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# **The Chief Rabbi's Centre for Community Excellence**

The story two years on...



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# The Chief Rabbi's Centre for Community Excellence

*"Transforming houses of prayer into powerhouses of social, educational, cultural and religious excellence" - Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis*

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## Two years on...

Since its launch in September 2014, CCE has focused on building connections with all UK communities under the aegis of the Chief Rabbi, finding the best ways to support them and enhance their Jewish experience. A multi-pronged approach via several highly successful projects has transformed the landscape, which looks very different now as a result.



There is more to be done and we are continually assessing and developing new projects and ways to support and enhance the fabric of Jewish life in our communities.

- 398 - New and innovative programmes and events funded in communities that would not have happened otherwise.

## Here's what people are saying...

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*"Thanks to CCE I can now see the reality that Pinner could have a future with the younger generation"*

Rabbi Bergson, Pinner United Synagogue

*have to work especially hard to ensure that we maintain a vibrant and enriching Orthodox Jewish life"*

Birmingham Central Synagogue Member

*"The support you give is vital to Shuls like ours, as we*

*"I now realise that we can get a large part of our community involved in Shul activities if we put on quality events"*

Northwood United Synagogue Member

*"We have seen many new faces in our Shul, thanks to CCE's help"*

Rabbi Wolfson, Newton Mearns Hebrew Congregation, Glasgow

*The results have been incredible and a significant number of unaffiliated people have now started to attend events "*

Rabbi Pink, Solihull & District Hebrew Congregation

*"CCE has given us the opportunity and wherewithal to invigorate and strengthen our community through the funding and advice provided"*

Rebbetzen Sufrin, Enfield Synagogue

## What less affiliated\* participants are saying...

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*"For me it was like being in a family. As I have not got one and live alone, it was like having Friday night supper with family where there is love and warmth"*

Judy Morgenstern, Bournemouth Shabbaton

*"We would not normally be in Shul on a Friday night and CCE has motivated us all to attend - thank you!"*

Anon, Pinner Synagogue member

*"I have gained insight into how Judaism can be alive and outward looking"*

Eric Joseph, Newcastle Hebrew Congregation, Guest Speaker

*"I really felt part of a wider, warm family and realised how important it is to connect with others Jews. Each CCE-funded event I have attended has been wonderfully uplifting in its own way. Thank you for enabling me and my community to take part"*

Solihull member, Residential Shabbaton

\* those who attend shul less than 5 times a year



## Etz Chaim Project

Youth leaders (*Madrachim*) bringing *Ruach* (uplifting Jewish atmosphere) to a community near you!

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- **160 Madrichim to 54 communities**

*"Everybody gains through this initiative, both the group of Madrichim and Shul members who are not so knowledgeable or so exacting with their religious observance. We would welcome more visits of this nature"*

Rabbi Singer, Belfast Synagogue

*"The wonderful group of Madrichim you arranged to come were great role models and a Kiddish Hashem - very warm, excellent with the children and surpassed our expectations"*

Rebbetzen Lieberman, Allerton Hebrew Congregation, Liverpool



## Rabbis to Communities

Personable and experienced Rabbis, taking communities under their wing (for communities without Rabbinic leadership)

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*"His personality livened up the atmosphere. He inspired better than most people! This was a stimulus that the community needs - like turning on a light in a room. Rabbi Fachler and his wife felt like part of the community"*

Eric Moonman, Southport Hebrew Congregation, visited by Rabbi Fachler over Simchat Torah

*"Rabbi Shisler and his wife Anne are so approachable, knowledgeable and especially understanding of the workings of a very small community like ours. The "Ask the Rabbi" session was so entertaining and instructive that we ran out of time"*

John Joseph, Northampton Hebrew Congregation, visited by Rabbi Shisler over Shabbat

## Community Twinning

An initiative that forges links between communities, enabling them to share Jewish experiences and best practice

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- Pinner and Norwich have already enjoyed multiple Shabbatonim together, while other successful pairings include Gateshead and Belfast, and Bowden and Southport
- Twinning projects in the pipeline include Birmingham Central and Cheltenham, who will celebrate Purim together, and Solihull and Sheffield, who are looking forward to a joint quiz

*"Meeting the congregation in Norwich helped me understand the problems facing smaller communities, and how our support can help"*

Pinner member

*"Having joined the Pinner delegation previously, the opportunity to keep Shabbat within walking distance of a Shul and to swell the numbers of a small community simply could not be missed"*

Pinner member

*"This Shabbat event confirms that events such as this help to keep the flame of the candles alight"*

Norwich member

*"The whole weekend has left me more enthusiastic than ever. I would like to thank all who made it happen for an excellent time"*

Norwich member





## Investing in Rebbetzens

Professional development and empowerment for our communities' leading ladies. Broadening both skill and mind-sets. Led by Valerie Mirvis.

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*"I enjoyed the high level of learning and the fact that you are taking the time to provide us with opportunities to learn. I really feel it encourages me to teach more."*

Rebbetzen Fromson, Golders Green Synagogue

*"The experience has given me resources to cope with challenges in my community. I have come back renewed in a leadership role"*

Rebbetzen Lister, Edgware Synagogue

*"Thank you for believing in us and investing in our growth"*

Rebbetzen Sturgess, St Albans

*"You really managed to inspire, relax, connect us, enlighten and challenge us to do better"*

Rebbetzen Jacobs, Singers Hill, Birmingham

## Conference for Regional Community Leaders

### With the Chief Rabbi

Bringing regional community leaders to work together and to learn from each other, making regional communities feel connected and giving them a sense of belonging through CCE.

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- **129 lay leaders from 63 regional communities over two conferences**

*"You run the Chief Rabbi's Centre for Community Excellence. You can be proud of the excellence you provide"*

David Lewis, Hull Hebrew Congregation

*"I found the Conference relevant, useful and inspiring and look forward to applying it within Cardiff United Synagogue"*

Lisa Gerson, Cardiff Synagogue

*"An excellent day capped off by an inspirational address from the Chief Rabbi"*

Mike Braham, Southport Hebrew Congregation

*"What a well-run and very informative conference, we all gathered information that will be useful for our various congregations. Thank you for all the support you are giving to the small communities - it has enabled Solihull to play in a league far above what we could achieve alone"*

Malcolm Hyams, Solihull & District Hebrew Congregation



## ShabbatUK

Through Shabbat UK CCE has supercharged its offering by getting communities to focus on one single theme over one single weekend across the UK. The impact has been staggering, leading to even greater CCE engagement with communities and wider engagement throughout the rest of the year

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- **135 communities**
- **Over 1,500 community volunteers**
- **Over 300 events**
- **12,136 challah makers**
- **Over 5,000 school children**
- **60 SUK bus visits**
- **50,000 candle holders**
- **30 participating schools**
- **22 participating campuses**

*"Thank you so much to you and everyone else involved in today's Shabbat UK Concert. Everything was great - the lead-up, the venue, the ruach, the organisation of the coaches - and we are so happy that WIJPS could again be a part of such an event. Our pupils are absolutely buzzing and sang the whole way back to school!"*

Teacher, Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School



*"There is a great warmth within our community. To have shared this with 450 people over a Friday night dinner, and again throughout Shabbat day, was a privilege. Not everyone who came was a member, and it felt like our Yeshurun family was sharing Shabbat with guests, some of whom were stunned by the atmosphere"*

Congregant, Yeshurun Cheadle

## ShabbatUK Continued...

*"Such an amazing experience. Even better than last year's. The community was out in force and was so amazing to share this with friends old and new. Our speaker was inspiring."*

Congregant, Brondesbury Park United Synagogue



*"Thank you for organising such a fantastic event [ShabbatUK schools event]. The children enjoyed such massive collaboration and had such a positive experience, there is no doubt Shabbat has been promoted in the minds and hearts of our school's families"*

Teacher, Immanuel College Primary School

*"It was a wonderful event, Rabbi Pink's explanations of aspects of the service were really interesting. Nice singing from the guest chazan. The food at the lunch was delicious. It was a great experience of what Shabbat can be like in a small community"*

Congregant, Solihull Hebrew Congregation



## **Ma'ayan Programme**

Developing exceptional female community leaders and educators – an historic innovation for the UK Orthodox Jewish community

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- **32 applications for the programme**
- **25 hours of interviews**
- **10 top-quality participants**
- **320 hours of teaching**
- **Over 50 outstanding teachers**

*"The Ma'ayan Programme is continually superseding my expectations, with the in-depth and challenging level of the halacha we are learning from Dayan Simons combined with the most up-to-date medical information. I feel inspired, educated and enthused weekly and am so looking forward to sharing my knowledge with the wider community"*

Participant, Ma'ayan Programme

*We feel the knowledge and experience Sarah will gain from the programme will be of huge benefit to our members. We have already seen Sarah grow and develop in this role and look forward to the added benefits her in-depth training will bring both to the women and to our wider community, particularly in the field of adult education"*

Chair of community with a participating Rebbetzen

*"Every Tuesday I'm happy to travel 6 hours to and from the Ma'ayan Programme. There I broaden my knowledge on family purity, medical knowledge connected to women and new skills in running educational programmes. The nice atmosphere, the presence of very experienced Rebbetzins and the attentive organization of Michelle make me feel lucky to be a part of this"*

Participant, Ma'ayan Programme



*“Staging a transformation of the landscape of  
communities across the UK”*

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

