



## **EDUCATION AND PROJECTS – Till Gins**

Jonathan's retirement and René's appointment was a seismic event which had the potential to be very disruptive and could have proved tricky in terms of handover. It wasn't! It proved seamless, as far as the religion school is concerned. The

smooth transition was due to the wonderful cohesion of all those involved:

- 1/ Hege (Cheder Coordinator) who is very thorough in her administration, kept everybody's spirits up. We owe her a heartfelt thank you.
- 2/ All the teachers pitched in to make the transition a success: their great commitment to the children is to be commended.
- 3/ Rabbi René announced when he took over that he wouldn't be making changes to the way things function: he's been true to his word!

Projects: as we have all experienced, events are organised with great precision, perfectly calibrated. Words are difficult to find to describe how privileged we are in Maidenhead: thank you, Barbara.

Safeguarding procedures are now in place. The policies are on the website; report forms are available at the office and an incident log is kept safely. All the teachers have completed a safeguarding course online. An in-person induction session for assistants is being planned.



## **LOCAL NETWORKS – Lauren Gill**

In the past year, Network Coordinators have continued to deliver an excellent level of social support to the synagogue community. The networks are split as follows:

Amersham & Beaconsfield: Myriam Silverman, with support from Lynne Gilbert  
Ascot & Camberley: Jacqui Brener  
Aylesbury & High Wycombe: Andy Becker  
Basingstoke, Bracknell and Wokingham: Ido Cohen  
Bourne End & Marlow: Mike Prager, with support from Linda Prager  
Burnham, Slough & Windsor: Stephanie Fountain, Russell Janes & Sybil Diskin

Henley-on-Thames: Helen Godson

Maidenhead: Lesley Alfred with support from Barbara Grossman

Oxford: Till Gins

Reading: Helen Godson

Regular events have taken place across a number of networks, including walks, coffee mornings and potluck dinners. There have also been some cross-geographical events, and a new bridge club initiated. The Beaconsfield network has enjoyed social events at local member houses with a superb turnout.

We have been conducting a series of Rabbi Roadshows, to welcome Rene and introduce him to members of the community in their own neighbourhoods. These have been very successful, with lots of useful discussions and feedback to help us evolve our approach to local engagement.

A number of coordinators will be stepping down, and we are keen to hear from anyone interested in running a network, or anyone who has suggestions for future events.

I am working closely with the Rabbi to review our approach to the Networks, taking on board all the feedback and hopefully making them more accessible. Watch this space for further updates.

As always, I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated network coordinators for continuing to keep their local areas connected, and the admin team in the office for all their help.



## **RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS – Shel Musiker**

The role of religion in the life of many Jews is orderly, well defined and will remain so forever. For others, the relationship was founded on Cheder and a bar / bat mitzvah seemingly a lifetime ago and then stopped. Perhaps slivers of Judaism remained; you attend Yom Kippur which appears repetitive but feel an obligation to go. Did it ever occur to you that your understanding of Judaism is that of a 12-year-old child? There is always more learning to do.

Maidenhead Synagogue offers adult education for all levels of competence