

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 08248096 (England and Wales)  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1149738

**Report of the Trustees and**  
**Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**  
**for**  
**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

Leon and Company  
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors  
100 High Ash Drive  
Alwoodley  
Leeds  
West  
Yorkshire  
LS17 8RE

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

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for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

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## **Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

### **Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2015. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in March 2005.

#### **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

##### **Registered Company number**

08248096 (England and Wales)

##### **Registered Charity number**

1149738

##### **Registered office**

Roman Avenue  
Leeds  
West Yorkshire  
LS8 2AN

##### **Trustees**

P Brook	
M Thornfield	- appointed 30.9.15
L Monaghan	- appointed 29.4.15
A Dyson	
N Dyson	- resigned 29.4.15
D J Israel	
V Mogendorff	
E Prins	
S Marcus	
R Baumberg	
R Teiger	
E Cohen	
Ms B Levy	- appointed 29.4.15
Mrs J Narodetsky	- appointed 29.4.15

##### **Company Secretary**

D Mogendorff

##### **Auditors**

Leon and Company  
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors  
100 High Ash Drive  
Alwoodley  
Leeds  
West  
Yorkshire  
LS17 8RE

#### **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

##### **Governing document**

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

## **Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

### **Report of the Trustees** **for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

#### **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

##### **Induction and training of new trustees**

All trustees are issued with a copy of "CC3 - The Essential Trustee - What you need to know" as issued by the Charities Commission, and are required to sign a trustee declaration form, the content of which is available to view on request.

Either at the first formal meeting of the Board, or prior to the first formal meeting of the Board, all trustees are allocated portfolios. At this meeting, the process for managing portfolios is explained, as is the format and process for Board meetings, and the requirements for Board members participation and reporting. The Governance Committee (a sub committee of the Board) is responsible for determining any new trustee induction requirements. Handover of responsibilities, knowledge and relevant information for individual portfolio holders takes place on a one-to-one basis.

Two training sessions for all trustees are held twice each year covering key governance topics.

##### **Risk management**

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

#### **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

##### **Objectives and aims**

The objectives of the Synagogue are that of providing and maintaining a place or places of public worship and for the furtherance and advancement of religious, educational and charitable objectives.

#### **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

##### **Reserves policy**

The current reserves policies is to maintain the level of reserves (where funds are available) to be sufficient to bridge any deficit between revenue and the normal running expenditure of the synagogue.

In addition, monies have been set aside by the membership to cover the costs of an assistant Rabbi and capital works to the building.

Where funds are available, money is to be put on deposit so that interest from those funds is available to be spent towards the objectives of the synagogue.

The policy relating to the level of reserves is to be monitored by the Executive with a full financial review once per year and appropriate recommendations made to the Board.

## **Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

### **Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

#### **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

As Treasurer I have made it a priority to tackle our annual deficit. The Board agreed to this and through their hard work in monitoring carefully their own budgets, as well as that of the Synagogue's, our deficit for the year stands at £99,820 against the previous year at £106,758. Whilst the reduction is welcome, and reflects the Board's reasonable and prudent judgement on issues, there is now further work to be done.

Much of the deficit relates to activities that we chose to undertake, with the knowledge that we have significant funds available due to legacies received in previous years. At the end of 2015, our investments, bank account balance and debtors amounted to just over £417,000.

It is worth noting that:

1. Income relating to subscriptions has fallen this year. The Board has already started tackling this with an increase to subscriptions for calendar year 2016. In addition, the Membership Treasurer and Bookkeeper do sterling work to bring in as much subscriptions debt as possible.
2. Having reviewed where cash is held in investment, it became clear that both the very low rates of interest, and ensuring the Synagogue had access to the cash where needed, the ability to earn useful sums of money was no longer possible.
3. As last year, in general, our costs are under control with many items in line with, or showing a reduction, from last year.

The clear message within these accounts is that key changes will have to be made in the coming months in order to meet the reserves policy of the Synagogue. The Board has already taken steps towards this (as noted above) and further steps will necessarily involve the full membership too.

The Synagogue is still clearly a going concern for the coming few years. In order to maintain its current Reserves Policy, it will have to make key decisions around how it allocates its resources. The Board has already been thinking around these decisions and has started to put in place the policies to enable this work.

#### **STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Sinai Synagogue, Leeds for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Report of the Trustees**  
**for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

Approved by order of the board of trustees on ..... and signed on its behalf by:

.....  
D J Israel - Trustee

**Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of  
Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

We have audited the financial statements of Sinai Synagogue, Leeds for the year ended 31 December 2015 on pages seven to sixteen. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015) (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities).

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 auditors' 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.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees Responsibilities set out on page three, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company 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.

Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

**Scope of the audit of the financial statements**

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the trustees; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Report of the Trustees to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

**Opinion on financial statements**

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 2015 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

**Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

**Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of  
Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where 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 of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

J L Posner (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
for and on behalf of Leon and Company  
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors  
100 High Ash Drive  
Alwoodley  
Leeds  
West  
Yorkshire  
LS17 8RE

Date: .....



**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Statement of Financial Activities  
(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31.12.15 Total funds £	31.12.14 Total funds £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>					
Voluntary income	2	133,823	15,133	148,956	154,721
Activities for generating funds	3	25,869	-	25,869	29,262
Investment income	4	2,145	-	2,145	3,812
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>					
Education	5	3,130	-	3,130	5,224
Youth activities		518	-	518	29
Religious activities		-	-	-	1,344
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>165,485</b>	<b>15,133</b>	<b>180,618</b>	<b>194,392</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
<b>Costs of generating funds</b>					
Fundraising trading: cost of goods sold and other costs	6	9,933	-	9,933	18,614
<b>Charitable activities</b>					
Education	7	27,883	-	27,883	28,527
Youth activities		6,937	-	6,937	12,183
High holyday		-	8,874	8,874	12,035
Board of deputies		-	1,575	1,575	1,597
Donations		857	-	857	2,535
Rabbis costs		113,269	-	113,269	120,653
Religious activities		69,671	-	69,671	67,784
Welfare costs		2,155	-	2,155	2,021
LJRC		-	4,104	4,104	4,740
<b>Governance costs</b>	10	<b>35,180</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>35,180</b>	<b>30,373</b>
<b>Other resources expended</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>265,885</b>	<b>14,553</b>	<b>280,438</b>	<b>301,150</b>
<b>NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS</b>					
		(100,400)	580	(99,820)	(106,758)
<b>Gross transfers between funds</b>	18	<b>580</b>	<b>(580)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources</b>		<b>(99,820)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(99,820)</b>	<b>(106,758)</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		<b>1,433,624</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,433,624</b>	<b>1,540,382</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>1,333,804</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,333,804</b>	<b>1,433,624</b>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Balance Sheet**  
**At 31 December 2015**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31.12.15 Total funds £	31.12.14 Total funds £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible assets	14	988,696	-	988,696	1,000,841
Investments	15	258,914	-	258,914	411,355
		<u>1,247,610</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,247,610</u>	<u>1,412,196</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	16	25,248	16,688	41,936	50,167
Cash at bank		116,924	-	116,924	37,079
		<u>142,172</u>	<u>16,688</u>	<u>158,860</u>	<u>87,246</u>
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	17	(55,978)	(16,688)	(72,666)	(65,818)
		<u>86,194</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>86,194</u>	<u>21,428</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
		<u>1,333,804</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,333,804</u>	<u>1,433,624</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>					
		<u>1,333,804</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,333,804</u>	<u>1,433,624</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>1,333,804</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,333,804</u>	<u>1,433,624</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>	18				
Unrestricted funds				1,333,804	1,433,624
Restricted funds				-	-
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>				<u>1,333,804</u>	<u>1,433,624</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015).

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on ..... and were signed on its behalf by:

.....  
E Prins -Trustee

.....  
D J Israel -Trustee

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Accounting convention**

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value, and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Companies Act 2006 and the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

**Incoming resources**

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

**Resources expended**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

**Allocation and apportionment of costs**

**Tangible fixed assets**

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Freehold property	- 2% on cost
Improvements to property	- 4% on cost
Fixtures and fittings	- 20% on cost
Computer equipment	- 25% on cost

**Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

**Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

**Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits**

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

## Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

### Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31 December 2015

#### 2. VOLUNTARY INCOME

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Donations	26,948	21,729
Gift aid	24,265	24,647
Legacies	2,000	520
Subscriptions	95,743	107,825
	<u>148,956</u>	<u>154,721</u>

#### 3. ACTIVITIES FOR GENERATING FUNDS

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Functions and catering	13,418	5,569
Plaques, books and videos	288	987
Introduction to Judaism course	1,001	2,001
100 Club	3,160	2,860
High holyday	1,532	811
Sinai Chronicle	1,530	1,229
Miscellaneous fund raising	484	3,477
Income from solar panels	4,456	4,624
70th Anniversary events	-	7,704
	<u>25,869</u>	<u>29,262</u>

#### 4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Deposit account interest	2,145	3,812
	<u>2,145</u>	<u>3,812</u>

#### 5. INCOMING RESOURCES FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Contributions	3,130	5,224
Contributions	518	29
Contributions	-	1,344
	<u>3,648</u>	<u>6,597</u>

#### 6. FUNDRAISING TRADING: COST OF GOODS SOLD AND OTHER COSTS

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Functions and catering	6,936	7,239
Plaques, books and videos	50	1,395
100 Club	2,500	2,920
Sinai Chronicle	67	71
Miscellaneous	380	2,078
70th Anniversary events	-	4,911
	<u>9,933</u>	<u>18,614</u>

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**7. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS**

	Direct costs	Grant funding of activities (See note 8)	Support costs (See note 9)	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Education	11,982	-	15,901	27,883
Youth activities	4,836	-	2,101	6,937
High holyday	1,300	7,574	-	8,874
Rabbis costs	113,269	-	-	113,269
Religious activities	4,919	-	64,752	69,671
Welfare costs	54	-	2,101	2,155
Board of deputies	-	1,575	-	1,575
Donations	-	857	-	857
LJRC	-	4,104	-	4,104
	<u>136,360</u>	<u>14,110</u>	<u>84,855</u>	<u>235,325</u>

**8. GRANTS PAYABLE**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Youth activities	-	4,645
High holyday	7,574	10,735
Board of deputies	1,575	1,597
Donations	857	2,535
LJRC	4,104	4,740
	<u>14,110</u>	<u>24,252</u>

The total grants paid to institutions during the year was as follows:

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Highholy Day Appeal	7,574	10,735
Board of deputies	1,575	1,597
Bursary	189	-
Donations	668	2,535
LJRC	4,104	4,740
	<u>14,110</u>	<u>19,607</u>

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**9. SUPPORT COSTS**

	<b>Management</b>	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Depreciation</b>	<b>Totals</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Education	13,584	-	2,317	15,901
Youth activities	1,664	-	437	2,101
Religious activities	54,106	53	10,593	64,752
Welfare costs	1,664	-	437	2,101
	<u>71,018</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>13,784</u>	<u>84,855</u>

**10. GOVERNANCE COSTS**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	<b>31.12.14</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Affiliation fees	29,763	24,379
Professional fees	617	1,194
Auditors' remuneration	4,800	4,800
	<u>35,180</u>	<u>30,373</u>

**11. NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES**

Net resources are stated after charging/(crediting):

	<b>31.12.15</b>	<b>31.12.14</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Auditors' remuneration	4,800	4,800
Depreciation - owned assets	13,784	15,015
	<u>18,584</u>	<u>29,815</u>

**12. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS**

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 December 2015 nor for the year ended 31 December 2014 .

**Trustees' expenses**

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 December 2015 nor for the year ended 31 December 2014 .

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**13. STAFF COSTS**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	<b>£</b>	£
Wages and salaries	143,149	146,279
Social security costs	6,332	13,601
Other pension costs	9,600	5,448
	<u>159,081</u>	<u>165,328</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
Staff	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>

The number of employees whose emoluments fell within the following bands was:

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
£60,001 - £70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	Freehold property £	Improvements to property £	Plant and machinery £
<b>COST</b>			
At 1 January 2015	1,005,230	121,207	3,147
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 December 2015	<u>1,005,230</u>	<u>121,207</u>	<u>3,147</u>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>			
At 1 January 2015	129,602	10,762	926
Charge for year	4,433	4,303	629
At 31 December 2015	<u>134,035</u>	<u>15,065</u>	<u>1,555</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>			
At 31 December 2015	<u>871,195</u>	<u>106,142</u>	<u>1,592</u>
At 31 December 2014	<u>875,628</u>	<u>110,445</u>	<u>2,221</u>

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
<b>COST</b>			
At 1 January 2015	98,866	7,431	1,235,881
Additions	1,139	500	1,639
At 31 December 2015	<u>100,005</u>	<u>7,931</u>	<u>1,237,520</u>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>			
At 1 January 2015	88,974	4,776	235,040
Charge for year	3,581	838	13,784
At 31 December 2015	<u>92,555</u>	<u>5,614</u>	<u>248,824</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>			
At 31 December 2015	<u>7,450</u>	<u>2,317</u>	<u>988,696</u>
At 31 December 2014	<u>9,892</u>	<u>2,655</u>	<u>1,000,841</u>

**15. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Fixed rate bonds	<u>258,914</u>	<u>411,355</u>

There were no investment assets outside the UK.

Investments (neither listed nor unlisted) were as follows:



**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**15. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS - continued**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
NatWest fixed rate bond	-	154,917
Yorkshire Bank fixed term deposit	258,914	256,438
	<u>258,914</u>	<u>411,355</u>

**16. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Trade debtors	6,447	4,870
Other debtors	17,626	19,362
Due from general fund	15,060	19,219
Due from designated fund	189	4,645
Accrued income	350	346
Prepayments	2,264	1,725
	<u>41,936</u>	<u>50,167</u>

**17. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
Trade creditors	5,281	6,412
Social security and other taxes	6,308	7,597
Net Wages Creditor	9,091	144
Other creditors	22,960	20,481
Due to restricted fund	15,060	17,612
Due to designated fund	-	1,607
Due to general fund	189	4,645
Accrued expenses	13,777	7,320
	<u>72,666</u>	<u>65,818</u>

**18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS**

	<b>At 1.1.15</b>	<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>Transfers between funds</b>	<b>At 31.12.15</b>
	£	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
General funds	1,433,624	(100,836)	1,016	1,333,804
Designated funds	-	436	(436)	-
	<u>1,433,624</u>	<u>(100,400)</u>	<u>580</u>	<u>1,333,804</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>				
Restricted funds	-	580	(580)	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>580</u>	<u>(580)</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>1,433,624</u>	<u>(99,820)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,333,804</u>

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	<b>Incoming resources £</b>	<b>Resources expended £</b>	<b>Movement in funds £</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General funds	164,860	(265,696)	(100,836)
Designated funds	625	(189)	436
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	165,485	(265,885)	(100,400)
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Restricted funds	15,133	(14,553)	580
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds****Detailed Statement of Financial Activities  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	<b>£</b>	£
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		
<b>Voluntary income</b>		
Donations	26,948	21,729
Gift aid	24,265	24,647
Legacies	2,000	520
Subscriptions	95,743	107,825
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	148,956	154,721
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>		
Functions and catering	13,418	5,569
Plaques, books and videos	288	987
Introduction to Judaism course	1,001	2,001
100 Club	3,160	2,860
High holyday	1,532	811
Sinai Chronicle	1,530	1,229
Miscellaneous fund raising	484	3,477
Income from solar panels	4,456	4,624
70th Anniversary events	-	7,704
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	25,869	29,262
<b>Investment income</b>		
Deposit account interest	2,145	3,812
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>		
Contributions	3,648	6,597
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	180,618	194,392
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>		
<b>Fundraising trading: cost of goods sold and other costs</b>		
Functions and catering	6,936	7,239
Plaques, books and videos	50	1,395
100 Club	2,500	2,920
Sinai Chronicle	67	71
Miscellaneous	380	2,078
70th Anniversary events	-	4,911
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	9,933	18,614
<b>Charitable activities</b>		
Wages	114,235	117,266
Social security	5,202	11,779
Pensions	9,600	5,448
Expenses and activities - Rabbis' costs	(823)	3,269
Expenses and activities - general	5,865	6,384
Mileage	1,809	180
Travel	472	545
Carried forward	136,360	144,871

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

**Sinai Synagogue, Leeds****Detailed Statement of Financial Activities  
for the Year Ended 31 December 2015**

	<b>31.12.15</b>	31.12.14
	£	£
<b>Charitable activities</b>		
Brought forward	136,360	144,871
Grants to institutions	14,110	19,607
Grants to individuals	-	4,645
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	150,470	169,123
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Affiliation fees	29,763	24,379
Professional fees	617	1,194
Auditors' remuneration	4,800	4,800
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	35,180	30,373
<b>Support costs</b>		
<b>Management</b>		
Wages	28,914	29,013
Social security	1,130	1,822
Rates and water	615	770
Insurance	6,840	6,611
Light and heat	11,400	10,967
Telephone	1,345	1,396
Postage and stationery	5,311	4,859
Sundries	3,183	3,701
Cemetery costs	1,451	1,695
Training	1,213	117
Maintenance and repairs	8,848	5,010
Computer consumables	194	107
Security and monitoring	574	1,868
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	71,018	67,936
<b>Finance</b>		
Bank charges	53	87
Bank interest	-	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	53	88
<b>Depreciation</b>		
Freehold property	4,433	4,433
Improvements to property	4,303	4,303
Plant and machinery	629	569
Fixtures and fittings	3,581	5,223
Computer equipment	838	488
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	13,784	15,016
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	280,438	301,150
<b>Net expenditure</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	(99,820)	(106,758)
	<hr/>	<hr/>



## SINAI ANNUAL REPORT 2015



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**Sinai Synagogue is a company limited by guarantee (No. 08248096) and registered with the Charities Commission (No. 1149738).**

**Board Meeting dates 2016-17: All Sinai members are welcome to attend as observers for all or part of the proceedings. Meetings take place at 7.30pm on Wednesdays at the synagogue.**

**2016: 25 May; 29 June; 27 July; 31 Aug; 28 Sept; 26 Oct; 30 Nov; 21 Dec (3rd Wed)**

**2017: 25 Jan; 24 Feb; 30 Mar; 27 Apr.**

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## SINAI VISION – 2015 UPDATED VERSION

***Kehillah Kedosha - Holy Community*** - is at the heart of Sinai Synagogue. Our vision is to be a thriving progressive *Kehillah Kedosha* founded on the values of:

*Tefillah* - Prayer

*Limmud* - Learning

*Tikkun Olam* - Repair of the World

Through the core values we will:

- encourage community building by being welcoming, empowering our members and ensuring they feel safe and valued. Through *keruv* (openness) we aspire to be a growing and inclusive community;
- recognise the individuality of our members and value the diverse community this creates;
- strive to be the leading proponent of Reform Judaism in the many different communities of which we are part.

***Tefillah - Prayer*** at Sinai will help people provide a relevant environment for exploring relationships with God and Judaism in today's world by:

- connecting with our Jewish tradition and beliefs in a relevant and meaningful way
- creating an engaging space to mark *Shabbat* and sacred times
- creating a sacred and communal time for reflection
- encouraging a personal and communal spiritual experience
- helping people to reflect on their lives and the world around them
- providing comfort to those seeking it.

***Limmud - Learning*** at Sinai is about making informed decisions through encouraging the asking of questions and providing the resources to search for answers by

- providing an inspiring learning environment for all
- providing a frame of reference for living a progressive Jewish life
- enabling shared communal experiences
- seeking the most engaging resources for the community
- studying heritage, tradition and stories
- providing learning resources accessible to all.

***Tikkun Olam- Repair of the world*** We recognise the need to take responsibility for the world as central to living a full Jewish life by

- taking action to make a positive difference to society
- building a just society, community and world
- making our communities better places
- recognising we have a responsibility to speak out against injustice and to support those in need.



## Chair's Report



As I write this report I am coming to the end of my two year tenure as Chair of Sinai Synagogue. This is a great opportunity to look back at some of our achievements over the year and to reflect on how vibrant, engaging and inclusive a community we are.

Before I reflect on 2015, I would like to express my sadness upon the recent death of our Honorary Life President, Ruth Sterne. Ruth, along with her late husband, Ernest, was part of the driving force behind the foundation of Sinai Synagogue and we are indebted to her for all the support she gave the synagogue throughout her life. She supported me in my role as Chair without reservation and I will miss her quiet insightful discussions. Ruth saw the synagogue community as her family and as such I hope that we will cherish her in our hearts and keep her in our memory.

I had not truly realised before becoming Chair quite how much of what we do is initiated and led by enthusiastic volunteer members of our community. We do not operate in a hierarchical manner, where the Board or Executive Officers say "this is what we'll do" and a team of staff go and magically make it happen. Instead, most of the time, a member comes forward saying "can I do" ... or "I am interested in", the Board say yes, and that member engages with other members, and together a team of volunteers create the magic.

A great example of this is the Rainbow Jews Shabbat in August. The idea came from a member, and was supported by the Board and our Rabbis, but could not have been as successful as it was without the many members who came together to help organise, plan, run and enjoy the event. We should be proud that we achieved a wonderful warm and significant Shabbat which attracted our members as well as people from other Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

As a community we can be particularly proud of our engagement with refugees and asylum seekers (see Social Action report). This included volunteering in 2016 to host a night shelter for asylum seekers at Sinai. What drove our members to get involved ranged from a keenness to do practical *tikkun olam* (healing the world) through social action initiatives, as well as a desire to "give back" knowing that for many of our members being a refugee or asylum seeker plays a part in our own family narratives.

On the education front, we have seen a greater number of *Shabbat* study lunches which continue to be well attended, and the series of Judaism through Cooking sessions has been a sell-out and has attracted non-members too. The education review that we envisaged would take place this year has been subsumed into the work of the Strategic Development Group, so although this is still ongoing, it is good to see that our religion school, early years, youth activities and family-friendly festival services are engaging our young people and their families. All the children who became *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* this year have done a great job of leading us in prayer, and thanks must go to all their tutors, youth workers and religion school teachers.

One of the great advantages of having two Rabbis and a strong lay leadership is that we have the opportunity to provide a wide range of religious services. Rabbi Morris and Rabbi Hugenholtz have been doing some great work this year, guiding our community to be a truly progressive and innovative place. They get involved in so many aspects of Sinai life, taking services, providing pastoral care, teaching, engaging in interfaith work, contributing to our *Tikkun Olam* projects, and so much more. Thank you for looking after us throughout our personal life-cycles.



One highlight for me was the annual AJEX (Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen) Shabbat service, which we hosted this year. It was rewarding to welcome so many members of the wider Jewish community and dignitaries to Sinai.

Many of you will be aware that long-standing member Judith Chapman is the current Lord Mayor of Leeds. Throughout her year in office we know that Judith has talked at many events about her pride in being a member of Sinai, and together with Rabbi Morris being the Lord Mayor's Chaplain this year, Sinai has had a positive wide exposure within the city.

It gives me great pleasure that this year we had a full complement of trustees on the Board. We started the year with only two executive members as we did not elect a full Executive at the 2015 AGM. During the year we were able to appoint Barbara Levy as Honorary Secretary and Matt Thornfield (*below*) as Vice Chair. I personally found it helpful to have the support of a full Executive in my role of Chair, and to be able to share some of the chair's duties. The Board has been made up of trustees with different skills sets and interests but who all have been committed to see Sinai develop and grow. They have brought energy and enthusiasm to the role, and we should particularly recognise those who are standing down as trustees this year.

It would be impossible to mention everybody who helps make our community what it is, and who deserve our gratitude for everything they do. Special thanks must go to Heidi Sizer, our administrator and bookkeeper, and Andy Ingleby, our caretaker. Both put in so many hours of dedicated service to our community, always with a smile and a sunny outlook, and we are extremely lucky to have them working with us. I must also mention the support we get from outside our community, particularly the CST and the Movement for Reform Judaism. These are both organisations that exist to help communities like ours operate in a meaningful and safe way, and we should not underestimate the value we get from them.



*Matt Thornfield: Vice Chair 2015-16*

Finally, I would like to thank the community for giving me the opportunity to serve Sinai Synagogue as Chair. I have thoroughly enjoyed leading the Board and have been honoured to represent Sinai at many events within the wider Leeds community as well as in the Reform Jewish community. I wish my successor the very best and offer all my support for next year.

**Elsje Prins, Chair 2015-16**

## **Strategic Development Group**

The Sinai Vision (*Page 3*) is a statement of intent. It is important that we review this document regularly to make sure we continue to meet the needs of everyone in our community. To that end, a Strategic Development Group was established through the Sinai Board, which held its inaugural meeting in October 2015. The terms of reference for the group were:

“To draw up a strategic development plan (SDP) to be recommended to the Board of Trustees and, if approved, to be proposed to the Sinai Synagogue membership at the May 2016 AGM.

The plan will be based upon

- developing strategic priorities in line with Sinai's vision and core values
- translating these priorities into action through Board, portfolio and members' activity

- considering the plan's deliverables and timescales, having regard to our current income and expenditure and future projections
- considering Sinai-specific fundraising opportunities, eg events, legacies, 100 club revival
- reviewing relevant literature on progressive Jewish community development".

The group comprised Board members Anna Dyson, David Israel and Becky Teiger, joined by Sara Bordoley, Richard Kempner, Nicolle Levine, David Plaut and Judy Plaut, and it continues to meet early in 2016. It is planned that the community will have a chance to share and discuss the preliminary findings and priorities identified by the Group at the May AGM outside of the normal 'business' part of the Agenda.

## Building Development

A well-attended Sinai Special General Meeting was convened on 22 February 2015 to consider the future of the Sinai building and its fabric. A resolution was proposed and carried by a clear majority as follows:

"Part 1 - This Special General Meeting accepts the Board's recommendation that to best meet the future practical and spiritual needs of our community, Sinai Synagogue should invest in a new building, on the current site, to replace the existing building.

Part 2 – This Special General Meeting authorises the Board to establish a project to deliver the new building. The project is to be managed by a new "Building Management Committee", with agreed terms of reference, which will allow it to deal with all aspects of the project. As the project progresses, key decisions, to be identified by the Board, will be brought to the community for approval. These will include detailed architectural plans and the overall project budget."

The Sinai Building Committee (SBC) was subsequently re-convened for a number of meetings over the following months, chaired initially by Barbara Levy and then by David Repper, to test the feasibility of the proposal by examining a design brief and exploring options for refurbishment up to and including a full rebuild of the existing site. After much detailed work the Sinai Board received a letter from David Repper on 10 September:

*"On behalf of the Building Committee (SBC), I believe it might be helpful to summarise our current findings:*

- *The idea of demolishing and rebuilding the Synagogue is not, in the view of the SBC, financially viable*
- *We believe, if we target the building, that we could, over a period of about 2 years, raise around £500,000.*
- *At this level of expenditure, we believe that we could produce an excellent refurbishment plan, allowing us to resolve most of the issues with the current building - this is a practical rather than a perfect solution - if costs rise, as they inevitably do, the possibility exists of some additional external (possibly lottery) funding and of selling a small part of the car park (losing only a handful of spaces) to bridge the gap*

*The plans, presented to Board members, are embryonic and were intended to demonstrate that the scheme is broadly achievable. Much more work is required to validate those ideas and to refine the cost of implementing them.*

*The next stages of the project should be:*

- *Contracting professionals to draw up detailed plans and to work out exact costs;*
- *Commencing a parallel fund raising campaign specifically for the refurbishment of the building.*

*Unfortunately, from an SBC perspective, I don't think that we are presently in a position to do either. From what we know of the Synagogue's current financial position, the time is not appropriate to embark on building development nor to commence fund raising activities, when the more pressing matters of stemming the current losses, balancing the budget and preserving the reserves need to be addressed, in order to safeguard the future of the Synagogue".*

The Board noted these conclusions with regret, whilst thanking the SBC for all its hard work, and agreed to put the project on hold pending further action on addressing the overall financial position. It is hoped that the work can be re-activated at some future date.

## **Movement for Reform Judaism (MRJ).**

Sinai plays a very active role in MRJ, both by way of direct representation on its Board, and through its various activities both nationally and amongst the Northern Reform Communities, ably assisted by its Development Coordinator Sarita Robinson. The report below highlights some key activities during 2015.

2015 was a fantastic year for the Movement for Reform Judaism. Our communities provide meaning, comfort, education, social activities, support and spiritual fulfilment to their members and are engaged in the building of a just society through social action and *tikkun olam*. We are enormously proud of them and their outstanding work.

A highlight of the year was *Shirei Chagigah*, our biennial music conference. With 125 participants representing over 35 communities, it was an opportunity to learn from the world's foremost experts in Jewish liturgical music through a series of workshops and services. Through events like this we enhance the musical and spiritual life of our members and communities. Then in November, 130 participants from twelve northern congregations attended Northern Chagigah, a joyful, fun, uplifting, spiritual, family-friendly gathering celebrating Reform Judaism.

The summer saw more than 1000 young people taking part in events with our youth movement, RSY-Netzer. Shemesh summer camps were a huge success and for the fifth summer in a row, we ran Reform Jewish day camps for younger children. 240 young people had an incredible experience on Israel Tour with six tours selling out. The Movement Workers have also been working in synagogues and have engaged with almost 300 young people in their home communities.

We engaged over 400 people through Jeneration, our initiative for students, and the work of our Young Adults Rabbi with events on campus and beyond. Over 150 young adults and students participated in the High Holy Day ticket scheme offering them free tickets to Reform services over *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*.



The recent guidance issued by our Rabbinic Assembly means that those of our communities who choose to can now find more suitable and inclusive processes to welcome individuals with only one Jewish parent.

July marked 40 years since the ordination of Rabbi Jackie Tabick as Britain's first female rabbi, a milestone for equality. The Beit Din, our religious court convened by Rabbi Jackie welcomed more than 250 people to Judaism and our communities.



In October we held our first Reform Judaism Shabbat, a chance for our communities to join Jews across the country in celebrating Shabbat. The weekend was enhanced with innovative educational materials from Reform Judaism.



Following a very well attended emergency meeting on the refugee crisis, we appointed a Refugee Response Coordinator to support Reform communities in their excellent work, co-ordinate all efforts, partner with existing campaigns and to introduce their initiatives to communities. This is the first time a UK synagogue movement has appointed someone to coordinate a response to a crisis of this nature.



We have established a Community Development Fund that will allow us to financially support community initiatives sharing new and creative best practice to the benefit all of our members. There are now 6 communities working on exciting projects as a result of this.

In November we partnered with *Yad Vashem* for a challenging and stimulating Holocaust education seminar, just one of a number of enriching educational events and initiatives through the year.

The public profile of Reform Judaism continues to grow with expanding media coverage; in the

past year over 60 individual rabbis, cantors and lay members have written pieces for the media or appeared in broadcasts. Increasingly, the Jewish voice in broadcast media is a positive and engaging Reform voice. Rabbi Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism is a strong voice for the movement and our values in wider society. In 2015 she provided a Reform Jewish response to acts of terrorism around the world, used her experience of meeting refugees in Calais to talk with authority about the crisis, and was published arguing against boycotts of Israel.

### **Martin Dix, Movement for Reform Judaism**

## **Leeds Jewish Representative Council**

Sinai Synagogue, as a Designated Organisation in common with other Leeds synagogues, has three representatives on the Council. In that role we try to influence decisions that affect Sinai whenever we can. Our involvement ranges from attending Council and other meetings together with participation in the Leeds Jewish Interfaith Network where our member Keith Ackerman has played a leading role over a number of years as well as acting an Executive member of the LJRC.

In the past we have encouraged the President of the Rep Council to apply to join the Jewish Leadership Council which represents the Chairs and Presidents of most leading Jewish organisations in the UK. We have also developed excellent relationships with the Rep Council's Executive Director Susie Gordon (who promotes Sinai activities through the LJRC website & newsletter) and the Programme Director Ann Dewar.

Currently we are trying to deal with an anomaly in the Leeds Jewish community where death notices from the three Orthodox synagogues are sent to our Administrator and distributed to our members, but where the other synagogues do not reciprocate. This has led to some sadness amongst the wider Jewish community when they would have wanted to attend a Sinai member's *levayah* (funeral) or *shiva* (prayers) but were not aware of this in time.

### **Dolf Mogendorff, Sinai Company Secretary**

## **Board of Deputies of British Jews (BoD)**

The BoD continues to consider some of the most pressing issues affecting the UK Jewish Community (UKJC), for example the effect that anti-Israel prejudice has on Jews across the UK. The BoD has adopted strategies on campus extremism, the UKJC's relationship with various religious groups, specific medical issues and much more. In each case the BOD has ensured that representations were made on behalf of the UKJC at every opportunity. Here are some selected topics dealt with during 2015/16.

*President's Pre-Election Statement, May 2015:* Outgoing president, Vivian Wineman, reviewed developments during his term of office, making particular reference to the live streaming facility for broadcasting proceedings to non-members and speaking highly of the contribution of Laura Marks, a reform deputy, for her work on community issues. He identified the need to defend *shechitah* (ritual killing), to pursue interfaith activity and to monitor curricula in Jewish schools.

*Election Results, June 2015:* Jonathan Arkush, an eminent barrister was elected President, defeating two other contestants, Alex Brummer and Laura Marks. Richard Verber became Senior Vice

President and also Chair of the International Division onto which, one of your own deputies, Marilyn Trovato was elected. The new President has broken with tradition by declining the Chairmanship of the Jewish Leadership Council, declaring that his principal responsibility was to the BoD.

*Anti-Israel Boycott and Campus Issues:* The BoD has noted with satisfaction the recent Government statement to legislate against boycotts of Israeli goods, speakers and technology. Labour party contacts have been lobbied to address anti-Israel and anti-semitic bigotry on the part of the Oxford University Labour Club. The BoD responded strongly to the National Union of Students' declaration of support for an anti-Israel boycott in June.

*The Middle East:* The BoD President was included in a delegation of UK Jews, meeting President Putin in January, the purpose was to express concerns over threats to Israel arising from Russian action in Syria (*Hezbollah* acquiring Russian weaponry and so on).

*Labour Party:* The President's and BOD's Chief Executive recent meeting with Jeremy Corbyn was inconclusive in relation to his previous contacts with anti-semitic elements and his support for anti-Israel boycotts.

*Gender Equality:* In March 2015 the BOD launched the Gender Equality Plan to help promote the attainment of senior positions by women in community organisations.

*Procedural Changes:* A number of changes were implemented during the year, notably a restriction of 2.5 minutes to deputies' speeches in plenary meetings. Also the Executive have recognised the need for additional representation by organisations as opposed to synagogues.

*Anti-Semitism in the UK:* Scottish deputies have been addressing concerns over levels of anti-semitism in their constituencies; meetings held with senior police officers, SNP representatives and the Scottish Office. In July the BOD and the Community Security Trust launched a day of action in Golders Green, responding to a far right anti-semitic demonstration held on the previous day.

*Further information:* Shortage of space means that the items are briefly noted and many topics not included. For clarification on any particular point, I or my co-Deputy Nick Chapler-Smyth will be delighted to fill in the gaps. If any Sinai member wishes me to raise a point at a BoD plenary, just get in touch with me via the Sinai office.

**Marilyn Trovato, Sinai Deputy**

## ***Tefillah activity***

### **Senior Rabbi's Report**

At the time of compiling this report, Rabbi Ian Morris is taking a well-deserved three-month Sabbatical - he and his family wish all members well in the coming year.



## Assistant Rabbi's Report

Over the last year, I've been privileged to guide the community in some changes. Change can be both difficult and necessary: those things are not mutually exclusive. Acknowledging that we may have to tinker with our beloved community in order to safeguard its long-term continuity is important. In an age of increased secularisation and assimilation, Jewish communities can no longer rely on communal solidarity, loyalty towards the tradition or a 'captive audience'. We no longer live in a time where Jewish affiliation is a given. Rather, it is up to all of us who cherish our *kehillah kedoshah*, our sacred community, to make a compelling case on why being involved in Sinai is worthwhile, personally enriching and transformative.

This past year, as the Assistant Rabbi, I've tried to help create a personally enriching and transformative Jewish experience through the values and vision of the congregation.

*Tefillah* (learning): My work with services continues to build on what I sought out to accomplish the year before. I lead both the traditional services according to Sinai's *minhagim* (customs) as well as establishing a tradition of fortnightly innovative, musical Friday night services. These alternate between intimate, small services allowing for reflection and larger services to coincide with a *Chavurah* supper. Services are as much



about interpersonal connection as they are about spirituality and liturgy. I also encourage learning and questioning during 'traditional' services, whether it is through a study passage, a *parashah* (Torah portion) discussion, a sermon or a participatory service.

*Kehillah Kedoshah*: Sacred community is a varied and broad category. I see my remit as Assistant Rabbi as a 'relater and communicator': building connections between people is the cement that holds our communal edifice together. I strive to make time for each individual, both members of Sinai (who I serve first and foremost) and non-members. The power of personal engagement and conversation is not to be underestimated and some of my most valuable work is done when meeting people in my office, at *Kiddushim* and networking in the larger community.

Within Sinai, I have launched the Shabbat Hospitality initiative as a way to foster a culture of hosting within our own community. People can sign up through slips whether they want to host or be hosted. Pastoral care, home and hospital visits are a continued priority through my effective liaison with the Welfare Portfolio holders. I have also continued with outreach, partially through Social Media and partially face-to-face, often liaising with Susie Gordon, the Leeds Jewish Community Development Worker. Creating a culture of welcoming has led to a moderate increase in our membership. Including the Introduction to Judaism students more consciously in our congregational life has led to greater participation and integration.

On a larger, Leeds-wide Jewish community basis, my continued participation in local media (Jcom Radio, JLife magazine) as well as events (*Limmud*, *Mitzvah Day*) and institutions (The Zone Youth Centre, Donisthorpe Hall Home for the Elderly) has allowed us to raise our profile as a synagogue. My interfaith work has allowed me to build valuable connections with mosques, gurdwaras and churches. Many of these connections proved fruitful for my Leeds Citizens and I am proud to report that a team of dedicated Sinai volunteers has taken

over Sinai Synagogue's affiliation with Leeds Citizens enthusiastically. Finally, I've cultivated relationships with the wider Reform Jewish community, being an active participant, teacher and service leader at *Chagigah*, Northern *Chagigah* and the *Beit Din* weekend.

*Limmud*: I have continued to drive my support for adult and children's education at Sinai, be it through the annual Communal Seder, ShabbaTots, the Introduction to Judaism and Thursday Workshop (*B'nei Mitzvah*), Study Lunches, the Marriage and Relationship course (born out of scoping out a communal need) or even participating in the Judaism through Cookery course ran by the Director of Education. The Director of Education and I have frequent meetings in which we strategise over programming for Festivals, Shabbat and other occasions and I have been more involved in Religion School on the back of that.

However, there is more to learning than just formal learning. Informal learning happens most meaningfully during conversations with the congregation; where people feel I am approachable enough to come to me with questions, topics of interest and even book recommendations. An important aspect of my rabbinate is to be an open-minded and warm-hearted resource for people on their Jewish journeys, whether it's conversion, navigating an intermarriage or wanting to do some learning to accommodate observance or spiritual and existential interests.

*Tikkun Olam* is what Sinai Synagogue excels at and it makes me immensely proud to be part of a community that values refugee support so highly, as well as supporting the North Leeds Food Bank, raising money through the High Holy Day appeal and now being part of Leeds Citizens. Our many initiatives in which I've partaken have not only delivered in helping the target groups we set out to help but has also brought our own community together. It is through what we do for others that we find value in our Jewish selves. I look forward to continued involvement.

This 2015 report is far from conclusive but seeks to give the congregation a 'taster' of some of my duties, apart from the regular rabbinic duties I engage in. An overarching theme is the theme of building trust, friendship, relationship and inclusivity. Only then can we have some of the 'hard and necessary' conversations around change. I have worked closely with the Strategic Development Group to identify what areas may need change and how we can (re)invigorate congregational life. As always, I am not only open to your ideas but I actively welcome them: come and talk to me, schedule in an appointment, scout me out after services or sit down with a cup of tea and some learning or engaging conversation. I'm here—for you, for the congregation and for our beautiful Reform Jewish heritage. Even through change, we have the vision, the gifts and the drive to rise to the challenge. Living Judaism—that's what we are and that's what we live.

**Esther Hugenholtz, Assistant Rabbi**

## **Services, rituals and wardens**

The past year has seen many *simchas* at Sinai ranging from *bar/bat mitzvah* celebrations to engagements, weddings and baby naming ceremonies – may the *simchas* continue!





As contained in earlier reports, our Rabbis have sought to provide services to cater to a variety of preferences, with services often running at parallel times in the main sanctuary and in the meeting room. Rabbi Hugenholz regularly holds musical *Kabbalat Shabbatot* which are announced in the newsletter, and in future she plans to hold some explanatory

services. Sinai recently hosted the RSY Youth weekend when the youth leaders led the service and an alternative service took place in the meeting room.

At the time of writing this report, one of our stalwart team of wardens, Carol Adams, has been putting together a list of lay leaders to cover several services over the next three months while Rabbi Morris is on sabbatical and Rabbi Hugenholz is holding the rabbinical fort. She is employed for 80% of the working week and cannot feasibly cover all the activities usually shared between two rabbis. We have many able and willing congregants who, I am sure, will help us to bridge the gaps as needed, as has been the case in the past. Additionally, over the last few months, several members have chosen to read or *leyn* (chant) a *parasha* (Torah portion) at Shabbat services. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to do this in an egalitarian community and it can only be a positive move to increase congregational participation in the services. If you are interested in reading a particular *parasha* please contact Sally Raanan (who has the list of readers) or me.

Looking back at the High Holy Days 2015, Sinai once again hired a marquee to provide space for family services. The *sukkah* decorating was once more blessed with fine weather and the *sukkah* looked its usual attractive self but we were informed by Ken Ellis that it had seen its last year of use. Ken, together with our caretaker Andy, has kindly built a new frame which he is confident will be durable and long-lived. This was my first year of being directly involved in the High Holy Days preparations and I can say that there is really a long “to do” list. Many thanks to my fellow board members (see Anna Dyson – right) for helping to organise this work. From silver cleaning to curtain changing, setting the scrolls, designing the High Holy Day tickets, allocating honours .... the list goes on. It is a huge job which can only be done with communal effort so thanks to everyone who participated in the preparations and not forgetting the sterling job done by the wardens in services and the voices of the choir.



I now look forward to what the spring months will bring in the form of member-led services and to welcoming Rabbi Morris back in May.

## **Janet Narodetsky, Services and Rituals portfolio**

### ***Chevrah Kadisha***

The *Chevrah Kadisha* (Holy Society) continues to work quietly performing a very important *mitzvah* for the community, preparing bodies for burial in keeping with our Jewish tradition. There is an able team of women led by Maxine Brown who we can call on – especially during the day and during the dark winter months. We do of course also have a men’s *Chevrah Kadisha*. If anybody, male or female, feels that they could contribute to this role, then please contact the office for further details.

## **Kiddushim**

A regular team of volunteers performs this key part of our community *Tefilla* activity, ably lead by Sally Brown. Aside from the regular weekly provision, they have been called upon to provide additional spreads to coincide with life-cycle events ranging from *Bnei Mitzvah* to anniversary celebrations, alongside special events such as the summertime Rainbow Jews exhibition. We thank them for their support. If you would like to sponsor your own *kiddush* please contact the office for further information.

## **LIMMUD**



*Becky Teiger – Education and Youth*



*Gwynneth Lewis – Director of Education*

## **Early Years**

In the early part of 2015 we employed Lucy Prevezer, a Leeds University student, as our Early Years Co-ordinator, who brought great energy and enthusiasm to the role. Unfortunately, her lecture timetable at university changed and she was no longer able to facilitate Friday morning ShabbaTots, so sadly had to step away from the role. After temporary support from Gavi Morris, before she left to go travelling, from Passover onwards, we have relied on volunteers, especially Naomi Goldman, who has worked so hard to keep the group running. This has led to a reduction in the overall provision for Early Years, and the current provision centres around ShabbaTots and festivals. We know that the families who access our early years provision would be really sad if our provision could not continue and are actively searching for the right person to step up and reinvigorate our early years activities – do please get in touch if you know of anyone who might be interested, or if you could spare a few hours one Friday to help out!

## **Religion School and Makpetzah**

There were twenty children registered for Religion School in 2015 and seventeen in *Makpetzah*, our *B'nei Mitzvah* programme, with eight children becoming *Bar or Bat Mitzvah* during the year. Our young teachers and assistants continue to offer weekly Hebrew and Jewish Studies sessions, along with a revamped mini *shacharit* service, following input and support from Rabbi Hugenholtz. Organised teacher training sessions took place each term, and we were fortunate enough to be able to invite The Judith Trust, Rabbi Janie Grackin, and Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers to provide sessions on various subjects, as well as in-house training by experienced classroom teachers.

The *Chai B'nei Mitzvah* curriculum, introduced last year, is becoming embedded and additional education sessions by Sinai's Youth Worker continue to supplement young people's understanding of, and attendance at, the *shacharit* service. The *Makpetzah* weekend, led by Sinai's Youth Worker, took place in October, with a change of venue from Herd Farm, Leeds, to Sherwood Forest.



## Youth Provision

Our Youth Worker Rhiannon organised and led two intergenerational services in the main sanctuary as well as the family services for both *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*. Following the *Yom Kippur* Family Service, activities for all children were offered during the afternoon session..

RSY's summer camp moved over the Pennines to Manchester this year, so to ensure our Leeds children didn't miss out, Rhiannon organised and led a Day Camp at Sinai, during the summer holidays, which was extremely well attended, with fifteen children on each day. She also facilitated and led an overnight RSY-Netzer Shabbaton at Sinai, which was very well attended by children from communities right across the north of England. It coincided with the monthly *Chavurah* supper, which allowed the community a chance to pick up some of the youngsters *ruach* (spirit) especially during *bensching* (grace after meals)!

Once again, Rhiannon facilitated the writing and organisation of Sinai's entry into the RSY-Netzer national Purim Spiel Competition. She organised rehearsals, props and costumes, including a sleepover for those involved, and liaised with The Zone to use their filming facilities to enable those of Sinai's youth who could not travel to Brighton to be able to take part in the competition. Together with the Director of Education, she also organised the Oy Factor, Sinai's talent show, and hosted the evening, as well as taking part in a variety of Sinai communal events including *Mitzvah* Day, the *Tu B'Shvat* Community Day, Sinai's *Chanukah* and *Purim* parties, and hosting primary school visits to Sinai.

## Adult Education

There were a number of adult learning opportunities organised throughout 2015:

- Hebrew for Beginners: two eight week programmes, each with eight participants.
- Study Lunches: 10 in total covering a variety of subjects and learning methods, led by both Rabbis, as well as by members of Sinai with particular interests.
- One-off talks: covering subjects such as the Holocaust, the History of Jews in the UK and the work of the charity Rene Cassin. Sinai also hosted the work of sculptor Doug James, whose work relates to the massacre of Jews in York, and provided the backdrop for the talk by Michael Barrie on the History of Jews in the UK.
- Shavuot Study
- Judaism Through Cooking: beginning in May, seven sessions took place throughout 2015 and have continued into 2016. These popular sessions take Jewish recipes for festival cooking, (*see Chanukah latkes below*) as well as Jewish regional cooking, and use them as a vehicle to discuss Jewish history and aspects of Judaism in a relaxed atmosphere.



## Family Events

The Director of Education has organised and facilitated a variety of events, including *Mitzvah* Day – together with Rabbi Hugenholtz and Susie Gordon (LJRC), and others based around the Jewish calendar, such as the *Tu B'Shvat* community day, *Shavuot* tea and the *Purim* and *Chanukah* parties, with activities for early years and primary aged children. Sinai also welcomed Rabbi Janie Grackin, American Rabbi and educator, in June, when she led a family service and afterwards ran a workshop for the Religion School teachers.



## School Visit Hosting

The last year has seen Sinai host 32 schools, reaching 1,500 children and over 200 adults from a variety of communities and faiths from all over Yorkshire. The Director of Education also visited four schools as part of Sinai's outreach/interfaith programme. Special thanks must be given to Michael Barrie who is stepping back from hosting school visits, after eight and a half years of tireless support, sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm with a total of 6,847 pupils and 958 adults! We are actively working to find a team of volunteers to step up to this role – please do let us know if you would be interested in this opportunity.

**Rebecca Teiger (Education Strategy Portfolio) and Gwynneth Lewis (Director of Education)**

## TIKKUN OLAM – REPAIR OF THE WORLD

### Social Action



As one of our core values, social action is at the heart of Sinai Synagogue. Although Sinai members continue quietly to get on with social action projects individually as well as communally, when a member has a particular interest or passion and wants to involve other members of the community, we are happy to help and support. As



an example, early in 2015, one of our members asked for help in bringing the Rainbow Jews Exhibition to Sinai. This oral and visual exhibition documents the contribution of lesbian, gay, bi and transsexual Jews over the past 50 years. Together we planned to launch the exhibition at Sinai over the weekend of 31st July 2015, the weekend of Leeds Pride. The result was two beautiful, themed services led by Rabbi Hugenholtz, with contributions from Sinai members; a joyous and delicious *Chavurah* supper at which the curator of the exhibition Surat Kahn was a guest speaker and a celebration *Kiddush* with speeches from MPs, councillors and one of our own members; entertainment from the Deep C Divas, a lesbian *a capella* singing group and, most importantly, a welcome from Sinai to people from Leeds and further afield who wanted to celebrate diversity. The praise and thanks from Sinai members and from people who had never been to a synagogue, or had felt they would not be welcome in a synagogue, confirmed the value of the project. The event was so well received that we intend to mark Pride in 2016 in some, perhaps less high profile, but equally welcoming way. We are planning as this report goes to press.

*Sukkot* lent the opportunity to act to help people in need of shelter. The plan was to hold a knitting circle in the Sukkah knitting squares to make up into blankets. At around that time a Sinai member asked for help to host a Macmillan coffee morning. So we decided to combine this with the 'Knitathon' and make the last day of *Sukkot* a day of action. We held a Macmillan coffee morning and afternoon tea; knitted throughout the day and asked for donations of toiletries and food to give to people who need such items. The event had limited success. Around £80.00 was raised for Macmillan – and it was very cold knitting in the *Sukkah*. It was



perhaps over ambitious to attempt to combine events. However, the mention of knitting sparked a new enthusiasm and so the Sinai Knitting Circle was reborn. This group continues to meet in members' homes every fortnight and has brought together a diverse group of women (men welcome) who exemplify the cliché 'knit and natter'. And the blankets? We ended up with seven of various size, colour (and shape!) which were donated to a hostel for asylum-seeking women and infants and to St. Georges Crypt for homeless men.

As we all know, in the summer of 2015, the reports of refugees fleeing Syria and other conflict zones hit the press. Many Sinai members independently volunteered with local refugee organisations and also donated clothes and bedding to charities supporting refugees at home and abroad. Several Sinai members asked what we, as a community, could do to help. A meeting of interested people agreed to work with WYDAN (West Yorkshire Destitute Asylum Network) on their project to provide a winter shelter. We established a small steering group which recruited over forty volunteers from Sinai and some additional friends and relatives. The volunteers each had a role in planning meals, friendship and welcome for up to 10 men who would be offered accommodation in venues around Leeds during the winter months. What more proof is needed that Sinai recognises that "It was Judaism that taught the world that God is the embodiment of the ethical and that we serve God not just through prayer and ritual but in the way we behave towards our fellow human beings"? (the Movement for Reform Judaism)

We planned to hold four activities at Sinai to mark Mitzvah Day. However, Susie Gordon Community Development Executive with the Leeds Jewish Representative Council and Sinai's Rabbi Hugenholtz



had bigger ideas. They invited us to join them at the Zone where they were hosting the Jewish Community's Mitzvah day activities. Sinai members co-ordinated knitting and sewing our squares for blankets; wrapping gifts for children and Palm Cove Refuge; collecting toiletries as part of Sinai's BOGO (buy one give one) appeal for donations to asylum seekers and refugees and food items for North Leeds Food bank. For their efforts, Susie and Rabbi Hugenholtz won a well-deserved national Mitzvah Day Award. BOGO donations and the foodbank collections continue at Sinai and people just keep on giving.

Social action includes donating money and items as well as volunteering time. This year, the Sinai High Holy day appeal raised money for Carers Leeds, Save a Child's Heart, Speak With IT, Chai Cancer Care (Leeds Branch) as well as the Movement for Reform Judaism/New Israel Fund appeal. Nearly £10,000 was raised in total. This was slightly lower than in recent years. The call for financial donations to so many causes is increasing year on year. We know that everyone gives as generously as they can but are aware that we don't always manage to promote the appeal sufficiently. This year our member Tess Ackerman is co-ordinating a group which will plan the appeal and aim to engage even more of our members.

We attempt to open our social action activities to non- members. Sadly, in the current climate there are security restrictions as to how widely we can publicise events and extend invitations. Our security team, supported by the Community Security Trust provide help and support, but the reality is that to extend unlimited, unrestricted invitations to non- Sinai members would involve a level of organisation and scrutiny which we do not have the capacity to provide. We can only hope that a time will come when such restrictions need no longer be imposed.

I started this report by acknowledging how many Sinai members are independently involved in social action. Long will that continue and be celebrated. There is also a place for community social action. If you have a social action initiative or idea about which you are passionate and would like to involve the community or have help developing, please email to [sanctuary@sinaisynagogue.org.uk](mailto:sanctuary@sinaisynagogue.org.uk). or telephone the office and I will contact you. The Rainbow Jews Exhibition and celebrations and the Macmillan coffee morning are just two examples of how your idea can become Sinai's social action.

## Pippa Brook, Social Action Portfolio Holder

[Note: a copy of the Sinai Social Action Strategy is available on request from the sanctuary email address above.]

## Welfare Report

Connexions, your welfare team, has continued to support members during 2015 as far as we are able to do so. We have organized a monthly three-course lunch for several years, catered by Liz and Bob Jacoby until May 2015. Thanks to them both for their years of support. The lunches, open to all members and friends, are now catered in-house by a group of volunteers. Those attending the Chanukah lunch enjoyed singing led by Joan and Mike Stevens, Helen Arion, and Lydia Cohen. Many thanks are due to them for donating their time and for joining us for the lunch.

Our annual garden party was hosted this year by Vivienne and Melvyn Mountain. Participants enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea and the pleasure, again in beautiful weather, of the Mountains' magical garden.

The pre-Pesach and High Holydays phone calls continue. As a result, as we wrote last year, the decision was made to re-institute a community *Seder* at Sinai. Over 80 people attended the 2015 *Seder*, slightly fewer than in 2014 due to the beginning of Pesach coinciding with a bank holiday. At the time of writing plans are well advanced for the 2016 *Seder*.

It has been possible to arrange accommodation for *Seder* night and over *Yom Kippur* for some members who have a long distance to travel and who benefit from taking advantage of the offer.



We continue to mark 'significant' birthdays and life cycle events by sending appropriate greetings cards.



Together with both of our Rabbis, we perform some of the basic *mitzvot* that Jewish life requires: we visit the sick in hospital and at home (*bikkur cholim*); we attend funerals (*levayot*); and we console those who mourn by attending *shiva* services and making *shiva* visits. We also phone members, and give lifts to services and events when we are able to do so. As those of you have needed any of this appreciate, this is important work. Of course, all these activities depend totally on volunteers. Can you join us?

And now a plea – we want all of you and those you know to stay healthy! But if you know of someone who needs a visit, please tell us! We can't visit if we don't know! We would like to extend our activities to increasing home hospitality for *Shabbatot* and festivals, visiting more members regularly, and otherwise supporting our community. Can you donate some of your time? A few minutes a month would mean that more members can be visited or phoned; a bit more of your time would mean you could join the hospital and home visiting team. We're friendly, and we need you!



Over a hundred members have been involved with one or another aspect of welfare this year, from making the pre-Pesach and High Holydays phone calls to helping with the *Seder*, offering hospitality, and all other activities. Many thanks are due to all of you for volunteering – none of our activities could happen without you. You are greatly appreciated!

Liz Monaghan joined Sinai's Board at the 2015 AGM and, since then, Liz and Val, with a great deal of support from Rabbi

Hugenholtz, have been working together to coordinate the activities. An addition to our work has been formulating policies. Liz has devised a volunteer policy and a vulnerable adults policy, both of which have led to new procedures, not least the development of an induction process and the requirement for DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service, formerly CRB), checks for all our volunteers who carry out individual visits or give lifts (ongoing). DBS certificates are a legal requirement. Obtaining them is a simple process, which Heidi, our administrator, administers.

We are delighted that, though some of the longer standing members of Connexions can no longer do as much as they would like to, we have several new volunteers. Would you like to join the team? Anything from a few minutes to several hours' availability would be very helpful. Please do contact us by emailing [connexions@sinaisynagogue.org.uk](mailto:connexions@sinaisynagogue.org.uk) or leaving a message for us at Sinai's office if you would like to know more. Many, many thanks to all who give their time to supporting our members – any time you can give is valuable.

**Val Mogendorff and Liz Monaghan, Welfare portfolio team**

## Security

Throughout 2015 and in to the new year, our community continued to find itself in challenging times. Finding the balance of maintaining and encouraging our community's 'normal' activities within a welcoming, safe and secure environment continues to be our Security Team's focus.



As I have said before, security is the responsibility of every single member of Sinai and not just those that volunteer their time to cover duties. We can all do our bit and play our respective parts to ensure the continued safety of our members and guests, who confidently go about their business under the assurance that we practise the true sense of *Keruv* (inclusion) and *Tikkun Olam* (healing the world). For inspiration on putting others first, look to

Lassana Bathily, the Malian-born shop assistant, hailed a hero in the hostage crisis at the Parisian kosher supermarket. He took responsibility and stepped up without request to hide hostages in the store's basement and send an alert to call the police. A low moment in 2015 was the Copenhagen murder of Dan Uzan, who had been on volunteer security duty while a *bat mitzvah* party was taking place at the city's main synagogue. This brought home in no uncertain terms the genuine dangers of what our volunteers at home in the UK and throughout mainland Europe face when volunteering to secure our communities. Had it not been for Dan's bravery and commitment the losses would have been significantly worse. MHRIP.

On a positive note, over the last year we have worked to refine and improve all of our procedures. This is an ongoing and never-ending project as we take advice and learning from professional and communal bodies internationally, working with all groups to adapt to the many uses of our building. We continue to see greater communication and commitment from the majority of those on rota, again witnessing a full and complete turnout of the Sinai Security Team for our High Holy Days. I am relieved and delighted that the operation went quietly. A quiet and boring duty is a safe one.

I ask that our community continues to support and value all those members of both Sinai's own security team and the CST (Community Security Trust). Both organisations volunteer, often at unsociable hours in poor weather, to promote a safe environment for our wonderful community. It is thanks to their hard work and dedication that we are able to accommodate the variety of activities and experiences for our members and the wider Jewish community in a safe and secure manner -

something that we should never take for granted. To join the Sinai Security Team, call the office and pledge your support or email [security@sinaisynagogue.org.uk](mailto:security@sinaisynagogue.org.uk).

**Emma Cohen, Security Portfolio**

## Community activities

### Gardening

Every effort has been made to keep our gardens, hedges, trees and car park in a clean and orderly state throughout the past twelve months, and I trust this meets the approval of our members. Some of you might wonder why I include the car park. For some years now this large area has been under severe attack by moss, which – if left alone – would have by now destroyed the whole tarmacked area, resulting in costly resurfacing. By treating the whole area yearly, taking several days, we have been able to keep the moss in check and avoid this very large expense.

This year it has become necessary to replace the *sukkah*, the timbers of which have been patched up year after year until now this is no longer possible. At the time of writing, our caretaker Andy and I have the construction of the new, slightly larger and stronger *sukkah* well in hand and should be finished shortly. The new structure has been designed in sections and is bolted together for ease of annual building and dismantling. The timbers are all oil-impregnated and should give us many years of trouble-free use.

**Ken Ellis, Sinai gardener**

*Note from Chair: We normally thank Ken Ellis for his sterling work in the gardens, and his continually prize winning roses, however this year, I would like instead to recognise the hours of effort he has put in to building us a new Sukkah. It is a true work of craftsmanship, which will benefit the community for many years to come.*



### Communications and Visual Identity Report

Last year we didn't have a Communications portfolio holder on Board... currently Val Mogendorff and Simon Marcus are sharing some of the workload – and there is much to do!

#### The Leeds Jewish Community's Communer App

We have a long to-do list, and one potentially exciting development in this area is Sinai's trialling of the Communer App. A large proportion of other synagogues and Jewish organisations are also adopting Communer, with Leeds acting as a pilot city for this community communication tool. Though hard to describe within the confines of a short report, it can be summarised as a potentially great solution to Sinai's ability to communicate efficiently and effectively with members and non-members throughout the Jewish community who have access to smart phones or portable tablet devices. One example is the real possibility of supplementing the paper-based Sinai Community Diary with an online version and, ultimately, the replacement of all Sinai emails and the weekly electronic newsletter with messages direct to your phone or tablet... and with you choosing which information you wish to receive. If you would like to read more about the Communer app, go to: <http://communer.co.uk>.





We are starting to test this new app and you will soon have the opportunity to download it for free and give us your own feedback. We are also aware that we still need to consider the communication needs of those of us without smartphones or tablets. In the meantime, we are using email and social media to communicate with our community; we have 192 people within the Sinai Community Facebook Group and 56 with the Sinai Early Years Facebook Group. Please let us know if you want to be added, for a more interactive way of being involved with our community and finding out what's on.

### **Sinai Chronicle, paper newsletters and press releases**

The Sinai Chronicle continues to be published four times a year. It is now making a small profit and is looking for more advertising to pay for the magazine to be printed in full colour at some point in the future. Please send in contributions to the Chronicle by email to [chronicle@sinaisynagogue.org.uk](mailto:chronicle@sinaisynagogue.org.uk) or by post to Sinai's office so that the interests and views of the whole Sinai community are reflected. We have re-instituted paper newsletters for those members who do not have internet access. These are sent out several times a year, supplementing information in the Chronicle.

Press releases, with photographs, are distributed to the Jewish press and to local magazines such as JLife both before and after Sinai events.

### **Visual Identity**

Visual Identity touches most aspects of Sinai life and Sinai's vision. It encompasses how we want to be seen and how we can assist members and a wider audience. The new Sinai logo is now fully embedded. Following a recommendation to help our visually impaired members and visitors, the external hand rails have now been painted in Sinai Blue, which is more easily visible at night when viewed against the stonework, compared with the previous brown finish. We have also started the process of replacing halogen lights throughout the building to create brighter, more welcoming spaces as well as saving on the cost of the all-too-frequent replacement of bulbs and reducing our energy costs.



### **Video Streaming**

The video streaming team is continuing to test and prepare for the introduction of streaming synagogue services over the internet, mainly for occasional services, which will bring us in line with many other congregations in the Reform Movement. One of the key drivers is to allow people who wouldn't otherwise be able to access services.

### **Can you help?**

We are always on the lookout for Sinai people with design skills (eg those who can put a nice poster together or help re-design our rather tired-looking website) to help us with future visual identity projects, big and small. Please contact us via [visualidentity@sinaisynagogue.org.uk](mailto:visualidentity@sinaisynagogue.org.uk) or via Sinai's office.

**Simon Marcus & Val Mogendorff, Communications and visual identity portfolio**

### **Sinai Knitting Circle**

Pippa Brook has covered the origins of this group in her social Action report, this is to add that this group continues to meet and knit 'for pleasure' on a fortnightly basis in members'

homes. If you would like to be part of this regular group (and, yes, that includes men too!) to share ideas, skills or just generally chat about the world about us, see [knitting@sinaisynagogue.co.uk](mailto:knitting@sinaisynagogue.co.uk) for information or check the newsletter for knitting dates.



## Embroidery Group

The highlight of this year's activities has been the production of a new wall hanging, currently in the meeting room, [see front cover] which attempts a visual depiction of "relational Judaism", how we inter-relate and touch each other with our stories. New enthusiasts are always welcome as we decide how to progress on our next project.

## Maxine Brown

## Book Group

Our small group of dedicated readers met regularly throughout the year at Sinai, to review our responses to the books selected. We developed a schedule across ten meetings, which covered a range of works, old and modern, fiction and fact. The list for the past year comprised:

- Ari Shavit: *My Promised Land* : A personal account of the building of the State of Israel.
- Michel Laub: *Diary of the Fall*: A teenage Brazilian boy coming to terms with his family's past.
- Naomi Alderman: *Disobedience*. Story of a struggling woman in a Hendon orthodox community .
- Ben Elton: *Two Brothers*. Growing up in pre-war Germany during the rise of the Nazis.
- David Vogel: *Married Life*. A portrait of a doomed marriage and a doomed city. Set in 1929 Vienna.
- Linda Grant: *Upstairs at the Party* : the highly acclaimed latest novel from this writer detailing the life and times of a student in the late 1960s.
- David Bezmozgys: *The Betrayers*. An Israeli returns to Crimea, with flashbacks to earlier times.
- Francesca Segal: *The Innocents*. Winner of the Costa first novel award 2012 and longlisted for the women's prize for fiction 2013
- Saul Bellow: *Herzog*. We returned to this author to consider this classic US novel.

Most of these works were well received and discussed in detail. Reading is personal and not everyone will enjoy the same themes. The discussion allows us to revisit and share our own personal stories in the context of the life and times of the books' protagonists, surely a relevant contribution to Sinai's pursuit of 'Relational Judaism'. We continue into 2016, advertising regularly in the newsletter, and would welcome new readers and suggestions for future works.



### .... and library news

The relocated library in the Malcolm Featherman Hall continues to be a popular resource for members and visitors alike and we are refreshing our shelves on a regular basis. New additions are always welcome, if you can arrange to leave these in the office ready for sorting and shelving. Readers are encouraged to

make use of the extensive collection of reference texts, historical themes, fiction, biographies, Israel, biblical tales, general literature – indeed all things Jewish.

**Barbara Levy, Hon Sec and Book Group Convenor**

## **Chavurah suppers**

Sinai's *chavurah* suppers (communal meals) have become the opportunity for new or potential members and visitors to get to know the community in an informal, welcoming setting and for regular members to meet and eat together once a month on a Friday night. The meals are cooked by teams of volunteers and can range from simple and nourishing to exotic and enticing. For the last 2 years Petra Mullen has co-ordinated the rota of cooks as well as taking more than her fair share of turns at cooking. We have a small but reliable and capable core of cooks but would also welcome new volunteers to lead or join established teams. All of the team leaders have proved themselves able to produce lovely meals while keeping costs low. We pride ourselves on avoiding waste, with leftovers being packaged up for people to take home, or donated to St. Georges Crypt. There is no charge to diners for the meal but we do welcome donations which help us to maintain our range of community activities.

Most months we have a speaker during the meal. 2015 saw a mix of internal and guest speakers so we were treated to a display of and a chance to join in Israeli dancing, led by Julia Kay; In September Rabbi Hugenholtz helped us to prepare for the High Holy Days and in November gave us a preview of Northern Chagigah (The residential weekend for Movement for Reform Judaism Northern communities); a taste of *Limmud* (conferences which bring together people of all ages and every perspective) was served up by Linda Rosen and Val Mogendorff and our Streaming Team gave a demonstration of how streamed services will look. External speakers included Leeds University students from "Into University" mentoring young people from underprivileged backgrounds to help them better achieve in school; Rabbi Janie Grackin from USA who spoke about intergenerational services and Surat Khan the curator of the Rainbow Jews Exhibition (see the Social Action report). I no longer have to look for speakers as our members approach me with suggestions and make the necessary arrangements – a tribute to the engagement of our members.



The format of the Chavurah suppers had changed little over the past few years and perhaps it's time for a makeover – or more of the same but with some new faces. I'm stepping down from the overall coordination from May 2016 and Petra would like to hand over co-ordinating the rotas (don't worry, she will still be cooking!). If you would like to take on either role or if you are the person to do that makeover, or volunteer to be part of a cooking team, please contact me by email to [supper@sinaisynagogue.org.uk](mailto:supper@sinaisynagogue.org.uk). or leave a message for me with the Sinai office and I will call you.

**Pippa Brook, Coordinator**

## Israeli Dancing - LIDO

Firstly, a huge thanks to the generous Sinai community members who support us in very many ways.

Getting a new Liverpool dance group underway has been one of the highlights of LIDO - Leeds Israeli Dance Organisation's work this year, along with some Newcastle workshops and our first *bat mitzvah* in Leeds (outside of our own "family"!) Manchester classes are also growing, so Northern Israeli dance – with a key hub at Sinai – has increasing strength! This is on top of the regular Wednesday classes at Sinai, a New Year party and Hora Derbyshire weekend.

We are in conversations with various Leeds Jewish community organisations to succession plan. So, we are hunting hard for the young dancers of the future. To this end we have already successfully begun crowdfunding for young *shalichim* (leaders) who will set up workshops and classes in Leeds and other Northern cities. We've identified youngsters who will be our first cohort of trainees for a three-year project.

Please take a look at the Hora Derbyshire FaceBook page where we publicise a great deal of what we do. If you would like to see our occasional newsletters, highlighting events across Leeds, the UK and beyond, please contact me.

**Julia Castle, LIDO organiser**

## OTHER REPORTS

### Membership Treasurer's Report



I take my figures from the annual return that Sinai makes every year to the MRJ. We started the year with a membership figure of 571 (including 145 children) plus 34 friends and ended the year with a membership of 568 (including 135 children) plus 38 friends. We welcome unreservedly our 31 new members which includes 7 children. 16 of our new members were previously unaffiliated to any synagogue. This augurs well for the future, as we need more younger members, who are the necessary life-blood of a thriving community. We now have 314 households who have members in Sinai.

We have lost 17 adult members, of whom 9 have died. The remainder either resigned or transferred elsewhere (none were 'lapsed' from membership for non-payment of subscriptions). Looking at the age profile of current members, there are 138 or 32% past their seventieth birthday, a peak of 115 or 27% in their sixties and a slightly larger number of 179 or 42% below the age of 60. It is clear that, in order to thrive we need to recruit more younger members. So there is much work to be done. We don't seem to be able to grow our numbers much through natural increase as there were only five births to current members, 8 *bar/batmitzvahs* during the year and 4 conversions during the year. Of the 135 children in the community, 58 fall between the ages of 5 and 13. I would expect many of the teenagers to attend the Youth movement and keep their allegiance to the community in that way. One child of members has become a member in their own right this year - understandable in these

times where children usually leave Leeds to go to university and very few return here afterwards. The number attending religion classes is no longer a signifier of Jewish commitment as many of the children in our community attend the Jewish schools in Leeds and get their Jewish education there. One of the interesting statistics of Jewish population is that birth rates apart from the *Charedi* groups are below national average figures and Jews generally have longer lives than the average so membership figures have a natural tendency to be concentrated in the older population.

I am sure our Treasurer will give you the figures for membership subscriptions collected – I should perhaps mention that 120 households pay reduced subscriptions (or 38%) which is not out-of-line for most Reform synagogues. We do make every effort to retain members through being sympathetic and giving reductions where members cannot afford the full membership fees. We do ask though for everyone, unless their circumstances are unusually precarious, to pay something towards their membership, including burial fees, to signal their commitment to the community.

This year I thought I would obtain some figures from previous years' membership to show up trends over time. Unsurprisingly given the downward trend of the Leeds Jewish population over the last ten, fifteen, or fifty years (see the Jewish population figures and trends on the Jewish Policy Research website), I note that there were 554 members at the beginning of 2005 (plus 192 children) making a total of 746 members. At the end of 2015, the corresponding figure is 568 or a decline of 24% or around a quarter. The number of households has declined from 400 to 314, a little under a quarter. Which is not surprising given that the Jewish population of Leeds has declined by around 1800 people during a similar period (between censuses of 2001 to 2011, JPR website "Thinning and Thickening" by David Graham). There are now only London and Manchester which have Jewish populations of over 10,000. These figures do not show a smooth transition, but local factors can give an extra number of people leaving in certain years from Sinai. However we need to concentrate our efforts into making our community one that attracts people to join and take an active part.

**Ruth Baumberg - Membership Treasurer**

## **Treasurer's Report**

As usual, the full Treasurer's report is contained in our annual accounts, so please do refer to that for further details.

As any member who has looked at the accounts in any of the last two or three years will recognise, we face challenging times in the near future. When I became Treasurer in 2014 my goal was to change the way Sinai runs its budgeting to ensure all Board members, as Trustees, had a clear and specific interest in the budget. For too long, I believe it had been the preserve of the Treasurer to worry about it. As a result, budget holders have kept a tight rein on their expenditure. We are still drawing down on our reserves in order to keep to the mandates set by the membership, including the benefit of having an additional Rabbi. These reserves will not, of course, last us forever, and the Board has been working on ways in which we can address this challenge.

In fact, I would say to anyone interested in joining the Board at the AGM is that this will be a key part of our work in the next two years. If you believe, as I do, that Sinai has a bright, engaging and relevant future in the Leeds Jewish community, then do seek to join the Board and help us to take the steps to secure this future.



**David Israel, Treasurer**

## **Governance committee**

The Governance Committee exists to ensure that the Rules and Articles of Association are upheld in all aspects of Sinai activity, and in particular advising the Board, the Honorary Secretary and its individual Trustees on matters of good governance, as befitting a large charitable organisation overseen by willing volunteers.

The Committee currently comprises six invited members, most very experienced in Sinai management over the years. Their deliberations are often complex, dealing with questions of interpretation of the Articles or recommending best practice. It met on six occasions in 2015, and covered the build up to, and smooth management of, both the SGM on building development and the AGM, Trustee training items and staff management issues, amongst others. It also provided an occasional minute-taking service for Board meetings.

**Barbara Levy, 2015 Chair of Governance.**

*Editor's note: I wish to thank all contributors to this report for their support and advice in its preparation, and to all members and others in the wider Jewish community in Leeds and nationally for making 2015 the successful year we have seen.*

*Barbara Levy, Hon Secretary.*

## Board portfolios 2015/16

The following alphabetical table shows how our work is shared amongst the various portfolio holders currently serving as Board members (*see photos throughout this report*). The list of activities is not exhaustive. If any member would like to engage with any of these activities in the forthcoming year in any capacity (via Board or otherwise) then do not hesitate to contact Sinai officers or the board members concerned. All skills are welcome, and early induction will be provided.

<p><b>Board administration and external links (Barbara Levy):</b> Prepare and issue Board papers; governance; identifying training requirements; AGM arrangements. Two-way liaison with representative external organisations: eg <i>Rep Council; BoD; MRJ and Northern Network</i>.</p>
<p><b>Welfare (Care and well-being) (Val Mogendorff and Liz Monaghan)</b> facilitating the Connexions group; coordinating pastoral contacts and visits; support of members in need (signposting; recognising “boundaries” and addressing specific individual needs); phone calls to membership at HHD and Pesach.</p>
<p><b>Communications and visual identity (Simon Marcus and Val Mogendorff)</b> Strategic overview; managing communications between Board and community (Newsletter/Chronicle/Facebook group/Annual report etc); how Sinai represents itself externally (press and PR ; advertising events, maintaining web page); service streaming; signage and consistent visual identity; foyer management.</p>
<p><b>Education and Youth (Becky Teiger):</b> all education and youth provision, covering Early Years; religion school; bar/bat mitzvah; adult education and youth clubs; managing library and educational resources.</p>
<p><b>Membership engagement and community development (Keruv) (all Board members)</b> volunteer encouragement; developing and supporting community activities, clubs and groups; encouraging members to arrange and publicise social events, new members integration; chavurah suppers; community week-end.</p>
<p><b>Membership Treasurer (Ruth Baumberg)</b> responsible for matters related to collection and arrears of subscriptions; bursary requests; monitor reduced subscription policy.</p>
<p><b>Security (Emma Cohen)</b> Sinai synagogue and Harehills cemetery facilities.</p>
<p><b>Synagogue services and Ritual (Janet Narodetsky (above) &amp; Anna Dyson)</b> Shabbat and festival services, <i>kashrut; kiddushim; wardens; Chevrah Kaddisha; prayer books; encouraging members to take part in services; Rabbinic support and development. Liaise with communications portfolio on service streaming.</i></p>
<p><b>Social Action (Tikkun Olam/Tzedakah) (Pippa Brook)</b> High Holy Day appeal; charity fundraising and support; Mitzvah Day; social action; campaigning for social justice.</p>