

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

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2017
for
Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

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

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

**Contents of the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017**

	Page
Report of the Trustees	1 to 2
Independent Examiner's Report	3
Statement of Financial Activities	4
Statement of Financial Position	5 to 6
Notes to the Financial Statements	7 to 13
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	14 to 15

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2017. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

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

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves policy

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

The policy relating to the level of reserves is monitored by the Executive on an on-going basis and appropriate recommendations made to the Board.

As Treasurer I have made it a priority to continue to tackle our annual deficit in a number of ways. The Board agreed to this and through their hard work in monitoring carefully their own budgets, as well as that of the Synagogue's, our deficit for the year stands at £81,096 as against the previous two years of £95,189 (excluding a legacy of £53,619) and £99,820. Whilst the further reduction is welcome, and reflects the Board's reasonable and prudent judgement on issues, there is much further work being done as reflected in the ten year financial plan presented at last year's AGM and updated since.

Much of the deficit relates to activities that we chose to undertake, with the knowledge that we have significant funds available due to legacies received. At the end of 2017 the total of our investments and net current assets amounted to £244,243.

It is worth noting that:

1. Income relating to subscriptions has increased by more than £9,000 this year. While this has been partially the result of an increase in the subscription rate the Membership Treasurer and Administrator, with help from me and other Board members, made further concerted efforts in collecting subscriptions and in reviewing all reduced subscriptions and, where possible, asking members in that situation to review their contribution to subscriptions. The Board is always sympathetic to members who suffer financial hardship; however, I have to report that the synagogue is losing about £6000 in income per annum from members who have not indicated that they suffer such hardship but nevertheless underpay their subscriptions or do not increase their standing orders from year to year, even after several requests. £6,000 has also been written off as bad subscription debts from previous years.
2. The introduction, in January 2017, of a Direct Debit payment system has resulted in more timely payments and a reduction in collection costs. Some 25% of members were paying their subscription by this method by the end of 2017. We also contacted all those members who are not currently signed up to Gift Aid to ask them to do so, in particular higher rate tax payers.
3. We have reviewed our investments and, apart from an investment in an interest bearing bond, as much of our liquid assets as possible are now invested in interest-bearing bank accounts but limited in any one bank to below the maximum allowed under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. We intend to continue this prudent investment policy in the coming year.
4. Throughout 2017 management accounts were presented to the Board on a bi-monthly basis thus allowing the Board to make more informed and timely financial decisions.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

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

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Induction and training of new trustees

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

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

Training sessions for all trustees are held each year covering key governance topics.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

08248096 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1149738

Registered office

Roman Avenue
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS8 2AN

Trustees

P Brook
J Chapman - appointed 25.10.17
D J Israel
E Prins - resigned 10.5.17
S Marcus
E Cohen - resigned 10.5.17
B Levy
J Narodetsky
Dr D A Mogendorff
J C Lewis
S J Nelson

Company Secretaries

Dr D A Mogendorff
M Thornfield

Independent examiner

Jack Posner
Leon & Company
Chartered Accountants
100 High Ash Drive
Alwoodley
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS17 8RE

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

.....
Dr D A Mogendorff - Trustee

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Sinai Synagogue, Leeds**

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017 set out on pages four to thirteen.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Jack Posner
Leon & Company
Chartered Accountants
100 High Ash Drive
Alwoodley
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS17 8RE

Date:

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31.12.17 Total funds £	31.12.16 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	149,728	14,738	164,466	206,944
Charitable activities					
General charitable, religious activities etc.	5	5,057	-	5,057	4,281
Other trading activities	3	15,961	-	15,961	18,626
Investment income	4	2,129	-	2,129	3,375
Total		172,875	14,738	187,613	233,226
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		10,611	-	10,611	7,860
Charitable activities					
General charitable, religious activities etc.	6	241,361	16,737	258,098	266,936
Total		251,972	16,737	268,709	274,796
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(79,097)	(1,999)	(81,096)	(41,570)
Transfers between funds	16	(1,999)	1,999	-	-
Net movement in funds		(81,096)	-	(81,096)	(41,570)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		1,292,234	-	1,292,234	1,333,804
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		1,211,138	-	1,211,138	1,292,234

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Statement of Financial Position
At 31 December 2017

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31.12.17 Total funds £	31.12.16 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12	966,895	-	966,895	979,350
Investments	13	75,529	-	75,529	75,000
		<u>1,042,424</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,042,424</u>	<u>1,054,350</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	13,942	14,384	28,326	41,085
Cash at bank		215,600	-	215,600	271,506
		<u>229,542</u>	<u>14,384</u>	<u>243,926</u>	<u>312,591</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(60,828)	(14,384)	(75,212)	(74,707)
		<u>168,714</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>168,714</u>	<u>237,884</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		<u>1,211,138</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,211,138</u>	<u>1,292,234</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		<u>1,211,138</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,211,138</u>	<u>1,292,234</u>
NET ASSETS					
		<u>1,211,138</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,211,138</u>	<u>1,292,234</u>
FUNDS	16				
Unrestricted funds				1,211,138	1,292,234
Restricted funds				-	-
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>1,211,138</u>	<u>1,292,234</u>

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Statement of Financial Position - continued
At 31 December 2017

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 479A of the Companies Act 2006 relating to subsidiary charitable companies for the year ended 31 December 2017.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2017 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

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

.....
D J Israel -Trustee

.....
Dr D A Mogendorff -Trustee

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

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

Tangible fixed assets

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

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

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

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

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

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

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

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

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Donations	25,580	27,744
Gift aid	26,974	22,830
Legacies	-	53,619
Subscriptions	111,912	102,751
	<u>164,466</u>	<u>206,944</u>

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Functions and catering	6,381	7,326
Plaques, books and videos	-	710
Introduction to Judaism course	-	1,001
100 Club	2,300	2,660
High holyday	-	710
Sinai Chronicle	1,857	1,566
Miscellaneous fund raising	-	753
Income from solar panels	5,423	3,900
	<u>15,961</u>	<u>18,626</u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Deposit account interest	2,129	3,375
	<u>2,129</u>	<u>3,375</u>

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Contributions	5,057	4,281
	<u>5,057</u>	<u>4,281</u>

6. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct costs	Grant funding of activities (See note 7)	Support costs (See note 8)	Totals
	£	£	£	£
General charitable, religious activities etc.	128,106	20,720	109,272	258,098
	<u>128,106</u>	<u>20,720</u>	<u>109,272</u>	<u>258,098</u>

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

7. GRANTS PAYABLE

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
General charitable, religious activities etc.	<u>20,720</u>	<u>18,412</u>

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

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Highholy Day Appeal	10,582	8,547
Board of deputies	3,155	1,455
Bursary	3,853	2,129
Donations	130	281
LJRC	3,000	6,000
	<u>20,720</u>	<u>18,412</u>

8. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management	Finance	Depreciation	Governance	Totals
	£	£	£	costs	£
				£	
General charitable, religious activities etc.	<u>66,131</u>	<u>372</u>	<u>12,784</u>	<u>29,985</u>	<u>109,272</u>

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	3,853	5,040
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>12,905</u>	<u>12,945</u>

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 December 2017 nor for the year ended 31 December 2016.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 December 2017 nor for the year ended 31 December 2016.

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

11. STAFF COSTS

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

	31.12.17	31.12.16
Staff	8	8
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31.12.17	31.12.16
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017**

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £	Improvements to property £	Plant and machinery £
COST			
At 1 January 2017	1,005,230	121,207	3,147
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 December 2017	<u>1,005,230</u>	<u>121,207</u>	<u>3,147</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 January 2017	138,468	19,369	2,185
Charge for year	4,433	4,303	589
At 31 December 2017	<u>142,901</u>	<u>23,672</u>	<u>2,774</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 December 2017	<u>862,329</u>	<u>97,535</u>	<u>373</u>
At 31 December 2016	<u>866,762</u>	<u>101,838</u>	<u>962</u>

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 January 2017	103,604	7,931	1,241,119
Additions	-	450	450
At 31 December 2017	<u>103,604</u>	<u>8,381</u>	<u>1,241,569</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 January 2017	95,364	6,383	261,769
Charge for year	2,763	817	12,905
At 31 December 2017	<u>98,127</u>	<u>7,200</u>	<u>274,674</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 December 2017	<u>5,477</u>	<u>1,181</u>	<u>966,895</u>
At 31 December 2016	<u>8,240</u>	<u>1,548</u>	<u>979,350</u>

Freehold property is based on a valuation which is made up of £700,000 land and £305,000 property. Of the £305,000 property valuation, £220,000 is depreciated at 2% cost basis and £85,000 is not depreciated as the trustees, in their best judgement, have reserved this as the residual value of the property.

13. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	31.12.17 £	31.12.16 £
Fixed rate bonds	<u>75,529</u>	<u>75,000</u>

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

13. **FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS - continued**

There were no investment assets outside the UK.

Investments (neither listed nor unlisted) were as follows:

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Yorkshire Bank fixed term deposit	75,529	75,000
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Trade debtors	4,155	15,760
Other debtors	20,962	23,180
Due from general fund	-	-
Due from designated fund	-	-
Due from restricted fund	-	-
Accrued income	94	55
Prepayments	3,115	2,090
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	<u>28,326</u>	<u>41,085</u>

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

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Trade creditors	20,019	19,835
Social security and other taxes	8,776	10,320
Net Salaries Creditor	5,882	8,171
Other creditors	18,855	19,701
Accrued expenses	21,680	16,680
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	<u>75,212</u>	<u>74,707</u>

16. **MOVEMENT IN FUNDS**

	At 1.1.17	Net	Transfers	At 31.12.17
	£	movement	between	£
		in funds	funds	
		£	£	
Unrestricted funds				
General funds	1,292,234	(80,303)	(793)	1,211,138
Designated funds	-	1,206	(1,206)	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	1,292,234	(79,097)	(1,999)	1,211,138
Restricted funds				
Restricted funds	-	(1,999)	1,999	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,292,234</u>	<u>(81,096)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,211,138</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	171,669	(251,972)	(80,303)
Designated funds	1,206	-	1,206
	<u>172,875</u>	<u>(251,972)</u>	<u>(79,097)</u>
Restricted funds			
Restricted funds	14,738	(16,737)	(1,999)
	<u>187,613</u>	<u>(268,709)</u>	<u>(81,096)</u>

17. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2017.

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

	31.12.17 £	31.12.16 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	25,580	27,744
Gift aid	26,974	22,830
Legacies	-	53,619
Subscriptions	111,912	102,751
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	164,466	206,944
Other trading activities		
Functions and catering	6,381	7,326
Plaques, books and videos	-	710
Introduction to Judaism course	-	1,001
100 Club	2,300	2,660
High holyday	-	710
Sinai Chronicle	1,857	1,566
Miscellaneous fund raising	-	753
Income from solar panels	5,423	3,900
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	15,961	18,626
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	2,129	3,375
Charitable activities		
Contributions	5,057	4,281
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total incoming resources	187,613	233,226
EXPENDITURE		
Other trading activities		
Functions and catering	7,607	4,099
Plaques, books and videos	-	223
100 Club	2,800	3,200
Sinai Chronicle	51	67
Miscellaneous	153	271
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	10,611	7,860
Charitable activities		
Salaries	110,921	114,540
Social security	8,441	12,071
Pensions	5,449	1,296
Expenses and activities - general	1,490	4,866
Mileage	-	168
Travel	1,805	616
Grants to institutions	20,720	18,412
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	148,826	151,969
Support costs		

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Sinai Synagogue, Leeds

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

	31.12.17	31.12.16
	£	£
Management		
Salaries	29,544	28,310
Social security	1,832	1,181
Pensions	52	-
Rates and water	1,104	1,198
Insurance	7,601	7,389
Light and heat	9,742	11,501
Telephone	825	1,425
Postage and stationery	2,802	3,812
Sundries	2,859	2,982
Cemetery costs	1,638	1,588
Training	317	1,914
Maintenance and repairs	5,647	12,039
Computer consumables	605	415
Security and monitoring	1,440	59
Computer equipment	123	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	66,131	73,813
Finance		
Bank charges	372	6
Depreciation		
Freehold property	4,433	4,433
Improvements to property	4,303	4,303
Plant and machinery	589	629
Fixtures and fittings	2,764	2,809
Computer equipment	695	769
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	12,784	12,943
Governance costs		
Auditors' remuneration	3,853	5,040
Affiliation fees	26,122	23,152
Professional fees	10	13
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	29,985	28,205
Total resources expended	<hr/>	<hr/>
	268,709	274,796
Net expenditure	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>(81,096)</u>	<u>(41,570)</u>

SINAI ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Sinai Synagogue
Roman Avenue, Leeds LS8 2AN
T: 0113 266 5256
E: info@sinaileeds.uk
W: www.sinaileeds.uk

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

CONTENTS

The Sinai Vision.....	3
Chair’s Report.....	4
Reform Judaism.....	5
Leeds Jewish Representative Council.....	6
Board of Deputies.....	7
<i>Tefillah</i>	
• Senior Rabbi’s Report.....	9
• Associate Rabbi’s Report.....	10
• Student Rabbi’s Report.....	11
• Services, Rituals and Wardens.....	11
• Service streaming and audio upgrades.....	12
• <i>Chevrah Kadisha</i> – preparing for burial.....	13
• <i>Kiddushim</i>	
<i>Limmud</i> - Education for children, youth and adults.....	13
<i>Social Action and Tikkun Olam</i>	
• Social Action.....	15
• Tikkun Olam.....	16
• Connexions	16
• Security	17
Community activities (<i>Kehilla</i>)	
• <i>Engaging Judaism</i>	18
• Developing the Sinai Website and Facebook Group.....	18
• Gardening.....	19
• Sinai Knitting Circle and Embroidery Group.....	19
• Book Group and library.....	19
• <i>Chavurah</i> suppers – community dining.....	19
• Israeli dancing	20
• Social events and fundraising at Sinai.....	21
Other Reports	
• Membership Welcomes.....	21
• Membership figures.....	22
• Honorary Treasurer.....	22
• Governance Committee	23

THE SINAI VISION

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

- *Tefillah* – Prayer
- *Limmud* - Learning
- *Tikkun Olam* - Repair of the World

Through the core values we will:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chair's Report

As this is my final report as Chair of Sinai Synagogue, I would like to thank the whole Sinai community for the privilege and honour they granted me to be chair. Two years is not enough time to really do the work needed in this role, and this is a cause I will pursue to allow future chairs the time to make and implement changes in the role. Having said that, and as I said in my report last year, it has been as exciting, challenging and rewarding as I hoped it would.

My first comment has to be about our dedicated, fantastic and inspiring Rabbinic staff team: Rabbi Ian Morris and Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz. Just before summer Rabbi Esther moved to the United States of America to take up a new rabbinic post. In the few short years she was with us she introduced new ways of prayer, thoughtful ways of interacting with our members and challenged how we thought about our progressive Judaism.

Then, as the summer came to an end, Rabbi Morris announced that, due to the signs of early onset dementia, he too would be retiring from Sinai. After 21 years as our Rabbi this came as quite a shock to the Sinai family. Rabbi Morris arrived at a time when the community was at its lowest, had lost its progressive way and needed to be inspired. He not only helped the community turn all these things round, he also helped us find new depths in our volunteers, new ways to proudly take ownership of our Reform Judaism and empowered members of the community to engage with the life and ritual of Sinai as never before. He is being, and will be, sorely missed.

To lose two *Rabbonim* in one year would be a challenge to any community. Which neatly brings me to my second important comment: the members of Sinai. Without doubt the most incredible thing I have seen in my two years as Chair has been how members have stood up to be counted and taken on work and responsibilities to not only maintain life at Sinai, but build upon it too. I'm pleased to say that too many people are involved now in so many different aspects of Sinai life that it would be impractical to name them all. Save to say that to every one of them, the Sinai family and I owe you a huge debt of gratitude. Thank you.

One challenge I stated in my report last year is the centrality of the Board in everything we do. Work began this year to try and address this through our *Engaging Judaism* project. A group of (naturally) volunteers have agreed to engage the membership in one-to-one conversations to create better and more meaningful relationships amongst our members. By becoming more engaged in what people think, feel and want from Sinai, combined with the research done over the last few years, we want to take Sinai from simply being a place where things happen to you (services, support in bereavement, having life-cycle activities etc) to a place where the things that happen are a part of what people want, that make the members feel a deeper part of what's happening and even help them to feel able to supply services and activities themselves. In the jargon, we want to become less transactional – "I pay a membership fee and I expect a 'service' in return" - and more relational - "My community and its members better understand me and together we are able to create what is needed". Jargon: well, yes. Deeply important for our future: I absolutely believe so.

These volunteers could not do their work without the support, guidance and knowledge of our staff team: Gwynneth Lewis, Heidi Sizer, Andy Ingleby, Naomi Goldman, our religion school teachers and team of individual support staff supporting young people becoming *bar* and *batmitzvah*. As our Rabbinic team has reduced they have taken on additional work above and beyond their hours. The community is grateful for all their help and support in doing this.

Leading a team of volunteers is never an easy task. And it would be crass to suggest that every element of being chair at, and in-between, Board meetings has been a breeze. However, what was

always clear in every discussion, debate and argument we had was that it was all, in the greatest Jewish tradition, a *makhloket l'shem shamayim* - an argument for the sake of heaven. We had some tough issues to tackle this year but it was always done with the best interests of Sinai in everyone's heart. To everyone who served on Board with me this year: it was a pleasure and honour to lead you.

Finally, I am proud to repeat the thanks I gave last year to CST for all the work they do helping us keep our members safe. And as Chair I would be lost without the support of Reform Judaism, both locally and nationally. In terms of staff, fellow chairs and the Northern Network, there is always an answer and a solution just a phone call away.

David Israel

Reform Judaism UK

Sinai remains an important constituent member of the Movement for Reform Judaism UK <https://www.reformjudaism.org.uk>. and is well represented at national level, through the Northern Network, led by Sarita Robinson, and via a number of working groups. All members are welcome to step forward to participate in events both educational and social, tailored to your particular needs or interests, and which are regularly advertised in the Sinai Chronicle and in our weekly electronic or emailed newsletter. We urge you to get involved! Below is a report kindly sent to us from RJUK

- Reform Judaism is a community of communities, a multiplier for each congregation, creating and delivering Reform Judaism in all its diversity, underpinning growth and well-being and devolving best practice across all our communities for their and our future together.
- 2017 was a year of renewal and innovation with some exciting key appointments with a particular focus on working with young people, students and young adults.
- *Shirei Chagigah*, our biennial music conference, took place in July, with four days of workshops, concerts and prayer hosted by Radlett Reform Synagogue and Finchley Reform Synagogue and attended by people from five countries; a perfect example of Reform Judaism and communities working together.
- Northern *Chagigah*, our residential weekend for northern communities was an uplifting gathering of 120 people from 11 out of the 13 communities in the region. Sinai was particularly strongly represented. To quote Sherry Ashworth from Manchester: "Reform Judaism in Scotland and the north of England is on an upswing – we are growing in numbers, enthusiasm, learning and commitment."
- Josh Martin was appointed as Informal Education Director, taking responsibility for RSY-Netzer and Jeneration, and our young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, as well as helping Reform communities to develop their informal education work for young people.
- We have deepened our capacity to work with young people with mental health challenges through the appointment of Mark Greenfield, who joins Sharon Daniels as part of our young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing team. This unique, nationally trend-setting, work responds to the needs of our communities and to our desire to provide a safe and inclusive environment for participants on our programmes for young people.

- Chaplain Rabbi Daniel Lichman has joined us and, together with Rabbi Leah Jordan from Liberal Judaism, are supporting our students around the country as chaplains to the Alliance for Progressive Judaism.
- Maya Skaarbrevik began her important work as Jeneration Fieldworker working with Jewish students on campus to provide Progressive-led Shabbat dinners, social events, student training, residential weekends and trips abroad, and that important warm feeling of community. Jeneration and the Alliance Chaplaincy are already working closely together to ensure that our students are supported and represented on campus by a strong Reform voice. Our work with young adults beyond university continues with the appointment of Yael Roberts as Reform Judaism's Young Adults Community Organiser, providing inspirational learning and programming for young adults across the country.
- 2017 saw the ordination of six remarkable and exceptional new rabbis for Reform communities from Leo Baeck College. Our partnership with the college – the heart of the intellectual and spiritual life of the Progressive Jewish community – is a key part of our work.
- Over 300 people of all ages celebrated 70 years of Reform youth movements at the Sternberg Centre in September.
- Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism, and our community rabbis across the country, represent a strong voice for the Movement and our values in wider society. The public profile of Reform Judaism flourishes with expanding media coverage. Increasingly, the Jewish voice in broadcast media is a positive and engaging Reform voice.
- 2017 saw tea parties and telethons reaching out to our synagogue members as part of our Communities that Care Initiative. Communities are responding well and have reported that these events have even helped to shape care provision. We are delighted that Sinai has been part of both this and our leadership initiative.
- 2017 ended with planning underway for a conference on Combatting Loneliness and Isolation early in 2018, which would look at practical ways to combat loneliness and isolation, and *Chagigah* – our biennial weekend away in June celebrating Reform Judaism and being part of something bigger. *Chagigah* will see the launch our newest Initiative: Financial Sustainability. This will focus on developing and co-creating new approaches, learning from different experiences in the UK and around the world.

Martin Dix, RJUK Communications Manager

Leeds Jewish Representative Council (LJRC)

Sinai Synagogue, as a Designated Organisation in common with other Leeds synagogues, has three representatives on the Council. In that role we try to influence decisions that affect Sinai whenever we can. Our involvement includes attending Council and other meetings. We continued to have excellent relationships with the LJRC's current President, Laurence Saffer, as well as with Executive Director Susie Gordon (who promotes Sinai activities through the LJRC website and newsletter) and with Programme Director Ann Dewar. In 2017 a number of members of Sinai participated in a consultation exercise covering the future strategic direction for the Leeds Jewish Community.

Dolf Mogendorff

Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD)

Editor's note: Sinai currently sends two deputies to the Board, Marilyn Trovato and Nick Chapler-Smyth. Elections for the next three-year term are due at our AGM and anyone interested in being nominated should contact honsec@sinaileeds.uk in advance for information. In addition, any Sinai member wishing to put a question to the BOD, or chat about the BOD, is most welcome to email Marilyn on malka27@icloud.com.

Rationale - a recap

The BOD protects and defends the rights and freedoms of British Jewry and plays a vital role in the community's relationship with Government, the media, religious and educational institutions, changes to legislation, campaigns by special interest groups and issues concerning Israel and which all require a concerted response... Here, then, is a brief summary of some of the work that has been or is being tackled by the BOD up to the present time.

Community to examine measures against harassment

The BOD, The Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) and Jewish Women's Aid held a consultative meeting to discuss the issue of sexual harassment in the UK Jewish Community (UKJC). Measures are being examined to ensure that every person in our community feels respected, secure and protected

Recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital

BOD and the Senior Vice President welcomed the USA's decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital in the hope that other countries would follow suit – Israelis and Palestinians alike should take the opportunity to return to the negotiating table to address the final status issues of mutual recognition, security borders, refugees and Jerusalem, to forge a lasting peace

Balfour Centenary

A hundred years after Britain's Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour issued the Balfour Declaration, his present-day successor Boris Johnson told a BOD Parliamentary Reception celebrating the centenary, that he recognised 'the magic, the genius and miracle of Israel' and also said 'The Balfour Declaration, whatever its defects and unfulfilled nature, paved the way for one of the greatest political triumphs of the 20th century - the creation of the State of Israel, which is a democracy, a liberal society, a beacon of hope and which shares the values in which I passionately believe in. This is an amazing achievement by humanity'.

The BOD and the JLC hosted Prime Minister Netanyahu and the UKJC's communal leadership as part of the Centenary. PM Netanyahu engaged directly with British Jewish leaders and reinforced his overriding message 'Israel stands as the vanguard of democracy against a backdrop of extremism sweeping across the Middle-East'.

Invest in Peace

The BOD launched this programme in tandem with the church umbrella body 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland' to support Israelis and Palestinians who reach across the divide for reconciliation. The BOD continues to interact through all levels of government and has worked internationally through relations with foreign embassies and links with the Board's Jewish partner organisations overseas.

Trends in synagogue membership

A report commissioned by the BOD and carried out by the Institute of Jewish Policy Research (JPR) shows that affiliated synagogue membership has further declined in the UK. The only mainstream organisation recorded as having increased its membership is Masorti Judaism, whose Chief Executive Matt Plen added that they were successful in attracting young families which was good for future

growth. On the other hand synagogue membership in the Charedi community had risen by 139% since 1990!

Legal professionals' advice

Lady Hale, President of the Supreme Court, launches the BOD *Family Life and Customs* Booklet Speaking at the Supreme Court, Lady Hale, congratulated the BOD for producing a document 'for all those legal professionals seeking to understand the UKJC'. The booklet is intended for lawyers and judges who are working with Jewish clients and who need a trusted resource providing baseline understanding of Jewish practices. If you would like a copy to pass on to a colleague let me know.

The UK Government's Organ Donation Consultation

The President Jonathan Arkush commented 'Saving life is one of the most important values in Judaism. On behalf of the UKJC we support means to increase organ donation and relieve suffering. We urge our community and the public at large to respond by helping us to opt in. Do not force us to opt out. The Government's consultation on presumed consent, risks counterproductive and unintended consequences'

The UK's first Holocaust Memorial Building planned for London

The BOD was instrumental in overseeing the selection of this new landmark, expected to be completed by 2021. The site will be in the Victoria Tower Gardens next to the Houses of Parliament and aims to be a 'living place' not just a monument to something of the past. Visitors will be offered an immersive journey and a 'sensory experience' throughout the site

Antisemitism: 2017/2018

Reports of increasing numbers of antisemitic incidents continued to be monitored and condemned throughout 2017 and beyond. The BOD in tandem with the JLC convened a March 2018 rally in Trafalgar Square ("Enough is enough") which included Labour MPs and hundreds of activists and others in an effort to stamp out antisemitism in the Labour Party. The BOD of course opposes antisemitism wherever it appears in UK political discourse. BOD's Jonathan Arkush and JLC Chair Jonathan Goldstein agreed to meet Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn and insisted that the emphasis of the meeting would be on actions, not words. In Scotland, it was reported in December 2017 that Nicola Sturgeon has taken tangible steps against antisemitism. Following a meeting in Edinburgh at which antisemitism, Israel and relations with the Scottish National Party were discussed, Jonathan Arkush said 'he was glad to have held his first meeting with the First Minister who has extended the hand of friendship to the Scottish Jewish Community'. Developing signs of antisemitism across Europe were noted, particularly in Hungary with the impending elections which (in 2018) saw Viktor Orban's ruling *Fidesz* party win by a landslide. The BOD was very concerned at some messages at the heart of Viktor Orban's campaign as there were anti-Semitic undertones in a speech reflecting classic anti-Jewish tropes. Its veneration of pro-Nazi collaborators, antisemitic politicians and policies have set Hungary apart from the European Union and the BOD commented that we can only hope that he intends to move on from this divisive campaign.

And finally Elections for President and Vice-President of the BOD will be held in May 2018. The leader in situ Jonathan Arkush has been a superlative all-singing and all-dancing President but has decided to stand down

Marilyn Trovato, Sinai Deputy to BOD

Tefillah

Sinai members will be well aware that we said a sad goodbye to Rabbi Ian Morris at the end of December 2017 following his ill-health early retirement. He is at the time of writing taking a well-earned period of rest with his wife Carey in his home city of Melbourne, Australia. We recognised his 21 years of service to our community by appointing him to the honorary post of Rabbi Emeritus at Sinai at a special service on 13 January 2018, where he gave us his final address from the bimah:

For the last 30 odd years, I have sat at one keyboard or another and tapped out my ruminations about various situations and topics which I thought needed to be shared with “The Jews in the Pews”. But this one is, without doubt, the most difficult address I have ever had to draft. The only upside that I can conceive of in this scenario (for both you and me) is that I will never have to do this again.

As I speak to you now, I am acutely aware that this “farewell” is going to be for “keeps”. And, not surprisingly, I am struggling to keep a handle on all of the implications which flow from it in the next few minutes.

Some 60 odd years ago, I was born into the world of Progressive Judaism. I was, courtesy of my parents, nursed at its warm bosom and educated and socialized under its broad wings. And do you know the really weird thing? Most of the time it made pretty good and comfortable sense to me..... which most of the time meant that it was, by and large, a place that I was happy to be.

I have been privileged to serve as a rabbinic student in a congregation in New York, and as the rabbi of one of the most geographically isolated Progressive Jewish congregations in the world in Perth, Western Australia. That was followed by a lovely 9 years in Adelaide, South Australia, where our nuclear family came on the scene.

Who could have dreamt that the next 20+ years would be spent in the tropical splendour of Leeds? And who could have imagined that an otherwise intelligent woman would be prepared to schlep around after an idiot rabbi who foolishly took these absurd positions? The plain fact is that I have been blessed, supported and indulged in so many different ways. And the reality is that I will never be able to adequately requite Carey for her love and support over the years.

I truly do not know how to properly thank all of those who have been the enablers of my insanity. So, all that I can do at the moment, is to say “Thank You”.

Sinai has been a fantastic home. I am both comforted and grateful that I will be leaving a Progressive Jewish congregation in Leeds which knows its mind and understands its seminally important role in the future of Anglo-Jewry, especially in the North. I am gratified beyond words that Sinai stands as a beacon for the direction of the next generations of Anglo-Jewish life, and I know that my successors will carry that torch for years to come.

You are all well aware that medical considerations have influenced the timing of today’s service. These things are never diarized and planned, but I have never been one to pretend that reality is not reality. And my interest was in making a dignified exit while it was still possible to do so.

I thank you for your love, support, caring and good wishes, and will always be grateful for it.

Rabbi Ian D. Morris

Associate Rabbi's Report

We said a sad goodbye during the summer of 2017 to Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz, together with her lovely family of Dave, Jonathan and Noa, who left Sinai to join her new pulpit, Agudas Achim, in Iowa City. Since then those of us on Facebook have followed her progress keenly, and continue to wish her well in the USA. We miss her wisdom and her musical ability! It seems fitting in this Annual Report to include her valedictory note to the Sinai Board in July 2017.

Also, members wishing to view Rabbi Esther's final sermon from the Bimah should log in to the Sinai Website and the following link <https://www.sinaileeds.uk/services/sermons/262-rabbi-esthers-final-sermon-at-sinai-july-2017>. (Paper copies are available on request from the office).

Dear all,

It is a bitter-sweet thing to write my last Board Report as Sinai Synagogue's Associate Rabbi. Sinai Synagogue has been part of my life (and my family's lives) for almost six years. I remember coming to serve the community for the High Holidays in 2012 and being immediately struck by what a kind and caring community this was. Being hosted by several families over the two years of my rabbinic internship brought me much closer to many of the lay leaders and involved congregants. There's nothing like sitting in someone's kitchen over a cup of tea.

I was equally thrilled when a number of people from Sinai attended my Ordination in July 2013. My family has shared many important milestones with this community: the *Brit Milah* of my son, the birth and Baby Naming of my daughter, as well as a number of professional milestones. As I said at the AGM, a first pulpit is a little like a first love. You grow, you learn, you love and it does not leave you unaffected. I will carry those experiences and relationships with me for the rest of my rabbinic life and for that I am deeply grateful.

I've fallen in love with Yorkshire and am sad to leave it behind. It is truly God's own county and I've been privileged to see some of its highlights, from the Dales to Skipton, from Knaresborough to York. However, I did not need to leave the city boundaries to be impressed with what Yorkshire has to offer: Leeds itself has proven to be a vibrant, multicultural, caring, creative city that offers untapped potential for a progressive, outward-facing rabbinate and Jewish community. Interfaith connections soon turned into interfaith friendships. Real-life, rooted social justice projects with organisations like Mitzvah Day, Leeds Citizens, the Leeds Muslim Youth Forum as well as neighbouring communities such as St John's Church, the *Baab ul Ilm* and *Makkah Masjid* have allowed me to represent Sinai and live out our Jewish values of *tikkun olam*.

Within the Jewish community, I couldn't have wished for a better welcome. Initially, I was quite curious about how I would be received in the wider Leeds Jewish community: a young, female, blonde (!) rabbi. Yet, my Orthodox colleagues have treated me with kindness and respect and the Orthodox synagogues have honoured me with the courtesy of using my rabbinic title in correspondence. I have found the UHC, Etz Chaim and BHH welcoming places and have thoroughly enjoyed collaborating with the MAZCC, with Makor, with *Shaliach* Or Nehushtan, the Jewish Representative Council, the Jewish Welfare Board and the Leeds Jewish Housing Association – especially with regards to the LJHA *Shabbatot* we've run.

It is not possible for me to thank each person individually who has contributed so richly to my rabbinate. Countless acts of kindness and generosity have graced my time here, and I leave as confident as I came that Sinai specifically and the Leeds Jewish Community in general can aspire to great things. I hope I have had the privilege of contributing even a little to its successes. I would,

however, like to take this opportunity to thank my senior colleague, mentor and friend, Rabbi Ian Morris, who has been my steadfast companion and support during this rabbinic journey. I have learnt from his wisdom and calming presence, but, most of all, from his compassion.

Thank you for making this itinerant sojourning rabbi feel so much at home for almost six years. May you go from strength to strength and may God bless the work of your hands.

Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz

Student Rabbi 's report

The past months since September 2017 that I have spent as a student rabbi at Sinai have been varied and enriching. A central part of being a rabbinic student at Leo Baeck College is the way that our learning is interwoven with service to reform communities. Being placed in a synagogue community provides constant opportunities to reflect on the needs of a 21st century Jewish community and I know I will carry much of what I have learnt at Sinai forward with me on my journey.

The question I get asked most often is, "What does an average week look like for a third year rabbinic student?" Well... we are in full time class at Leo Baeck College from Monday to Wednesday. On Thursdays we volunteer or receive training from a communal welfare organisation, and then after the day is finished I get the train to Leeds to teach the Introduction to Judaism class. On Fridays I have had the chance to meet many Sinai members and to work to prepare for *Shabbat* or other events like the *Seder*. Then, I lead *kabbalat shabbat* and once a month attend the *chavurah* supper. On *Shabbat* morning I lead *shacharit*, which is either a traditional service or Sinai's new *b'yachad* service- an intergenerational prayer space that involves a more inclusive *tefillah* and *torah* study for all ages and abilities. Once a month there is also a *Shabbat* study lunch. Topics that have been covered since I started at *shul* include the censorship of Jewish texts and sermons of the Great War. After *Shabbat*, I travel back down to London for classes, ready to return to Leeds a fortnight later! (or sooner if there is a festival!)

Sinai is a fantastically diverse, thoughtful, and kind community. It has been a privilege to work with and get to know so many of you and I look forward to the rest of my time here.

Deborah Blausten

Services, Rituals and Wardens

In July of last year, Sinai said goodbye with a special service and *kiddush* to Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz. Rabbi Hugenholtz has moved to a community in Iowa, USA, where, judging by her Facebook posts, she and her family have settled in well.

Sinai has been fortunate to have had the regular, part-time help of student rabbi Deborah Blausten over the past months (ongoing to June 2018). She and Rabbi Morris made an excellent team over the High Holy Days, supported as usual by congregant lay leaders.

The empty space which was sadly created by Rabbi Morris' early retirement at the end of the calendar year, whilst leaving us feeling somewhat bereft, has been temporarily filled, not only with our student Rabbi leading services - some regular, some intergenerational - but also by our very capable lay leaders.

Sally Raanan continues to organise rotas of congregants who are willing and able to lead services and read *Torah*. Carol Adams coordinates the scheduling of wardens. A word of thanks also to our administrator/bookkeeper Heidi and our caretaker Andy, who are taking care of the necessary logistics every week for *Shabbat* services.

At time of writing, we are preparing for a *shabbat* led by Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers, who will visit us from London, with the support of our movement, Reform Judaism.

In addition to her warden activities, Carol Adams also raised funds this year to repair and clean the silverware belonging to the Torah scrolls. This work is already underway. Further funds are being raised to repair the actual scrolls and discussions have already begun with the *sofer* (scribe) in London as to how best to do this. Thanks to Carol for taking this on and, of course, to all those who donated and made this work possible.

Finally, having gone from two rabbis to none in a short space of time, a huge thank you to everyone in our Sinai community who has led and read (and attend services!). You are very much appreciated and needed until the happy day when Sinai again has a Rabbi to lead our community.

Janet Narodetsky

Service streaming and audio upgrades

This is my last report as a Board member at Sinai as I have served four years and will no longer be on Board by the time this report comes out. I have enjoyed the challenges of trying to help Sinai improve its internal and external communications... but you don't get rid of me that easily, as I'll still be involved in the Sinai website, Facebook activities and the video and audio techie stuff I seem to have inherited. (*see also website article below*).

The live streaming of Sinai services is currently exclusively available to members of Sinai Synagogue who are registered users of the Sinai website. We have had very positive feedback on the live video streaming of Friday and Saturday services from members who are unable to attend but still want to be part of the Shabbat experience and retain a connection to Sinai, even if that is done remotely. Unfortunately, streaming occasionally 'stops' part way through a service, when cameras are switched over, and we are working hard to reduce any such interruptions for remote viewers.

In 2017/18 we spent a large amount of time tackling technical issues and at the same time planning for improvements in picture and audio quality, helped by the introduction of the PA audio system improvements which should be complete by the time you read this report.

For many years I have held the ambition to improve the entire audio system in the sanctuary and the Malcolm Featherman Hall, the latter being particularly challenging in such an echo-filled space. I have been the first port of call for people with issues with the sound at Sinai and have spent 2017 planning and getting several quotes for these improvements, with help from Mike Morton. -These improvements should be fully implemented by the time you read this.

The old system was over twenty years old and had not grown with the demanding multi-use requirements we have in such a dynamic and busy synagogue. We should now have more radio microphones for leading services and for large scale meetings. The most exciting prospect for me (I don't get out much!) is the replacement of the 'gooseneck' microphone on the *bimah* for a more professional model which should sound much better for the congregation and which should be able

to cope with the loud and soft voices of people who are called up... without all the clunking of the microphone needing to be moved.

We have also added more audio facilities in the Malcolm Featherman Hall for plugging CDs and laptops into the sound system and have improved the connection from the Sanctuary to the Hall for better amplification during the High Holy Days.

As with such 'improvements' it is likely that we will have some teething troubles, but please bear with us and do report back to me any issues so I can look into them and continually improve things at Sinai.

Simon Marcus

Chevrah Kadisha – preparing for burial

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

Kiddushim

A regular team of volunteers performs this key part of our community *Tefilla* activity, led by Sally Raanan. Aside from the regular weekly provision, they have been called upon to provide additional spreads to coincide with life-cycle events ranging from *B'nei Mitzvah* to anniversary celebrations, alongside special events such as the leaving gatherings marking the departures in August and December of our two Rabbis. We thank these volunteers for their support. The *Kiddush* team has now become rather depleted and we are always looking for new volunteers to help either for special events or the regular *kiddushim*. We may get to the point where we will be unable to cater for some events due to lack of volunteers, which would be a great shame. If you would like to sponsor your own *Kiddush* or offer to join the team please contact the office for further information.

Limud : Education, Youth and adult study

Early Years

ShabbaTots continued to be successfully run by Sulia Calebi until the end of August, when it was then run by Rhiannon Humphreys and Naomi Goldman, the latter on a voluntary basis. Rabbi Hugenholtz continued to lead family-orientated services until her departure in August, and these attracted a number of early years families. Torah Time services were also held through the year.

Religion School and Makpetzah

There were 15 children registered for Religion School and 6 in Makpetzah, with one child becoming Bar Mitzvah in January. After Rabbi Hugenholtz left Sinai, Gwynneth Lewis took over the teaching of the Jewish Studies element of *Makpetzah*, the *B'nei Mitzvah* programme.

During the first four months of 2017 the Director of Education, along with Emily Lawson, a change management consultant, and Board member Janet Narodetsky, held a community-wide consultation on children's education at Sinai. This resulted in a report being submitted to Board in May and then distributed to the Sinai parents. Recommendations from the consultation were agreed to by Board, which saw the recruitment of adult teachers for Religion School, a new Hebrew curriculum developed by Dr Jo-Ann Myers of the Leo Baeck College, and a new Jewish Studies curriculum co-written by Gwynneth Lewis and Rachelle Sanderson. The final report is available on the synagogue website.

Organised teacher training sessions took place, in particular to bring all members of staff up to date with the changes to the new curricula and the new format for Religion School. Dr Myers visited Sinai specifically to train our Hebrew teachers in the new Hebrew curriculum and has maintained contact with them throughout the year.

Other changes to Religion School have been the introduction of the children taking the sermon slot in the main service at the end of each half term, a monthly *Shabbat B'Yachad*, (intergenerational), service at the beginning of each month and the children joining the main service at the end of their lessons instead of having assembly. All of these changes were made in direct response to the consultation.

Youth Provision

In January 2017, we recruited Sophie Peterman to work alongside Barney Kessler on a job share basis. From January to June they ran a number of Youth events, including movie night and bowling. Unfortunately, both left Sinai in June. However, we were fortunate to see the return of Rhiannon Humphreys from October to the beginning of December. She combined the roles of Early Years Coordinator and Youth Worker, giving us the opportunity to redesign both roles and advertise the Sinai vacancy more widely. We had a number of applications and interviews were held in November and December. We were delighted to be able to offer the combined role to Naomi Goldman, with a starting date of 1 January 2018.

Camps

- With RSY-Netzer we organised and led a Day Camp at Sinai for Primary aged children, during the summer holidays, which was extremely well attended.
- We took part in Mitzvah Day, planting bulbs in pots to be distributed to the elderly and infirm within the Leeds Jewish community.
- RSY-Netzer *Netzafon* weekends.

Adult Education

There were a number of adult learning opportunities organised throughout 2017 including Study Lunches, evening talks given by invited guest speakers, and *Shavuot* Study. The Introduction to Judaism course was taught by Rabbi Hugenholtz and then by Rabbi Morris and volunteer members of the Sinai community.

Family Events

A number of community education events were held throughout the year, including "You be the Judge", Israeli cooking, *Tu B'Shvat Sedarim*, Purim party, Yom Ha'Atzmaut BBQ, *Shavuot* family service and tea, Jewish Parenting in a non-Jewish World with RJUK Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers and a *Chanukah* extravaganza organised and led by Sarah Glatherine.

School Hosting

Sinai hosted over 30 schools and the Director of Education visited five schools, as part of Sinai's outreach/interfaith programme. This activity reached over 1500 children and 200 adults from all over Yorkshire, and from a variety of communities and faiths.

Gwynneth Lewis, Director of Education

Social action and *Tikkun Olam*

Social Action

Communal social action has had its ups and downs this year. Below is an overview of both the successes and the less successful activity.

Refugees and Asylum Seeker Support

As part of Sinai's on-going support for asylum seekers and refugees in Leeds we have continued to collect toiletries for destitute asylum seekers. It's so encouraging to see members and visitors arriving at Sinai with toiletries for our BOGO (Buy One Give One) appeal. Donations are distributed via PAFRAS (Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) and are so gratefully received. All toiletries are needed, especially sanitary towels (not tampons) and nappies.

Once again Sinai hosted the WYDAN (West Yorkshire Destitute Asylum Network) Shelter for a week in March 2017. WYDAN has been running the winter shelter for the past three years and this coming year they hope that it can continue throughout the year. The Shelter moves between venues, taking beds, bedding, towels and the guests' belongings. Each venue creates as homely an atmosphere as possible for destitute asylum seekers who have no stability and a very uncertain future. Up to ten male guests are welcomed from 6.00pm in the evening until 8.00 or 9.00 am the next morning. Hot food, a warm place to sleep and friendly hosts to chat to are all on offer. Volunteer hosts are not there to deal with their asylum issues, nor to be counsellors, but to show support, care, kindness and friendship. This is a great opportunity to be involved in a group project which is very much part of our ethos of social action and reaching out to the community. Volunteers are involved in planning, organising rotas, food stores, cooking, welcoming and covering overnight shifts. The Shelter is an invaluable resource to asylum seekers who often find themselves with nowhere safe or warm to go at night and who may be alienated from community. Sinai is the only synagogue in Leeds to host the shelter and we have been happy to welcome volunteers from across the Jewish community. This year, we were also delighted to be joined by Muslim volunteers.

If anyone would like to help with the next Shelter in any capacity please email shelter@sinaileeds.uk

LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) inclusivity

Inclusivity and awareness raising of LGBT is integral to social action at Sinai. To this end, Matt Thornfield and Nicolle Levine report: "On *Erev Shabbat* 14 July, after the service, we had a discussion and film over a meal with Shaan Surat Knan, a Transgender Jew who is running a project called Rainbow Pilgrims. We heard the stories of a number of LGBT migrants to Britain over the years. The event was really well attended, and Shaan hosted a lively and interesting discussion. We don't currently know what the next event will be, but are open to suggestions.

Mitzvah Day (an international day of faith based social action)

We made a decision to approach *Mitzvah Day* slightly differently this year and rather than plan a day of one-off activities we encouraged members to take part in the collection of sanitary products to help combat period poverty in Leeds schools. This was organised by *Nisa Nashim* Leeds.

Nisa Nashim (Jewish/Muslim Women's Network)

Two Sinai members are on the steering committee for *Nisa Nashim* Leeds and several Sinai women are members along with other women in the Leeds Jewish and Muslim communities. As well as general events where Jewish and Muslim women get together in peace and friendship, there is now a yoga group, a walking group and an embryonic knitting group. It was a joy to work with some of the Muslim members of *Nisa Nashim* as volunteer on the winter shelter at Sinai (see above).

High Holy Day appeal

Donations to High Holy Day appeal 2017 were in the region of £9,000 to which some gift aid was added. That is roughly the same as in the past few years, meaning that each of the five charities received around £2,000. The 5779/2018 appeal will raise funds for just three charities. We hope that we can raise more than £3,000 for each.

Human Rights Day

In the same way as we believe that *Mitzvot* are not just for a single designated day, we attempted to incorporate the concept of Human Rights Day into our ongoing thoughts and practice rather than specifically marking one day. The theme of Human Rights and a reminder of our own freedom were introduced into the intergenerational service in December.

Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World)

We will continue to support and raise awareness for all the above causes and others in the coming year. Such activity can loosely be categorised as *Tzedakah* (charity/justice) which is a key component of Social Action. The other broad category is environmental, *Tikkun Olam*, which is close to the heart of many of our members but we have not been so successful in communal environmental activities. There was an enthusiastic response to the plan to hold a Clothes Exchange at Sinai. This was an opportunity to help reduce wastage by recycling unwanted clothes and accessories. However, there was little actual support and attendance was very low. On the upside, the team who organised the event had a lot of fun and made new friendships. Similarly, a fair-trade stall in the Sinai foyer attracted very little custom with most of the goods having to be returned to the suppliers. Food wastage is an ongoing issue, especially as we increase the number of really lovely events at Sinai where food is served and Sinai cooks excel themselves. Where possible, leftover food is used by our members or donated to other causes but we do still end up with too many started groceries items in the cupboard which eventually have to be disposed of as they go out of date. We are currently planning an initiative to combat waste and I hope to include a positive account in next year's report. Sinai has an excellent reputation in the Leeds Jewish community and beyond for its social action to help people. My aim is to match this with our work on environmental issues.

Pippa Brook

Connexions

Connexions, Sinai's welfare team, has continued to support members during 2017 as far as we are able to.

Our monthly three-course lunches are continuing successfully at the Marjorie and Arnold Ziff Community Centre (MAZCC). Our thanks to caterers Andrea and Rob McQue and their staff and volunteers for being so accommodating. All members and friends in the wider community are welcome to attend - dates are advertised in advance via the weekly newsletter.

The pre-*Pesach* and High Holydays phone calls continue. Many thanks are due to the volunteers who prepare and check the lists, make the phone calls and write the cards.

The 2017 Community *Seder* was again a success, with almost 80 participants. Again, it was catered by volunteers and led by Rabbi Hugenholtz and several Sinai members. It has been possible to arrange accommodation for *Seder* night and over *Yom Kippur* for some members who have a long distance to travel and who benefit from taking advantage of the offer.

We continue to mark 'significant' birthdays and life cycle events by sending appropriate greetings cards. And together with both of our Rabbis, we performed some of the basic *mitzvot* that Jewish life requires: we visit the sick in hospital and at home (*bikkur cholim*); we attend funerals (*levayat*); and we console those who mourn by attending *shiva* services and making *shiva* visits. We also phone members, and give lifts to services and events where possible. As those of you have needed any of this appreciate, this is important work. Of course, all these activities depend totally on volunteers. Can you join us?

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

Over a hundred members have been involved with one or another aspect of welfare this year, from making the pre-*Pesach* and High Holydays phone calls to helping with the *Seder*, offering hospitality, and all other activities. Many thanks are due to all of you for volunteering - you are greatly appreciated! For the last year, since I retired from Sinai's Board, welfare at Sinai has necessarily been operating in a more *ad hoc* manner. However, the good news is that Judith Chapman is now representing welfare on Sinai's Board and has been able to take a more active part in our work, and we are delighted that we have several new volunteers. Would you like to join the team? Anything from a few minutes to several hours' availability would be very helpful. Please do contact us by emailing connexions@sinaleeds.uk or by leaving a message for us at Sinai's office if you would like to know more.

Val Mogendorff

Security

Once again, it was not only our community that found itself facing security challenges - we are now seeing the wider British community address security concerns on a daily basis. Finding the balance of maintaining and encouraging our community's activities within a welcoming, safe and secure environment continues to be our Security Team's focus.

Security is the responsibility of every single member of Sinai and not just those that volunteer their time to cover duties. We can all play our part to ensure the continued safety of our members and guests, who should confidently go about their business under the assurance that we practise the true sense of *Keruv* (inclusion) and *Tikkun Olam* (healing the world).

We continue, with the advice and learning from professional bodies – the CST's national and local response units, the local police and the wider Leeds Jewish community - to refine and improve all of our procedures. We aim to encourage greater communication and commitment from volunteers on

security rota. High Holy Days are always a challenge and Sinai again witnessed a full and complete turnout of the Sinai Security Team, supported by additional security from Gough and Kelly, for our services. We are, as always, very happy to report a quiet HHD, in terms of security.

Regrettably CST reports increasing anti-Semitic activity across the UK. These included allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party and the wider political sphere; a perceived increase in racism and xenophobia following the EU referendum; and regular, high-profile discussion of antisemitism, racism and hate crime in mainstream media, politics and on social media during the year.

We ask that our community continues to support and value all those members of both Sinai's own security team and the CST. Both organisations volunteer their free time, often at unsociable hours in poor weather, to promote a safe environment for our wonderful community. It is thanks to their continued dedication that we are able to host all of our wonderful activities for our members and the wider community in a safe and secure manner - something that we should be very proud of.

Emma Cohen continues to serve as Sinai's Security Officer and chief link to the Community Security Trust (CST). To join the Sinai Security Team, please call the office or contact security@sinaileeds.uk.

David Israel

Community activities

Engaging Judaism

Engaging Judaism is an initiative for Sinai to get to know its members better. It's based on the firm belief that community is all about relationships. So we are aiming to have 100 conversations across our membership to get to know each other a little better and to build a little more "community" in our community. A growing group of Sinai members is contacting other members, offering to meet up and getting to know each other a little better. The conversations started in January 2018 and will be going on...we hope forever. As someone famously said "it's good to talk".

Pippa Brook

Developing the Sinai Website and Facebook communications

In 2017 the Sinai website has matured into a comprehensive 'one stop shop' for key information about Sinai ranging from a fully up to date calendar of events and activities at Sinai to what to do in the event of a funeral.

Longstanding member, Brian Teeman has continually developed, refined and optimised how the website works with feedback from Sinai's users and it has more than doubled in the numbers who have registered to use it since my last report. If you or someone you know hasn't yet done so, please take a few minutes to register at <https://www.sinaileeds.uk/register>. This provides you with access to a full calendar of events, the ability to check out information on festivals and services, upload posters and pictures, create events with or without registrations, see the next Torah portion, book on to, and pay for, events and lots more.

Sinai also runs a thriving Facebook group, ably supported by Suzanne Finlay, which provides timely information on forthcoming events and a platform for members to feed in their comments.

Simon Marcus

Gardening

I have now completed 35 years as the shul gardener and at 85, with a minor health problem, I have decided to give up the weekly task of cutting our lawns. The Executive has been informed and has agreed that the work, which usually takes 2 to 3 hours a week, can be taken on by Andy, our caretaker.

I will of course continue to be the *shul's* gardener, looking after all the trees, shrubs, hedges and not forgetting the roses, which have enabled us to win many prizes, cups and rose bowls at the local Rose Lake Flower Shows over the last 25 years. I will also continue to increase our stock of quality roses by propagation, so that our older rose beds will always be full of quality exhibition roses. I have assured Officers that I will remain responsible for all aspects of our garden maintenance including the work being done for us by Andy.

I trust that our members continue to be satisfied with the overall neat appearance of our gardens and general overall tidiness of our trees and hedges.

Ken Ellis

Sinai Knitting Circle and Embroidery Group

A small band of knitters with a range of expertise has been meeting at least once a month during 2017. Apart from bringing our own garments or soft toys to the evening meetings, the group has also worked on social action projects. These include creating babywear for premature and neo-natal hospital maternity units, and for Mitzvah Day in November we joined other Leeds knitters in creating "Twiddle muffs", which are used by dementia patients. These decorated items, using buttons, ribbons and other bric-a-brac, are said to bring calm to a difficult environment. Let's hope!

Embroidery took a back seat in 2017 but there remain plans to create a new curtain for the Sinai *Bimah*. All we need is more willing hands, and we can begin! Contact Maxine Brown via the Sinai office if you can bring your skill or enthusiasm to the team.

Book Group and library

Sadly the Book Group came to the end of its run early in 2017 as readers moved on to other groups elsewhere in Leeds. However, the Library continues to welcome donations of 'pre-loved' books on Jewish themes or by Jewish authors to replenish our stocks in the Malcolm Featherman Hall, whilst older books or books of wider interest are placed in the foyer, all yours to take home in return for a small donation to Sinai. Please liaise with the office to make your book donations, so that we know who to thank!

Barbara Levy

Chavurah suppers

Sinai Synagogue's *Chavurah* Suppers (communal meals) continue to provide an opportunity for current members, potential members, and visitors of all kinds, to feel included and encouraged to engage in our community in an informal and delicious way! Suppers are cooked by rotating teams of

volunteers. We have been fortunate enough to include some new volunteers who have, whether once, or multiple times, graciously filled the gamut of roles in the kitchen - from shopping, to cooking, to serving, to preparing, to laying tables. It's always special to welcome someone new to the team and to share the experience of what happens behind-the-scenes.

We continue to emphasise the social aspect of Suppers. Hosting duties handled by the monthly Master/Mistress of Ceremonies (or MC) continually prove to be an effective way of promoting interactive events. In addition, it's been a great accomplishment to enable members to take part in a Supper in a unique way that is not related to the meal but still crucial to the atmosphere and the experience of those who attend.

As last year, we continue to welcome many new guests at these events as we reach across the wider community to encourage anyone who is seeking a Friday Night Dinner experience to join us. This year the new Sinai website was introduced which included a streamlined method of guest registration for all events including *Chavurah* Suppers. This technology has and still does enable us to process bookings in a much more efficient manner, for which we are very grateful. Thanks Brian Teeman and Simon Marcus!

Looking forward, we hope to attract new guests on a constant basis to help broaden and enrich the social experience that *Chavurah* Suppers bring to all involved. We will also, as before, be actively encouraging anyone who is inclined to get involved in whatever way they are comfortable and feel they can best contribute- whether that's every month, once a year, or once in a lifetime!

Melissa Miltz and Suzanne Finlay

Israeli dancing

Anyone passing by Sinai on a Wednesday evening is likely to have heard the strains of Israeli music, and other world music, emanating from our hall. This is what you are missing!

As well as the regular Wednesday classes, *simchas* and festival events, this year Sinai has helped Israeli dancing across the North of England go from strength to strength. We won an Aviva Community Grant of £1000 to create "Parties with a Purpose" and invited our increasingly well known, wonderful young community dance leader from Lithuania to England for a month to build bridges among all faiths, and none, in many settings. The project aims to leave a legacy by starting to train up young leaders of the future who will go on to do this work in their school or community.

The very old art form of Jewish dance, together with modern Israeli dance, is accessible to all ages and to all kinds of people including those with disabilities. It is a community activity that builds confidence between people and opens doors in a happy, fun-filled environment. We have many years of experience going into schools, community centres and faith institutions to showcase and put on workshops with Jewish, Christian, Muslim & Hindu groups (and more.) We put on a month of activities across the North of England, going into at least one organisation every day (usually more) to put on workshops with these different groups. We worked with dance classes, Jewish and non-Jewish schools, churches, arts groups, community centres, disability groups and elder care homes, Muslim organisations, university students and more who were all very willing to host us in putting on these "Parties with a Purpose!" It is the Sinai dance group that has been at the core of all this activity, supporting in all different ways.

Not many people have experience of Jewish and Israeli dance and the reception we get is really amazing as it is a very uplifting thing to do. We often use the workshops as a way of opening up informal discussions among people to build positive ideas about interactions between Jews, Muslims and Christians and also about some of the many difficult issues currently in the news.

Julia Kay

Social events and fundraising at Sinai

Editor's note: Getting together socially as a community for its own sake is a healthy and creative activity for any shul. It is also noteworthy if this activity also helps to raise funds for our future growth and development. A small fundraising team led by Val Mogendorff and Janet Bromberg has worked tirelessly throughout the year to come up with fresh ideas. Please support these ventures where you can.

Games Afternoons

Sinai hosted the first three Games Afternoons during 2017. These take place after Shabbat morning services and start with lunch, prepared by volunteers. All ages have attended, playing games as diverse as Twister, Backgammon, and Chess – and any others participants wish to share. The aim is to have one games afternoon approximately every three months. everyone is welcome. Pippa Syers has been very helpful in organising these sessions. Details always appear in the Sinai Chronicle, in Sinai's electronic newsletter, and on Sinai's Facebook page.

Seder 2017

Sinai's *seder*, on the first Seder night (rather than the second) since it was re-started, attracted 77 people. It was catered again by a team of volunteers led by Petra Mullen, and the service was led by Rabbi Esther and five nominated Sinai members, each leading a specific section of the *seder*. More volunteers are always welcome to help with shopping, table-setting, and other tasks. Many thanks are due to all who helped in any way to make Sinai's community *seder* the greatly enjoyable and meaningful success that it was.

An evening of Words and Music

Two Evenings of Words and Music, devised, produced and directed by Vanessa Rosenthal and performed by Vanessa and other Sinai members, were enjoyed by all who came, and raised several hundred pounds for Sinai. Requests for donations in the Sinai Chronicle and in Sinai's foyer have also borne fruit. Thanks to all involved in organising this fundraising and to all those generous people who have made donations.

If you are interested in organising a fundraising event or drive or you'd like support in doing so, email fundraising@sinaleeds.uk or contact Sinai's office.

Val Mogendorff

Other Reports

Membership welcomes

One of my favourite activities at Sinai is my role in welcoming visitors and new members. When we know that someone new is coming to a service, we arrange for a regular attender to meet, greet, and, if needed, guide the visitor through the service. If the visitor is a potential new member we keep in touch, introduce them to other members, keep them informed of other events and generally

welcome them. I've made many new friends through carrying out this role and it's a pleasure to have some of those former 'new people' join me in this meeting and greeting role. Our aim for the next year is to ensure that every visitor to Sinai has a personal welcome and that new members receive the information they need and enjoy the benefits of being a member of Sinai Synagogue.

Pippa Brook

Membership figures

Ruth Baumberg continues as Membership Treasurer to monitor our membership details and ensure the timely collection of subscriptions as well as reviewing and liaising with those in financial hardship to identify what they feel able to contribute. Figures checked at the end of December showed membership standing at 309 families comprising 460 individuals (including 39 designated 'friends'). We registered 140 children plus four subscribers.

During the year we welcomed 25 individuals and 6 friends (including 4 conversions to Reform Judaism). We noted the departure of 7 individuals, 5 friends, and 10 children – mostly due to moves out of the Leeds area. Sadly we also saw four members pass away, but in turn we celebrated two births to our members.

Hon. Treasurer's Report

The Annual General Meeting in May 2017 endorsed a ten-year financial strategy, begun by our vice-chair Jonathan Lewis and designed to reduce our working deficit and provide financial stability over that extended period. This involved reviewing our overall staffing costs, considering an option to sell off part of the car park land for housing, and seeking additional one-off donations from targeted members of our community. This plan will be updated annually via the Board of Trustees and presented to the AGM.

The detailed financial statement for 2017, independently audited, will be presented to the Annual General Meeting. Key points to note are:

- The current reserves policy is to maintain the level of reserves (where funds are available) to be sufficient to bridge any deficit between revenue and the normal running expenditure of the synagogue.
- As Treasurer I have made it a priority to continue to tackle our annual deficit in a number of ways. The Board agreed to this and through their hard work in monitoring carefully their own budgets, as well as that of the Synagogue's, our deficit for the year stands at £81,096 as against the previous two years of £95,189 and £99,820.
- Income relating to subscriptions has increased by more than £9,000 this year. The introduction, in Jan 2017, of a Direct Debit payment system for subscriptions has resulted in more timely payments and a reduction in collection costs.
- Throughout 2017 detailed management accounts were presented to the Board on a bi-monthly basis thus allowing the Board to make more informed and timely financial decisions.

Dolf Mogendorff

Governance Committee

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

The Committee currently comprises six invited members, most very experienced in Sinai management over the years. Their deliberations are often complex, dealing with questions of interpretation of Articles or recommending best practice. It met on just two occasions in 2017, and covered the build up to, and smooth management of, the AGM, together with identifying Trustee training items, seeking RJUK advice on defining Jewish status for membership purposes, and recommending a minor rule change agreed at the AGM on reducing the Board quorum from six to five Trustees.

Barbara Levy

Editor's note: many thanks to all those who have contributed to the production of this report for 2017. Your efforts are much appreciated.





Pictures reproduced with permission from Reform Judaism UK

Our youth movement in Israel



Rabbi Laura Janner Klausner joins inter-faith vigil at the mosque in Finsbury Park attacked during 2017



Sinai members and student Rabbi Deborah Blausten at Northern *Chagigah*, Sheffield



Shirei Chagigah, London