

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

and our services are always in English as well as Hebrew. We have a group that meet once a month to explore the Torah, no pressure and no experience required. Rabbi Rene is starting a new course to learn how to leyn, or sing, the Torah portion, which in my opinion is a no brainer for those who have a child who will be preparing for their bar / bat mitzvah soon.

The place of Judaism at Maidenhead Synagogue is at the heart of our enterprise and in the soul of all members; young and old, those active or not. Open the door and there will be someone smiling, welcoming you back home.



### **SECURITY – Marcus Richards**

I am delighted to introduce myself to you all as the new representative for Security on the Synagogue Council. I would like to thank Matt Loewenthal for handing over this role and for his continued help during this time of transition.

Thanks to work going back over many years which many members will be aware of and have helped create, we have a very secure and welcoming place of meeting and a security team of very committed members who guard the community, tirelessly overseen by Vikki and David.

However, we find ourselves with fewer members volunteering for the security team and increasing levels of potential threat against which we need to be prepared. For these reasons with the help of CST (Community Security Trust) we are reviewing the physical security of our buildings and property and looking at how to make the best use of the volunteer security team to maintain our open relationship with the community whilst increasing our ability to handle unwelcome threats.

You will certainly see some changes over the next few months but please be assured these are designed to protect the community and to ensure that we maintain a safe and welcoming Maidenhead Synagogue. We will communicate any proposed changes well in advance.

I would ask that everyone be sure that they have the 2025 Synagogue Car Parking badge to hand when they come to the security gate. Not everyone is known personally to the security team, and this is our primary way of knowing that you are a member. If you do not have the badge, please let us know on your next visit to the Synagogue.