

Cheltenham Hebrew Congregation

The Synagogue Synagogue Lane St James Square Cheltenham GL50 3PU
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Trustees' Report

I March 2023 – 29 February 2024

CHC Community Life has continued to thrive and achieve our objectives, both religious and educational, with both members and the wider community.

We have marked Shabbat and Jewish Festivals and Holidays with services and socials events. Allan Sanis, Senior Warden, Alan Silverston, Leonard Bazar and Joel Huberman have led the erev Shabbat services each week. Shabbat morning services have also been held, led by Allan Sanis.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services were conducted by Rabbi Claude Vecht-Wolf.

A Service of Remembrance was held in our Elm Street cemetery led by Allan Sanis and Alan Silverston before Rosh Hashanah. Members remembered family and friends buried in our Cheltenham cemetery as well as those buried elsewhere.

Jessica Shapiro has continued to lead thoughtful study sessions each month for members focussed on the Torah.

Rabbi Vecht Wolf's Drashas, circulated to the community, have been much appreciated. Rabbi Stanley Cohen invited members to attend Shiurim with his own community Ruislip members online.

We were happy to welcome many visitors in the Synagogue including a large, lively Sage Group from Bushey Synagogue accompanied by Rabbi Vecht-Wolf.

The highlight of our social year was the celebration for the 200th anniversary of our community. It was attended by the Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Reverend Elkan Levy, (who had come with Andee all the way from Israel) Dame Janet Trotter, Lord Bishop Rachel Treweek, The Rt Hon Alex Chalk, and the Mayor of Cheltenham with other dignitaries. We listened to addresses in the Synagogue and then continued to enjoy socializing and reminiscing afterwards during the reception at The Wilson, accompanied by great music from the Burne family.

The Wider Community

Cheltenham's Act of Remembrance for Holocaust Memorial Day

Highlighting the frailties of freedom, this year's theme, the event led by Dame Janet Trotter, was delivered with raised passions. CBC considered 2 of Abigail Fisher's images, reflecting local and national hatred of Jews inappropriate to print in the programme so their empty frames were presented and the banned contents described instead. Adam Dunning,

Cheltenham College Chaplain spoke movingly of the experiences of a Jewish student who survived the Holocaust and was later able to give testimony to the War Crimes tribunal. A contemporary perspective was added by Toral Pattni who works on international projects overseas specialising on providing aid to women and girls, those are most likely to experience violence, poverty and limitations to their freedom.

Services

During Inter Faith week in November we held an open erev Shabbat Service to which the wider community of any faith or none were invited. Elements of the service were explained to make it meaningful to all.

Education

Abigail Fisher undertook sessions in the Synagogue with Beavers and Scouts. Educational sessions took place online with the Chaiman, mainly primary schools, reaching well over 2,000 children. Marion Janner conducted lively multisensory sessions in schools. All sessions were bespoke to children in mainstream education and those in special schools. No charges were made for these services.

SACRE

The Chairman attended all meetings, continuing to uphold the importance of Judaism in the Gloucestershire SACRE Primary RE Syllabus.

Heritage Days

As part of our celebrations for the Community's 200th Anniversary, four talks were arranged to coincide with the B'nai B'rith European Days of Culture and Heritage Open Days: Jessica Shapiro on Aspects of Jewish Life in Britain 1800n-1850, Neela Mann on 'William Hill Knight' and Steven Blake on 'Dissenters'boxes: the Nonconformist chapels of early 19thcentury Cheltenham'. Rabbi Benarroch then spoke on 'Cheltenham's Historical but Controversial Montefiore Sefer Torah. Did Sir Moses get duped?' All the talks were very well received. As a result of Rabbi Benarroch's presentation we found that our Sefer Torah was not a Montefiore one. It is, however, still beautiful and kosher.

Vigil for Peace

At this Inter Faith event organized on behalf of the Dean of Gloucester at Gloucester Cathedral, the Chairman was privileged to be able to speak words of peace on behalf of Judaism.

Buildings and Maintenance

We continue to be mindful for the maintenance of our property.

Painting the Lantern

The side of the lantern facing the restaurant has been repainted. The other side facing the car park will be examined during the second half of 2024 as part of the 5 Year Report, which is due to take place the summer of 2024.

Exterior Toilets

Having taken advice from Seven Trent Water Technicians an air filter system has been fitted to the drainage allowing better flow through. This has improved water drainage during use of the toilets.

Five Year Architects Report

As already mentioned a 5 Year Report will be completed and submitted to the Board of Management during the second half of 2024.

CPC Hamper Scamper

Members gave generously to this seasonal appeal for goods and donations.

Security

We met with the Chief Constable Rod Hansen at his invitation and his Chief of Staff with Moslem representatives, sharing our concerns. We have also liaised with local police as well as the Community Security Trust in the interests of community safety and security. Special precautions were taken during the Chief Rabbi's visit when celebrating our 200th Anniversary.

My thanks to all who contributed to the well being of our community, our Board of Management Members Allan Sanis, Senior Warden: Jessica Shapiro, Treasurer: Abigail Fisher, Secretary: Steve Cohen Assistant Treasurer, Christine Dyer Minutes Secretary and much more: Sara Capie, Joel Huberman and Elizabeth Jacobs.

Also to be thanked, so important to the well being of CHC, are Leonard Bazar, our Board of Deputies Representative, Alan Silverston Security Officer and Buildings and Maintenance Officer and Penny Pepper our External Examiner.

We now look forward to the year ahead.

CHELTENHAM HEBREW CONGREGATION
INCOME & EXPENDITURE - YEAR TO FEBRUARY 29 2024

2023	INCOME	Note	2024
	Contributions		
10,656	Members Subscriptions	(1)	11,831
272	Friends and Associates Subscriptions	(2)	424
<u>10,928</u>	Total Contributions		<u>12,255</u>
	Donations		
1,631	Donations	(3)	5,606
180	Donation for B.O.D		204
<u>1,811</u>	Total Donations		<u>5,810</u>
<u>12,739</u>	Total Contributions & Donations		<u>18,065</u>
	Other Income		
206	Bank Interest	(4)	1,620
78	Rent from No. 44 Elm Street		78
235	Donation from School Visits		195
2,261	Gift Aid & tax Repaid	(5)	2,651
0	Books Sold		13
182	Congregation Events	(6)	648
<u>2,962</u>			<u>5,205</u>
15,701	TOTAL CONGREGATION INCOME		23,270
	EXPENDITURE		
	Property : Synagogue & Elm Street		
321	Lighting, Heating, Water for the Synagogue		548
1,750	Synagogue Maintenance	(7)	2,664
632	Cleaning		676
47	Rates - Elm Street		50
213	Elm Steet Maintenance		78
3,476	Insurance	(8)	5,853
<u>6,439</u>			<u>9,869</u>
	Other Expenses		
192	Representations & Donations to B.O.D		150
200	Fees to Rabbinate		220
0	200 Year Event		1,407
2,789	Fees and Expenses for High Holy Days Ceremony		2,938
14	Postage & Stationery		38
40	Printing & Photocopying		22
331	Sundry Expenses	(9)	1,746
<u>3,566</u>			<u>6,521</u>
10,005	TOTAL EXPENSES		16,390
<u>5,696</u>	EXCESS / (DEFICIT) OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		<u>6,880</u>