

ק'ק מבקשי צדק ומושבת אמת

**South West Essex
& Settlement
Reform Synagogue**

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Registered Charity Number: 236663

**ANNUAL REPORT
FOR
2018/2019**

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It really has been a year of two halves. A number of members put themselves up for election to Council at the 2018 AGM, who all were united in opposing the measures being proposed in respect of the current rabbinic position, brought about by the loss of income from our departing tenant, Norwood.

Fortunately, at the AGM, proposals were shared that we could sell off or rent out the Community Centre and raise enough money to retain the rabbinic position, but that Officers and Rabbi Lisa had agreed to a reduction to 80% of her hours and a consequential reduction in her salary until this was in place.

We started the year with a series of successful High Holyday services. I would like to thank Rabbi Michael Heilbron for assisting us once again, and are pleased that he has agreed to join us again this year. Last year, there was no second service on Yom Kippur, and the number of attendees justified this. I would also like to thank the choir for their efforts from Selichot through to Simchat Torah, Catering Committee, Lay Readers, Wardens and Shamashim, Security, Stewards, everyone who helped set up for the service and to build and decorate the Sukkah and anyone I might have missed out who made the services such a success. As you can see, it takes teamwork to make a successful event.

A Property Sub-Committee was set up in September, chaired by Gail Klein to look at the various options available to us. Their proposal formed the basis of the January Community Meeting and offered three possibilities – 1) to rent out our facilities (but there had been little interest due to the restrictions on use imposed by Officers); 2) to sell off, say the Community Centre, and live off the income it generated; 3) to sell the whole site and move elsewhere (shared or sole use).

In December, a number of Officers and Council members resigned. In response, the remaining members of Council met, and to ensure the continuity of the synagogue filled the now-vacant Officers' roles. At the same time, other members volunteered to be co-opted onto Council. Fortunately, a Community Meeting had already been scheduled for January, and the new Council was able to gauge members' feelings over the proposed way forward for the site. The meeting gave a clear indication that members did not want to sell the site and move, nor did they want to sell off part of the site, as this would devalue any future sale. Also at this meeting, we were delighted that around 70 people volunteered to help out in one way or another, but we do still need a fund-raising committee who can bring in additional income to boost the synagogue's funds.

Early this year, we were approached by Br3akfree Ltd with regard to renting the Community Centre. They had apparently viewed the site late last year, but had heard nothing back from our agents or ourselves. Although their use of the Community Centre would present us with a number of challenges, including use of the Community Centre by NEMS on Shabbat and other groups during the week, we did come up with a workable solution. We held another successful Community Meeting in May when this solution was endorsed by 90% of the attendees. However, a small number of members are still unhappy with this solution, and have proposed the resolution that is being discussed at the AGM. The lease with Br3akfree was signed in June and this will restore the income lost when Norwood left us last year. The lease only runs till December, so that it will co-terminate with the leases of our other tenants. We can then determine whether we wish to grant them a long-term lease.

I am greatly indebted to all my fellow Officers and Council members who have put in so many hours to ensure the synagogue can once again be on an even keel, financially. I would also like to thank the army of volunteers we now have propping up the organisation side of the synagogue, and of course, many thanks to Deborah and Janine in the office and to our caretaker, Junifer, who have all worked so hard in making sure this machine called SWESRS is well oiled and runs smoothly.

Steve Robbins
Chairman

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

1. Background

On 10th December 2018, a number of Honorary Officers, some members of Council and the President resigned without prior notice and halfway through their term of office. The resignations included that of the Honorary Treasurer. The remaining Honorary Officers and members of Council called an emergency Council meeting and I took over as Honorary Treasurer.

Whilst my background is accountancy, this was a steep learning curve for me in relation to the intricacies of the financial aspect of SWESRS. Although I had been Assistant Honorary Treasurer for the previous six months, it was agreed between my predecessor and me that she would handle the accounts and I would handle other aspects of SWESRS' finances. I have been in post as Honorary Treasurer for six months rather than the full year, and not at all for the accounting period we are considering at the AGM, 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018.

2. Overview of the year

It was a difficult year for SWESRS. Apart from the turbulence of the resignations that I mention above, there was also turmoil regarding the proposed redundancy of the Rabbi and the subsequent reduction in her hours to 80%.

We lost Norwood as a tenant, which had a huge impact. I am very grateful to you, the community, for your fantastic response to the request for an emergency appeal, contributions for which are still coming in. In her report at the 2018 AGM, the Honorary Treasurer set out restrictions regarding property options, namely the restrictive covenant on the property and that the land is classified as non-residential. She stated that 'Professional advice received stated that due to the above restrictions, it was not economically viable to sell off part of the land'. She therefore stated that there is proof 'that rental income is necessary for SWESRS' survival' and that 'New tenants to replace Norwood would be the ideal solution if they could be sourced'. We can be more optimistic going forward, with a lease now signed with Br3akfree.

In her report at the 2018 AGM, the Honorary Treasurer stated that there is 'significantly less scope to reduce costs going forward'. However, I am pleased to report that the Finance Sub-Committee has found additional ways to reduce costs for the future, and my thanks to Sue Terpilowski in particular for her work on this.

As has been the case in previous years, we have also seen a reduction in membership, losing 36 members, sadly mainly due to deaths.

3. Overview of the accounts

The accounts reveal a net surplus in the sum of £42,477 against a deficit of £21,203 in the previous year. Included in the 2018 surplus there is rent and service charges from Norwood in the sum of £26,476 and donations to the emergency appeal in the sum of £32,039. As can be seen, without these sources of revenue, the result would have been yet another deficit.

Sadly, as noted above, our membership has fallen due to deaths. As a consequence, subscriptions fell from £275,280 to £254,325 compared with the previous year.

General overheads fell from £384,783 to £330,765 compared with the previous year. However, we expended £36,741 for car park refurbishment in 2017.

To summarise, despite the turmoil of the year in question, thanks in a large part due to the generosity of members, we survived with a healthy surplus.

4. Going forward

We have tough challenges ahead but I, along with my Finance Sub-Committee, am definitely up for the challenge. We clearly do need to try and find ways to increase our membership. However, I am confident that, without losing control of the overall site, we can make our buildings work for us to take us into a more secure financial future.

In conclusion, I should like to thank Janine Robbins and Deborah Roos in the office and the Finance Sub-Committee, Jo Turner, Catriona Diamond and Sue Terpolowski, for their work, assistance and support. I also give my sincere thanks to my fellow Honorary Officers, members of Council, members of staff, our energetic volunteers and of course our Rabbi, who gives so much to our community.

Rob Jackson
Honorary Treasurer

Registered Charity Number: 236663

**Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018
South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue**

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue

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For The Year Ended 31 December 2018**

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**South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018**

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2018. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2016).

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity No 236883

Principal Address

Oaks Lane
Bford
Essex
IG2 7PL

Website address: www.swesra.org.uk

Trustees

The permanent trustees are Mr L Gilbert, Mrs R Gorn and Mrs J Mortlock. The permanent trustees have the power to vest property on behalf of the synagogue and are the only trustees who can, for example, sign leases with tenants on behalf of SWESRS.

The trustees and council members during the year, who charged at the Annual General Meeting on 30th July 2018 are listed below:

Up to the Annual General Meeting 30.07.18

Mr P Gersh	President
Mrs E Dalton	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr L Gilbert	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr M Moran	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mrs L Harris	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr C Joseph	Chairman
Mrs J Jacobs	Vice-Chairman
Mrs J Lewis	Hon. Secretary
Mr M Joseph	Asst. Hon. Secretary
Mrs J Mortlock	Hon. Treasurer
Vacant	Asst. Hon. Treasurer

After the Annual General Meeting until 10 December 2018

Mr P Gersh	President
Mrs E Dalton	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr L Gilbert	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr M Moran	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mrs L Harris	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr C Joseph	Chairman
Mrs J Jacobs	Vice Chairman
Mrs J Lewis	Hon. Secretary
Dr F Igleman	Asst. Hon. Secretary
Mrs J Mortlock	Hon. Treasurer
Mr R Jackson	Asst. Hon. Treasurer

From 11 December 2018

Vacant	President
Mrs E Dalton	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr L Gilbert	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr M Moran	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mrs L Harris	Hon. Life Vice-President
Mr S Robbins	Chairman
Vacant	Vice Chairman
Dr F Igleman	Hon. Secretary
Ms S Terpiowski	Asst. Hon. Secretary
Mr R Jackson	Hon. Treasurer
Ms J Turner	Asst. Hon. Treasurer

Up to the Annual General Meeting

Council:-
Dr F Igleman
Mr L Gilbert (Jnr)
Mr G Lutner
Mr J Matthews
Mr A Fleischer
Mr H Smith
Prof S Jackson
Mr L Cohen (co-opted 24/8/17)
Mr M Green (co-opted 21/12/17)
Mr A Fleischer (resigned 21/12/17)

After the Annual General Meeting until 10 December 2018

Council:-
Mr S Robbins
Ms J Turner
Ms S Terpiowski
Ms C Diamond
Mr L Gilbert (Jnr)
Mr H Smith
Prof S Jackson (resigned 10/1/18)
Ms R Korzon
Mr J Matthews
Mr M Joseph
Mr J Bernstein
Mr J Leaf (co-opted 11/18)

From 11 December 2018

Council:-
Ms E Bloom
Ms C Diamond
Ms R Korzon
Mr L Gilbert (Jnr)
Mr J Leaf
Prof S Jackson (co-opted 11/12/18)
Mr D Lawson (co-opted 11/12/18)
Mr M Dalton (co-opted 11/12/18)

No trustees received any remuneration during the year (2017 - 18).

Auditors
Prestons & Jacksons Partnership LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
384-388 Cranbrook Road
Gants Hill
Bford
Essex
IG2 6HY

Bankers
Lloyds Bank Plc
PO Box 1000
Barking Branch
BX1 1LT

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity operates as an unincorporated association under the constitution as amended on 18 June 2005.

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

The trustees and Council are elected on an annual basis at the annual general meeting, in accordance with the charity's constitution.

**South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018**

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Organisational structure

The charity is governed throughout the year by the trustees. Council meet on a monthly basis to approve all significant decisions. In addition the Honorary Treasurer heads the Finance Committee which meets on a regular basis to discuss the charity's performance and any other financial matters. The day to day running of the charity is carried out by an administration team, who are not Council members, but who report to the trustees. The Rabbi is principally responsible for the spiritual, religious, pastoral and educational needs of the membership. The trustees are responsible for the management of the Synagogue's finances and administrative functions within the Synagogue.

Induction and training of new trustees

The charity ensures that all trustees are directed to the extensive guidance available on the Charity Commission website in relation to the role of trustees and their responsibilities. Trustees are aware that it is their responsibility to keep abreast of developments in relation to the governance of charities. Regular training sessions are held for trustees and Council during the year, to ensure that all newly elected members are aware of their role, duties and responsibilities.

Related parties

The charity is affiliated to The Movement for Reform Judaism whose remit is the advancement of Reform Judaism within Great Britain. The charity is also a member of the Jewish Joint Burial Society.

The charity does not have any other material related parties.

Remuneration Policy

Council, at the annual budget meeting, set the pay and remuneration policy for all the charity's personnel. Reference is made to the prevailing rates of pay in similar, local charities and the guidelines published by the Movement for Reform Judaism.

Risk management

The current level of reserves stands at £3,113,775, which includes a revaluation reserve of £1,997,187, which was increased when the building was revalued to market value on 2 July 2018. The reserves are considered accurate to support the charity in the long term. The charity has continual income in the form of annual subscription fees.

The estimated future cost of the burial of certain members is held in a separate fund. Other costs are met by regular payments to the Jewish Joint Burial Society.

At the year end the Special Burial fund showed reserves of £18,110.

There is also a Security Fund of £28,284 (2017 £32,640). This fund was donated anonymously by a member to improve the security of the synagogue buildings and site.

The trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis, combined with an annual review of controls over key financial systems. The trustees have examined other operational and business risks faced by the charity and confirm they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The Synagogue is governed by the Synagogue constitution, Jews and Charities Act 2011. Its objective is to advance religion in accordance with the principles and practices of Reform Judaism by providing and maintaining a Synagogue for the purpose of public worship, advancing education in accordance with the principles and practices of Reform Judaism and for other charitable purposes as the Synagogue, through its Council, may from time to time determine.

The Synagogue continues to pursue the objectives of The Movement for Reform Judaism, and continues to be represented on the various inter-faith and social reform organisations which have been set up in the Redbridge Community, as well as cooperating with the local Synagogues, Churches and Mosques on issues common to all and continues to develop social action and community care projects within its own membership.

**South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018**

Public Benefit

Each year the trustees review the synagogue's objectives, to ensure they continue to reflect the synagogue's aims. In carrying out this review, the trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission and in particular its supplementary public guidance on the advancement of religion for the public benefit.

Review of activities during the year

SWESRS, its staff and members have been involved in a variety of activities which have supported other SWESRS members, the local Jewish community and the wider local community as a whole. Below is a list of some key activities in alphabetical order:

Adult Education: Activities have included Torah lunches on a variety of subjects, the Access to Judaism and Hebrew classes and Learn to Leyn.

AHADA: The synagogue hosts and provides facilities for the AHADA Bereavement Counselling Service which encompasses Empathy Counselling, for those affected by separation and divorce, as well as some of our members serving as trustees and Counsellors.

Choir: Our Choristers not only provide musical accompaniment for services at SWESRS, they also support other local choirs such as at St. Francis' Hospice. This year saw a change of choirmaster with Ian Jacobs stepping down and David Jacobs and Andrej Lipkin stepping in to share the role. Our thanks go to Ian for his years of dedicated service.

Community Action: Members of SWESRS generously donated toiletries and non-perishable food items for Bethel Food Bank in Goodmayes.

Community Meeting: In April 2018, a community workshop event was held to think together about future directions for the Synagogue

End of Life Matters: On October 7th 2018 SWESRS hosted an ECAMPS seminar on End of Life Matters. The keynote address was by Palliative Care Consultant Dr. Adrian Tookman and he was supported by a variety of speakers including an organ donation (heart) recipient. This was followed by a series of seminars over the next few months on topics such as Jewish customs and rituals, Chavra Kaddisha and legal issues at the end of life.

Harry Jassby Memorial: On November 11th 2018 members of SWESRS gathered at St. Peter's Church on Aldborough Road to remember Harry Jassby who was a Jewish alman who died in the First World War. Later that year members of his family also came and visited his grave.

Musical Extravaganza: On October 14th 2018 SWESRS saw a musical afternoon with an eclectic mix of genres ranging from classical opera, bel canto and contemporary 20th century items which included many popular numbers. Our thanks go to Leslie Toba for organising this event in aid of the SWESRS Emergency Appeal.

School visits: Over the course of the year many local schools have run trips to visit SWESRS and learn about Judaism. We had five schools alone in the first term of the 2018/19 academic year and also a group of Scouts. This programme is led by Linda Lester and Sheila Chlil and provides a vital link for our local community to understand what happens at SWESRS. The Holocaust memorial programme continues its essential role in educating children about the horrors of that time. Several local rabbis, members and survivors spoke to the children. This year nearly 800 children attended SWESRS to learn about the Holocaust over the 4 days that the programme was running.

Table Tennis: A weekly table tennis group meets at the synagogue.

Tuesday Club: The Synagogue provides a Tuesday club with a weekly lunch and activity programme organised for the senior members of the community.

This is a relatively new group who enjoy the Latin American rhythms of Salsa whilst keeping fit.

Salsa:
U3A: U3A

(University of the Third Age) is a UK movement of retired and semi-retired people who come together to continue educational, social and creative interests in a friendly and informal environment. A U3A group has met and used SWESRS facilities for some time, providing activities for SWESRS' members and others in the community.

Financial Review

This has been an extraordinary year. On 10th December 2018 there were unexpected and mass resignations from the President, all the Honorary Officers with the exception of Asst. Honorary Secretary and Asst. Honorary Treasurer, and three additional Council members. As an emergency measure, all Honorary Officer posts were filled the following day, when an additional three members were also co-opted onto Council.

The synagogue finances suffered a major setback when our long-term tenant, Norwood, gave notice and vacated the building during the financial year. However, thanks to the support and generosity of a number of our members, an appeal helped to mitigate the loss of income.

**South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018**

The statement of financial activities (Page 7) shows a net surplus for the year of £43,780 after charging depreciation of £6,938. This comprises an unrestricted fund surplus of £49,587 and deficit of £5,787 on restricted funds.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the Charity

Details of movements in fixed assets are set out in Note 12 to the accounts. In 2008 the trustees agreed to adopt a new accounting policy, which necessitated a professional revaluation of land and buildings as they are no longer being depreciated. The land and buildings are now being shown at a replacement cost value in the Statement of Financial Position and will be reviewed regularly.

Reserve Policy

Restricted Funds have been created to provide for known specific future costs. Over the past 10 years, Council have undertaken a major refurbishment programme of the Prayer Hall and community buildings on the synagogue site.

Plans for future periods

Trustees continued their strategic review begun the previous year. The charity will continue to look for additional ways of improving its financial stability by seeking new tenants to replace Norwood, increasing its membership, fund raising and seeking donations. It will also look for stricter controls on expenditure and to maximise the use of our existing resources.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 (The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales 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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

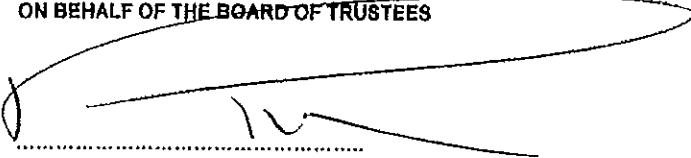
- a. select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- b. observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- c. make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- d. state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- e. prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity 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 charity's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES


R L Jackson - Honorary Treasurer

Date:

7 July 2019

**Independent Auditor's Report to the Members
of South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue**

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2018 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities and the Statement of Financial Position and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2018 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, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland'; and
- prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other Information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Report of Trustees is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- the charity has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees Responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. We have been appointed as auditor under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under Section 154 of that act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Prestons & Jacksons Partnership LLP
Statutory Auditor
364-368 Cranbrook Road
Gante Hill
Ilford
Essex
IG2 6HY

Prestons & Jacksons

Date: 10/7/19

Prestons & Jacksons Partnership LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Statement of Financial Activities
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2018 Total Funds £	2017 Total Funds £
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	Notes 2	348,498	8,044	356,540	342,388
Other charitable activities	3	1,928	-	1,928	4,226
Investments	4	63	-	63	118
Income from charitable activities		40,608	-	40,608	48,422
Total Income		391,023	8,044	399,067	393,153
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Raising funds	5	267,038	6,741	263,779	310,210
Charitable activities	6	91,606	-	91,606	98,373
Total resources expended		348,646	6,741	355,287	408,683
NET (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME		42,477	1,303	43,780	(16,430)
Revaluation gain on freehold property					248,476
Transfers between funds		7,090	(7,090)		-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		49,567	(5,787)	43,780	233,046
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS		2,945,649	124,446	3,009,995	2,836,850
Total funds brought forward					
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		2,995,118	118,659	3,113,776	3,069,995
COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES					
		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2017 Total Funds £	
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	Notes 2	324,975	17,413	342,388	
Other trading activities	3	4,226	-	4,226	
Investments	4	118	-	118	
Income from charitable activities		48,422	-	48,422	
Total Income		375,740	17,413	393,153	
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Raising funds	5	298,670	11,840	310,210	
Charitable activities	6	98,373	-	98,373	
Total resources expended		390,043	11,840	408,683	
NET INCOME		(21,203)	5,773	(16,430)	
Revaluation gain on freehold property		248,476	-	248,476	
Transfers between funds		27,258	(27,258)	-	
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		264,630	(21,485)	233,046	
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS		2,681,019	145,931	2,836,850	
Total funds brought forward					
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		2,945,649	124,446	3,069,995	

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
 Statement of Financial Position
 As at 31 December 2018

Page 8

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2018 Total Fund £	2017 Total Fund £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12	2,910,023	28,351	2,938,374	2,942,521
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	13	24,432	-	24,432	49,406
Cash at bank and in hand		129,080	92,308	221,388	164,092
		<u>153,512</u>	<u>92,308</u>	<u>245,820</u>	<u>203,497</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	14	(44,988)	-	(44,988)	(43,318)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>108,546</u>	<u>92,308</u>	<u>200,854</u>	<u>160,179</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>3,018,569</u>	<u>118,659</u>	<u>3,137,228</u>	<u>3,102,700</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	15	(23,453)	-	(23,453)	(32,705)
NET ASSETS		<u>2,995,116</u>	<u>118,659</u>	<u>3,113,775</u>	<u>3,069,995</u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements

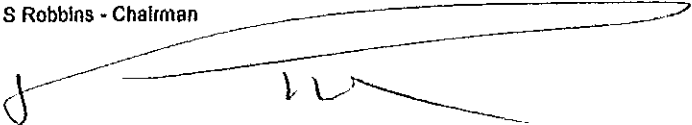
South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Statement of Financial Position - continued
As at 31 December 2018

FUNDS	Notes 18	2018 Total Funds £	2017 Total Funds £
Unrestricted funds:			
Revaluation reserve		1,997,187	1,997,187
General fund		998,929	947,362
Legacies and bequests		1,000	1,000
		<u>2,995,116</u>	<u>2,945,549</u>
Restricted funds:			
Harry Jaseby Grave Fund		210	158
Special burial fund		18,110	25,000
Charitable trust fund		417	417
Tuesday club fund		1,357	1,357
Blumenthal prize fund		490	490
Krasnador fund		245	245
B'nei Torah scheme		7,180	7,180
Educallon and youth		722	722
High Holy Day Appeal		6,784	7,047
Defibrillator fund		-	200
Israel Action Group		626	626
Building fund		2,265	2,240
Community and Youth		4,510	4,510
Jack Petchey Award Scheme		6,953	6,453
Security fund		28,284	32,640
New 60th Anniversary Torah Scroll		21,600	22,580
Sefer Torah repair fund		5,596	5,596
Handrails Prayer Hall Fund		6,997	8,228
Miriam Landsman prize fund		5,000	-
General refurbishment project		1,334	-
		<u>118,659</u>	<u>124,446</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u><u>3,113,775</u></u>	<u><u>3,069,995</u></u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on

and were signed on its behalf by:-


.....
S Robbins - Chairman


.....
R L Jackson - Honorary Treasurer

7/7/19

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Notes to The Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation of accounts

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice of the Charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS102, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2015), with FRS102 and with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention (except as modified for land and buildings).

Donations and legacies

Donations and legacies 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.

Subscription income represents members subscriptions net of amounts written off, as a result of members erased, in accordance with the synagogue's constitution. Subscriptions are stated on a receivable basis.

Financial Reporting Standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemptions in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland": The requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Direct charitable expenditure and support costs

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to that 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.

Religious books are written off in the year of purchase.

Religious artefacts

The synagogue has a number of religious artefacts which are shown as religious appurtenances in note 12, fixed assets at residual value. The insurance value of these religious artefacts are reviewed annually.

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 and land	Not depreciated
Fixtures, fittings & computer equipment	20% on reducing balance
Religious appurtenances	Nil, 20% and 2% on cost
Security fencing and lighting	10% on cost
Website	20% on cost

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised at cost or revaluation basis less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Historical cost includes expenditure directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended.

Unrealised gains/(losses)

Unrealised gains/(losses) are charged to the revaluation reserve in the Statement of Financial Position designated as unrestricted funds.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable and fundraising activities.

Value added tax

Value added tax is not recoverable by the Synagogue and as such is included in the relevant costs in these financial statements.

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against income on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

Pension costs

SWESRS contribute to the NEST Work Based Pension Scheme for its employees (defined contribution scheme). The annual contributions payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities. SWESRS has no potential liability, other than for the payment of those contributions.

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 note 18 to the financial statements.

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Notes to The Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2018	2017
	£	£
Donations (general and restricted)	51,199	22,366
Gift Aid claimed	51,016	44,742
Subscriptions	254,325	275,280
	<u>356,540</u>	<u>342,388</u>

3. OTHER CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2018	2017
	£	£
Fundraising - income	2,778	6,703
Fundraising - expenses	(852)	(2,478)
	<u>1,926</u>	<u>4,225</u>

4. INVESTMENTS

	2018	2017
	£	£
Bank interest received	93	118

5. RAISING FUNDS

	2018	2017
	£	£
Premises upkeep	74,105	121,832
Office costs	16,438	16,091
Finance costs	3,822	2,762
Donations to charities and inter faith work	105	572
Affiliation fees - MRJ	40,428	44,783
Burial costs - JJBS	62,483	52,658
Office staff costs	44,048	49,050
Depreciation	2,580	1,789
Sundry costs	1,287	1,294
Governance costs (see note 8)	11,744	7,741
	<u>257,038</u>	<u>298,570</u>

6. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2018	2017
	£	£
Salaries, NI and expenses	86,317	90,970
Religious services and festivals	(408)	2,298
High Holy Day costs	4,521	4,807
Security costs	1,078	208
	<u>91,508</u>	<u>98,373</u>

7. SUPPORT COSTS

Included within Raising Funds are the following support costs:

	2018	2017
	£	£
Caretaker and cleaners	43,844	45,920
Printing, postage and stationery	7,462	6,714
Telephone	4,858	4,428
Hire of office equipment	2,619	2,619
	<u>58,781</u>	<u>59,681</u>

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Notes To The Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

8. GOVERNANCE COSTS

	2018	2017
	£	£
Legal and professional fees	7,784	3,801
Auditors' remuneration	3,960	3,840
	<u>11,744</u>	<u>7,741</u>

9. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 December 2018 nor for the year ended 31 December 2017.

The trustees consider themselves to be the key management personnel in accordance with the Synagogue's constitution.

Trustees' Expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 December 2018 nor for the year ended 31 December 2017.

Volunteers

The charity is dependent on the voluntary work of the trustees in administering its funds and many other aspects of Synagogue working. As this work has no quantifiable value this is not recognised in the financial statements.

10. WAGES AND SALARIES

	2018	2017
	£	£
Staff costs		
Salaries	130,512	142,330
National insurance	11,283	9,225
Pension costs	6,203	3,276
	<u>147,998</u>	<u>154,831</u>

Number of employees

The average weekly number of employees (excluding trustees) during the year were:

	2018	2017
Ministerial	1	1
Administrative	2	2
Education and Youth	1	2
Other	3	3
	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>

No employee earned £80,000 or more in 2018.

11. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The synagogue is a constituent member of the Movement for Reform Judaism. The synagogue pays a membership levy to the Movement for Reform Judaism, based on a per capita charge of the synagogue's membership. At the year end the synagogue owed the Movement £2,086 (2017 - £291). The levy due for 2018 was £42,605 (2017 £44,583).

The synagogue has entered into a contract with the JJBS Burial Society. The synagogue collects burial fees from its members and pays these to the Burial Society. In return, the Burial Society provides a comprehensive funeral and burial service for the synagogue's membership. At the year end there were no outstanding amounts due to the JJBS (2017 - £NIL).

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Notes to The Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Freehold Property	Freehold property £	Security fencing and lighting £	Totals £			
COST/VALUATION						
At 1 January 2018	2,900,000	43,659	2,943,659			
Additions/reevaluation gain in the year	-	-	-			
At 31 December 2018	2,900,000	43,659	2,943,659			
DEPRECIATION						
At 1 January 2018	-	34,452	34,452			
Depreciation Charges for year	-	4,356	4,356			
At 31 December 2018	-	38,808	38,808			
NET BOOK VALUE						
As at 31 December 2018	2,900,000	4,751	2,904,751			
As at 1 January 2018	2,900,000	9,107	2,909,107			
Other Tangible Assets	Weballe	Religious appurtenances	80th Anniversary Torah Scroll	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	Totals
	£	£	£	£	£	£
COST						
At 1 January 2018	2,000	7,535	24,000	51,289	10,600	95,424
Additions	300	-	-	489	-	789
At 31 December 2018	2,300	7,535	24,000	51,778	10,600	96,213
DEPRECIATION						
At 1 January 2018	2,000	3,989	1,440	44,837	9,744	62,010
Charge for year	60	-	660	1,388	172	2,580
Disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2018	2,060	3,989	2,400	46,225	9,916	64,590
NET BOOK VALUE						
At 31st December 2018	240	3,546	21,600	5,553	684	31,623
At 1 January 2018	-	3,546	22,560	6,452	856	33,414
Net Book Value of Total Tangible Fixed Assets as at 31st December 2018						2,936,374
Net Book Value of Total Tangible Fixed Assets as at 31st December 2017						2,942,621

We have changed the basis of our accounting policy and have now moved to a valuations basis for the freehold property. The buildings were last professionally valued by B Bailey & Co Ltd, Chartered Surveyors and Valuers on 2 July 2018. The valuation was based on the cost of acquiring a similar property, as there is a restrictive covenant in place on the land. The historical cost of the freehold property was £945,669 with historic depreciation of £148,002. The Trustees are of the opinion that the valuation above fairly reflects the current market value of the buildings. The buildings used by the charity have not been depreciated as the trustees consider their useful life to be in excess of 100 years and the depreciation charge is therefore considered to be immaterial.

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Notes to The Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

13. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2018	2017
	£	£
Trade debtors and gift aid	22,686	30,850
Prepayments	1,847	18,555
	<u>24,432</u>	<u>49,405</u>

14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2018	2017
	£	£
Bank loan and overdraft	9,005	10,555
Trade and other creditors	4,729	4,222
Accrued expenses	24,045	23,720
Amounts owed to related party (MRJ)	1,959	291
Advance Income	5,228	4,530
	<u>44,966</u>	<u>43,318</u>

Contingent Liability

There is a contingent liability to the Movement for Reform Judaism (MRJ) in the sum of £53,349 which would crystallise should the Synagogue leave the Movement for Reform Judaism.

15. CREDITORS; AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	2018	2017
	£	£
Bank loan - 2-5 years	<u>23,453</u>	<u>32,705</u>

16. LOAN

An analysis of the maturity of the loan is given below:

	2018	2017
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank loan	<u>9,005</u>	<u>8,758</u>
Amounts falling due between two and five years:		
Bank loan - 2 - 5 years	<u>23,453</u>	<u>32,705</u>

17. SECURED DEBTS

The following secured debts are included within creditors :

	2018	2017
	£	£
Bank loan	<u>32,458</u>	<u>41,463</u>

The charity's bank borrowing is secured by a bank security over the freehold property shown in the the accounts.

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Notes to The Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.01.18 £	Net movement in funds £	Revaluation of freehold property during the year £	Transfer between funds £	At 31.12.18 £
Unrestricted Funds					
General fund	847,362	42,477	-	7,090	896,929
Legacies and bequests	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Revaluation reserve	1,997,187	-	-	-	1,997,187
	2,845,549	42,477	-	7,090	2,995,116
Restricted Funds					
Special burial fund	25,000	-	-	(6,890)	18,110
Charitable trust fund	417	-	-	-	417
Tuesday club fund	1,357	-	-	-	1,357
Blumenthal prize fund	490	-	-	-	490
Kraanador fund	245	-	-	-	245
B'nei Torah scheme	7,160	-	-	-	7,160
Education and youth	722	-	-	-	722
High Holy Day appeal	7,847	(1,083)	-	-	6,764
Israel Action Group	625	-	-	-	625
Building fund	2,240	25	-	-	2,265
Community and Youth	4,510	-	-	-	4,510
Jack Petchey Award Scheme	6,453	600	-	-	6,953
Security fund	32,640	(4,356)	-	-	28,284
Torah Scroll fund	22,680	(960)	-	-	21,800
Sefer Torah repair fund	5,598	-	-	-	5,598
Harry Jassby Grave Maintenance fund	158	52	-	-	210
Handrails Prayer Hall fund	6,228	771	-	-	6,997
Defibrillator fund	200	-	-	(200)	-
General refurbishment project	-	1,334	-	-	1,334
Miriam Landsman prize fund	-	5,000	-	-	5,000
	124,446	1,303	-	(7,090)	118,659
TOTAL FUNDS	3,069,995	43,780	-	-	3,113,775

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	391,023	348,546	42,477
Restricted funds			
General refurbishment fund	1,696	362	1,334
Handrails Prayer Hall fund	771	-	771
High Holy Day appeal	-	1,063	(1,063)
Jack Petchey Award Scheme	500	-	500
Building fund	25	-	25
Torah Scroll fund	-	960	(960)
Security fund	-	4,356	(4,356)
Harry Jassby Grave Maintenance fund	62	-	52
Defibrillator fund	-	-	-
Miriam Landsman prize fund	5,000	-	5,000
	8,044	6,741	1,303
TOTAL MOVEMENT OF FUNDS	399,087	355,287	43,780

South West Essex & Seillement Reform Synagogue
 Notes to The Financial Statements - continued
 For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (continued)

Restricted funds are represented by:

	Restricted current assets	Fixed assets	Total
	£	£	£
Restricted funds	28,351	92,308	118,659

Restricted funds are funds donated, or set aside for specific educational or religious projects such as the the Harry Jassby Grave Maintenance Fund or the repairs of the sifrei torah fund. The Special Burial Fund represents payments of overage fees by members, to be utilised at their future burial.

The Security Fund consists of donations from a member and CST towards the erection of security fencing and gate and a new CCTV system, less accumulated depreciation to date. The Torah Scroll fund consists of donations from the membership to purchase a new Torah Scroll for the Synagogue's 60th Anniversary, less accumulated depreciation to date. The High Holy Day appeal fund comprises donations from the membership, for the annual appeal for specific selected charities.

The transfer between funds represents monies set aside in previous years, to fund the renewal of the car park.

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Notes to The Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018

18. COMPARATIVE MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

	At 1.01.17 £	Net movement in funds £	Revaluation of freehold property during the year £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.12.17 £
Unrestricted Funds					
General fund	941,307	(21,203)	-	27,258	947,362
Legacies and bequests	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Revaluation reserve	1,748,712	-	248,476	-	1,997,187
	2,691,019	(21,203)	248,476	27,258	2,945,549
Restricted Funds					
Special burial fund	26,000	-	-	-	26,000
Charitable trust fund	417	-	-	-	417
Tuesday club fund	1,357	-	-	-	1,357
Blumenthal prize fund	400	-	-	-	400
Kresnador fund	245	-	-	-	245
B'nei Torah scheme	7,160	-	-	-	7,160
Educaiton and youth	722	-	-	-	722
High Holy Day appeal	3,609	4,238	-	-	7,847
Israel Action Group	626	-	-	-	626
Building fund	2,215	25	-	-	2,240
Community and Youth	4,510	-	-	-	4,510
Jack Patchey Award Scheme	5,703	750	-	-	6,453
Security fund	36,986	(4,356)	-	-	32,630
Torah Scroll fund	23,620	(960)	-	-	22,660
Sefer Torah repair fund	5,598	-	-	-	5,598
Harry Jasby Grave Maintenance fund	108	50	-	-	158
Car park fund	27,168	100	-	(27,258)	-
Handraite Prayer Hall fund	500	5,728	-	-	6,228
Defibrillator fund	-	200	-	-	200
	145,931	5,773	-	(27,258)	124,446
TOTAL FUNDS	2,836,950	(15,430)	248,476	-	3,069,995

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	375,740	396,943	(21,203)
Restricted funds			
General refurbishment fund	3,802	3,802	-
Handraite Prayer Hall fund	6,228	500	5,728
High Holy Day appeal	6,280	2,022	4,238
Jack Patchey Award Scheme	750	-	750
Building fund	25	-	25
Torah Scroll fund	-	960	(960)
Security fund	-	4,356	(4,356)
Car park fund	100	-	100
Harry Jasby Grave Maintenance fund	50	-	50
Defibrillator fund	200	-	200
	17,413	11,640	6,773
TOTAL FUNDS	393,153	408,583	(15,430)

Restricted funds are represented by:

	Restricted current assets £	Fixed assets £	Total £
Restricted funds	92,779	31,667	124,446

South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue

Management Information

The following pages do not form part of the statutory financial statements

**South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Unrestricted Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018**

	2018 £	2017 £
INCOME		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	41,968	2,715
Gift Aid	51,016	44,742
Subscriptions	254,326	275,280
Judalca shop	58	311
Tree of Life income	434	382
Marriage fees	695	1,095
Mixed faith burial subscription	-	450
	<u>348,496</u>	<u>324,976</u>
Other charitable activities		
Fundraising events income	2,778	6,703
Less: Fund raising costs	(852)	(2,478)
	<u>1,926</u>	<u>4,225</u>
Investment income		
Bank interest received	93	118
Income from charitable activities		
Rent and service charge received	32,428	38,148
Donations for use of synagogue premises	8,080	8,274
	<u>40,508</u>	<u>46,422</u>
Total Incoming resources	<u>391,023</u>	<u>375,740</u>
EXPENDITURE ON		
Costs of generating income		
Function hall extension roof repairs	-	3,576
Refurbishment donations	-	(3,576)
Car park refurbishment	-	56,587
Less Norwood/CST contribution and refurbishment donation	-	(19,848)
	<u>-</u>	<u>36,741</u>
Wages, pension and expenses	75,249	79,722
Recruitment costs	-	4,322
Education, Youth and Adult study	11,088	11,249
High Holy Day costs	4,521	4,807
Marriage expenses	35	184
Religious services/festivals	1,246	1,483
Alonim publications	-	927
Affiliation fees MRJ	40,428	44,783
Burial costs	52,483	52,658
Office salaries and pension costs	44,048	44,728
Water rates	138	135
Insurance	4,090	4,879
Light and heat	13,316	11,957
Cleaning and contract material	19,623	20,823
Caretakers and cleaners	25,943	25,097
Repairs and maintenance	9,749	20,927
Printing, postage and stationery	7,293	6,714
Publicity	1,203	1,028
Telephone	4,856	4,428
Computer and broadband costs	465	375
Hire of office equipment	2,619	2,619
Bank charges	1,617	1,242
Donations	105	495
Kitchen and Kiddush costs	(408)	2,087
Inter faith work	-	77
Security costs	1,078	298
	<u>330,765</u>	<u>384,783</u>

**South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Unrestricted Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
For The Year Ended 31 December 2018**

	2018 £	2017 £
Costs of generating voluntary income		
Sundry expenses	1,252	1,110
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	2,580	1,789
Building loan interest	2,205	1,520
	<u>6,037</u>	<u>4,419</u>
Governance costs		
Legal and professional fees (payroll)	7,784	3,801
Auditors' remuneration	3,960	3,840
	<u>11,744</u>	<u>7,741</u>
Total resources expended	<u>348,546</u>	<u>388,843</u>
Net Income/(expenditure)	<u>42,477</u>	<u>(21,203)</u>

RABBI'S REPORT

'A week is a long time in politics,' said Prime Minister Harold Wilson during one of the greatest periods of social and industrial change in the twentieth century. Well, a year has certainly turned out to be a long time in the life of our community, here at SWESRS, in the 12 months since our last AGM.

From the bleakest financial forecast after the departure of Norwood last October, the current Council has not only secured a new tenant in Br3akfree, but is forging ahead with a strategic plan to generate significant increase in income in the coming years. This will provide the funds necessary to expand our professional team, an essential factor in facilitating the regeneration of our community. The professional provision needed includes a Care Team Co-ordinator, a 50% increase in rabbinic support and a part-time Youth Worker – modest provision which is given in other communities our size, and all the more essential in an ageing community that at the same time needs to attract and engage young families. Generating funds to achieve this goal is a matter of urgency, and not a wish list for 10 or even 5 years down the road.

I offer my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the current Council who stepped up at a moment's notice to ensure continuity of leadership after the resignations at the end of last December. The current Council have worked with tremendous skill and effectiveness, acknowledging the urgency in securing the community's financial position, as well as embracing the need for change across key areas of SWESRS to bring new life to our community. They have brought new vision and creativity to the leadership of our community, and have conducted themselves with healthy transparency and effective communication. They have ushered in a radical change in SWESRS culture by engaging members in a series of thoughtfully organised community meetings, providing an opportunity for listening and discussion on the issues that will shape our future, with record numbers of members choosing to show up and be part of the discussion (180 at the January meeting!). This new spirit of engagement inspired 70 of you step up for new volunteer positions at that January meeting, making possible the creation of a number of new Volunteer groups and the strengthening of existing ones. Thank you! to all of you who stepped up, and to those of you who may still choose to be more actively engaged. It is this new spirit of engagement which will transform SWESRS, steadily building a renewed and vibrant community with a hopeful future.

On a personal level, I have very much appreciated the co-operation and support of the current Council, which makes my work so much easier. I have enjoyed a good working partnership with outgoing Chair Steve Robbins, and wish Mazal Tov! to Incoming Chair Michael Dalton, and to all of the new Council. I am delighted that the community will benefit from the continuity of leadership facilitated by a slate of unopposed Council positions this AGM.

In other areas of synagogue life, I'd like to thank Devorah Levy for her wonderful running start as our new Bnei Mitzvah Educator, taking over from Lucy Nuttgens who moved back up North to her native Leeds in January. Devorah is making some exciting innovations to the current Bnei Mitzvah programme, and doing a great job at engaging not only the students, but our Bnei Mitzvah families too. As a teacher of Special Needs and Hearing Impaired Children in her day job, and with a son in the BM programme, Devorah brings great professionalism as well as a vested interest, in ensuring that the BM programme meets the needs of this important group of families within our community membership.

As in previous years, I offer my appreciation to Deborah and Janine in the office. They continue to provide a warm and friendly face (or voice!) to members who visit or call with a question or a problem, they work with the utmost skill and professionalism, and consistently go above and beyond the call of duty in so many essential areas of the running of the shul. Junifer, our competent Facilities Co-ordinator, continues to prove himself the best find of the century, continuing the work of improving our building, gardens and grounds in addition to his regular Caretaker duties.

Celebrations: Services and Education

There are many areas of success that we can celebrate in the life of the community. At the Kol HaMishpachot service last Shabbat we used our brand new draft Kol HaMishpachot siddur for the first time, as well as trialling a guitar-only service, led by Mich Sampson, our new musical service leader. Feedback from those who attended expressed an overwhelming preference for guitar only Kol HaMishpachot services going forward (a couple of times each term). Together with the occasional guitar-Choir combination, this is an exciting development in engaging members of all ages in an alternative style of prayer experience, alongside our traditional Choir-led services on most Shabbatot. You only needed to look around the sanctuary last Shabbat to see the joy on the faces of young and old alike as they shook their tambourines and rattled their maracas, to understand that a variety of musical styles and traditions provides an opportunity for more of our membership to connect spiritually through the music of our synagogue service.

Regular Shabbat activities continue, including our new Chavurah@Home Friday nights, Family and Community Chavurah services with Bring-and-share Dinner, Neshamah Contemplative service, monthly Torah Lunch, and Access to Judaism course.

We have increased our number of Torah reader volunteers over the past year, but are still looking for new lay-leaders to join the team to lead services, read Torah and lead shivas. Please do get in touch if you are interested. One-to-one training and ongoing support will be provided.

We enjoyed Reform Judaism RSY-Netzer Youth Worker provision in a second year with the delightful Amy Decker, who joined us for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur Family services, ran a successful Shabbaton in the winter, and led a number of activities at Family Chavurahs during the year. We look forward to welcoming our new RSY-Netzer Youth Worker in the autumn and to strengthening our Youth provision at SWESRS going forward.

Conclusion

To me it feels that our community has turned a significant corner. With our short-term financial stability secured, and realistic plans for our long-term financial viability in process, we can now turn our focus to what kind of a community we want to be going forward. The community-wide Listening Project, a project planned by the Strategic Planning Group, under Sue Jackson's skilful leadership, will be a collaborative process that every SWESRS member is invited to be part of.

As we read in Pirkei Avot, The Sayings of the Fathers:

Lo alecha ha'mlacha ligmor. Ve'lo ata ben chorim lehibatel mimena.

'It's not for you to finish the task, but nor are you free to desist from trying.'

Rabbi Lisa Barrett

ALONIM

You may have noticed that the Alonim has continued to be produced in house and mainly contains the Rabbi's article along with the upcoming diary, personal announcements and the odd article plus flyers for upcoming events.

Sue Jackson, who is our Volunteer Co-ordinator, is eagerly putting together a new team of volunteers to help create the Alonim moving forward.

We are still looking for someone to be responsible for collecting copy and or for organising deadlines and production. If you are interested in joining the Alonim team please let Sue know ASAP volunteers@swesrs.org.uk.

Finally if you can help deliver copies of Alonim to people who live near you, or if you would prefer to receive the newsletter via email, please contact us in the synagogue office – admin@swesrs.org.uk.

Deborah Roos
Office Manager

CATERING GROUP

Following the changes in the Synagogue's Lay Leadership in December 2018 and the subsequent disbanding of The Guild, the remit of the Catering Group has broadened to bring under one umbrella the majority of the different aspects of Catering which support the provision of Religious Services, Life Cycle and social/community activities and, by implication, fundraising for our Synagogue. For this reason, this report deals with the period January 2019 to date, rather than a complete year.

However, before expanding on this, I should like to pay tribute to and recognise the commitment and sheer hard work put in by both Judith Jacobs, former Chair of the Guild, and Jan Mortlock, who led the Catering Crew. They both deserve full acknowledgement and thanks for their dedication and major contributions to Synagogue Life.

With large Extended Kiddushim for three Barmitzvahs held in January, the revamped Catering Group, in which I work in tandem with Jo Turner wearing yet another of her many 'Synagogue Hats', had to hit the ground running and met with great success. A fourth Barmitzvah Extended Kiddush took place in April and there are others in the pipeline between now and the end of 2019. Jo, my deep thanks, for sharing this load.

In addition to large Extended Kiddushim, the Group has also catered for 6 smaller celebrations such as significant anniversaries and special birthdays; will have provided, by the time of the AGM, four lunches following the Kol Hamishpachot Services, and has set up the food for monthly Torah Lunches which follow the Shabbat Service. We have also arranged the refreshments served at two Community Meetings and the Yom Hashoah Service, to which SWESRS welcomed members of the ECAMPS Communities and co-ordinated the chavurah dessert buffet following the evening Purim Celebrations. Further catering support will be provided as appropriate for future Yom Tovim and other events.

None of this could happen without the help of a group of dedicated volunteers, who regularly take time aside from their many other commitments to be on 'kitchen duty'. It is only through this vital support that we can make things happen and develop a strong feeling of 'community'. In this connection I am delighted to report that we have been able to widen the volunteering pool considerably by setting up a rota of both men as well as women to prepare the 'standard' Kiddushim following Shabbat Services where there are no special celebrations. This has only recently come into effect, and we hope these new arrangements will have their own momentum and success, aided by a detailed 'to do' list circulated with the reminders that are sent out.

We have also been overwhelmed by the support given to a request for home baked cakes to be served at Kiddushim. The result is a full chest freezer packed with delicious offerings for your future delight!

The SWESRS Lunch Club which meets on Tuesdays over three ten-week 'terms' per year has been flourishing in its latest iteration for the last two-and-a-half years and brings a great deal of pleasure both to its attendees, the majority of whom are staunch 'regulars' and to (again) the marvellous group of volunteers who do the background work of preparation and service. I hope I can be forgiven if I single out Jocelyn Laws, who has helped at virtually every one of the 75 Lunch Club sessions that have taken place since January 2017 and who deputises for me when I can't be at SWESRS. Jocelyn is an absolute tower of strength and I am much indebted to her.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate my deepest gratitude to every individual who has come forward to help with any aspect of the Catering Group's work, and also to extend my appreciation to the long-suffering and patient professional team – Deborah, Janine and Junifer – for everything they do to facilitate our efforts to work for our Synagogue's well being.

Nina Young

CHAVURAH@HOME

Chavurah@Home is an innovation recently introduced by Rabbi Lisa in order to allow synagogue members to open their home to others to enjoy the beauty of an informal Erev Shabbat Service together, sharing food, prayer and song together. It is planned to hold a monthly Chavurah in different areas enabling members to attend a service near where they live.

The first Chavurah took place at the home of Eleanor Bloom in Newbury Park with those attending bringing both savoury and sweet dishes for the buffet table. The evening started with traditional candle lighting and blessings over Wine and Challah. This was followed by the singing of familiar Shabbat songs and readings, using a mixture of the Friday Night Synagogue Erev Shabbat Service and the Erev Shabbat Service at home in the Siddur. Everyone joined in creating a wonderfully warm, friendly environment. This was followed by food and chat.

We held the next Chavurah in Colchester in early June and then on 5th July the third Chavurah @Home will be hosted at the home of Sonia and Howard Lerner in Woodford. There is a link on the weekly e-mailed newsletter if you would like to attend. There won't be a Chavurah@Home in August due to the summer holidays but they will resume again in September. We already have two families willing to host but are looking for more so that we can hold one each month in the different areas in which our members reside. Those attending are asked to contribute vegetarian/fish or dairy dishes in line with Jewish dietary requirements. All foods should also be nut free in order to avoid allergic reactions.

Please give some thought to opening your home to family and friends and sharing the joy of Shabbat. Send your name and contact details to the email address below and I will call you, or leave your name and phone number with the ladies in the synagogue office. It doesn't matter how large or small your home is – we can adapt the Chavurah to suit individual families and the synagogue can supply the Challah, Grape Juice and Siddurim if necessary.

Do please give some thought to hosting a service in order to help us to continue building our wonderful SWESRS community

Valerie Garnelas
Chavurah@Home Coordinator
chavurahathome@swesrs.org.uk

COMMUNITY CARE TEAM

At the Community Meeting in January several people volunteered to join the Care Team which can only be good news for a synagogue that has a growing number of members over retirement age!

During the year we have continued to telephone those who have a yahrzeit, to personally wish them Long Life and feedback shows this is much appreciated.

Building on this, we are phoning elderly members before the major festivals to wish them good yom-tov (at the moment our aim is to contact all the over 90s!), and this is also a way of keeping in touch. We also send out birthday cards to our over 90's and the feedback from this has been extremely positive. The group has continued to visit members who are either in hospital, or who are at home.

As well as regular meetings, Rabbi Lisa and various members of the group have attended the Reform Judaism Communities That Care Mental Health Conference in Finchley and more recently the Mental Health & Wellbeing Conference at West London Synagogue. Sessions attended there included: 'Self Care', 'Sing for your Life', 'I'll be there for you' and 'Beyond Shiva'.

Whilst listening to the various conversations in the 'Beyond Shiva' session I realised that most of the other synagogues have an adult social care co-ordinator who arranges training sessions for dealing with bereavement, safeguarding issues etc. which are all concerns for our group as we reach out to the community.

Given our ageing demographics, finding the budget to recruit and appoint our very own Care Co-ordinator is more important for SWESRS than it has ever been. I am guessing this is something beyond our means at the moment, but we can dream! I really hope that as soon as our aim for greater financial security for SWESRS is reached, Council will again consider the appointment of a Care Co-ordinator for our wonderful community.

Once again, a big thank you to the Synagogue office for all their help over the year.

Roz Bedford

EDUCATION & YOUTH

The committee is responsible:

- To oversee the formal and informal education of the SWESRS youth including the B'nei mitzvah programme
- To oversee family education programmes
- Youth activities at SWESRS

2019 Report

We are currently restructuring the committee and are hoping to hold a strategy planning morning in the autumn to help define our activities going forward.

At the beginning of the year Lucy Nuttgens left and we are pleased to say Devorah Levy has taken over as our Bnei Mitzvah Educator.

We would really welcome new members to join the committee to help shape our youth activities within SWESRS, if you would like to find out more please contact me via the office – admin@swesrs.org.uk.

Sue Terpilowski OBE
Chairman from January 2019

HERITAGE GROUP Inc SETTLEMENT CENTENARY

The Settlement Synagogue started in 1919 in the Youth Club and Settlement and was originally called The St George's Settlement Synagogue.

The founders were Basil and Rose Henriques. The Synagogue was the only congregation to be affiliated to both the Reform and Liberal movements in Great Britain.

In 1997 South West Essex Reform Synagogue (SWERS) merged with the St Georges Settlement Synagogue in Stepney, bringing members who added greatly to the further enrichment of the congregation. The Settlement was added to the title & the Synagogue was renamed South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue (SWESRS).

2019 will commemorate the Centenary of the Settlement Synagogue and for the last year the Heritage group have been looking through many back copies of Alonim, old photographs, press cuttings and other written material for information. We have extracted much material that is of interest for our archive and this has been filed according to subject. Further work needs to be done on this filing to present it in a more pleasing and accessible form.

Other ongoing work: we still have lots of photographs to identify and file. Again we need to decide on the best way to display these photos.

At some time in the future we hope to put all our material on the SWESRS web site.

Another idea which our little group of volunteers has discussed is to interview Synagogue members to seek out their memories of life at SWERS and the Settlement. We would really like younger members to help with this. Volunteers please!

Our most pressing need now is to find a suitable area, preferably in the foyer or off the functions hall where the archive can be displayed for the benefit of all.

Finally we are engaged in organising the programme for the Settlement weekend which takes place on Shabbat 31st August and Sunday 1st September. Please let the Synagogue office know whether you will be attending the beigel brunch on the Sunday. We are hoping that ex members of the Settlement Synagogue will be talking about life at the Settlement and about prominent members and rabbis.

Laurie Cohen

HOUSE MANAGEMENT

Much of the last year has been taken up with looking at the long term future for the building, and so house management issues have necessarily come second to this.

With the employment of Junifer our Facilities Coordinator (and general handyman) almost 2 years ago, many of the day to day repair issues for the synagogue building are now speedily and cost effectively resolved. I would like to pass on my thanks to both Debz and Junifer for getting us to this arrangement.

The final design for the handrail to the Bimah was produced but unfortunately it was not felt to be in keeping with the Prayer Hall. It is therefore under review.

The hot air unit in the main building needs some major work and this will need to be rectified before the autumn.

The security gate was unfortunately damaged earlier this year and was out of order for some months. The person who caused the damage made arrangements for the work to be covered by their insurance and the work has now been successfully completed.

Ruth Konzon
House Management Group

RELIGIOUS SERVICES COMMITTEE

As there still remains no Senior Warden, it falls to me as chair of the Religious Services Committee (RSC) to write the report. Steve Robbins, Jo Turner and I have been dividing the duties of Senior Warden as a trio.

The membership of the RSC has changed significantly over the course of the year. Karen Dalton stepped down after years of dedicated service at the last AGM, although she has been running children's services since. Ian Jacobs attended his last RSC in November 2018 when he retired as choirmaster and we give special thanks to his role both on RSC and his contribution to musicality at SWESRS. His encyclopaedic knowledge of SWESRS liturgical tradition will be greatly missed. He was replaced by Andrej Lipkin and David Jacobs as joint choirmasters. Colin Joseph, Jan Mortlock and Judith Jacobs stepped down when they relinquished their other roles in December 2018. Ailsa White joined the committee and Ruth Konzon has remained.

Much of the work of the RSC is to ensure the services run smoothly and to that end the year has been mostly successful. Some changes to services have occurred such as the format of Kol Hamishpachot (KH) services with guitar accompaniment, a review of the services in preparation for the new KH siddur and changes to the format of Friday night services. These now run on a monthly cycle with family chavurah, traditional services and chavurah@home services. We have tried to keep a variety of service formats available to members so that they can have a choice as the traditional services on Shabbat do not suit everyone. Shabbat morning Neshama (contemplative) services have maintained a relatively small but consistent following. One service that has had a small attendance has been the children's services and so a new approach with a peer led service with Bnei Mitzvah students leading, will be replacing them.

We have had to deal with some issues that SWESRS considers controversial e.g. sweet throwing. It is important to strike a balance between respecting the traditions of SWESRS whilst not stifling innovation. As a Reform community we have never followed strictly to the maxim, "the custom of your ancestors is law." (Shulchan Arukh) I feel we have achieved that balance.

None of the services we run at SWESRS would be possible without our dedicated team of wardens, shamashim and lay readers. I am sure all of the past and present members of the RSC would want me to thank them whole heartedly. If anyone else would like to join the team then please contact any member of RSC. Full training will be provided.

Farrel Igielman
Chair of RSC / Lay Reader Co-ordinator

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY GROUP

A group of volunteers with a keen interest in this area met for the first time on 28 January in the Synagogue and have had three more meetings since then, the last two in our respective homes, mapping out what we perceive to be our agenda and embarking on the process of planning events. We see the following intentions as integral to the mission of the group:

- To play a key role in promoting a sense of community engagement within SWESRS and to generate a positive orientation towards Synagogue activities.
- To set up a range of social/cultural events, which draw upon a broad spectrum of interests which include the arts, humanities and sciences and which cater for different age ranges and tastes.
- To provide a vehicle for the exploration of aspects of Jewish identity and heritage.
- To collaborate with and support other groups within the Synagogue promoting events with a social/cultural dimension.
- To be as inclusive as possible in terms of welcoming to its events not only members of the SWESRS community but others who are keen to support its programme.
- To facilitate small group events with 'minority' interests as well as larger events, with a view to setting up meetings on a monthly basis.
- To cover the costs of the events organised; where possible, to accumulate sufficient income to meet the needs of future planning and, when appropriate, raise additional funding for the Synagogue.

In the light of the demise of the Redbridge Jewish Cultural Society with its last event on Sunday 19 May, the establishment of the Social and Community Group was timely. It is certainly our intention to build on the success of the Cultural Society over several decades in enriching the cultural life of the community and at the same time to broaden its agenda, hopefully catering for a wider range of interests. Many members of the Cultural Society have already expressed their wish to participate in future events and their support is greatly appreciated.

The first two events being organised give a flavour of what we are wanting to embrace:

Sunday 23 June: *Music for a Summer's Evening*, we held a concert featuring the Woodford Singers, an award-winning and versatile ladies choir, whose repertoire extends from musical theatre to jazz and folk-song. The concert appealed to all age ranges, young and old alike! 8.00pm.

Sunday 21 July: *Funny Guys*, an illustrated presentation about some of Britain's comedians from the 1930s to the 1960s, including Max Miller, Morecambe and Wise, Frankie Howard and Tommy Cooper. The presenter, Geoff Bowden, has been a keen performer on stage, especially in musical review, and since 2009 has been editor of the British Music Hall Society's official magazine, *The Call Boy*. Earlier in the year, Geoff impressed and delighted his audience at the Synagogue, when he celebrated the life of Irving Berlin at an event

arranged by the Redbridge Jewish Cultural Society – so we are very much looking forward to his return visit!

Looking further ahead, we want to support the Heritage Group in a project to celebrate the centenary of the Settlement Synagogue – this will include an event on 1 September, probably a beigel brunch, which would incorporate the recording of reminiscences from former Settlement members. We are also planning to collaborate with the Social Action Group in the promotion of an inter-faith multi-cultural concert on 17 November and are keen to work with the Fundraising Group on a Burns Night for 26 January 2020.

We very much hope all members of the community will want to support the programme and would be delighted to hear from you if you wanted to propose some ideas for future events (rmyoung1942@yahoo.co.uk) or, even better, would like to join the planning group.

Robert Young

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Strategic Planning Sub-Committee has been meeting regularly to develop a strategic plan to take SWESRS into the future. Following the Open Community meeting in January, it became clear to us that we need to think about this in stages with short, medium and long term goals. Our current financial and resource challenges make this work an imperative for safeguarding the future of SWESRS.

The Strategic Planning Sub-Committee has been working on developing SWESRS in the medium term, with a 5-year strategic plan, and we will return to this as a community, probably next year and we are grateful to support from the Reform Movement. However, given our current challenges, we need to start by considering the immediate future of SWESRS. The sub-committee has therefore developed a 2 year strategic plan to try and meet our more immediate needs and hopes for the future. The draft sent for approval at the AGM has been approved by Council and discussed at the Open Community meeting held on Sunday May 19.

In considering our short term future, the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee is focussing on 4 aims:

Aim 1: To craft and develop a clear and consistent narrative about SWESRS that draws on and embraces a new Vision

The first aim asks us to be brave and to work together for a new Vision for SWESRS. To do that, we need to actively engage with and listen to our members and learn what it means to be a member of SWESRS. To work towards this we are proposing that immediately after the AGM we begin a 'listening project' to directly engage with all community households and to identify ways in which SWESRS is perceived by our members. The 'listening project' will enable us to seek the views of all members, to understand and articulate our core shared values and to clearly define what we want from our membership. It is Council's aim to work with members in co-creating and re-building the community.

Aim 2: To become financially sustainable, both in the shorter and the longer term

The second, and obviously vital, aim is to become financially sustainable, both in the short and the longer term. We recognise the need to review our day to day expenditure on a rolling basis and ensure value for money from our service providers, and to keep payment of subscriptions under active review. We also need to attract new members and we have a newly formed membership and communication group working to this end. We need to learn from our successes in order to create additional income streams. As a community, we have also been considering how we can maximise the potential of our buildings and land in the short to medium term, so that we are able to properly plan for our financial sustainability in the longer term.

Aim 3: To strengthen a sense of community and chavurah (communal friendship), and to develop relationships that deepen commitment to SWESRS and enable members to get to know each other

As important as finances, though, is a sense of ourselves as a community of people. One of the aims of meetings such as the Open Community meetings we have held, and other events like our forthcoming new members' tea and our Chavurah@Home services, is to create spaces and opportunities for members to get to know each other better. We have several groups actively working towards strengthening our sense of community and

communal friendships, such as our new social and community group and our Chagim working group. The Strategic Planning Sub-Committee and Council see community participation as a vital way to build on and strengthen SWESRS' future.

Aim 4: To develop SWESRS' capacity to respond to new and changing opportunities whilst retaining our commitment to our Vision and Values.

Finally, we think that our successful future is dependent on our willingness and capacity to respond to new and changing opportunities whilst retaining our commitment to our Vision and Values. Whilst we should, and do, celebrate and draw on our rich heritage - and we are currently planning a celebration of Settlement's centenary - we also need to be prepared to evolve as a community of the future. This Council has been committed to developing and enhancing SWESRS' transparency and accountability to its members and this final aim enshrines this in the strategic plan.

The 2 year Strategic Plan is supported by an implementation plan which sets out appropriate actions for each aim and will ensure transparency and accountability, copies of which will be available for information at the AGM. It strives to put SWESRS on a firmer footing for the future, involving our membership in whatever ways you wish to contribute.

Sue Jackson
Chair, Strategic Planning Sub-Committee

VOLUNTEERING

On behalf of Council, I am delighted to report that we have an excellent range of volunteer groups and activities taking place at SWESRS, with over a hundred of our members volunteering in different capacities. Some of the groups are well established: others have barely got going and really need enthusiastic members to help develop them. Our volunteers are part of the lifeblood of SWESRS and we simply couldn't function without people who are willing to step forward and help. In addition, volunteering is a lovely way to get to know other members of the community, working together for the benefit of SWESRS.

Adult Education is central to our lives as Reform Jews. This group works to plan programme of adult education activities for our members.
Alonim is a vital part of our communication with members. A group of people have come together to co-ordinate the production of this important publication.
Building Maintenance is an indispensable part of keeping SWESRS in a good state of repair.
The Care Team is an essential and well established part of SWESRS' life, contacting members who are sick, or who are commemorating a yahrzeit, for example. A phone call and a caring voice can make all the difference to most of us.
The Catering Group is always busy! It is an essential part of all our services and celebrations and most of us have appreciated their efforts during the past year.
The Chagim Working Group plans and organises celebrations of the Chagim, or festivals, for example by arranging a Simchat Torah or a Chanukah party, or organising a Purim splel.
Education and Youth is a vital group for the future of SWESRS and focuses on working with young people both before and after bnei mitzvah.
Fund Raising: To move into a successful and viable future, it is essential that we have a team of people who are focussed on fundraising. This is a group that is yet to properly get going and really needs some willing volunteers.
Hosting@Home consists of a small team that helps develop opportunities for members to host Chavurah suppers or other events at home, enabling opportunities for communal sharing and friendship.
The Israel group is one that has not properly got going yet and needs interested members to help develop it.
IT support lends a helping hand to the office when needed.
The Listening Project is new for SWESRS. Council is listening closely to feedback from our members and is learning from what you tell us. We plan to run a listening project through the coming year, making sure we meet with every household to ensure we know more about each other and about what we want from our membership of SWESRS. We are looking for additional volunteers who are good listeners and enjoy meeting members of the community.
Mailshots can be laborious, but the task is made easier with more people involved, and mailshots are essential for keeping in contact with the community at key times.
Marketing is vital for us in trying to build and develop our membership, and this new group is looking for people who have the skills to help us with making the best in marketing SWESRS for the future.
Members are the life blood of SWESRS, both current and prospective, and the Membership and Communication group ensures we stay fully engaged with our current members, whilst working to attract new ones.

Sadly, Security is a key function for all synagogues today. A committed group of people keep us all safe when we are in synagogue.
The Social and Community group is newly formed and very active, with an exciting programme of events planned. It aims to play a key role in promoting a sense of community engagement within SWESRS.
Social action is a new group which has started by collecting items of food and toiletries for distribution to those in need. New members will enable the group's activities to be expanded.
The SWESRS Heritage and Settlement Centenary group helps us all to remember the building blocks on which both SWERS and Settlement were founded, for example by displaying and archiving material and recording oral histories. It is currently planning a weekend of celebration to mark the centenary of Settlement.
With so many people involved in so many activities, Volunteer Co-ordination helps ensure the smooth running of the groups and gives support to group facilitators.

Of course, there are myriad other ways in which SWESRS members volunteer, for example as lay readers and wardens; as members of the choir; serving on Council and its sub-committees; taking responsibility for safeguarding and health and safety; running the Tuesday lunch club; and just by being there to lend a helping hand when needed. It is impossible to list them all. However, as Volunteer Co-ordinator and on behalf of Council, I should like to thank every one of you who adds so much to the life of SWESRS in so many ways. Without you all, we wouldn't be the community that is so important to us all.

If you would like to know more about or join one of these groups, or have ideas for additional groups and activities, please do get in touch with me.

Sue Jackson
 Volunteer Co-ordinator
volunteers@swesrs.org.uk

CHOIR

Since last year's AGM quite a few things have happened. Some are obvious, some not so obvious. What will be most noticed is the recent change of personnel at the helm as at the turn of the year - after more than 20 dedicated years of service as Choirmaster and making this choir one of the most distinguished in the Reform movement – Ian Jacobs has retired from the position. We applied together to take his place on a 50/50 basis. After seven months as co-choirmasters, we (Andrej + David) assure the SWESRS community that it is still business as usual and we greatly appreciate the choir members for staying with us, bearing with us on the change of personnel and continuing to provide their warm, inviting voices for enhancing each service like always. THEY are the ones who deliver the music to us after all. We also appreciate Judith Jacobs taking over the position from Gillian Smith as Choir Co-ordinator, keeping us on our toes with diary dates, meetings and various correspondence. Our thanks also go to the Council for the ratification of our posts and to the Rabbi for her continued encouragement and support.

Unfortunately, we lost Mildred Isaacs around the end of last year. Every chorister has their own unique voice to add to the overall sound so any absence of a voice is noticed. As a keen chorister for a number of years herself, it was a great loss to us all and we won't forget Mildred's kind, harmless demeanour.

We have learnt that our regular accompanist – Antoine Pichon - is leaving us to seek pastures new in Austria as he builds on what already looks to be a promising musical career. We have found him to be a highly competent pianist and a joy to work with. We want to thank him for assisting us and this community in continuing to provide the music which enhances our services and wish him the best of luck in the future. On learning of his imminent departure, we have been working hard behind the scenes to form a 'bank' of accompanists who are available to play services on an ad-hoc basis.

There was a Holocaust Memorial commemoration on the 28th January at Valentines Park. The choir were again invited to sing and we felt it appropriate that Ian conducted them for this one last time as his retirement was only announced after 2018's Holocaust Memorial commemoration. Of course if we get invited back next year, one of us will conduct the choir at such time.

In May of this year, the ECAMPS Yom Ha'Shoah service was held at our synagogue. I felt it was a fulfilling and very well-formatted service on all counts.

Following the passing of Della Carr, a concert in her memory took place on the 26th May, organised by Lewis Miller at Southend & District Reform Synagogue with the proceeds going to Fair Havens Hospice. We want to thank Lewis for inviting us to sing. Della was chairman of both SWESRS and SDRS so she deserved representation from both synagogues. The Choir sang a few songs selected from our own previous concert repertoires and it was a lovely afternoon. We had some lovely comments from audience members including the Mayor and Mayoress of Southend, who interestingly enough have sung in choirs themselves.

Since undertaking the post, we have introduced, taught and debuted a number of new pieces in services across the past six/seven months. A new version of 'Odecha' for the Hallel section of services, a new version of 'Lecha Adona' for the Shabbat Torah service and a version of the Chatzl Kaddish specific to festivals. All of which have been well received by members of the congregation. Also, hopefully coming up at High Holydays will be 'Hayom T'amtzelnu'.

Our aim with the Choir's repertoire is always to expand it where possible. It ensures variety so that the melodies chosen cater to as many different personal tastes as possible. Furthermore, it keeps things interesting for the congregation and also for ourselves! Watch this space as there WILL be more to come.

Andrej Lipkin and David Jacobs
Choirmasters

JEWISH JOINT BURIAL SOCIETY (JJBS)

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION IN THE PAST YEAR:

- **JJBS MEMBER COMMUNITIES:** There are two new member communities: Peterborough Liberal and Edgware & Hendon Reform (as a result of their merger), totalling 39 member communities.
- **ORGAN DONATION:** After lengthy discussions, it was felt that Rabbis and members of Reform, Liberal and Masorti communities would be happy with this as it is a lifesaving process. It was agreed that organ donation is good for Jewish communities and members should be encouraged to carry donor cards. 'Opt out' would be a personal choice. The Orthodox are less in favour of organ donation but according to the Chief Rabbi's office, they are prepared to be more flexible.
- **PRIORITY BURIALS:** As a result of a recent case of a civil registrar refusing to give priority to a Jewish funeral referral, a high court ruling has been granted in favour of Jewish burials being prioritised in accordance with religious practice.
- **WOODLAND CEMETERY:** This opened in 2013 and is the first woodland cemetery for the Jewish community. It allows Jews to be buried in a natural environment, where the surroundings are planted with British native trees and plants to provide a green environment. The graves are marked with small memorial stones rather than large tombstones. It also has separate areas for mixed faith marriages or partnerships, offering double decker burials. Services take place in a new modern wood clad 'Ohel' prayer hall.

Members have a choice of three woodland burial landscapes; wooded area, lawn area and a meadow. It is advised that if there is a preference, the Synagogue office should be informed for the records.

There is a columbarium for the internment of cremated ashes and plans have been approved to double this in size.

There is also a separate area for neo-natal burials.

This new woodland cemetery has been more successful than expected and more woodland burials from SWESRS than any other affiliated synagogue have been chosen by members or have already taken place.

Work on a second car park has commenced. Plans have also been approved for a new building at the entrance to the Woodland cemetery which will accommodate an office to be relocated from Wanstead for staff to be always on site. The proposal is for the building to be 'green' and carbon neutral. It will also include a gathering room for mourners before and after funerals and stone settings, and to provide a space for up to 50 persons standing if they require the hall for (self-catering) buffet refreshments.

Eleanor Bloom
JJBS Governor representing SWESRS

Minutes of the Twenty Second Annual General Meeting of the
South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue held at
Oaks Lane, Newbury Park, Essex IG2 7PL
on Monday 30 July 2018/18 Av 5778 at 8pm

Present:	Paul Gersh	President
	Evelyn Dalton	Life Vice-President
	Leslie Gilbert	Life Vice-President
	Colin Joseph (CJ)	Chairman
	Judith Jacobs	Vice-Chairman
	Jan Mortlock (JAM)	Honorary Treasurer
	Jocelyn Laws	Honorary Secretary
	Marion Joseph	Assistant Honorary Treasurer
	Rabbi Lisa Barrett	

150 members of the community were present. Apologies were received from Farrel and Jane Igielman.

The opening prayer was read by Rabbi Barrett.

1. **Welcome by Paul Gersh, President**
Appendix A, attached.
2. **Minutes of the Twenty-first Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 13th July 2017**
The minutes were included in the Annual Report for 2017/18, circulated to members, and noted.
3. **Amendments to the Minutes**
There were no amendments. The minutes were agreed to be a correct record of the meeting.
4. **Rabbi's Address**
Appendix B, attached.
5. **Chairman's Address**
The Chairman's report was included in the Annual Report. (See Appendix C)
6. **Treasurer's Report**
The Treasurer's report and financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2017 were included in the Annual Report; Jan Mortlock gave a presentation to supplement the financial statements and other written financial information that had been circulated with the papers. 2017 had been the most challenging year since 2009; subscription income was down for the ninth successive year and had reduced by more than £5000 since 2016 (over £86k since 2009). Membership had reduced by 35% since the year 2000.

From 2nd October 2018 we would lose £33,750 income from Norwood rent which equated to 9% of SWESRS' total current income. There were very few opportunities for further savings to be made. In 2017 we had made a loss of more than £15k, principally due to work on the car park. However, with adjustments for the one-off costs of the car park work, and the loss of income from Norwood of £37,500 per annum, the underlying

figure was a deficit of £16,189. This demonstrated how essential rental income was to our financial survival.

The presentation set out the timeline for discussions with Norwood which had commenced in May 2017, well in advance of the expiry date of their existing 5 year lease in October 2018. A new 2 year lease, for less space at a slightly lower rent, was eventually signed in December 2017 but in March 2018 Norwood had unexpectedly advised us that they would be exercising the break clause as they had lost their funding from Redbridge Council.

We were currently exploring a potential property-related solution to the funding crisis, following an approach by one of our members, and in the meantime Rabbi Barrett had agreed to a variation of her contract and a reduction in salary for one year, commencing October 2018. The only other potential ways to balance the books were to increase membership subscriptions by 10%, which was likely to generate only a 5% increase in income, or to reduce outgoings either by leaving the MRJ which would save £44,500 a year or reducing our subscription to them.

A question was raised about the work of the Strategic Planning group who were considering ways to attract new members and it was noted that the last meeting of the group had been cancelled to make way for an extraordinary Council meeting. CJ said the work of the planning group would be revived and we must continue to try to attract new members; however, we would not be able to fill the gap in a short period. Ross Juggler questioned whether SWESRS should remain on its current site as he believed we would not survive unless we improved our strategic planning and gave serious consideration to the future. However, CJ said that approximately 800 of our members lived in the IG1-IG8 postcodes (Ilford to Woodford), about 150 lived in Romford and 100 in IG9 and IG10.

Steve Juggler stated that the younger generation was missing from the community and he was pleased that the Strategic Planning group work would be revived, but asked what Officers felt we should be doing in the short term. JAM thought we must focus on finding a property solution but while the future was uncertain if we remained on the current site, it would be a huge emotional wrench to move elsewhere, and options were very limited owing to the scarcity and costs of alternative sites. A suggestion had been made that we sell the whole site and move to Clore Tikvah who also were in a difficult financial position. However, the pros and cons needed to be further explored.

Mel Vincent commented that the covenant on the land, restricting its use, would make it difficult to sell the site. JAM said we were aware that about 130 local religious organisations were looking for a site which may make it easier to sell, but the real question was where we could move to.

Robert Jackson said that the current Officers and Council had done a tremendous amount of work but he felt they had not communicated sufficiently with the members. JAM responded that the appeal letter issued in April had been explicit about the financial situation and it asked for ideas and suggestions. We had received only one. However, as a result of the comprehensive information sent out with the AGM mailing, three people had come forward with proposals. Now that the membership was aware of the situation, everyone had a responsibility to step up and it should not be left only to Officers and Council.

A question was raised about why the proposed redundancy of the full-time rabbinic post had been the first option to deal with the financial crisis. JAM stressed that this had never been the first option, and Officers and Council had been rigorously exploring alternatives, such as a 'mosaic' arrangement with other local progressive synagogues, as well as trying to find a new tenant. However, we had to be guided by what the professionals advised us about rental solutions and had worked for the best while planning for the worst. We had been very clear that if a feasible financial solution could be identified, we would rescind the notice of redundancy. This was exactly what had happened and the motion to approve the redundancy of the full-time rabbinic post had been removed from the AGM agenda.

Steve Robbins said we would still be in receipt of Norwood rental income for 6 months from the date they exercised the break clause and asked why the redundancy issue had not been postponed for 6 months. JAM said this was because we would have had to use the income to pay the rabbi's salary until October which would have meant we could not then have afforded to pay her notice period, assuming she had not accepted the half-time post. We had also been advised that, even if we secured a new tenant, we would not benefit from the full rental income in the first year as we would have to pay agency fees and may have to offer a reduced rent and an initial rent-free period to attract interest. The space was now being advertised but we had no idea how long it would take to find a new tenant. Sue Terpilowski felt that the restrictions on tenants in relation to working on Shabbat and Jewish festivals were unrealistic.

Steven Soskin pointed out that the Constitution required the dismissal of a rabbi to be agreed by the membership. JAM confirmed that the Constitution required both the appointment and the dismissal of a rabbi to be agreed at a general meeting. However, by the time of the general meeting in 2016 the offer of the post to Rabbi Barrett had been made and accepted, so the appointment had been ratified by the membership. This was the same for termination, but we had received legal advice which indicated that this practice contravened human rights. Therefore, a change to the Constitution would be required.

Lizzie Jackson asked why Rabbi Barrett's original offer to work at 80% of salary and hours for 6 months, made earlier in the year, had been rejected. JAM said we could not answer questions related to an employee's contract or terms and conditions.

Other points made related to GDPR and its impact on using our members' information, and suggestions for ways in which we could generate additional income, such as letting out rooms on an hourly basis. Ruth Cann said it was heartening to see so many people at the meeting who were engaged and cared about the future of SWESRS. Everyone wanted the community to remain vibrant and we had heard about some potential solutions. These might not all be viable and we may need to think again, but she hoped that the new group of Officers and Council members, with help from the membership, could explore the ideas and build on opportunities.

Bernard Davis felt it had been a productive meeting despite the difficult financial situation we were facing, and agreed there was no quick fix. The question was where did we go from here? We needed to consider moving to another area although no location would suit everyone. However, people would remain as members because we were a community and a community should be led by a rabbi. It was the Council's responsibility to make the rabbi's work possible.

Bernard Davis also said it would be helpful if the Annual Report could be circulated in advance of the meeting so that attendees had time to read it. However, it was pointed out that the agenda, circulated to all members, stated that copies of the Annual Report could be requested from the Synagogue office prior to the meeting.

7. Presentation and Adoption of the Annual Accounts

Proposed by Jerry Bernstein and seconded by Jack Matthews. There were 10 abstentions but no votes against. The Annual Accounts were adopted.

8. Presentation and Adoption of the Annual Report

Proposed by Karen Dalton and agreed, with 8 abstentions.

9. Reappointment of Preston's and Jackson Partnership LLP as the Synagogue's Auditors

Ruth Cann noted that Robert Jackson was standing for election as Honorary Treasurer/Assistant Honorary Treasurer and asked whether, if appointed to either position, he would have a conflict of interest. RJ explained that his association with the partnership was in name only, for continuity. He had no actual interest or profit share and therefore he did not believe he had a conflict of interest.

The reappointment of Preston's and Jackson was proposed by CJ and seconded by JAM. The reappointment was approved by the majority, with two votes against and two abstentions.

10. Election of Officers and up to 12 Other Persons as the Council of the Synagogue

Three places were contested, with two people standing for each position: Hon. Treasurer, Assistant Hon. Treasurer and Assistant Hon. Secretary. Ballot papers for each post were distributed.

11. Announcement of Election Results

The following Officers and Council members were elected:

Officers:

Chairman	Colin Joseph
Vice Chairman	Judith Jacobs
Honorary Treasurer	Jan Mortlock
Asst. Honorary Treasurer	Robert Jackson
Honorary Secretary	Jocelyn Laws
Asst. Honorary Secretary	Farrel Igielman
Senior Warden	No Candidate

Council members:

Jerry Bernstein, Catriona Diamond, Les Gilbert, Sue Jackson, Marion Joseph, Ruth Konzon, Jack Matthews, Steve Robbins, Henry Smith, Sue Terpilowski, Jo Turner.

12. Any Other Business

12.1. Ruth Cann commented that the voting system that evening had been shambolic and time-consuming. CJ said it had been thought that having separate ballot papers for each contested post would be simpler, but he agreed it had not worked well and we would do it differently next year.

- 12.2. Eleanor Bloom asked whether postal voting could be introduced for people unable to attend the meeting. Paul Gersh said the Constitution currently did not allow for this. Any proposals for changes to the Constitution would require an Extraordinary General Meeting, following a request in writing from not less than twenty members.
- 12.3. Leslie Tobe promoted his fund-raising musical extravaganza to be held on 14th October.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.55p.m.

APPENDIX A

President's Address

My Dear Fellow SWESRS members,

Today's AGM marks the end of my second year of a scheduled three year term as the appointed President of SWESRS so I would like to share with you some reflections and a view on our future.

It is a great relief that both motions with respect to the redundancy of the full time post of Rabbi have been withdrawn from the Agenda. Collin and Jan will both give you fuller information on the reasons why we are able to do this.

We are acutely aware of the unwelcome stress Rabbi Lisa has experienced due to the impact on our financial situation of Norwood giving us their notice at the end of March that they were leaving effective 2nd October 2018. During my working life I personally experienced redundancy seven times after the age of forty so I totally empathised with her during the aftermath of Norwood's announcement.

I want at this point to rebut in the strongest terms the inaccurate, accusatory letters and emails that have been circulated within our community and beyond, as far away as Canada, alleging that our financial situation was not the real reason for the potential redundancy of the full time rabbinic post and that Trustees were motivated by something other than acting properly and responsibly as Trustees of a charity. It has been an incredibly stressful period for Trustees as well. Participating in countless meetings, receiving and replying to dozens upon dozens of emails and, to top it all, being subjected to rumours emanating from the accusatory letters and emails mentioned above. These have called into question whether elements of our community have truly grasped the reality of what we have been trying to deal with. All Trustees are relieved that it has been possible for both motions to be withdrawn and that we can look forward to activating the Rabbinic Partnership Agreement with Rabbi Lisa, an agreement which ironically was arrived at on the very day that we first were advised of Norwood's decision to quit their tenancy.

I have considered it a privilege and honour to serve this community in a variety of voluntary positions, including Chairman and Honorary Treasurer, since joining SWERS (as it was) with Rita, 48 years ago in March 1970. For the past 31 years, I have been a proud member of our Choir and have shared many treasured relationships with members past and present as well as friendships in the community at large.

At this point, I want to give praise to my fellow Trustees for all their dedication and hard work. They hold a very special place in my respect and affection for them, none more so than Jan who, as our Treasurer, has worked ceaselessly in steering our finances in an exemplary fashion, combining her undoubted professional expertise with a deep-felt love for our community to which she has belonged since a child. I am delighted and reassured that she would like, if elected, to continue to serve this community.

As we should be only too aware, from reading Jan's comprehensive analysis of our financial situation, our financial crisis has to be met with determination and resolve, not least because we are a registered charity and as such, should not be seen to budget for a deficit. Were we to lose our charitable status we would forfeit our access to Gift Aid, which would mean a reduction in our subscription income (from those who pay income tax and covenant) of 20%.

I was interested to read on the front page of Alonim that the Rabbi believes that SWESRS is not known as a community that eagerly embraces change. In my view, we none of us eagerly embrace change. We are, in our personal lives, buffeted by life's challenges – ill health, bereavement, loss of job, house moves, financial strain, etc etc. I believe that we come to shul for respite from our busy lives outside and to immerse ourselves in the familiar form of service that gives us comfort to refresh our souls. The recent upsurge in Jews who seek membership of orthodox communities could be because they desire a familiarity with what is on offer, rather than adopting new ideas. In our own community, I believe that changes should be considered, by our Rabbi, Religious Services Committee and Trustees actively consulting with each other through the laid out procedures in RSC's Terms of Reference, and should not be arbitrarily introduced into our services until consensus is arrived at. In this way, we as a community can more readily embrace change.

In her article, Rabbi Lisa highlights the three virtues of Transparency, Communication and Engagement. Your Trustees have emphatically demonstrated, with the Appeal Letter, our Financial Information Pack that was distributed with the AGM Calling Papers and individual responses to concerned members, that these three virtues have been and will continue to be an essential part of our strategy to meet the challenges that lie ahead. Indeed, as a direct result of the Financial Information Pack, three members have come forward, individually, with certain ideas that might effectively resolve the financial challenge we face. Jan will later give her Power Point presentation which will demonstrate the challenges we have to face and the choices we may have.

I was also heartened to read our Rabbi's fullsome praise for those members who have so generously given to the Appeal Fund. I echo that praise and would also draw everyone's attention to the fact that this is the latest example of our communal generosity and follows on from notable acts of generosity in the past such as the new Torah Scroll, the new Torah Mantle, some individual contributions to the new car park, the hand rails, the defibrillator, the new library, the Tree of Life, the Prayer Hall roof, and our Prayer Hall itself. Add to this, generous contributions to external good causes and I would submit that this is not too shabby for, as the Rabbi puts it, "a community not known for a culture of giving"!

I agree with Rabbi Lisa when she said in that article that "we have the responsibility to vote in a Council and Officers with the vision, skill and expertise to take our community forward". I certainly believe that the current group of Trustees standing for re-election, led by Colin, have those attributes in abundance. The composition of existing and new additions through our election process will be revealed later this evening. Whatever the composition, they will have my full support. Whichever way this will evolve, what is not in question is that the financial challenge will still be there to be met head on with courage and decisiveness.

In closing I would like to emphasise that we can achieve a harmonious outcome if we are all prepared to listen, ask questions and open our minds to understanding and realise that we all have a common interest which is the healthy future of our community. Let's work together to make it happen!

Paul Gersh

APPENDIX B

Rabbi's Address

During my Induction address in January 2017, I said 'It was bashert that we were brought together at this turning point in the history of the community.' Little did I know how much of a turning point lay ahead!

The outgoing Council and Officers have worked incredibly hard throughout the year. In the last few months, faced with the current challenges, their commitment to SWESRS has been second to none. I want to offer my personal thanks to our Chairman Colln Joseph and to all the members of Council and Officers for their leadership over the past 12 months, and particularly at this time of existential challenge for our community.

It has been my deepest desire to do everything within my powers to offer spiritual leadership at this time of challenge, and to do my tachlis bit to contribute to the financial situation. This is why, back in May, I offered to take a 20% cut in my pay and hours for a period of 6 months to contribute to the stop-gap measures, giving the entire community, led by Officers and Council, the opportunity to explore every possible avenue in facing our immediate financial challenge. It was to my great regret that this offer was rejected by Council back in May.

As you may imagine, the past 4 months have been very difficult for me, personally. Despite my usual positivity and resilience, it has been a real struggle to carry out my regular responsibilities at SWESRS and to fulfil all aspects of my rabbinic role whilst at the same time dealing with the stress of receiving a 'Possible redundancy' letter back in April, and being engaged in ongoing redundancy negotiations with Officers all the way through to these past few days. I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for the many expressions of concern and support that I have received from members of the community over these past few months, which have made all the difference, kept me sane, and kept me going. At the same time, I have had to witness the distress of countless congregants who have been truly devastated at the thought of losing their full-time rabbi yet again, and doing my best to reassure them.

I am truly delighted at the new developments currently being explored, that my offer of taking a reduction in pay and hours is once more being considered, and, of course, that the redundancy of the full-time rabbinic position is now off the table. At the same time, I question whether the redundancy proposal could have been avoided from the start.

In my AGM Alonim article, I wrote about the important insights I gained at Chagigah, the recent Reform Judaism Biennial Conference, where I attended the Re-Thinking Synagogue Engagement & Finance track. We learned that transparency, communication and engagement are the key principles that underpin finding successful and creative solutions to the financial challenges that so many synagogues face.

I pray that this AGM will prove an opportunity for such transparency and communication. That all of us will engage in open discussion, listening to each other with respect. That the efforts of the current Council and Officers will be celebrated, on this night of the AGM when we hold our leadership to account.

Tonight I trust you will vote in a Council with the skill and vision to take our community forward.

Finally, I pray with all my heart, that each and every member of SWESRS will leave this AGM with a renewed commitment to engage in the building, sustaining and flourishing of this community, in whatever way you personally can contribute, be that by stepping up to help with fund-raising, volunteering as a lay-leader, joining the Care team, offering your professional expertise in finance, strategy, education or any other aspect of community life.

There is so much potential waiting to be unlocked here at Oaks Lane. We stand at the brink of an exciting new chapter in our proud 60 year history as a holy community. Let us move forward together, transforming our present challenge into a stronger, brighter and better future.

Rabbi Lisa Barrett

APPENDIX C

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The year since our last AGM has been very much mixed with achievements, successes and disappointment.

A number of initiatives such as Neshamah services and Torah lunches were brought in by Rabbi Lisa and these are continuing successfully. In community matters she has been very active in not only re-vitalizing the Care Team which is running well but has added the yahrzeit report initiative, which is being carried out by a small team of volunteers, which has been received well on the whole and has meant we have been able to gain additional information about our members. This has helped us to offer more pastoral support – mainly from Rabbi Lisa, but also from members of the care team with more regular “chats” on the telephone. The Rabbi has once again spent many hours on pastoral visits and very regrettably officiating at funerals and stone-settings.

Rabbi Michael Heilbron once again joined us for High Holy Day services and will be doing so again this year. We also had the services of Rabbi Benji Stanley who joined us for Rosh Hashanah prior to taking up his post at Westminster Synagogue. On Yom Kippur morning we were joined by Rabbi Laura Janner Klausner who is Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism. She had an incredibly busy morning participating at various services including giving two sermons.

As I write this report in June, it suddenly reminds me the High Holy days will soon be here but before that will be our wonderful choral Selichot service. On 10th June 2018 the SWESRS choir concert will be in tribute to Ian Jacobs who has been choirmaster for 20 years. A very modest, dedicated professional who has worked hard to keep SWESRS choir the envy of synagogues. A hearty Mazeltov to Ian on this achievement.

Another special individual mention must go to Sheila Chiat for her tenacity and hard work in co-ordinating and creating a programme on the Holocaust for schools which was hosted here over 3 days in February with about 200 schoolchildren in attendance. It is hoped that the attendance will be double next year. Of course thanks also must go to a band of volunteers who made the whole event run smoothly.

The final special mention must go to Nina Young for her hard work and catering skills for the Tuesday Lunch Club which has become extremely popular. Once again thanks go to her band of volunteers and speakers who provide the entertainment who help make it a thoroughly enjoyable few hours.

The B'nei mitzvah programme continues to run well including the erev Shabbat chavurahs under the care of Rabbi Lisa and Lucy Nuttgens, although we lost the services of Rabbi Adam Frankenberg at the beginning of this year. A mentoring programme by the post b'nei mitzvah group of young people to assist and support our b'nei mitzvah students started last September. This has been a success and some of the mentors have also leyned at Shabbat morning services.

In January of this year we welcomed New Essex Masorti Synagogue to Oaks Lane and they hold services in the Community Centre on Shabbat mornings and also on some festivals. We have entertained them at kiddushim and hope to share some events in the future.

They have also integrated well into our security team which has been strengthened by their team of volunteers. We lost the services of Ross Juggler as head of security due to business commitments. We thank him for all his hard work during his years of service and welcome Jason Borkett who kindly took over the role. Many thanks to the whole team for keeping us safe every week of the year.

We have been committed to continuing our ongoing refurbishment programme when finance has allowed it or we have received a grant or donation. This year we have carried out substantial electrical re-wiring so that we are fully compliant. We also now have an integrated audio/visual system in the functions hall. The work is ongoing on our updated website and hope to have live streaming in the not too distant future.

We also said farewell at High Holy days last year to Omkar who for many years was as our caretaker. At the same time we welcomed our new facilities coordinator Junifer who has fitted into the newly created role very well. As you walk round the premises it is very noticeable the amount of work he has already undertaken in repairs and painting.

You are aware that Norwood are leaving us here at SWESRS on 2nd October 2018. This departure was unexpected and disappointing since they only signed the lease in December 2017 after 7 months of negotiation. Having taken professional advice, we were informed, that it may take some considerable time to find a suitable tenant to replace Norwood. There have been many initiatives already undertaken to try and resolve this major income stream problem and the trustees will be continuing this work for the foreseeable future. Once again a very special note of thanks to the generous response to our appeal.

Our thanks go to not only the many volunteers without whom this synagogue could not function, but also our honorary officers and council who spend many unseen hours working on behalf of the synagogue. You all know who you are, thank you so very much. Also, thank you to Deborah and Janine in the synagogue office. I would challenge anyone to spend a day in the office to experience how difficult it is to work with so many interruptions.

Colin Joseph