

**The
West London
Synagogue of
British Jews**

**Annual Report and Financial
Statements**

31 December 2023

Company Limited by Guarantee
Registration Number
08578248 (England and Wales)

Charity Registration Number
1155821

Contents

Reports

Reference and administrative details	1
Report of the trustees	3
Independent auditor's report	20

Financial statements

Statement of financial activities	25
Balance sheet	26
Statement of cash flows	27
Principal accounting policies	28
Notes to the financial statements	33

Reference and administrative details

Trustee management board	Richard Slowe (Chairman) Antony Pierre (Honorary Co-Treasurer) Matthew Rosedale (Honorary Co-Treasurer) Andrew Stone (Appointed President 8 October 2023) Bradley Altberger Timothy Angel CBE (Resigned 20 June 2023) Joan Arnold (Resigned 20 June 2023) Jeremy Bard Tamara Barnett Wildman (Resigned 20 June 2023) Ruth Corb Alison Edelshain Vivien Feather David Gasperow Sam Goodman Monica Jankel Lenka Kohli Caroline Landau Lady Hannah Lowy-Mitchell (Resigned 20 June 2023) Remy Maisel Sylvia Mingay (Resigned 20 June 2023) Wendy Pollecoff Gary Skovron Anna Strang (Appointed 31 January 2023) Isabelle Tarsh (Resigned 20 June 2023) Peter Vogl (Resigned 20 June 2023) Alina Weisman (Appointed 12 December 2023) Michael Weiss (Resigned 20 June 2023)
Executive Director	Stewart Sether
Registered office	33 Seymour Place London W1H 5AU
Company registration number	08578248 (England and Wales)
Charity registration number	1155821
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL

Reference and administrative details

Principal bankers

Barclays Bank PLC
99 Hatton Garden
London
EC1N 8DN

The Trustee management board (the “Trustees”) present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of The West London Synagogue of British Jews (“West London Synagogue”, the “Company”, the “Synagogue” or “WLS”) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

This annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Objectives and activities

Public benefit

In formulating the charity's aims and in planning the work of the members of the Community, the Trustees have had regard to the general guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Strategies for achieving objectives

The objectives and activities of the Synagogue are:

- ◆ to promote and foster Judaism by the provision and maintenance of a public place of worship, following the principles of reform Judaism.
- ◆ to promote and co-ordinate the education and religious instruction of Jews.
- ◆ to perform such other charitable activities for the public benefit, and in particular for the benefit of the Jewish people in the UK, Israel or elsewhere in the world, which may be charitable according to the laws of England and Wales.
- ◆ to promote other cultural activities, which will contribute to communal development and unity.

The Synagogue sets out to stimulate the development of a thriving, welcoming Jewish community, which provides formal and informal opportunities for spiritual, religious, and communal expression built on life-long learning through all cycles of members' lives. We aim to put the Synagogue at the heart of London Jewish life and to provide thoughtful leadership to the wider Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

The Trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing the Synagogue's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. Substantial public benefit arises from the activities of The West London Synagogue. There is a strong emphasis on education and the provision of support for the elderly and infirm. Burial and cremation services are provided to the wider Jewish community. The Synagogue also works for intra community and interfaith harmony, especially with the two other Abrahamic faiths, Christianity, and Islam. The Synagogue maintains a grade 2 listed building, which it makes available to the whole Community.

Objectives and activities (continued)

Strategies for achieving objectives (continued)

The Synagogue has a subscription paying membership, which sustains part of the Synagogue's activities. The subscription income is supplemented by income derived from a funeral expenses scheme and conducting of non-member funerals together with the sale of grave plots. The Synagogue also generates income from property, which is derived from the letting of room space within its premises. Lastly, WLS relies upon donations, both large and small, from members and charitable foundations, much of which is achieved through ongoing fundraising activities, which is described further below. Synagogue members are encouraged to make voluntary contributions to the Board of Deputies of British Jews which are collected and paid over to the Board of Deputies. The Synagogue also acts as a resource for the wider community and continues to develop activities in the areas of education and outreach with both adults and young people. WLS manages its own fundraising with administrative support by the staff team. It does not currently employ professional fundraisers. WLS has established a Fundraising Group (FRG), chaired by our President, to have an organised and coordinated approach to soliciting donations given the importance of this income source. As a charity, WLS aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data. The synagogue adheres to the Fundraising Regulator Code of Fundraising Practice. It applies best practice to protect supporters' data: it never sells data or swaps data with other organisations and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. WLS undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its fundraising activities and to learn from them and improve its service. During 2023, the charity received no complaints about its fundraising activities.

Fundraising activities and income generation

As a charity, the WLS aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data. The synagogue adheres to the Fundraising Regulator Code of Fundraising Practice. It applies best practice to protect supporters' data: it never sells data or swaps data with other organisations and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. WLS manages its own fundraising with administrative support by the staff team. It does not currently employ professional fundraisers. The WLS undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its fundraising activities and to learn from them and improve its service. During 2023, the charity received no complaints about its fundraising activities.

The Report of the President 2023

This will not be the Gantze Megillah which typified my Chair reports; this, the first as your President, is going to be brief.

We did not expect what happened on October 7; its impact on our Community, and on many of our activities not least attendance at our services, was abrupt and intense.

The Report of the President 2023 (continued)

Our first responses were both of fear and defiance. Fear for the safety of our people, generally, and for our families and friends in Israel, the country we love and criticise simultaneously, fear for the safety of visitors, members and our friends to our Sanctuary. Defiance, in the face of a challenge to our freedom to associate with our fellow members and friends in our safe place.

I cannot be specific about additional security measures; suffice to say that they were put in place within a matter of hours. The openhanded, generous, response of those members whom I approached for financial support to facilitate this, was astonishing, gratifying and emotional. In this time of heightened tension, your Board is constantly reviewing our security, so that, as far as is possible, we feel safe when we come into our building.

But what these recent events have done, is to draw our Community together and highlight the need, for many people, to belong to a synagogue – I hope ours, in particular.

An unexpected response to October 7 was the flood of new individuals and families, from the UK and abroad, who joined our Community. In the six months since October 2023, we have had around 150 new members join including 30 children, our future. I am so delighted to welcome our newcomers to this wonderful Community.

All this goes to show that, especially in times of adversity, the pull towards sharing our lives with other Jews, be that in person or through simple membership, is a strong one. WLS is pleased and honoured to be here for you.

With that in mind, West London Synagogue has initiated internal discussions, led by our senior Rabbinic team and for Congregational discussion in due course, as to how appropriately to react to the needs of mid-21st century progressive Jewish families. It will be no surprise if there are differing views as to what is appropriate. We need to find a way to stay within the four corners of our heritage, whilst accommodating the myriad varieties of what a “progressive Jewish family” means. Within that discussion, we must always respect that we are, and will remain, a Jewish community at core.

Thank you, for allowing me the privilege of having been your Chair, and now being your President. I aim to serve you as best I can and hope that our future together is one of safety and a joyful Jewish life.

L'shalom

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

Overview

2023 was a year of great achievement as well as one of dreadful sadness and tragedy. 7 October 2023 will be etched in all our memories, and what followed afterwards was an awful reminder of how easily the wildfire of antisemitism flares up.

After two kibbutzim and a music festival close to the border with Gaza were attacked by terrorists, the Board of Deputies offered a programme whereby communities could adopt hostages. West London Synagogue has adopted four people from Kibbutz Nir Oz. David and Ariel Cunio, Ariel's partner Arbel Yehoud and her brother Dolev Yehoud. Their pictures sit in a place of honour at the front of the Sanctuary and their names are mentioned in every service when we pray for their release from captivity. Our rabbis have been in touch with their families and are providing support.

Throughout the year, our rabbis, staff and volunteers worked hard to maintain and develop the many areas of interest in which our members participate. They remained steadfast in the face of all challenges and continued to build on the communal spirit on which WLS thrives.

1 Services and Festivals

Coming fully out of the pandemic at the start of 2022, Friday evening Shabbat services have been well attended, especially for monthly combos which are followed by a dinner and a speaker. Shabbat Shira introduced the new concept of Shira & Share, with members enjoying 'pot luck' dishes during a post-service bring and share picnic. Our youngest members continue to love ShabbaTOTS, our pre-service parent and baby service, which has gone from strength to strength. Whilst Shabbat morning service attendance is steady, it has prompted some long-term rethinking, with the launch of a task force to address the smaller attendance on those weeks when we do not mark a bar/bar mitzvah or lifecycle event.

In 2023 we celebrated 19 baby blessings, 24 b'nei mitzvah, and 24 weddings & mixed faith marriage blessings. We also conducted 41 member funerals, 27 stone settings and 2 memorial services. We also marked the Coronation of HM King Charles III, and all the other significant dates in the Jewish and secular calendars, especially Remembrance Shabbat in November.

Our well-attended High Holy Days were busy and moving, with the theme of 'looking to the past to build our future.' We continued to have a very large online presence (with more than 20,000 viewers around the world over the HHD period) alongside many more members returning to in-person services for all ages. The same can be said for our festival provision, from packed intergenerational and 20/30s sederim, to a full house for a Fiddler on the Roof themed Purim evening, to the most energised and well-attended intergenerational Erev Simchat Torah in living memory; certainly, the community has enjoyed a lift in attendance and in-person engagement post pandemic.

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Services and Festivals (continued)

However, the immense joy of our Simchat Torah evening only heightened the depths of horror felt across our community by the next morning's 07/10 terrorist massacre in Israel. The response by the WLS leadership, staff and membership was rapid, resolute and deeply moving. From arranging solidarity services to holding a vigil for the hostages, WLS has stood by our brothers and sisters in Israel, without shying away from articulating our sorrow at the death of all those innocents on all sides of this conflict. From sermons to study sessions and to special prayers we have worked together to make sure that our community remains engaged and supported during a time of heightened anxiety because of a spike in antisemitism within the UK and overseas. Special thanks must go to our security staff, the CST and the police for their incredible efforts to ensure that every service since 8 October 2023 has been held safely, and well-supported by the reassuring presence of a team of officers in uniform.

2 Social Care

Social Care, the department that focuses on the welfare and wellbeing of members, is a core activity for WLS. 2023 saw some changes as we bade farewell to our long-serving Head of Social Care, Jo Michaels. The Vice Chair for Social Care, Joan Arnold, stood down at the AGM and has been replaced by Monica Jankel. Joan has made an extraordinary contribution to social care at WLS over a number of years and has continued to do so as Lead Volunteer for our fortnightly Tuesday Club events. These bring together older members and volunteers who enjoy exercises and cards, art and discussion, as well as a chance to renew old friendships and build new ones. We were lucky to find and appoint Sha LeWilante as our Senior Care Advice and Support Advocate at the end of 2023. She was able immediately to share some of the case work with Tirza Waisel, our long serving social worker.

We are privileged as a community to have amazing volunteers, who continue to keep in contact with older members, and they have regular supervision as a group and a chance to feed back any concerns to the social care team. We also welcome the support of Dr Mandy Warner, who will work alongside Monica to support social care, as well as Anna Strang, our Board Member for Safeguarding. The rabbis and Social Care team are always happy to be in contact with members and their families where there is a need for support and signposting to other services as appropriate.

3 Social Action

West London Synagogue has, since its inception, been committed to Tikkun Olam, the Jewish value of 'repairing the world'. It means that, for our members and others, volunteering for social action projects is a major attraction to being part of our community. For nearly a decade, the social action work has been headed up by Nic Schlagman, who grew the Family WLS Drop-in to a size that meant it had to be split into two groups who meet on alternate months. The WLS Drop-in is a social action programme that aims to host less fortunate asylum-seekers and their families for a warm meal and to provide personal care essentials with the help of volunteers from our Community on a monthly basis. The WLS Drop-in programme eases poverty, hunger and loneliness – and helps families get on a path to

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Social Action (continued)

independence.

We now bid farewell to Nic and thank him for all the extraordinary work that he has put into our Social Action programme for so long and with such dedication. We also welcome Naddy Vidot, who has been a long-standing supporter of our Rainbow Drop-in for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers, who takes over the reins from Nic in early May 2024.

Nic has also been involved in advising other religious communities in setting up similar Drop-ins, as well as working with Westminster City Council and local churches to consider how best to help the street homeless. Our Rainbow Drop-ins have been a great success, allowing people who might be stigmatized in their own communities to find a welcome at West London Synagogue.

Access to the building had to be reassessed since 7 October, for obvious security reasons and the support for our asylum families and individuals moved online for the rest of 2023. We have found alternative premises in the Hinde Street Church, which we hope will only be needed for a short while and that we can return to using our building soon.

4 Interfaith

Our interfaith programme has been realised in the organisation of special events such as the Big Iftar, when we were able to invite Muslim friends into the congregation to finish their Ramadan fast, and also the B'nei B'rith European Day of Jewish Culture and Heritage, for which our own member, Valerie Bello, is a long-term contact. Because WLS has a very good reputation for engaging with the wider world, we are now asked to organize the interfaith event for this programme. We have become used to doing this on what we call 'Open House Shabbat', the Sabbath in Sukkot when we have invited those of all faiths and none to join us for our Shabbat morning service, including an explanation of the Synagogue and its history and an extended Kiddush in the Sukkah afterwards. Rabbi Helen continues to be on the executive of the Faith Exchange for Westminster City Council.

5 Education

The Education Department continues to be overseen with great care and thoughtfulness by Gil Reshef, our long serving Head of Education. Gil was determined to build up the Religion School after the pandemic, and 2023 has seen the number of families attending our Sunday school increase. Thanks for that should go to Gil and his team of teachers and madrichim-assistant teachers, as well as to the indefatigable security team who make sure we are safe in the building.

The Education Department, in partnership with the rabbis, also oversees the Jewish Preparation Class for Jews-by-Choice, which has grown post-pandemic, and the popular Learning Hour Online study opportunity, largely taught by our own rabbis, with special guests on occasion such as Rabbi Judith Levitt and Jon Boyd of Jewish Policy Research. The opportunity to learn Hebrew has been taken up via the Milim classes and liturgical Hebrew via special classes with David Strang. There has been particular appreciation of the Family Festival Celebrations when two or even three generations of WLS members

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Education (continued)

celebrate together.

The Religion School community was also impacted by the events of 7 October and were most appreciative of the sessions run by our member Jacky Gerald, who is a psychotherapist and allowed people a safe space to explore their feelings together. Our thanks are also due to our administrator, Adi Ben-Naim, for her hard work. Without Adi the Education Department could not function as well as it does.

6 Community Engagement

The year marked the full return to in-person events, with an obvious positive effect on membership engagement. Our Friday Night Dinners featured guest speakers such as our own members Sir Simon Schama and Dame Maureen Lipman, and many influential guests, including Dame Joanna Lumley, Dame Sharon White, Dame Zandra Rhodes, Sir Trevor Philipps and Simon Sebag Montefiore. The enthusiasm for this flagship programme has helped launch a Meet the Author series with members and guest authors.

Our parents with young children have met regularly at ShabbaTOTS events and the group has grown to such an extent that they have overspilled from the children's synagogue. Their meetings at Belmont Farm, kindly hosted by one of our members, continue to be very popular.

Our regular Lunch With a Speaker series and outings regained their previous levels. The many different strands to our Israel programming under the Eretz umbrella enabled us to respond immediately after the horrendous attack on 7 October and then to the weeks of demonstrations starting nearby on Edgware Road. We supported our members of all ages, but especially parents and young people, with safe spaces to meet and talk, and appropriate background information and discussions on the history of the region and on ways of combatting antisemitism.

For all these activities and more, we are indebted to the staff team and the many volunteers who create, organise, supervise and clear up afterwards. This has enabled our vibrant Community Engagement to strengthen and enhance the value of WLS in the lives of our members in today's tense and uncertain world.

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

7 Music

The high quality of music at WLS continues to be sustained thanks to the Music Committee, along with Richard Hills (Director of Music & Organist) and Maya Levy (Head of Music Engagement & Cantorial Soloist). In addition to providing music at every single service across the year (more than 150), our Music Team released a special Chanukkah music video in December 2023 which was viewed by over 50,000 people via YouTube and Facebook. Coming fully out of the COVID-19 pandemic, the community enjoyed a World AIDS Day concert by the London Gay Men's Chorus, as well as a very special Shavuot silent film concert played brilliantly by Richard Hills, as he improvised the music to accompany a screening of the 1923 Cecil B. DeMille masterpiece, The 10 Commandments. Other highlights included a pre-High Holy Days' selichot concert by the WLS Choir and the introduction of new musical pieces across our choral, Shira and combo services. Our historic and ever-expanding musical repertoire is part of what makes WLS unique. The response by the WLS Musicians to the horrors of 7 October has been especially moving, as they have provided comforting liturgical music at a number of reflective solidarity and memorial services.

8 Our Building

Our plans to redecorate the ceiling of the Sanctuary are progressing. We have instructed specialist architects to advise, as both planning and listed building consents will be required. We aim to start work at the beginning of 2026 and finish before the High Holy Days in the same year. This will be a costly exercise, luckily only once in a generation.

Maintaining and improving security on an ongoing basis has always been a priority at WLS. During the year, significant work has been carried out upgrading CCTV cameras and on strengthening the external doors and some fire exits within the building.

In conjunction with our tenant Halcyon School, major refurbishment works have been carried out, adapting the Children's Synagogue and Library for use as three modern multi-purpose teaching rooms and an office for the School, which produces incremental income for WLS. We continue to have use of the space outside School times.

We are about to embark on a major repair of one of our wonderful stained-glass windows, leaving just one more to go through the same process in the near future.

9 Cemeteries

We have three cemeteries: two active (Edgwarebury and Hoop Lane), that we share with other communities, each managed by a representative board, and Balls Pond Road that had its last burial in 1951. Edgwarebury Cemetery is jointly owned with the Spanish & Portuguese Sephardi Community, Liberal Judaism and Belsize Square Synagogue and is operated by the Edgwarebury Joint Burial Board (EJBB). Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery is jointly owned with the Spanish & Portuguese Sephardi Community.

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Cemeteries (continued)

a) Edgwarebury

In conjunction with the three other communities, we are progressing works on the cemetery's perimeter road and pathways over the coming months. WLS's own Woodland burial area has undergone a major refurbishment that has now been completed by cemetery staff: including planting of new trees and wildflowers. This welcome improvement will take a while to mature. Whilst we have significant purchased reserve land, we always keep an eye to the long-term need.

b) Hoop Lane

Major mapping of all plots and reservations has been completed. Planning is going ahead to refurbish the (listed) Prayer Hall and improve toilet facilities. Available plots are reducing in number, and it will be impossible to find alternative space inside Greater London area, so our plotting exercise will enable us to make a calculation of how many years we have left there.

c) Balls Pond Road

This is a historic cemetery based in Canonbury, currently closed for access. We are partnering with Islington Council in a pilot project that has received initial funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The project is designed to lay the necessary groundwork for a larger scale funding bid, ultimately delivering more extensive restoration and community engagement. The initial objective will be split into two parts: (i) specialist led surveys to inform the future funding application (e.g. ecological, topological, tree and grave/tomb surveys) and (ii) clearance and part-restoration, including the creation of a safe viewing platform and improvement to the safety of the entrance to facilitate those works. This is a long-term project, in which we would intend to involve volunteers.

10 Fundraising

WLS is so much more than our wonderful building. It is a place of support primarily for our community, especially the vulnerable, providing cultural, education and social engagement for our members. To many, it is their "second home" and to even more, a source of comfort, just knowing that they are a member of a vibrant Jewish community. Our membership fees cannot be expected to cover all this. We have to rely on the generosity of our members to provide the financial wherewithal to cover these additional activities.

To facilitate our ability to solicit financial contributions from our community, we have a Fundraising Group (FRG), chaired by our President and supported by several volunteers, who, as a team, have raised £392,000 in general funds and £944,000 in restricted funds in 2023. Without the generosity of the many congregants who respond to our fundraising approaches, some of them astonishingly so, we could not do what we do, the way we do it. We are so grateful for that generosity, and to the Trusts and Foundations who have also supported us.

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Fundraising (continued)

Our High Holy Day appeal in 2023 raised some £175,000. Enormous thanks to all those who gave so generously. We also raised £105,000 in the immediate aftermath of the 7 October attack to cover the substantial additional cost of increased security, and we are immensely grateful to those members who contributed. It kept our doors open at a time of crisis, which was hugely appreciated by the entire community.

In early 2024, we launched our Legacy Programme. This is to assist in securing continuation of a progressive community in the centre of London, at a time when we fear for our future. A legacy is a way to provide the most pleasant of surprises for future generations, without affecting your lifetime finances. Further information is available from the rabbis or the chair of the programme's development, David Strang.

The West London Synagogue Endowment Fund Trust was established in 2018, as an independent charity, with trustees connected with, but not officers of, WLS. Their objective is to raise a capital sum to act as a long-term, but discrete, fund available to WLS as an additional capital base, for recurring income support in the long-term and for potential emergencies that may arise in the future. There is a protocol in place to guide the relationship between WLS and the Endowment Fund. For those interested, a copy is posted on our website, alongside a copy of the Fund's Constitution.

The West London Synagogue Charitable Fund is a historic (1962) separate fund-raising body, raising funds for the charitable purposes – including the charitable activities of WLS. Thanks to those who run this, for their support and effort.

11 Board Composition

Tim Angel, Joan Arnold, Tamara Wildman, Hannah Lowy-Mitchell, Sylvia Mingay, Isabelle Tarsh and Peter Vogl retired at the AGM in June. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their valuable contributions to our community.

We have been fortunate to have been joined on the board by Jeremy Bard, Ruth Corb, Sam Goodman Caroline Landau, Gary Skovron and Mike Weiss, all of whom are already working hard on our behalf.

Our treasurer, David Marks, also retired during the year, having served with distinction for over 7.5 years. Tony Pierre and Matt Rosedale have taken up the baton as joint treasurers, which has been really appreciated.

12 Management Changes

After 6 ½ years as our Executive Director, Stewart Sether has accepted a part-time position as our Executive Vice President. His contribution to the Synagogue over many years, including time as our treasurer and as a warden, is incalculable and has been hugely appreciated by the board.

We have been joined by James Davies as Director of Operations and by Helen MacDonald as Director of Finance.

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

13 The Movement for Reform Judaism

We suspended our membership of the MRJ in February 2020. All benefits of membership were withdrawn, and we therefore ceased to pay any fees. However, the MRJ contended that fees were still due and terminated our membership in February 2023.

In April 2023, the MRJ announced that it was joining Liberal Judaism to form a single Progressive Movement. We have welcomed that development and have remained on amicable terms with the MRJ during this transition. Our rabbis have continued to be members of the Assembly of Reform Rabbis and we have use of the Reform Beit Din. The new movement is due to be established in 2025 and we will be reporting to our members for their decision as to whether we should join in due course.

14 The Board of Deputies

We have five enthusiastic members representing us on the Board of Deputies as well as the current President, Marie van der Zil, whose term of office ends in 2024.

15 Mark Fox and Andrew Stone

Finally, we must thank both Mark Fox and Andrew Stone for their tremendous contributions to WLS. Mark served as our co-chair and then for 5 ½ years as our President. His breadth of knowledge both of Jewish teaching and our community has been invaluable and he helped steer us through some difficult times with his wise and careful counsel.

Andrew served as our chair from June 2020 until 8 October 2023 and then followed Mark as our President. Without Andrew's guidance, we would not have been the flourishing community that he has fostered, encouraged and maintained. His commitment of time, his experience and his sound judgement has been and continues to be exceptional.

Financial review

Going concern

The Trustees have carefully considered the availability of funds, with detailed estimates, for at least the period of twelve months following the date on which the accounts are approved and are satisfied that the Synagogue is able to manage its resources to remain as a going concern for this period and beyond.

Reserves policy and financial position

WLS does not have any free reserves, as defined by the Charity Commission, as the reserves are tied up in the Synagogue buildings. This is not a critical issue because of the regularly paid subscription income, rental and other income, and fundraising capabilities that WLS benefits from. The Trustees are highly focused on increasing the cash reserves of WLS to ensure that it can continue to flourish and serve the community. To that end, we have continued to make good progress towards eliminating our indebtedness and as soon as this task is accomplished it is the aim of the Trustees to put WLS in a position of being able to build up reserves for the future.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees acknowledge the management of risks faced by WLS as a prime responsibility. Detailed consideration of risk is delegated to the Executive Committee who maintain a risk management register.

These risks include legislative and regulatory requirements as well as third party, governance, management, financial and operational risks.

The principal financial risk facing the charity is maintaining income from its congregation at a sufficient level to carry out all the activities and services it wishes to offer and which we believe its Congregation wants. In line with other synagogues, this is an increasing challenge and we have adopted a strategy of seeking alternative sources of income, in addition to encouraging philanthropy from congregants, and approaching external funds and trusts, by securing revenues from our premises by leasing space and providing room hire opportunities. It is also our policy to ensure that anyone who wishes to be part of a synagogue community but cannot afford to pay based on our membership fees scales is able to contribute what they can afford. If it appears that our revenue cannot cover our costs, the Trustees are prepared to reduce the services we offer to ensure that we continue our remaining activities whilst remaining solvent.

The total funds held by the Charity at 31 December 2023 were £7,521,000 (2022 – £7,255,000) of which £1,235,000 (2022 – £1,145,000) represented restricted funds.

Financial review

We were able to maintain our financial performance this year and our total surplus was £266,000 (2022 – £478,000).

We refer in our financial statements to Restricted, Designated and Unrestricted Funds.

Restricted Funds represent funds raised for a specific activity and can only be used to fund that activity. Examples are funds raised to support social action, interfaith, social care, and LGBT activities and without the generosity of our donors, these activities would have to be curtailed.

Our Designated Funds represent those funds given without a specific restriction but in line with discussions, at the time with the donor, the Board designated them for a particular use.

Our Unrestricted Funds represent income generated from membership fees, funeral income, and commercial income, such as letting space to Halcyon International School, general donations from members and limited event income. It is used to fund the expenses such as the day-to-day operations of the Synagogue including staff salaries, building overheads etc.

In 2023, the Unrestricted Funds generated a surplus of £176,000 (2022 – £378,000). Restricted Funds generated a surplus of £90,000 for the year (2022 – surplus of £100,000).

Financial review (continued)

Accounting principles require that a charity recognises restricted income at the time it is received but only recognise the related expense when an unconditional commitment to incur it is made. Accordingly, because we invariably raise funds for restricted activities before we undertake those activities timing differences result in surpluses in an earlier year and deficits when we spend the funds in a later period. This results in swings between surpluses and deficits on restricted income and expenditure from year to year.

We continue to repay longer term debts and within five years would hope to be largely free of such indebtedness, other than the remaining part of the twenty-year bank loan taken out to fund the replacement of the Synagogue boilers. In fact, we were able to repay £143,000 of this loan in April 2023.

We present the statement of activities (charity only) for the last five years:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2021 £'000	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Income					
Membership	1,370	1,301	1,240	1,201	1,339
Funeral	592	492	584	581	796
Voluntary-general	392	375	253	258	398
Voluntary-restricted	887	833	378	823	611
Other	739	576	604	540	590
	3,980	3,577	3,059	3,403	3,734
Expenditure					
Salaries	1,361	1,188	1,155	1,271	1,377
Choir	110	107	80	79	100
Funeral	265	289	299	309	309
Other	1,233	782	708	809	941
Restricted funds	745	733	448	670	625
	3,714	3,099	2,690	3,138	3,352
Operating income	266	478	369	265	382
Non-recurring items	—	—	—	—	(358)
Net income	266	478	369	265	24

This table illustrates the that our membership income does not generally cover our operating costs and we are reliant on funeral income, commercial income from letting part of our premises and philanthropy to allow us to provide the range of activities that our Community desires. There has been an increasing trend over recent years for philanthropy to be directed to specific projects and we are in real need of members to consider supporting the operations of the Synagogue on an unrestricted basis if we are to maintain our level of activities. We have sought to transfer 10% of each restricted donation, with donor consent, to cover our infrastructure and support costs on the basis that we could not undertake those restricted activities if the fabric of the Synagogue organisation and administration is not properly funded.

Governance, structure and management

Constitution

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee. Its governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association together with detailed Rules. The Charity is run by its Directors who are also the Trustees of the Charity. The Trustees are elected by the congregation of the Synagogue.

We maintain trustees' indemnity insurance and will continue to do so.

Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the Company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected from and by the congregation of the Synagogue. Appointment as a Trustee is normally for a three-year term, with the possibility of a second and third term, up to a maximum of three terms. As noted above, when fewer than one third of the Board is remaining in post on completion of their terms, we are able to appoint new Trustees for shorter periods of time. In addition, the Chairman can recommend to the Board the appointment of Vice Chairs, to assist in certain specified areas, who sit on the Board during their period of appointment. We provide training for new Board members and maintain adequate procedures so as to ensure appropriate adherence to corporate governance.

Our Articles of Association have detailed provisions requiring any dealings with Trustees to be on an arm's length basis, but any such dealings are actively discouraged as a matter of corporate governance (zero in 2023). Although Trustees are entitled to recover expenses incurred, generally they do not recover any petty amount and, in 2023, none were recovered.

Organisational structure and decision-making policies

The Company had a wholly owned subsidiary, WLS Seymour Place Limited which was dormant during 2021, incurring minor amounts of expenditure and was fully dormant during 2022 and the Trustees' struck it off the Company Register in early 2023.

The Key Management Personnel comprise the Trustees and the senior staff responsible for the management and operations of the Synagogue. During 2023 our senior staff were the rabbinic team led by our co-senior Rabbis, Rabbi Helen Freeman and Rabbi David Mitchell and the other staff and operations led by the Executive Director, Stewart Sether. The professional teams who run the charitable activities listed in the Objectives and Activities section of this report are managed by and report to the senior staff. The Executive Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Board, consider remuneration proposals for all staff taking into account, performance, market rates and affordability.

The Directors meet at least six times each year and if important decisions are required and a Board meeting is not scheduled to occur in sufficient time, the Trustees are consulted by email. The Executive Committee comprising the co-senior Rabbis, Executive Director, Chairman, Treasurer, Board members Alison Edelshain and Brad Altberger, and our President, Mark Fox met regularly and the minutes of their meetings are circulated to the full Board as soon as practicable after these meetings.

Other committees are established to consider other areas of importance such as a Rabbinic Appointments Committee, education, religious ritual, membership and social care). These committees report on their deliberations to the Board.

Financial risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Company is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Company and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. Our approach to risk is set out under Financial Review above.

Plans for future periods

As previously mentioned, substantial public benefit arises from the activities of The West London Synagogue. There is a strong emphasis on education and the provision of support for the elderly and infirm. Burial and cremation services are provided to the wider Jewish community. The Synagogue also works for intra community and interfaith harmony, especially with the two other Abrahamic faiths, Christianity, and Islam. For these reasons and more, it is imperative that we maintain robust financial controls and a healthy financial position to ensure the long-term viability of the Company. The physical home and heart of WLS is a grade 2 listed building, which also requires ample financial resources to upkeep.

The Trustees have continued to focus on the repayment of our financial indebtedness while at the same time maintaining and growing our cash reserves. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, and despite the events of 7 October, we have managed to increase our membership and membership engagement across our various activities. We have also continued to find success through our fundraising efforts.

In the course of 2024, we plan to complete a long-running project to transition our legacy membership database to a more modern, cloud-based, fit-for-purpose enterprise resource planning system designed for synagogues. This new software will allow us to better manage our membership accounting and communications, including accounts receivable, donation tracking, collections, etc. Subsequently, we will also be able to upgrade our core financial accounting and bookkeeping software. These initiatives will allow us to have more timely financial information, equipping WLS to make better financial planning decisions.

Lastly, we have started planning for a significant restoration project for our beautiful pipe organ in the main sanctuary of the Synagogue. We are in discussions with the original manufacturer for the organ which was installed in 1907. The intention is to have this work done to return the organ to its musical prime and enable the organ to play its part in the musical life of the Synagogue, both liturgically and in teaching or concert use, for many years to come. This will be a financially significant undertaking so we are also taking time to secure the requisite funding.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustee at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- ♦ so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditors are unaware, and
- ♦ that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustee and signed on their behalf by:



Richard Slowe (Chair)

Date: 4 June 2024

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities 31 December 2023

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the Company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustee's report including the Strategic Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- ♦ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- ♦ observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102).
- ♦ make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- ♦ state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- ♦ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Richard Slowe (Chair)

Date: 4 June 2024

Independent auditor's report to the members of The West London Synagogue of British Jews

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The West London Synagogue (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Financial Statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- ◆ the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- ◆ the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- ◆ the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ certain disclosures in respect to the remuneration of trustees specified by law are not made; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Trustees' responsibilities

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ we obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements are those that relate to the reporting framework (Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing this accounts in accordance with the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, and the Companies Act 2006), those that relate to data protection (General Data Protection Regulation); and
- ◆ We have reviewed correspondence between the Charitable Company and its principal regulators regarding laws and regulations.
- ◆ We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:
 - ◆ making enquiries of management as to their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
 - ◆ considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls we:

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships; and
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions; and
- ◆ assessed whether the judgements and the assumptions made in determining accounting estimates for the probability of receipt of legacies and the provision for bad and doubtful debts were indicative of potential bias.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
- ◆ enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of this report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters that we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company's and the company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, or the opinions we have formed.



6 June 2024

Edward Finch (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Statement of financial activities (including and income and expenditure account)

Year to 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted general funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Unrestricted general funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	1	1,761	887	2,648	1,676	833	2,509
Income from charitable activities	2	821	—	821	649	—	649
Investment income	3	359	—	359	333	—	333
Other income	4	152	—	152	86	—	86
Total income		3,093	887	3,980	2,744	833	3,577
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	58	—	58	51	—	51
Charitable activities	6	2,911	745	3,656	2,315	733	3,048
Total expenditure		2,969	745	3,714	2,366	733	3,099
Net income/(expenditure)		124	142	266	378	100	478
Transfer between funds		52	(52)	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds		176	90	266	378	100	478
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2023		6,110	1,145	7,255	5,732	1,045	6,777
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2023		6,286	1,235	7,521	6,110	1,145	7,255

There were no recognised gains and losses other than those set out in the statement of financial activities above.

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

Balance sheet 31 December 2023

	Notes	2023 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2022 £'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		6,118		6,166
Current assets					
Debtors	13	514		417	
Prepayments and accrued income	13	50		58	
Short term deposits		904		—	
Cash at bank and in hand		480		1,336	
		<u>1,948</u>		<u>1,811</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	<u>(397)</u>		<u>(429)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>1,551</u>		<u>1,382</u>
Total net assets less current liabilities			<u>7,669</u>		<u>7,548</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	17		<u>(148)</u>		<u>(293)</u>
Net assets			<u><u>7,521</u></u>		<u><u>7,255</u></u>
Funds					
Restricted funds	18		1,235		1,145
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>					
Designated funds	19	226		226	
General funds		<u>6,060</u>		<u>5,884</u>	
			<u>6,286</u>		<u>6,110</u>
			<u><u>7,521</u></u>		<u><u>7,255</u></u>

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Matthew Rosendale (Trustee)

Trustee Approved on: 4 June 2024

The West London Synagogue for British Jews

Company Registration Number: 08578248 (England and Wales)

Statement of cash flows Year to 31 December 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash used in operating activities	A	(39)	(2)
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(6)	(6)
Purchase of short term deposits		(904)	—
Investment income received		245	333
Net cash provided by investing activities		(665)	327
Financing activities			
Repayment of bank loans		(152)	(20)
Net cash used in financing activities		(152)	(20)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(856)	305
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2023	B	1,336	1,031
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2023	B	480	1,336

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 31 December 2023.

A Cash flows from operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	266	478
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(245)	(333)
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	54	60
Decrease (increase) in debtors	(89)	126
Increase (decrease) in creditors	(25)	(333)
Net cash used in operating activities	(39)	(2)

B Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 January 2023 £'000	Cash flows £'000	At 31 December 2023 £'000
Cash at bank and in hand	1,336	(856)	480
Bank loans falling due within one year	(17)	7	(10)
Bank loans falling due after more than one year	(293)	145	(148)
	1,026	(704)	322

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Charity information

The charity is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. In the event of the company being wound up, the maximum amount which each member is liable to pay is £1. The registered office is 33 Seymour Place, London, United Kingdom, W1H 5AU.

Accounting Convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £'000.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

Consolidated financial statements have not been prepared as the inclusion of the charity's sole subsidiary in a set of financial statements would not be material for the purpose of giving a true and fair view.

Assessment of going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these financial statements.

The financial position of the Synagogue is under continual review and where necessary, cost saving actions will continue to be considered in order to mitigate any possible financial damage. The Trustees have prepared cash flow forecasts which demonstrate that the Synagogue can continue to operate within its current bank facilities for at least the next twelve months following the date of approval of these financial statements. The Trustees consider that they have adequate resources to meet all obligations as they fall due.

In the unlikely event that this is not the case, the Trustees are confident that financing options would be available along with cost cutting measures which would allow the Synagogue to continue in operation. The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Synagogue has adequate resources to continue in operation for the foreseeable future. The Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated funds comprise funds which have been set aside at the discretion of the Trustees for specific purposes. The purposes and uses of the designated funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Transfers between funds occur for a number of reasons including when funds are closed on completion of project, when fixed assets are purchased or when Trustees decide to release funds from a designated fund.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) in the period when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and is probable that income will be received.

For donations, entitlement is taken as the date that the Synagogue receives the donation.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the Trust that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate.

Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Members do not derive benefits of a material financial value as a result of their membership fees. These fees are also non-refundable. As such the trustee consider that membership fees are, in substance, donations towards the general activities of the Synagogue. They are therefore accounted for when invoiced.

Income from charitable activities relates mainly fees received for cemetery and funerals, educational and synagogue activities.

Investment income relates to rental income which is recognised when it comes due, and interest on funds held at the bank on deposit, which is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Wherever possible costs are directly attributed to these headings. Costs common to more than one area are apportioned on the basis of staff time spent on each area.

The cost of generating funds are those costs incurred in trading activities and those incurred in support of the activities of the charity. These have been allocated to the charitable activities on a basis that fairly reflects the true use of those resources within the organisation.

Governance costs are those incurred in the governance of the charity and are primarily associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

- ♦ Freehold property Nil
- ♦ Roof costs 10% straight line
- ♦ Furniture and equipment 3.33%, 4%, 20% or 25% straight line
- ♦ Cemetery capital costs 2% straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

Heritage assets have not been recognised in the financial statements, as significant costs are involved in the reconstruction or analysis of past accounting records, which are onerous compared with any additional benefit derived from recognising these items in the balance sheet.

Heritage assets are assets that are of historical or religious importance that are held to further the preservation, conservation and educational objectives of the Synagogue and contribute to culture and education. These assets are integral to the activities of the Synagogue and are unique in terms of their religious and historic significance.

Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, and bank overdrafts.

Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

Investment policy

The charity monitors its cashflow closely so that any funds not required in the short term for day-to day operations can be identified and placed on short term deposits with Flagstone. The term of these deposits typically range from three to twelve months.

Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Employee benefits

The Synagogue operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of certain of its employees. Contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year they are payable.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the Charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged as an expense on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

Burial Grounds

As in previous years, no depletion provision is considered necessary by the Trustees in respect of land used for burial.

Government grants

Government grants are accounted for under the accrual model and are recognised at the fair value of the amount received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

Government grants were received under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme designed to compensate for staff costs, when the staff concerned were unable to work.

Government grants (continued)

Amounts received or receivable are recognised in the statement of financial activities over the same period as the costs to which they relate.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments were valued at the amount prepaid.

Creditors

Bank loans are secured by fixed charges over freehold property. Interest is paid off in monthly instalments and the loans are split out, to reflect amounts due within 12 months and that over 12 months, within current liabilities and non-current liabilities respectively.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

The calculation of the bad debt provision is a critical accounting estimate. This is based on an assessment of how many members will be unable to pay their annual subscriptions.

A portion of the freehold property owned by the charity is let out for rental income. The charity has not treated this separately from the freehold property as the investment property component cannot be reliably measured.

1 Income from: Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Donations	391	869	1,260	375	833	1,208
Legacies	—	18	18	—	—	—
Membership fees	1,370	—	1,370	1,301	—	1,301
	1,761	887	2,648	1,676	833	2,509

2 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Rabbinic and Synagogue	142	—	142	99	—	99
Funeral and cemetery	592	—	592	492	—	492
Education	87	—	87	58	—	58
	821	—	821	649	—	649

3 Investment income

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Rental income	359	333

4 Other income

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Other income	152	86

5 Raising funds

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Staff fundraising costs	58	51

6 Charitable activities

	Rabbinic and Synagogue £'000	Funeral and cemetery £'000	Education £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Rabbinic and Synagogue £'000	Funeral and cemetery £'000	Education £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Staff costs	403	—	144	547	406	—	133	539
Direct costs	1,081	274	103	1,458	834	289	107	1,230
Legal and professional	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1,484	274	247	2,005	1,240	289	240	1,769
Grant funding (note 7)	(9)	—	—	(9)	47	—	—	47
Share of support costs (note 8)	850	—	284	1,134	630	—	210	840
Share of governance costs (note 8)	395	—	131	526	294	—	98	392
	2,720	274	662	3,656	2,193	289	548	3,048

7 Grants payable

	Rabbinic and Synagogue Total 2023 £'000	Rabbinic and Synagogue Total 2022 £'000
Grants to institutions:		
Movement for Reform Judaism	(30)	23
Board of Deputies	21	24
	(9)	47

8 Support costs

	Support Costs £'000	Governance £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Support Costs £'000	Governance £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Staff costs	425	300	725	349	244	593
Depreciation	54	—	54	60	—	60
Premises, administration, finance and other costs	655	—	655	431	—	431
Audit fees	—	25	25	—	30	30
Accountancy	—	—	—	—	—	—
Legal and profession	—	201	201	—	118	118
	1,134	526	1,660	840	392	1,232

9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration, reimbursement for expenses, or benefits from the charity during the year.

10 Staff costs

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Wages and salaries	1,361	1,245
Social security costs	146	139
Other pension costs	78	60
	1,585	1,444

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 48 (2022 – 59).

The number of employees whose remuneration was £60,000 or more were:

	2023	2022
£60,001 – £70,000	2	2
£70,001 – £80,000	—	1
£80,001 – £90,000	—	—
£90,001 – £100,000	2	2
£100,001 – £110,00	1	1
£110,001 – £120,000	—	—

Total remuneration paid to Key Management Personnel was £560,982 (2022 – £525,157).

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold Property £'000	Roof Costs £'000	Furniture and Equipment £'000	Cemetery capital costs £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Costs					
At 1 January 2023	5,396	143	1,194	286	7,019
Additions	—	—	6	—	6
At 31 December 2023	5,396	143	1,200	286	7,025
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2022	—	143	637	73	853
Charge for the year	—	—	48	6	54
At 31 December 2022	—	143	685	79	907
Carrying amount					
At 31 December 2022	5,396	—	557	213	6,166
At 31 December 2023	5,396	—	515	207	6,118

12 Heritage assets

The charity for many years held assets of historical and cultural importance.

These assets are considered to be heritage assets. Due to the nature of these heritage assets, it was previously not possible to place a reliable value on them, and the trustees followed the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) which allows heritage assets to be excluded from the financial statements if there is no reliable estimate of value and it would be reasonably costly to obtain such a valuation.

Two of the cemeteries are integral to the activities of the Synagogue and are unique in terms of their religious and historic significance. They consist of:

- ♦ Balls Pond Road Cemetery
- ♦ Hoop Lane Cemetery

13 Debtors

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Trade debtors	514	417
Other debtors	—	—
Prepayments and accrued income	50	58
	564	475

Included within trade debtors is a provision of £61,638 (2022 – £99,590) against potential bad debts relating to subscription income.

14 Contingent Assets

During 2020, West London Synagogue were notified of a bequest from the estate of a former Trustee who died in June 2019. The Synagogue is a residuary beneficiary of the estate, and the estimated value of the portion bequeathed is subject to considerable uncertainty regarding both the amount and timing of the legacy owing to two assets with highly uncertain value held in the estate. The assets with uncertain value are a foreign property in a remote part of the countryside in Europe and a shareholding in an unlisted company.

15 Loans and overdrafts

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Bank loans	158	310
Payable within one year	10	17
Payable after one year	148	293
	158	310

The bank loans are secured by fixed charges over freehold property.

The long term bank loans are for a term of 20 years from the draw down date of 21/12/2015. The rate of interest for the variable rate loan is the bank's base rate plus a margin of 2.75%. The rate of interest for the fixed rate loan is 4.65%. All interest rates are subject to review after 10 years. The loans are repayable in monthly instalments.

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Bank loans	10	17
Other taxation and social security	41	39
Trade creditors	123	73
Other creditors	4	4
Accruals and deferred income	219	296
	397	429

17 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Bank loans	148	293
Other creditors	—	—
Accruals and deferred income	—	—
	148	293

18 Restricted funds

	At 1 January 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 December 2023 £'000
Care and education	341	155	(195)	—	301
Cemetery maintenance	73	17	(4)	—	86
Activities of the Synagogue	731	715	(546)	(52)	848
	1,145	887	(745)	(52)	1,235

18 Restricted funds (continued)

	At 1 January 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 December 2022 £'000
Care and education	268	284	(191)	(20)	341
Cemetery maintenance	76	1	(4)	—	73
Activities of the Synagogue	701	548	(538)	20	731
	<u>1,045</u>	<u>833</u>	<u>(733)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>1,145</u>

Care and Education Fund

These funds are to provide education for the whole community, including the libraries, educational holidays and training.

Cemetery Maintenance Fund

These funds are brought about from the previous sale of land and monies given for individual grave maintenance, to be used solely for the upkeep of tombstones and grounds in Balls Pond Road and Hoop Lane Cemeteries.

Activities of the Synagogue Fund

These funds are to further the programmes of the Synagogue, including individual funds for maintaining the buildings for security and for other projects and programmes.

19 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	At 1 January 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 December 2023 £'000
Social care	100	—	—	—	100
Building fund	126	—	—	—	126
	<u>226</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>226</u>

	At 1 January 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 December 2022 £'000
Social care	100	—	—	—	100
Building fund	126	—	—	—	126
	<u>226</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>226</u>

19 Designated funds

These funds were received from a charitable trust and have been designated upon receipt to further the programmes of the Synagogue, details of which can be seen above.

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £'000	Designated Funds 2023 £'000	Restricted Funds 2023 £'000	Total 2023 £'000
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible assets	6,118	—	—	6,118
Current	90	226	1,235	1,551
Long term liabilities	(148)	—	—	(148)
	6,060	226	1,235	7,521
	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £'000	Designated Funds 2022 £'000	Restricted Funds 2022 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:				
Tangible assets	6,166	—	—	6,166
Current	11	226	1,145	1,382
Long term liabilities	(293)	—	—	(293)
	5,884	226	1,145	7,255

21 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under noncancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Within one year	37	37
Between two and five years	78	115
Greater than five years	—	—
	115	152

22 Related party transactions

During the year, the trustees and persons connected to them made aggregate donations of £76,830 (2022 – £83,027).

The West London Synagogue received a donation of £15,000 (2022 – £15,000) from The Apax Foundation. David Marks, a trustee of the Synagogue, is a director of The Apax Foundation.

The West London Synagogue received a donation of £16,230 (2022 – £16,230) from The Kobler Trust. Andrew Stone, a trustee of the Synagogue, is a trustee of the Kobler Trust.

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration, reimbursement for expenses, or benefits from the charity during the year.

23 Subsidiaries

Details of the charity's subsidiaries at 31 December 2023 are as follows:

During the current year, on 21 February 2023, WLS Seymour Place was dissolved.