

BRISTOL HEBREW CONGREGATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 16th December 2024, 7.00pm at Park Row Synagogue, Frank Cohen Hall

Attendees: 12 attendees, and quorate.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence
 - a. Apologies: Ben Sanders, Mark Braude
2. Remembrance
 - a. For Arnold Greenwood and John Hecht. Silence observed.
3. Minutes of the AGM held on 14th December 2023
 - a. Distributed a month ago.
4. Matters Arising
 - a. No matters arising.
5. Chairman's Report
 - a. We have had multiple events: Chanukah 2023 with 65 people. Tubishvat partnering with South Gloucestershire Council. Purim party with 80 people. Chabad Pesach seder with 70-80 people. 3 Shabbats here (1 "interfaith").
 - b. Good attendance with consistent minyanim.
 - c. Jordan Shelly has started a security company.
 - d. Attendees all say that Noam has done a wonderful job.
6. Treasurer's Report

Balances

The accounts for the year up to 31 July 2024 were distributed.

The present balances as at 16.12.2024 are:

- BHC 1 account: £ 26,081 (running costs)
- BHC 2 account: £ 6,269 (membership and cheder)

Question raised why "Rabbi expenses" in 2024 is £3k more than in 2023. Attendees agree that should be understood in time by the next council meeting, and we will go through this then.

Income

- Membership subscriptions are not yet fully in for this year. The means to pay membership is not clear for some people and they are waiting to pay. There are no membership subscriptions in yet for Friends of Park Row.
- We have sought to close the investment EEA as it is terminating. It will pay the small amount remaining as it is dissolved. The other investments are being kept in reserve to provide capital in case of emergency or need. They are paying some interest.
- The 4 flats and small greengrocers are paying rent, this covers shul running costs.
- The hall has been rented out for functions for the community
- The cheder is being run by Channy Adani. It is running through the shul bank at present. It is not thought to be self-sustaining yet, so at present is being sustained by the membership fees. It is hoped it will become self-sufficient in the future.

Running expenses.

- The utilities of gas and electricity now appear to be running at a reasonable cost. New contracts for 3 years have been negotiated for both.

Funding Needs

- We are going to have to change the heating system from gas and put in a new electric system which is easier to manage. The windows also need to be repaired. The grants for this will need to be applied for.
- JJ Martin has researched for a disabled entrance lift to the shul. This needs to have a Shul council decision and funds applied for from granting authorities.
- We will need to raise funds to put in further security around the site.

Donations

We are receiving many kind donations from various people, school visits and Friends of Park Row, which are being used to repopulate our Siddurim at present. We are very grateful for the kindness of these.

7. Board of Deputies Representative's Report

Clive A Lawton – December 2024

Established over 250 years ago, the Board remains the central body that advocates for British Jews.

The election of a new group of Honorary Officers led by a truly dynamic and creative new President, Phil Rosenberg, has put a new spring in the step of the Board this year and a five point plan has been adopted for the coming triennium.

1. **Fight antisemitism**
2. **Stand up for peace and security in Israel and the Middle East**
3. **Defend our religious freedoms**

4. **Make our community more united, inclusive and outward-looking**
5. **Celebrate our faith, heritage and culture as British Jews**

Responding to the rise in antisemitism in both the public sphere and on social media platforms, the Board has worked closely with law enforcement and has put pressure on both the media and universities to address hate speech and discriminatory practices. It continued to raise awareness about the dangers of antisemitism and pushed for stronger legal protections. It continues to advocate for widespread adoption and implementation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

Additionally, the Board of Deputies worked on initiatives to present an accurate view of Jews so that its work was not only defensive. Its Jewish Living Experience travelling exhibition is mounted in a range of venues around the country and the Board has invested in multiplying copies of the Exhibition so that it can be displayed in several venues simultaneously, rather than each venue having to wait for the Exhibition to leave one place before arriving elsewhere.

It has also developed the marvellous online resource, Jewish Learning Online, accessible to all, which provides accurate information about Jews and Jewish life while also providing information about the phenomenon of antisemitism.

Another such positive initiative was the launching of what has been called 'The Optimistic Alliance, an attempt to restart Jewish/Muslim dialogue. It is early days yet, but the Board is certainly to be commended for not waiting for better conditions before turning to this critical dimension of a calmer life for Jews in the UK.

In addition, it has also focused on issues like mental health, employment conditions and other matters where Jews might experience challenges.

The Board has taken an active stance on ensuring that the hostages in Gaza are not forgotten. Utilising its unique status with government, it has kept up the pressure to ensure that no actions are taken by the British government on issues concerning Israel without mention being made of the urgent need to 'bring them home'. The Board is also British Jewry's representative on the World Jewish Congress and the 'J7' (led by the Anti-Defamation League), as well as the Commonwealth Jewish Council, ensuring that a British voice is consequential in international Jewish discussions, as befits the fourth largest Jewish community outside Israel.

Lastly, the Board of Deputies focused on sustaining and enhancing its relationship with the UK government. Perhaps the most recent evidence of this is the meeting held between community leaders and the Prime Minister at No 10.

Clive Lawton proposes that we find a way to notify members to pay the voluntary levy of £35 per member for the BoD. Suggestion that this is done within the notification of the annual membership fee. **We will address this in our next council meeting.**

8. Security Report

- a. Since the Oct 7th attack we have had no incidents despite national and international threats.
- b. There have been numerous multi-faith meetings in Bristol. Jordan Shelly has been helping with security, and BWS have come in to explain our current security system further. We have a talkie walkie on site that goes through directly to CST.

9. Housekeeping & Flats Management Report

- a. All flats and shop let out and paid up to date.
- b. Fire precaution work done
- c. Anti asbestos and anti damp work completed
- d. Flat B repainted and renovations done. Plaster work done.
- e. Insurance all paid up.
- f. We have been clearing the path gradually (behind the mikvah). The bridge needs to be renovated to be safe, to provide access to leave the shul in an emergency. This should all be completed by March.

10. Chevra Kadisha Report

The Chevra Kadisha is Bristol's Jewish Burial Society and has been independently run alongside Park Row since its inception in 1743. We can arrange funerals for those who are halachically Jewish, whether shul members or not.

They can be buried in our Fishponds or Memorial Woodlands cemeteries.

Since the shul's last AGM we have had 2 funerals, Arnold Greenwood and John Hecht.

There are 3 trustees:- myself as Chairman and Administrator, Yoram Adani to organise funerals and stone settings, and Sam Baum head of Teharim and who will gradually take over my position.

Ben Bar- Orien continues to maintain the Fishponds, and Barton Vale (historic) sites. At Fishponds there are around 20 spare plots plus reserved ones. At Memorial Woodlands there are over 120 plots; that site is maintained by the Memorial Woodlands company. Maintenance of graves themselves is the responsibility of next of kin. Access to the Fishponds site can be at any time as there is a tumbler padlock on the gate - contact any of us for the code.

Despite a modest turnout on our Open Day at Fishponds and Memorial Woodlands cemeteries, and following our annual mailout to 100 next of kin, we received £750 from generous donations.

For Teharim, we still have the privilege of using the shared but specially fitted room at HG Harris funeral directors in Staple Hill. We also have a list of 2 Tehara teams to use this room, which consists of 10 men and 8 women. We are still hoping to invite a member of London US chevra's team to run a session on Teharim in Bristol. Date to be confirmed.

Alan Elkan
Chairman

Clive Lawton notes and praises the involvement of HG Harris. We will write a note to Alan Elkan.

11. Educational work & visits

- a. We will have completed 39-40 visits this year. Mostly schools but also Cubs & Beavers, Bristol Civic society, a group from the University & Swindon Interfaith group. November and December were the busy periods!
- b. I have been assisted by Janet Lee & Clive Lawton, my thanks to both of them for stepping up when the pressure was too much for me to handle.
- c. Bristol Civic Society came and a member of theirs now comes every week to the synagogue.
- d. Lecturer in Jewish studies wants to bring his students, and his department wants to put on a seminar on antisemitism. He has been put in touch with Clive Lawton who is helping him put it together.

Tony Gordon

12. Cheder Report

- a. Just finished 1st term of the new program. It's a USA based program "Shalom Learning" and is going very well.
- b. Introduced BBYO, run by Shelley Braude.
- c. Cheder is around 8-10 children regular attendees. Plus a new family has arrived.

13. Election of Honorary Officers and Members of Council

- a. Council members elected, through emailed in votes and seconded votes:
(Secretary has details)

		Role
1	Noam Adani	President
2	Tony Gordon	Vice-President
3	David Stillitz	Secretary
4	Carol Simmons	Treasurer
5	Garry Temple	
6	Mark Braude	
7	Linsey Clark	
8	Melody Beard	
9	Clive Lawton	
10	JJ Martin	

We can discuss coopting Ben Sanders for the next meeting.

Eve has stepped down from the council after many years of service. Enthusiastic thanks and applause from attendees.

14. Election of Board of Deputies Representative

Clive Lawton is our current representative and has agreed to stand.

15. Any Other Business

We should have "Membership" on next year's AGM agenda

Mark Braude's membership report:

3 new members this year, and 3 others in the pipeline. 1 has stepped down.

26 people haven't responded to their membership fee request

"Friends of Park Row" we will address on the next council meeting.

Peter Shepherd requests to help with Membership. We should address this at the council meeting.

Next council meeting: Monday 13th January at 7.30pm at the Gordon's house

Linsey Clark volunteers to take minutes.

Meeting ends 8.20pm

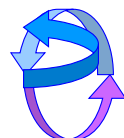
Bristol Hebrew Congregation

Charity Number 1165722 (Incorporated 24th February 2016)

Bank Accounts - movement for the year ending 31st July 2024

Esther White ACA
Chartered Accountants
Henleaze, Bristol BS9
[Tel: 07971 543016](tel:07971543016)

Email: esther@estherwhite.com



	July 2024	July 2023
<u>Income</u>		
Members Contributions	£6,662.50	£6,715.50
Events	£981.00	£0.00
Donations and Offerings	£5,322.75	£3,741.11
Investment Income	£13,309.28	£6,705.96
Interest Income	£7,350.00	
Grants In	£9,474.00	£0.00
Rental Income	£49,398.01	£42,863.58
Other Revenue	£1,429.99	£3,840.00
Investment sale	£0.00	£10,000.00

£93,927.53	£73,866.15
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	July 2024	July 2023
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Ministerial Assistance	£18,911.88	£19,785.00
Rabbi Expenses	£6,114.49	£3,116.08
Direct Expenses	£143.88	£0.00
Light, power & heating	£5,300.31	£8,710.56
Rent	£16.00	£0.00
Travel	£29.96	£148.22
Telephone		£172.06
Insurance	£5,719.42	£4,943.63
Entertainment	£343.36	£0.00
Subscriptions & Donations	£350.00	£694.99
Repairs, Maintenance & Cleaning	£34,935.36	£9,949.72
Recorder	£919.67	£994.29
Legal Expenses	£250.00	£0.00
Wine and provisions	£3,958.34	£3,097.36
Guild payment		£0.00
Accountancy	£720.30	£886.50
General Expenses	£876.05	£3,819.75
Event Costs	£2,157.81	£122.00
Bank Charges	£122.80	£116.75
Website	£179.01	£95.00
Refurbishment of synagogue	£12,467.88	£3,749.88
Cheder Expenses	£2,050.81	£996.53

£95,567.33	£61,398.32
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Movement for the period	-£1,639.80	£12,467.83
Rent Debtor	-£6,875.00	
Bank Balance Brought Forward / Introduced	£15,550.50	£3,082.67
Bank Balance C/Fwd	£7,035.70	£15,550.50

Approved by



Esther White ACA
DATE: 18 October 2024

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Bristol Hebrew Congregation.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the income and expenditure accounts of the Bristol Hebrew Congregation (BHS) for the year ended 31st July 2024

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of BHC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records. I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



18th October 2024

Esther White ACA

ICAEW Number 7957609