone who ever knew him. His humility was respected by everyone, including many esteemed rabbis. A lion amongst men, I rest assured Hashem will look after him in death as he did in life.

I wish the family a long life and only simchas for many, many years. Amen.



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Leslie Kleinman with Miriam, his second wife

# Beshert, coincidence or kismet. Who knows?

HOLocaust survivor Bob Obuchowski had the number 7650 tattooed on his arm when he was in Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Rhemsdorf and survived a death march to Theresienstadt before he was liberated.

Bob was one of 'The Boys' who were brought over to Britain in 1945; and 60 years after that nightmare in the camps, he applied in England for a bank card and the pin number provided by the bank was 7650 – the identical number he had tattooed on his arm!

He must have been stunned. But was that coincidence or was it, as we say in Yiddish, beshert – which can be translated as 'meant to be'? It was used mainly over the years when a Jewish man and woman were introduced, liked each other and married – or, in Arabic, kismet, meaning fate.

According to some Jewish theologians, there is no such thing as coincidence. Hashgacha Pratit or Divine Providence is the concept that God is actively involved in each of our lives. Whatever it is called, sometimes events align in such a way that it feels, they say, as if God is directing the action.

My own son, Howard Robinson, while reading History at university, was browsing in the history section of a second hand bookshop in Southampton Row. He pulled out a book at random, opened the front cover and saw on the facing page the words 'Dedicated to the memory of Howard Robinson'.

And on the subject of books, there is also a story involving actor Anthony Hop-

## VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

### MANNY ROBINSON

1



kins, who was asked to play Kostya in the film adaption of The Girl From Petrovka. To prepare for the role, he tried to get the book but, despite an exhaustive search, was unable find one in any bookstore.

Then, while sitting in a Tube train in London, he found a copy of the very book he had been searching for lying next to him on a seat.

According to a website story in Jewish World, Rochelle and Bill Willner attended a service at a shul in Kissimmee, Florida, for the first time in two years. Before the mourner's kaddish, the rabbi asked if anyone was observing sheloshim, the 30-day period of mourning. A woman, who they didn't recognise, announced that she had recently lost her aunt, Yetta Weiner.

Immediately after the service, Rochelle approached the mourner and said: "Excuse me, but Yetta Weiner is my aunt." It didn't take long for Rochelle and the stranger to realise that they were second cousins. Yetta was the wife of David Weiner, brother to both Rochelle and the stranger's grandmothers.

What would have happened had the Willners not

gone to shul that day for the first time in two years? What if the rabbi had not asked if anyone was in mourning? What if the stranger had not announced Yetta's name?

When doing some research for a talk on a cruise ship, I discovered that when song writer Israel Beilin completed his first song he took it to a printer. The printer made a typographical error and instead of the credit coming out as 'Words by Israel Beilin' it was printed as 'Words by Irving Berlin'. When Israel saw the error, he decided it was beshert and decided to keep the incorrectly printed name. The rest, as they say, is history.

Dutch cyclist Maarten de Jonge was due to fly on the Malaysian Air Lines plane that was shot down over the Ukraine. He was due to fly on the same airline the same year when that plane disappeared somewhere over the Indian Ocean. He cheated death on both occasions because he had changed his tickets at the 11th hour, when cheaper prices became available.

In a podcast, Radiolab in 2001 came a story of 10-year-old Laura Buxton, who had a

red balloon in her garden. On the side of the balloon she had written the words "Please return to Laura Buxton"; along with her address. She then released the balloon into a strong wind.

The balloon travelled roughly 140 miles before descending, and landed in the garden of another 10-year-old girl. The second girl's name was ... Laura Buxton!

The strangest coincidence of all must be the 'Jim Twins'. Separated at birth and raised by different families in Ohio, they finally met up at the age of 39. Both sets of adopted parents named the boys James and called them Jim for short. Both men married twice; both wives were named Linda, and both men had second wives named Betty. Both had one son, who they had both named James Allen.

Perhaps the luckiest – or unluckiest – man was Tsutomu Yamaguchi. Unlucky because he lived in Hiroshima and fled the city when the atomic bomb was dropped. Where did he flee to? Nagasaki, only to see a second flash of white light that would cover half his body with radioactive ash. He was the only person recognised by the Japanese government as having survived both bombings. In China, 80-year-old Xu Weifang from Jiangsu Province saved an eight-year-old boy from drowning. According to the magazine Newsweek, Xu discovered that 30 years earlier he had saved the boy's father from drowning as well.

Beshert? Kismet? Coincidence? Who knows?



## Is Kosher food healthier?

ARE you getting nagged about taking too much sugar, salt, fat, meat or alcohol? Just forget about it!

According to French oncologist David Khayat, the former chairman of France's National Cancer Institute, we worry too much about what food we eat. Mr Khayat, who has written a book on the subject, gave an interview to the *Jewish Chronicle* earlier this year and stated that a balanced lifestyle with meat, wine and sex enjoyed in moderation, is ideal and said "(it is) an approach that aligns with ancient Jewish wisdom".

Professor Khayat, who moved to France from Tunisia, described his approach as 'very Jewish'. Recalling his Shabbat meals he said: "Food was a means to express love, more than a means to give you calories. This is very Jewish, very north African Jewish. It influenced my personality, my education, my achievements."

But the professor was writing about north African 'Jewish' food, which comprises vegetables, fish, couscous and spices like turmeric, ginger, hot peppers, cinnamon, paprika, caraway and cumin. I don't think it covers the Eastern European Jewish food that so many of us know and love.

According to the American magazine *Women's Health* writer Sue Fishkoff, author of *Kosher Nation*, no food safety source or any of the rabbis she spoke to could provide evidence that the certification that meat was kosher meant it prevented illness. And yet there are reports of an upsurge in the number of non-Jewish people opting for kosher food because they are of the opinion that it is healthier.

I agree with Ms. Fishkoff. Kosher food is not inherently healthier than any other food. Kosher simply means food that is prepared or kept in conditions that follow the rules of Jewish law (halachah).

Indeed, many of the traditional Ashkenazi foods that we accept as quintessential 'Jewish' food are not considered the healthiest around. Traditional Sephardic cuisine may, in fact, be much better for you. There is also a concern that, to avoid bug contamination in produce, kosher vegetables are sprayed with extra pesticides that are not that great for human health.

So the bottom line is that eating some kosher foods isn't necessarily healthier, but you could be safer for eating it. I've got a cold ... pass the chicken soup!!!

## The Jewish view of coincidences

BY RABBI GEOFFREY HYMAN MINISTER OF SOUTHHEND & WESTCLIFF HEBREW CONGREGATION



A FUNDAMENTAL principle in Jewish thought is that the human being has been created with freedom of will, often referred to as free choice. Judaism rejects the idea that we are subjects of des-

tiny or fate, that our lives, from birth to death, are mapped out for us. Freedom of will and reward and punishment go together – just like a 'horse and carriage'. The Biblical story about Adam

and Eve and the forbidden fruit is the narrative that established these principles. In addition, numerous Biblical verses refer to these principles e.g. "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse, therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live". (Deut. 30:19)

Another principle in Judaism is Divine Providence. This means that God provides the needs of all His creatures. However, Maimonides states categorically that it is only the human that enjoys individual providence – "hashgachah pratit" and that this is given in the measure corresponding to the Divine influence or emanation that that individual receives. So, the prophets would enjoy the highest degree of Divine Providence whereas, at the other end of the scale, the person who is ignorant and disobedient is neglected and left to be governed by chance. (*Moreh Nevuchim*, chapter 18)

The use of Yiddish term 'beshert' must therefore be understood in the context of these principles. If

one uses beshert with the meaning 'all is fated' or 'meant to be' – then that is inconsistent with the principle of free choice, as I explained earlier. But if one looks at beshert as meaning Heavenly help, as God, so to speak, is pointing us in the right direction – then that would be acceptable.

So now let us look at coincidences. One could view them as heavenly help or opportunities for reflection. Our rabbis stated: "No person knocks his finger on earth unless it was a decree from Heaven" (Talmud Chullin 7b). The Talmud is filled with many passages that teach us to reflect on both the good and bad things that happen in our lives. And I certainly believe that when we find ourselves in given circumstances, it is an opportunity for reflection. The last word here must go to the worldwide popular thinker Rabbi Sacks, Z'L, who tackles the issue of coincidences in a short YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/Lds6FklZv-I> – his bottom line on the matter is: "Life is God's call to us!"

## The ins and outs of cricket

ONE of the most difficult jobs for any sports journalist (like me) is to be told to cover a sport you know absolutely nothing about – like canoeing, Greco-Roman wrestling, weight lifting – and, in my case, American Football.

So I found myself in New York asking an American journalist to explain the rules of American Football to me as we watched the game on television. After half an hour of explanation I was still totally bemused. He then asked me about cricket and I thought I would get my own back by giving him this brilliant explanation written first, I believe, many years ago by the late Leslie Crowther.

This is what I told him: "You have two sides, one out in the field and one in. Each man that's in the side that's

in goes out, and when he is out, he comes in and the next man goes in until he's out. When they are all out, the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in, out. Sometimes you get a man still in and not out.

"When a man goes out to go in, the men who are out try to get them out and when he is out he goes in and the next batsman in goes out and goes in. There are two men called umpires who stay out all the time, and they decide when the man who is in is out. When both sides have been in and all the men have been out twice after all the men have been in, including those who are not out, that's the end of the game."

Howzat for an explanation!!!

# This little piggy went to ... Jerusalem

ONE of the most fascinating articles I have come across in the last month or so appeared in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz. It revealed that the remains of a piglet from 2,700 years ago had been found in a place where you wouldn't expect to find pork remains: a Jerusalem home dating from the First Temple period.

No: I am not telling porkies. The discovery seems to support the theory that the ancient Israelites occasionally did eat pork; and the biblical ban on the pig was only first observed in the Second Temple era. Oink Vey!

The remains of the piglet were found crushed by large pottery vessels and a collapsed wall during excavations in Jerusalem; and the archaeologists reported their find in a study published earlier this year in the journal of Near Eastern Archaeology.

What interests me is that the discovery ties in with the wider question about when the Bible was written and when Judaism – as we know it today – was born.

According to the archaeologists, the pig's skull identifies it as a domestic animal as opposed to a wild swine, and indicates that pigs were raised for food in the capital of ancient Judea.

Lidar Sapir-Hen, an archaeologist at Tel Aviv University and at the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, said that that there was compelling evidence that the room (where the piglet and other animal remains were found) was where meals were prepared or eaten. "So this pig was just waiting for its turn," she said.

The excavation also yielded an elegantly carved bone pendant and a human figurine. Together with the great variety of other animals found alongside the pig, all the evidence pointed to a house that had been occupied by a wealthy or upper-class family.

Joe Uziel, the Israel Antiquities Authority archaeologist,



## VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

**MANNY ROBINSON**



2

## Wishing you a happy Ra's a-Sanah!

MY comments in the last issue of EJN about Muslims celebrating the Fast of Ashura to mark the Exodus from Egypt by Moses and the Children of Israel have brought requests from a number of readers to see if I can discover any other similarities between Jewish customs and traditions and those found in the Koran.

So I have returned to my Islamic website, as we approach Rosh Hashanah, to find that the Islamic New Year is called ...surprise, surprise: Ra's a-Sanah! It's the Arabic word for 'Head of the Year': Rosh Hashanah means the same thing.

The Islamic website informs me that, while there is no strictly traditional religious observance on Ra's a-Sanah, the day is used as a day of reflection on the past year as well as planning for the coming year.

Like Rosh Hashanah, Ra's a-Sanah begins at sunset the

previous night, and many devout Muslims spend time in prayers and fasting.

I also found that the Muslim holy month of Ramadan marks the revelation of the Koran. Islamic tradition teaches that, while the Koran was revealed on the 24th of the Islamic month of Ramadan, the Torah was revealed to the Children of Israel on the sixth day of the same month. Together with all other points of significance, Ramadan is the month of the revelation of the holy books.

According to another website, 'My Jewish Learning', when Mohammad told his followers that the Torah was given on the sixth day, he was clearly drawing on Jewish tradition.

The opinion has been expressed that the year Mohammad made his declaration the Islamic month of Ramadan and the Hebrew month of Sivan coincided. Both the Hebrew months and the Islamic

months are based on the lunar cycle. While the Muslims follow a strictly lunar calendar, our Jewish one is based on the solar cycle, meaning that at certain fixed times an extra lunar month is added to ensure that the holidays don't rotate through the seasons as they do in the Muslim calendar. But there are rare cases when the two months do align.

So when we celebrate the giving of the Torah on Shavuot, Muslims also remember that the Children of Israel received the Torah at the same time.

One final point: when it comes to giving a Jewish child its Hebrew name, the word 'ben' meaning 'son of' is inserted in the middle; for example, 'Ariel ben Yosef'. The 'ben' is always after a male. In the Koran, a Muslim boy has the middle name 'bin' and also means 'son of'; for example, Mohammad bin Abdullah.

who led the dig, said that pig consumption and pig husbandry may have been a rare treat. It suggests that it doesn't mean an Israelite had nipped out for a bacon buttie on the quiet, but it was always part of 'mainstream' food habits, that is until the Second Temple period.

So it appears that, in practice, First Temple-period Judaism was very different from the religion it would later become.

According to the archaeologists, it was only in the late Second Temple period that there is clear evidence that Jews were banned from eating pork and certain sea foods.

To me, the whole story has the makings of a spirited discussion between archaeologists and rabbis... I just don't want to be piggy in the middle!

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## PERSONAL OPINION

### RENEE BRAVO



FORTY years ago, Manny Robinson told me that there was going to be a local Jewish newspaper called *The Bridge*, for the Redbridge Jewish community, and asked if I would like to write the Woman's Column.

I turned him down, saying: "I can't cook and I think fashion is silly, but if you want me to do a column written by a woman, I would love to."

Manny took me on and that is how the Renee Bravo column was born.

*The Bridge* then became the Essex Jewish News, its remit expanded to cover the whole of Essex and East Anglia and Manny later moved from being Editor to Director and Editorial Consultant ... but this column has continued throughout.

As my first piece, four decades ago, was about the High Holy Days, and this edition is for the High Holy Days, I thought it might be fun to repeat it.

I would also like to thank Manny and the EJN team for all their work over the years. Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

## The passing of ten minutes

I SAT back in my seat, and closed my eyes, the chazan's voice forming a background to my thoughts, the familiar words of the Yom Kippur prayers biting into my memories.

The synagogue was beginning to fill, in anticipation of the Yizkor service. I could hear the shuffling of feet, the lifting and closing of seats, the whispered greetings, the half-heard replies.

I had my usual headache. My mother never had a headache; she would sit in the synagogue all day, quietly praying, never moving. She constantly assured us that she never felt any different; fasting didn't bother her. I must take after my father. He was ill every year but, being a man, he had to hide it and could only show his suffering in anger.

How often on Yom Kippur night he would swear never to let his children fast again. "Such stupidity," he would storm. "Isn't life bad enough without self-inflicted suffering."

We children used to think it was his bad temper, and laugh. I felt sick at the sudden realisation of how it must have hurt him.

The chazan had stopped, and the minister announced

the Yizkor service. There was the usual stampede as the children left, glad of the excuse to run out into the sunshine and show off their new clothes.

We all stood up, close together now, each one mouthing the hackneyed words, each one's thoughts scattered over the years. Could it possibly be that I had my mother for 30 years?

I cannot find memories for all those days. I had so much to say to her. Where was she all that time? So many things I needed to know, she could have told me. Why didn't I ask her?

What was I doing all those years that I had no time to speak to her? I saw her every day, ate the food she cooked, wore the clothes she washed, talked and talked, and said nothing. I glanced at the book. "Lord, remember the souls of our beloved parents, whose desire it was to train us in the way of the righteous." My father didn't. He hated Yom Kippur, and begged us not to fast. I looked again at the book. Is there a prayer for a rebel father? No. there isn't.

The minister had started on the prayer for the departed chief rabbis. Interminable names, one after the other. My father used to tell a joke about a chief rabbi, how he came to a little town to give a judgment in a divorce case, and the wife met him at the station... and suddenly, I saw my father's face, with that little half-smile as he was telling it, and my throat closed, and the tears came, and I lifted my head so that they should not roll down my face.

The chazan started on the El Mole Rachamim, and let the words pour down into my brain, longing to find their meaning. "Grant eternal life unto our loved ones." Can it be true? Can it possibly be true? Please mummy, let it be true.

I opened my eyes, and found myself looking at the choir gallery, and the Ten Commandments embroidered on the curtain. "Honour thy father and thy mother." Had I? I'd loved them, and cherished them, but had I honoured them? And now it was too late.

The minister was reading psalm 16. "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; I have a delightsome heritage." I thought then of my parents, giving me their love to keep after they were dead, to give to my children, for them to keep after I am dead; and I knew, suddenly, yet surely, that this was indeed the bond of eternal life.

"Ushrai Yoshvei Bescho" sang the chazan, and someone opened the doors; and the children streamed in, and people blew their noses, and normality was restored, and I sat back in my seat and closed my eyes.

## TRAVEL

MARK HARRIS

1



## Global Kiddush reminiscences

NEEDLESS to note here, but during government-imposed, global pandemic 'lockdowns' and restrictions since March 2020, millions of people worldwide have missed out on their usual, various and enjoyable activities of more normal times. Not least of these would've been journeying, and sojourning, overseas for vacations of one kind or another. Also, numerous other regular pursuits generally would've needed to be temporarily shelved because of coronavirus safety requirements.

In that connection, and for thousands within the planet's Jewish communities, just one stand-out illustration would've been attendance at Shabbat morning services in their synagogues. Though maybe – and especially for a goodly proportion of congregants – what would've been missed particularly might well be the post-prayers' kiddushim with their wine, whisky and other tasty refreshments (sweet and savoury); as well as the shmoozy socialising whilst partaking thereof.



In consequence of the official bans, and in order to wet your appetites for the hopefully near future return to something approaching a real normality, I'll be reminiscing here about just some of the especially memorable, post-Shabbat morning service kiddushim enjoyed in relatively near but also some rather far-flung, foreign parts. These include Germany and Japan, Italy and Australia, Switzerland and Hawaii, the Czech Republic and South Africa. My memories of delicious, even intriguing kiddushim at synagogues, shuls, temples, prayer-houses and shtiebls extend back a very long way, with many of them (unlike in the UK generally) comprising 'sit down' meals of eclectic content, atmosphere and environment.



An example that readily springs to mind, when recalling such repasts, was happily consumed – one Shabbat in the 1990s – seated at tables on the terrace of the attractive, neoclassical styled, orthodox Maghain Aboth ('Shield of our Fathers') Synagogue, dating from 1878, on Waterloo Street in Singapore's central business district. (It's said to be the oldest, extant 'Jewish' building in south-east Asia.) Alongside regular congregants, a few (like us) visitors from abroad and under a broiling August sun, we were served an amazing 'hot' kiddush-lunch featuring ... curried chicken! And yes, you did read that correctly.

Coming somewhat closer to home, it was during a stay (extended to cover Purim) in Trieste, on Italy's north Adriatic coastline, that I attended the picturesquely-sited city's

(literally) hugely impressive – though of an architecturally unpertinent, 4th century CE Syrian design – orthodox Templo Israelitico Synagogue, one of the largest in Europe. Dominating Piazza Giotti, and constructed in 1912 with a strikingly embellished and domed interior, it replaced four Ashkenazi and Sephardi shuls in the old Jewish quarter. I attended not only for the Megillah readings and Purim festivities; but also on Shabbat, when the Kiddush's primary ingredient was – yes, you've guessed it ... delectable slices of pizza! What else in Italy?

It was one summer in the 1980s that witnessed us jetting more than half way round the world to spend a number of weeks in the Hawaiian Islands, based largely in a lovely hotel beside Waikiki Beach on the island of Oahu; and not far from

the capital of former West Germany. We attended a Shabbat service at the orthodox Tempelstrasse Synagogue, off Adenauer Allee. The expansive, modern 'glassy' building was completed in 1959. The kiddush-lunch included hot baked salmon and vegetables, plus generous pourings of the invariable vodka shots. But what I recollect mainly is the dessert, one of the best overseas kiddush 'puddings' I've ever consumed: plump, white meringues topped with tiramisu-flavoured cream ... really yummy!

In 2003, we holidayed for a few weeks in Japan, based in



**Above:** Synagogue in Singapore  
**Right:** Synagogue in Sydney

the engaging city of Honolulu. One Shabbat morning, we hiked along the coastline – and for what seemed like more than a couple of miles under the solar radiation – to the then Chabad House on the far side of the commanding volcanic cone, Diamond Head. Arriving for the service quite dry in the mouth, we were handed large bottles of Coca Cola to quench our thirsts!

But what made the 'sit-down' kiddush there quite remarkable for us wasn't the appetising food and drink, but rather a youngish married couple we met ... he a Jewish cabby in Honolulu, she a Filipino convert to Orthodox Judaism; and also the fact that it's 'a small Jewish world'. We were then living in Clayhall; and were gobsmacked to learn

(thousands of miles from Redbridge) that, whilst serving on a USA airbase in East Anglia, the American guy would drive to Gants Hill to buy necessary religious items at Harvey's 'Blue and White' Judaica shop! (I'm sure many readers will fondly remember it.)

Having, over the years, spent much time exploring many cities and towns, and their 'Jewish' aspects (past and present), across Germany – and having worshipped in several of the country's synagogues – I know well that most of their Shabbat kiddushim are traditionally 'sit-down' meals. Our last such trip, a couple of years ago, was a return visit to Bonn,

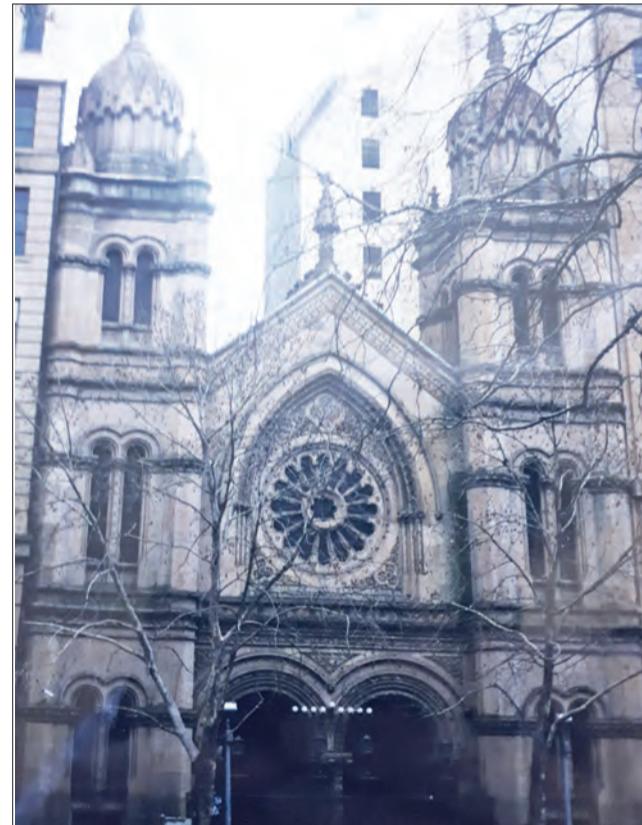
On one particular Shabbat, his service was attended by the Israeli ambassador and the Japanese director-general of the Holocaust Education Centre in Fukuyama, Tokyo-Chabad Rabbi Mendi Sudakevich was present at our service that day. He told me that he knew Rabbi Aryeh Sufrin of Chabad Gants Hill! On entering a spacious hall for the joint kiddush, I was expecting to be eating kosher 'sushi'. We were in Japan, after all; and we'd even had such Far Eastern fare, though rarely of course, at a kiddush in the UK. So what was the primary item on that Japanese Shabbat's menu? Gefilte fish with chrayne ... naturally!

So back to Europe and now the Czech Republic. A nation we've explored well beyond handsomely historic Prague,

including its wonderfully active and historically medieval Alt Neu Synagogue. I do, however, remember the kiddush savoured at the easterly city of Brno's 'functionalist' styled synagogue in Skorepka Street, designed by Jewish architect Otto Eisler and built in 1936. The appealingly distinct simplicity of this orthodox shul's ample interior was shown to me by its affable minister, Rabbi Shlomo Radomir Kucera, one Shabbat morning; and before he led me to the cosy beis hamedrash for the start of the service.



I've not forgotten the 'sit-down' kiddush in the smallish, basement hall of the endearingly comfortable premises because, during it, I mentioned to the minister that at UK kiddushim there was customarily present a bottle of Scotch whisky. I could've been mistaken, but the rabbi then appeared somewhat embarrassed.



I felt sorry to have alluded to the alcohol liquidity gap, especially when he jumped up suddenly, dashed into the nearby kitchen and returned smilingly, not only with a bottle of slivovitz (stated, on its label, to mark the 400th anniversary of the Maharal of Prague) but also, wait for it ... a bottle of Johnny Walker (Red Label) blended whisky! "Czech this out, Mark!" I thought he should've said with a telling wink.

Clearly, not every city or town overseas to which we've travelled has been home to a Jewish community with at least one synagogue; and one that holds Shabbat morning

(and not only Friday evening, Kabbalat Shabbat) services. But fairly often, there is; and, indeed, attendance at the shul – opportunely, so far as concerns kiddushim – might happen to fall on a Saturday when a simchah is being celebrated. And there have been, memorably, more than one such unexpected happy occasion.

Coming immediately to mind is the arrival – by my wife and me – at the orthodox Great Synagogue in Sydney; and during our month-long exploration around much of Australia some years ago. The vast shul was consecrated in 1878, and it's situated opposite the later Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park. (Actually, Sir John Monash, a practising Jew, commanded Anzac forces during World War I.) The interior is exquisite, with a grandly ornate ceiling punctuated by a myriad of gold-leaf stars against a dark blue background. The familiar Ashkenazi service was enhanced by a male choir, housed in an open

vodka offerings ... initiated by the Federal Republic's nowadays Jewish community members, largely long-hailing from Russia and Eastern Europe. But rather one of the best (kosher) red wines that I've ever tasted, whether in shul or otherwise. It was a Pinot Noir from the Nistreana region in the former Soviet Republic of Moldova, adjoining Romania. This brings to mind also a fantastic Italian, Barbera wine that I really enjoyed imbibing during a Shabbat morning kiddush at Turin's imposing synagogue. The vino came from a congregant's own vineyard; and it was a truly elegant accompaniment to the buffet's fresh strawberries and cherries.



My reference to the choir at Sydney's Great Synagogue has prompted thoughts – as a choral first tenor myself – of delighting in Shabbat kiddushim alongside fellow choristers, of The London Jewish Male Choir (with which I sang for two decades) and then (since 2008) with The London Cantorial Singers (LCS), during a number of performances and concert tours abroad ... in Israel, the USA, South Africa and Europe. In 2015, we participated in the annual – and, if I might say so, prestigious – Louis Lewandowski Jewish Music Festival in Berlin. Fortunately, I'd learned about the festival from Cantor Jochen Fahlenkamp of the city's 1904-completed and war-surviving Rykestrasse Synagogue (one of the largest in the world, built to seat over 2,000 people) during a superb, 'sit down' kiddush in 2014! I'll never forget it's fantastic outcome for my choir!



On one of several return visits (across the years) to Switzerland – this one in December 2019 – we stayed in Basel for a week or so and enjoyed an extensive kiddush buffet after the Shabbat morning service at the city's magnificent, 1868-dedicated, double-domed and orthodox Choral Great Synagogue. As the LCS's sort of promotional 'ambassador' when meeting with Jewish communities on roving overseas, I'm hoping that – at some future 'normal' time – my choir will be singing in this beautiful shul (and enjoying its kiddush); and also participating in the appealing Swiss city's own (normally annual) 'Jewish Music Festival'. But one thing I do remember from the Basel temple's delicious kiddush (and aside from the vodka shots) ... its wonderful, piping-hot and winter-welcome barley soup! Let's leave it there for now ... L'Chaim!

# TRAVEL

MARK HARRIS

2



# Staycation? Enjoy some East Anglian towns

**T**HREE was a pre-pandemic 'normal' time when 'red, amber and green' – if mentioned together – invoked a set of traffic lights. Since not long after Covid-19 began spreading around the globe in March 2020, with its subsequent variants, these three colours have represented the grades of foreign nations to which British citizens can or cannot or may be able to travel to for a vacation. But subject to any government's imposed restrictions, such as 'quarantine' (either on arrival abroad or when back in the UK).



The official list of 'green' (or accessible without isolation on return) destinations had been relatively limited for potential holidaymakers. And also prone to uncertain risk and variation, which sometimes led to disappointment, if not acute exasperation and additional expense. Though the PM and relevant cabinet ministers had generally advised against non-essential trips abroad. Instead, they recommended less problematic 'staycations' in this country.

So I would like to suggest a particular 'escape' possibil-

esque, historic and relatively proximate (often also 'market') towns located in Cambridgeshire or its neighbouring counties of Norfolk or Suffolk.

There are several excellent hotels in cultural Cambridge with its several theatres, museums, art galleries and concert halls. At the town's academic heart, architecturally rich with numerous historic colleges, these are some 4-stars to consider: the Cambridge University Arms (overlooking the central greensward of Parker's Piece, where the rules of football were shaped); the Hilton Cambridge City Centre (in museum-filled Downing Street and close to The Grand Arcade shopping mall); The Graduate (newly re-developed beside the River Cam, where

day-trip – Huntingdon, St Neots, Stowmarket, Wymondham (pronounced 'Windam'), even Kings Lynn, Norwich and Ipswich.

Only some 12 miles northwest of Cambridge, St Ives is best reached (in a mere 30 minutes) direct from the city centre via a pleasantly rural 'Guided Bus-Way' route, the world's longest. On the banks of the River Great Ouse, this old Saxon town sits on the edge of the Fens. It prospered during the medieval epoch as a trading centre, then as a cattle market. Its 15th century (originally toll) bridge – where a myriad of swans and other waterfowl gather – is one of only four in England to possess a quaintly integrated chapel. St Ives holds regular weekly markets, and has a legacy of centuries-old pubs

cient Ely, on the River Great Ouse, is about 14 miles northwest of Cambridge; and its cute (1845-built) railway station is speedily reached by train. Having a glorious cathedral – with encircling gardens, and parks to the river – helped make the fairly compact (weekly market) town technically a 'city' (one of the UK's smallest). This status was recognised formally by



**King's College, Cambridge**

the Queen's 'letters patent' of 1974. When the surrounding, low-lying and marshy fens were drained, it ceased to be an 'island' ... though it's still known as 'The Isle of Ely' with a very popular, yacht-filled marina and river-boating.



Construction of its beautifully distinctive cathedral (known as 'The Ship of the Fens') – a towering landmark for miles around – was begun by William the Conqueror almost 1,000 years ago; and was

and coaching inns; The Dolphin, now a hotel at the riverside, is a scenic venue for an alfresco drink.

The town square's statue of Oliver Cromwell, erected in 1901 and one of four in the country, acknowledges his defensive activities in St Ives during the English Civil War. Between the riverbanks (and with an entrance opposite the

The city also retains various old taverns ... especially useful when waterside rambling.

Direct trains to south Norfolk's Thetford, some 34 miles north-east of Cambridge, take around 40 minutes to its mid-19th century station. Certain sections of this ancient (market) town pre-date the Norman Conquest; and it was the tribal base of Queen Boudicca's

focal point of West Suffolk is notable for much else, too.

Places to explore include the Theatre Royal (built in 'Regency' times); the Apex arts and events centre (which rose from the old cattle market in 2010); the 12th century edifice of Moyse's Hall Museum (a fine art etc gallery); and the Greene King Brewery, reputed to be the largest in the UK.

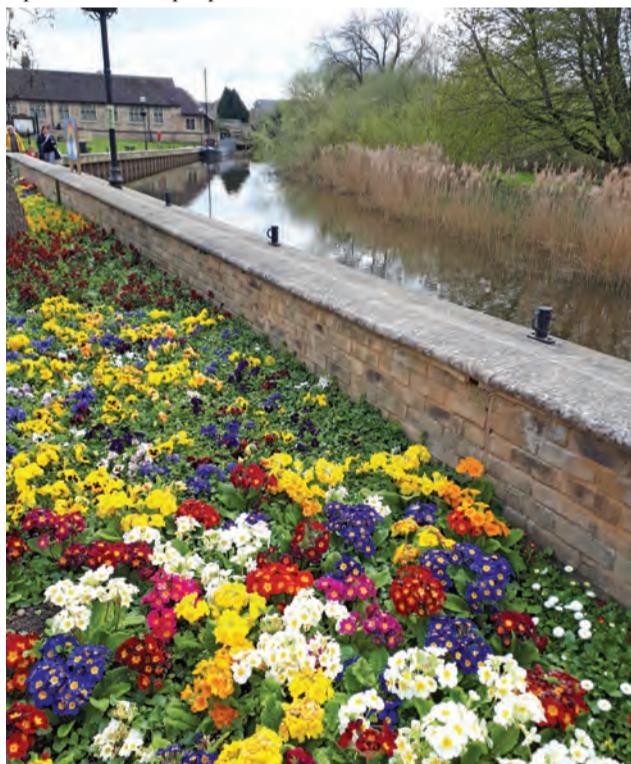
Bury evolved around an historic Abbey, constructed exactly 1,000 years ago. This ecclesiastical structure was virtually destroyed following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th century. (In the extant and ancient St Mary's Church is buried Mary Tudor, Henry VIII's preferred sister.) You can promenade the cathedral's inviting gardens, which contain not only intriguing remnants of the old Abbey but also – in the 'Peace Garden' – a 2015-established, Holocaust Memorial. Its plaque relates, additionally, to the persecution of Bury's early medieval Jewish community and the massacre of 57 Jews in 1190. HMD is marked annually, latterly on Zoom; and it's organised by the Cathedral authorities and W Suffolk Council. Facing the stately and symbolic old Abbeygate, and housed in a fine Georgian building, is The Angel Hotel. It stands on the site of a 15th century onward, coaching inn; and has boasted Charles Dickens as a well-satisfied guest. Bury offers many old hosteries with ambience; and one, The Nutshell, claims to be the tiniest pub in Britain.

We've run out of space, so let's hope EJN readers' appetites have been whetted for a Cambridge 'staycation' with some appealing, East Anglian side-trips. Readers might wish to research further the towns outlined here, and others only mentioned. But, if not driving, do check transport timings, as well as the then current availability of venues.



Finally, I would just allude to one of the towns cited earlier ... Huntingdon. In 2011, I interviewed (for my EJN 'Cambridge Diet' column) its MP, Jonathan Djanogly, in this historic market town. He's a fellow lawyer and member of the Cambridge Traditional Jewish Congregation. We spoke about the town's medieval Jewry; its stone synagogue was gutted with fire by an antisemitic mob in 1285.

The MP told me that, if the shul's precise location were to be found, he would seek to have a commemorative plaque affixed in the vicinity. After a few years of on-and-off research, I discovered the exact site of the shul and mikvah; and, in 2016, a plaque was unveiled – jointly by the MP and the town's then Mayor – at 'Muttongate', just off St Clements Passage and a brief stroll from the town's main shopping area.



**St Ives riverside**

ity that, geographically, could be very convenient for those readers residing within the NE London and Essex sectors of the print EJN's circulation area. And who may not have ventured significantly into East Anglia, another part of this newspaper's physical distribution network. Any imputation of bias aside – your 'Travel' writer has lived there for a dozen years – may I recommend a hotel stay based in the sublime university-city of Cambridge for, say, seven nights. And which relaxing 'staycation' could readily include a number of optional day-trips – perhaps letting a train take the strain – to pictur-

you can punt to your heart's content); and – just metres from the Cambridge Synagogue – The Varsity Hotel and Spa (with its panoramic, rooftop bar-terrace and only a stone's throw from trendy Quayside's bar, cafe, restaurant and punting scene).

'Cambridge' railway station is just a 15-minute walk from the city centre; taxis are available, of course. Possible day-trip targets, with stations also near to their hubs, include: St Ives, Ely, Newmarket (if you're a horse-racing fan), Bury St Edmunds, Thetford and – just a little further afield, but still within a very reasonable distance for an enjoyable



**Captain Mainwaring's statue, Thetford**

over 1,000-year-old All Saints Parish Church) is Holt Island, a nature reserve; and the nearby Norris Museum displays much of local history. Also, and for aficionados, there's a very good whisky etc emporium in the 'Broadway'! Fenland's historic and an-

painstakingly restored in Victorian times. Ely possesses numerous 'listed' buildings, crossing many centuries back to the Norman era. Oliver Cromwell and his family lived there for a decade. The Lord Protector's one-time home is now a fascinating museum.

# COME ON IN!

It's been a while!



We're so excited that we are ready to open our community centres again.

From July through to October, we will carefully and safely be reopening all of our dementia day centres, community centres and Connect@ services.

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