

HADASHOT

חדשות

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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Elsa Kremer

Ronit Sapir

Ilan & Clair Sirkis

CONDOLENCES

Leigh Dworkin on the loss of his mother **Carole**

Family of **Mark Harris**

Michael Moher on the loss of his mother

Family of **Dr Bryan Robinson**

Sonia Stone on the loss of her sister-in-law

MAZEL TOV

Lucy Baddeley for her Gold Duke of Edinburgh award, which was presented at Buckingham Palace

Alexander & Danit Brooke for the birth of **Nathaniel**

Judy De Haan for her 85th birthday

Darrel & Suri Poulos for their first grandchild, **Ariyeh Joshua Benjamin** (his Hebrew name is Gil)

Keith & Wendy Marks on their 65th wedding anniversary

GET WELL SOON

Philip Dandridge

THANK YOU FOR HOSTING KIDDUSH

*To book the date for your kiddush, please contact,
Pauline Keyne at pauline.keyne@maidshul.org
Pauline is happy to find you a 'Kiddush buddy' if you would like one.*

Barbara Grossman	Shel & Sara Musiker	Josh & Leah Tal to mark Roie leyning at the seventh day Pesach service
Kathryn Leman & family for Joshua's civil partnership	Michael & Heather Rome for their wedding anniversary	Adam & Anna Urch for Ruby's Bat Mitzvah
	Richard & Lisa Stoliar	

Share Your News!

Good, bad, big or small – important things are happening to us all. Please share your news with the rabbi, who will share it with the community or keep it in confidence.

Please contact Rabbi Rene at rabbi@maidshul.org or 07495 491325.

Please dispose of Hadashot responsibly!

Please dispose of Hadashot responsibly! Remember that there is a lot of sensitive information in the magazine, so please shred before putting it into your recycling. Thank you!

Shul Security.

Monthly Musings From Rabbi Rene

Shavuot

Someone asked me recently, "What's the purpose of Shavuot?"

"Cheesecake", was my immediate answer.

The truth is, Shavuot is less observed than Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, or Pesach. And yet, in the overall Jewish narrative, if our ancestors became a people during the Exodus, they received a structure, a framework, only 50 days later on Shavuot (Hebrew for "weeks" – the seven weeks between both festivals). According to Torah, God revealed what was expected from us in a Hollywood-style narrative, with thunder and loud noises, with reverence and awe.

The fundamental teaching of Shavuot is that Torah wasn't given to isolated individuals, but to all of us, standing together. A beautiful Midrash teaches that all Jewish souls were present at Sinai - those of the people who lived that day,

those yet to be born in the future, and the proselytes who would join our community along the way.

Shavuot invites us to contemplate: what is our community, what is our purpose? We have received a law, but it's open to endless debates and interpretations. More importantly, we have received a sense of common purpose.

Recently, I've found myself drawn to the concept of the "Amen Effect," described in a book of the same name by Rabbi Sharon Brous. In essence, Rabbi Brous explains that when we affirm each other's experiences, when we see each other in truth, something powerful happens – connection. She writes, "When I hear your story and your struggles, and respond with 'amen', I am saying, 'I see you. Your experience matters.'" And somehow, we are both strengthened. This "Amen

Effect" manifests throughout our community — in conversations after services, in study groups, in how we show up for each other during both celebrations and challenges.

Rabbi Brous drew her inspiration from a passage in the Mishnah (Middot 2:2), which describes an ancient ritual when the Temple was still standing. During the pilgrimage festivals (Pesach, Sukkot and Shavuot), people would enter the courtyard from the south and walk clockwise. However, mourners would circle in the opposite direction. When the mourners were asked, "What happened to you?", they might share their pain: "My mother died," or "I found a lump." The community would then respond, "May God comfort you", or "May you be wrapped in the embrace of the community".

This was revealed at Sinai: we now have rules and values to live by, and above all, we have each other to face any challenges that life sends our way. We see in the other the face of God, and when

we meet someone in mourning, we show up and support them. Because it is the right thing to do. And because one day we will be the ones circling counterclockwise, welcoming the love and support of our community.

The question of Shavuot's relevance arose one Sunday morning during The Forum, a safe space for difficult conversations facilitated by the fantastic John Dunston. People come with different views, yet they listen to each other respectfully. We live in a time of heightened tensions, strong emotions, and significant challenges. I am proud to be the Rabbi of a community that has created within it a space where difficult conversations can happen in a menschlich way.

Kol ha-Kavod to you all, and
Chag Shavuot Samecha.

Shavuot Study Session 1 June at
5pm.

Evening service-1 June at 7:30pm.

Morning service-2 June at 10:30am.

Rabbi Rene



By Shel Musiker

The Torah is eternal. Yet we are required to learn subjects, such as the Holy Temples, the second of which was destroyed over two thousand years ago. The key is to apply rabbinical logic to ancient themes enabling us to glean timeless lessons for all mankind. Numbers chapter 5 includes two subjects that, on the surface, challenge our notion of relevance today. For today's commentary I will focus on chapter 5:11 - 31, known as the 'wayward wife'. Let me begin by stating that this practice was officially stopped over two thousand years ago, so let's look briefly at what this entails. In essence, a wife is suspected of having an adulterous relationship.

She was previously warned by her husband not to be secluded with this person and there were witnesses who saw her secluded with him. Mind you, that is not adultery so her husband is suspicious at best. If she denies being unfaithful she is brought to the priest and undergoes a humiliating test meant to prove if she is being honest.

The Hebrew word for the wayward wife is 'sota', which is related to the word 'shtoot' which translates as folly. There is a tractate in the Talmud called sota which expands upon the Torah and is traditionally read from Passover to Shavuot.

Parasha Naso – Numbers 5:1-31 – The parashah addresses priestly duties, camp purification, restitution for wrongs committed, the wife accused of unfaithfulness, the Nazirite, the Priestly Blessing, and consecration of the Tabernacle.

Coincidentally, our Torah portion is always read just before or just after Shavuot. What possible connection does the wayward wife have with the revelation at Mount Sinai?

Let's jump back to Exodus 20:17, Moses led the people out of the camp towards G-d, the people took their place at the foot of the mountain. G-d came down upon Mount Sinai and Moses went up. Jewish literature describes this event as a wedding between G-d and the Jewish people. The ketuba is the covenant between us and G-d. The ring, so to speak, is the Torah and the Ten Commandments spoken by G-d and written on two tablets of

stone. The holiday Shavuot is normally translated as 'weeks'; however, it can also be translated as 'oaths' for on this day G-d swore eternal devotion to us and we pledged everlasting loyalty to G-d. A wedding.

One of the key events on Shavuot is the reading of the Ten Commandments, which states, "You shall have no other G-d besides me" and continues, "You must not prostrate before them or worship them for I, your G-d am a jealous (kana) G-d".

It is when we stumble and fall.
We are the wayward wife.

Yom Ha'Zikaron



Yom Ha'Atzmaut



ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Maidenhead Synagogue Limited

Registered Number: 5512194

Charity Number: 1110795

Grenfell Lodge, Ray Park Road, Maidenhead, SL6 8QX

Telephone: 01628 673012

Email: admin@maidshul.org

Notice is therefore hereby given that the Annual General Meeting will take place in Grenfell Lodge at **7 pm on Thursday 3 July 2025** for the following purposes as set out in the agenda items 1–8 below:

1. To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 27 June 2024.
2. To receive the Chairman's and Treasurer's reports together with other reports from trustees.
3. To receive and approve the audited Financial Statements, including the Report of the Trustees and Independent Auditor's Report, for the year ended 31 August 2024.
4. To consider the re-appointment of the Auditors.
5. To accept the retirement of trustees and to consider elections of trustees from nominations received (if applicable).
6. To appoint a representative for the Board of Deputies of British Jews.
7. To transact any other business.

Dated 9 May 2025, by order of the Council

Martin BIRCH, Chairman

Additional Notes

Any member unable to attend the Annual General Meeting is entitled to use a proxy vote on any or all agenda items. Details of the procedure for proxy voting are available from the Synagogue Office.

With regard to Agenda Item 3 above, the audited Financial Statements, including the Trustees' and Auditors' Reports for the previous financial year, will be posted on the Synagogue website by **Thursday 19 June 2025** and will be available upon request from the Synagogue Office.

In regard to Agenda Item 5, in the event that any Council post is contested, then soon after the closing date for nominations, **Thursday 19 June 2025 at 9 am**, members will be notified by means of a notice posted on the Synagogue website together with any manifestos. A similar notice will also be sent by email to those members for whom we have current email addresses. Any member unable to receive this notification may give contact details to the Synagogue Office and will be duly notified by other means. The Synagogue Office can be contacted at the postal address, telephone number and email address above.

NOMINATION FORM FOR ELECTION TO MAIDENHEAD SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL

Any member may be nominated for election to Council. Nominees must be proposed by two Synagogue members whose membership is current and who are not the nominee's spouse, parent or child. Proposers must sign the form below to indicate their support. When signing the form below, the nominee is giving their written consent to stand for the position as indicated. Contact the Synagogue Office for all portfolio role descriptions. The positions marked by asterisks (*) are positions required by the Synagogue's constitution.

Nomination forms must be returned to: *The Administrator, Maidenhead Synagogue, Grenfell Lodge, Ray Park Road, Maidenhead, SL6 8QX*. The deadline for receipt of all nominations is **Thursday 19 June 2025 at 9 am**.

Responsibility	Nominee	Nominee's signature	Proposed by	Proposer's signature	Seconded by	Seconder's signature
Chair*						
Vice-Chair*						
Treasurer*						
Building & Grounds						
Communication						
Community Care						
EcoSynagogue						
Education & Projects						
Networks						
Religious Affairs						
Security						
Social						
Youth						
Board of Deputies						

2025 AGM – 3 JULY AT 7 pm

COUNCIL PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Your Council has had another busy year! The AGM report from each Portfolio is reprinted here for your convenience.



CHAIR – Martin Birch

Dear members, it's incredible what a difference a year makes. This time last year, we were all dealing with the prospect of Jonathan's retirement and what the future held for our community. We all did Jonathan proud by giving him a good send off and thanked him for his tremendous 44 years in establishing our vibrant, inclusive, and caring community.

Now we have a new era with our dear new Rabbi Rene, who joined us last September. His relaxed style, humour, and caring manner make him a pleasure to listen to, and of course, he can sing. The services are more musical, and he brings joy to us with his soft and caring manner. Rene has made tremendous inroads to get to know our diverse community. I believe he has settled in extremely well and is respected by all who meet him.

I have worked closely with him to ensure he has the best support to deliver his role. Of course, that is also only possible with the huge help that everyone around provides. Agnes, Barbara, Alison, Graham and now Liya and Aaron are just incredible at maintaining the essential infrastructure of our synagogue. I would like to extend my personal thanks to them. We also have a huge volunteer base and teaching staff that brings a vibrancy to shul life. Thank you to those who do so much.

Now to council business. We have many exciting new projects ahead of us. Some are essential works, such as heating, but also the creation of a Jewish cultural/education room. Plans are currently being developed, and we hope by next Pesach to have this completed. We received a large donation and part of those funds are being utilised for this project. There is a raft of other projects

on the list, such as installing TVs in each classroom to assist teachers, and new AV systems to enhance online capability, so hopefully no more changing batteries mid-service.

I have agreed to stay in position until June 2026 and then relinquish my responsibilities as Chair. Jon Berman, who was responsible for buildings, has been great during his tenure, but has asked to step down. I asked Tony Nothman to step into this role, as he has extensive operational experience, which will help in future projects. Matt Loewenthal, security, has also asked to step down due to work commitments and Marcus Richards has agreed to take on this role. I would like to thank Vikki and Dave for their continued support. Without them, we would not be able to provide security. Over the coming months, we will be enhancing security further. New systems of entry are being explored and once plans have been agreed, we will instigate these measures which will create a more secure and safer environment.

Sue Henry is stepping down. She has been amazing with the environmental portfolio and has secured a silver EcoJudaism award for the synagogue for all the efforts in making us more environmentally sustainable – thank you. We are seeking a new eco warrior. Please let me know if you are interested in taking on this role. In communications, Elizabeth, who has been exemplary at producing Hadashot, has handed the magazine over to an editorial team that continues to produce this excellent publication. A massive thank you to all the team.

In terms of finance, we are in a strong position but still need further funds to support some of our ongoing projects. We would very much welcome any donation to assist us in our objectives. We will also be undertaking a review of the membership fee structure to ensure fairness across the membership.

Finally, I would like to say that the energy and passion I see across the board with synagogue life is great, and I would urge you to show up as much as you can to breathe further life into our vibrant community. If you have ideas, want changes, or want to do more activities, please step up.

Thank you and have a wonderful summer.



VICE-CHAIR – Lincoln Ball

Thank you to everyone who contributes to keeping Maidenhead Synagogue a safe place to visit and work at. The focus during the year has been to further improve the health and safety systems at the shul following a positive health and safety audit in 2024. Over the last 12 months, we have instigated quarterly in-house health and safety inspections and an annual fire risk assessment. We continue to incorporate good health and safety practice in everything we do, including health and safety induction and knowledge retention for employees.

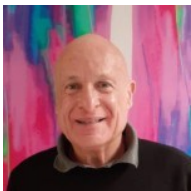
A big thank you to our staff members Aaron Kader and Agnes Fixler, who contribute significantly to the shul's Health and Safety sub-committee. The shul council is grateful to the generosity of WGC Ltd, which significantly supports our ability to provide a professional IT support service.

Thank you also to the local fire and rescue service, who kindly donated surplus screens, keyboards and mice that helped facilitate the recent admin office move.

We have continued to experience a few issues with the reliability of our Shabbat streaming service and every time that happens, the team investigates what issue caused the disruption. We have improved the availability of the internet service for the security team, as they move around the premises on their duties.

Using computers and screens throughout the building is now easier since the WiFi service was extended to every classroom.

The shul's internet access is still restricted because of the existing copper cables, with the introduction of full fibre not expected for another year. However, we have been able to run some successful events over the past year that relied on a good internet service.



TREASURER – Rob Gilbert

Accounts will be presented at the AGM.



BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS – Tony Nothman

Having recently taken over this portfolio, my report is based on the good work done by my predecessor Jon Berman. I'd like to put on record my thanks for his work, knowledge and advice as he passes the baton.

As in previous years, we strive to develop and maintain our building and grounds in the most efficient and effective manner. This is an ongoing task and one that takes considerable effort from all those involved, not least because as our building ages, it requires more attention. I know I am repeating the statement by many of my predecessors but the cost of maintaining our buildings is significant and expenditure is both necessary and important for our community.

There is a programme of gradual improvements across our estate that we are working through both externally and internally. These include painting and decoration, but also several health, safety and security upgrades. My thanks to Aaron Kader, our Site Manager, for his hard work and commitment on much of this.

I must also acknowledge the work of our gardening team, led by Steve and Liz Yates. Our grounds are a fabulous asset and one that we want the community to enjoy, but it does require significant work. We are always looking for willing volunteers!

Alongside our ongoing maintenance, we have several major projects aimed at making us more energy efficient and reducing our carbon footprint – for instance, electricity generated through our solar panel roof installation.

Our current heating, lighting and related systems are not all as resilient or efficient as we need them to be. We need to be able to control all our systems across the entire building, regardless of how often each area is used. New technology will help us to do this in an efficient and effective way.



COMMUNICATIONS – Elizabeth Prais

Our community uses three main communication channels to keep members updated with what is going on: Hadashot, weekly emails, and the website.

In 2024, there were a baker's dozen issues of Hadashot, including a special edition for Rabbi Romain's retirement. Katharine Rooney and Sapir Tal took over as Editors of Hadashot in early 2025.

Rabbi Rene sends out a weekly email containing the most up-to-date event information and news from the wider Jewish community.

Our website is our online home and contains the livestream link for Shabbat Services, a Business Directory for members, and articles that are too long to be included in Hadashot.

Looking at the year ahead, we are working on streamlining the Weekly Email, making booking and paying for shul events easier, and increasing our Social Media presence.

If you wish to contribute to either the website or *Hadashot*, please email



COMMUNITY CARE – Lucy Henning

We have a small core of volunteers who visit our members as part of the Tea and Chat initiative. If you know someone who might benefit from this service, please contact me.

Our Caller Team is in contact with about 100 members at Pesach and Rosh Hashanah. This past year, we sent out around 300 handwritten greeting cards to our senior community members at Rosh Hashanah and Pesach.

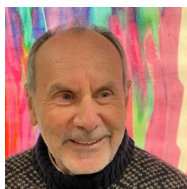
Our provision of lifts to appointments has always been a much-appreciated service, and we are greatly indebted to everyone who has volunteered to help.

We have been considering how to evolve the connections available via our networks to help improve our support systems.

Our inaugural Wellbeing Shabbat in February was a great success and will now be an annual event. We had a lot of positive feedback and discussed new ideas and initiatives.

Shalom Counselling is available for any member of the community and their family who are looking for psychological support. We offer six free sessions of confidential counselling.

We always need more people to help, either regularly or on an ad hoc basis. Please contact me on lucy.henning@maidshul.org if you can volunteer.



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:

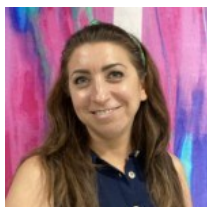
1/ Hege (Cheder Coordinator) who is very thorough in her administration, kept everybody's spirits up. We owe her a heartfelt thank you.

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

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.

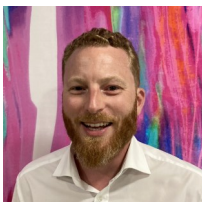
Thanks to work going back over many years which many members will be aware of and have helped create, we have a very secure and welcoming place of meeting and a security team of very committed members who guard the community, tirelessly overseen by Vikki and David.

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.

We pass our condolences to the family and close friends of Mark Harris after his sad and sudden loss. Mark was a very active and committed member of the security team and CST for many years and will be greatly missed.



SOCIAL – Oliver Lawton

The social calendar has been increasingly active over the year, and I want to thank everyone who has supported these events either by attending, hosting and organising!

Last year we attended Far Peak Camping & Climbing Centre for a fun-filled weekend of outdoor activities. I am delighted the event is taking place again this year, from 30 May-1 June. We have around 30 people attending climbing, caving and archery activities followed by pizza and toasted marshmallows! On 29 June, we plan to hold a summer picnic in the synagogue garden – a free event with a barbecue, music and games.

Our Hidden Middle events are targeted at those members of working age looking to build friendships and work connections. They continue to be very popular! The next After Work drinks will be Wednesday 4 June, 6–9 pm. Numbers are limited, so please email Jo to book in. Venue details are sent a few days beforehand. The next Co Working Day at the shul is Monday 30 June, 9:30 am–5 pm. Pre-booking is required, but you can come for the whole day or just for coffee or lunch. Quiet spaces are available, along with snacks and lunch. Come for the day, a coffee or just lunch.

Lastly, we have a free Business Directory on the Members-Only area of the Shul website. If you'd like to be added, please contact [**webmaster@maidshul.org**](mailto:webmaster@maidshul.org)

Thank you to Jo Berman for leading the charge on this initiative and without whom these events would never have got off the ground. To get involved, please contact [**Jo.Berman@maidshul.org**](mailto:Jo.Berman@maidshul.org)

Young Adults are targeted at those individuals in the 18-35 age range as well as those parents with children or grandchildren within this group—no membership required for the young adults. We would like help and support in getting more people interested in these events and connecting with young adults who might be interested in attending. Out of the 207 names we have on our

database list, we only have details for 33 people.

The aim is to keep things as open and inclusive as possible, connecting with other local Jewish communities and university societies to involve them in our work. The following events are being planned for this year: June - Outdoor excursion and November - Games night at the synagogue.

Thank you to Sapir Tal and Sarah Lewis for leading this initiative. To get involved, please contact [**MaidenheadYA@gmail.com**](mailto:MaidenheadYA@gmail.com)



YOUTH – Anna Crollick

This year, we have been working more closely with RSY-Netzer and the Movement for Reform Judaism (MRJ). By the end of the academic year, we will have had four visits from the prestigious Shin Shinim Programme's Israeli Youth Ambassador, Ariel, 18. He has been very well received by both Cheder teachers and children. Being friendly, fun and positive, he engages well with the different age groups, giving them a young person's perspective on life in Israel. Keeping to our Eco-youth theme, we ran a successful trip to Maidenhead's Eco-Hub and have had two visits from the RSY Movement Worker, Josh, who ran Youth Club for us. We also aim to host a Shabbat sleepover at Maidenhead soon.

We are still looking for an in-house Youth worker who could run more events for us. Let me know if this could be you/someone you know [**anna.crollick@maidshul.org**](mailto:anna.crollick@maidshul.org)

For our older youth, we are pleased to have begun a new initiative for GCSE and A-Level students. Dale Resnick, a local secondary school sixth form teacher and our very own post b'nei mitzvah teacher, is running revision support/social sessions. Students can tap into his expertise, ask for advice on all things from exam strategies to well-being/resilience and revise together in the same space with friends. This will continue to run next year.

Rabbi Rene led the antisemitism support group for parents of children and university students. Thank you to him and everyone who has helped support our youth this year.

A journey from Topol to Torah

It was Fiddler on the Roof that started it all. Avielah Barclay remembers watching the film repeatedly as a child, at her father's movie theatre in Prince George – a town in the north of British Columbia, Canada. “That really stuck with me”, she said. It was one of the reasons she became fascinated by Hebrew calligraphy, which she painstakingly taught herself.



Years later, living in London, Barclay met the film's star, Chaim Topol, backstage at Regent's Park Theatre, where he was performing in the musical Gigi. “We had quite a long chat at the bar”, she says. “He was very nice.” (Her husband had organised the meeting as a birthday surprise).

By then, Barclay had trained as a soferet – a female Torah scribe – in Jerusalem, after facing a good deal of resistance and searching far and wide for a teacher who would take her on. She was certified as a soferet in 2003 – the first woman in modern times to do so.

As well as writing scrolls (and other Hebrew documents, such as Megillat Esther and ketubot), Barclay repairs them. Rabbi Rene invited her to come and inspect Maidenhead's Torah scrolls, one of which is on loan from the Memorial Scrolls Trust (MST), which looks after historic Czech scrolls, including over 1,500 that had been saved after the Second World War.

Barclay estimates that Maidenhead's MST scroll dates from the early 1800s, and it has a few quirks, like having 54 lines per column – a non-standard layout. Her assessment is that both scrolls will need a few repairs. Typically, this work includes things like fixing some of the ink in the lettering (if a crack goes right through it, it's no longer kosher) or repairing loose stitching.

While some soferim now use fountain pens to make their work faster, Barclay prefers the sharp edges she gets from using a quill: “That's how you get your very best lettering”, she says. “It's part of the art and the craft – the traditional practice – and I see myself as a protector of that tradition.”

Avielah Barclay will give a talk at the synagogue on Thursday, 5 June at 7 pm. It will be an interactive session, with the opportunity to learn both about the art of Hebrew calligraphy and about scroll repairs.

JUNE EVENTS DIARY

EVERY SUNDAY

Children's Choir at 9:30 am

Group meets before Cheder. For any further details, contact Julia at juliashumway@gmail.com or on 07707 223946.

EVERY MONDAY

Exploring Judaism at 6:30 pm (Adults)

Contact Rabbi Rene at rabbi@maidshul.org for more details.

Hebrew at 7:30 pm (Adults)

"Because Jews Love Stories" at 8:30 pm (Adults)

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Wednesday Social from 11:30 am

This mid-week social is for our senior members. Come along each week and enjoy a three-course lunch, games, gentle exercises, or relax and have a chat over a cup of tea with friends. And, if you have something to celebrate, this is a special invitation for you – we love to celebrate all birthdays and other things, too!

For further information, please contact Agnes Fixler at admin@maidshul.org or on 01628 673012.

EVERY THURSDAY

Ganon Nursery – 2½ to 5 years old from 10 am

For further details, contact Sheila Veniar at sheilaveniar@gmail.com

Mothers & Bumps/Babies/Toddlers from 10 am

Feel free to come regularly or periodically. Bring along any special toys, snacks or other essentials. For any further details, contact Julia at juliashumway@gmail.com

MUSICAL SERVICE

Friday 6 June at 7:30 pm

Shabbat Ruchani (a spiritual Shabbat), with Tom Smith on the guitar. This service will be musical, with new melodies, meditation, prayers — a gentle way to enter Shabbat.



TORAH BREAKFAST

Saturday 7 June at 9:15 am

Discussion Group

Join us before the Shabbat service on 7 June for an in-depth discussion of the portion Naso — Numbers 5:1–31. Coffee and tea are available. No RSVP is necessary.



BUCKS ART WEEK

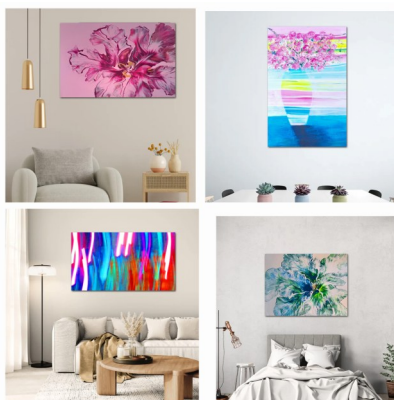
Saturday 7- 22 June

Karen Broude is excited to be opening her home as part of Bucks Art Weeks 7th- 22nd June (11am-5pm).

Come along and see a selection of her original artwork on display, all in a relaxed welcoming setting.

Whether you are an art lover, curious passerby or just fancy a browse, you're very welcome!

Instagram: broudek



See me at



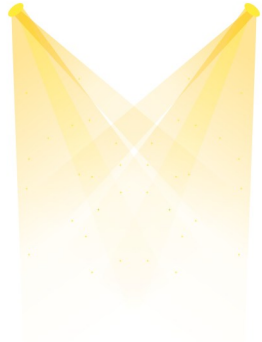
7th to 22nd June

SHUL THEATRE GROUP

Sunday 8 & 22 June at 2 pm

Do you believe the shul needs a theatre group?
Not just to put on plays, but to work on accents, facial expressions, and trust.

Come along to find out more: Sunday 8 & 22 June at 2-3 pm in the synagogue. Contact Mike Consden, 07503 228375 or email mikeconsden@aol.com



KINDERLECH SHABBAT

Saturday 14 June at 11 am

3 to 7 year olds

Shabbat Morning Tiddlers' Service is specially for children in the 3 to 7 age group. Siblings and parents are welcome to join!

Please contact Julia Shumway at juliashumway@gmail.com for more information.



THE FORUM DISCUSSION GROUP

Sunday 15 June at 10:15 am

Discussion Group

The Forum is a lively discussion group at Grenfell Lodge focusing on a Jewish topic and is led by **John Dunston**. There will be a 30-minute break during the discussion at 11:15 am. If you have any questions, please email John at johnhdunston@gmail.com



BACKGAMMON

Wednesday 18 June at 2 pm

Grenfell Lodge – Elvira's Room



Whether you're a complete beginner, novice or experienced player come along and either learn how to play this fascinating board game or play in a mini tournament with other players at your level. **Anyone interested, please email Irving Lomon at irving.lomon@gmail.com**

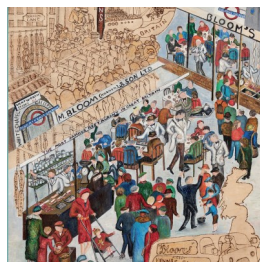
T GROUP

Thursday 19 June at 1 pm

With Pam Fox, who will be talking about her latest book: *Noshtalgia, the Bloom's Story, 1921–2010*

Hear about the 90-year history of Blooms, both its internationally renowned restaurants and its factory, which initially supplied traditional kosher butchers and delicatessens across the capital.

If you would like to come for lunch beforehand at 1 pm please contact Barbara Grossman before Thursday 19 June, by calling 07855 801937 or email her at projects@maidshul.org



FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER

Friday 20 June at 7:30 pm

Communal Meal

Why celebrate Shabbat on your own when you can be with other members of the community – great company awaits you!

Please bring a starter, main course or dessert to share after letting Robbi Hunter know that you're joining us.

Contact her at robbilynnhunter@gmail.com or on 07917 222875.



CLOTHES SWAP

Sunday 22 June at 9:45 am

The parents of the B'Nei Mitzvah class are holding a children's clothes swap at Cheder breaktime. An eco-friendly way to refresh your children's wardrobes. Please bring in good quality, clean children's clothes to swap and find new ones! No cash required.

REGULAR CO-WORKING DAYS

Monday 30 June at 9:30 am

Swap your kitchen table for a more sociable working day, as we transform the shul lobby into the place to co-work and connect this side of London!

Our shul workspace will be offering fresh coffee, lunches, quiet areas to concentrate or chat with your new work neighbour. Come for an hour, for lunch or the day, it's up to you.

If these activities are of interest or if you would like to volunteer to help run them, please contact Kate at katesaffman@yahoo.co.uk or Jo at jo.berman@maidshul.org



WOMEN'S INTERFAITH GROUP

Monday 30 June at 7:30 pm

Part of the Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum (WAMCF). The speaker is Bishop Mary Gregory, the new Bishop of Reading, talking about working together for reconciliation.

Please do join us at Grenfell Lodge. You are guaranteed an enjoyable and interesting evening!

Ladies of all faiths or none are welcome to come along and share refreshments. If you would like details of the meetings planned for 2025, please email Barbara Grossman at projects@maidshul.org



JOIN THE FUN!

Summer Picnic

SUNDAY 29 JUNE 2025 - BETWEEN 12:30 PM AND 4:00 PM

Get ready for a relaxed and fun-filled day in the sun!

Bring your picnic blanket and settle in for:
Live music performances - volunteers welcome!

A kids' talent show - let their talents shine!

Classic garden games for all ages

A festive outdoor stage (weather permitting) for that true summer festival feel

Whether you're performing, playing, or just relaxing—there's something for everyone.

Booking details will be shared soon by the office.
We can't wait to see you there!



SHEMESH 5785

Sign up here!!



**Briyah -
Years 5 & 6**

Atid - Year 10

**Shivyon -
Years 7 & 8**

Reut - Year 9

site activities

new friends

hobbies

interesting discussions

community

creative services

immersive fun activities

29TH JULY - 10TH AUGUST
(- 6TH AUGUST FOR Y5&6)



"I want you to know this: We've got your back."

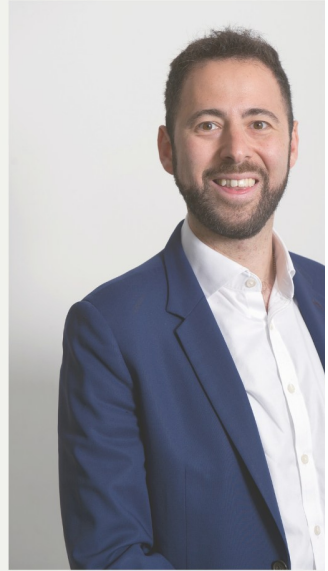
JUBILEE LECTURE: PHIL ROSENBERG



SUNDAY 13 JULY 2025
4:00 PM

Phil explores the role of the Board of Deputies in modern British Jewish life. He reflects on how the BoD, often seen as distant, can reconnect with communities, foster cohesion in a divided society, and confront the ongoing challenge of antisemitism through advocacy and political engagement.

Booking details will be shared soon by the office.



Kaytana 2025

(SUMMER CAMP IN HEBREW)

MONDAY 28 JULY
TO
FRIDAY 1 AUGUST

Summer Camp for our young members
aged 3 and up to Year 8!

Exciting activities! Make friends!
Have the most amazing time!
Supervised, happy and relaxed
environment!

REGISTER AT
PROJECTS@MAIDSHUL.ORG

SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

One of the most positive aspects of belonging to our community is the wide range of support options available to members.

If you feel in need of support, of any kind, not just those listed below, please get in touch with Rabbi Rene, who will be able to advise on options for help.

Rabbi Rene can be reached on 07495 491325.

SHALOM COUNSELLING SERVICE

This confidential service, staffed by trained counsellors who are members of the synagogue, can offer support in understanding your situation and help you explore ways to cope with life's difficulties. **Please contact Rebecca Senel on 01491 579446 or Rabbi Rene on 07495 491325, who will discuss the next steps with you.**

MAIDENHEAD SYNAGOGUE CARE SCHEME

Do you need any help getting to a doctor's appointment or help with the shopping? Feel lonely and need a visitor? The synagogue runs its own care scheme to help members of the community in whatever way. **Contact Lucy Henning on 01753 624977.**

BIASED AND INACCURATE MEDIA REPORTAGE

If you identify biased and inaccurate media reportage on Israel, please send the examples via email to reportingbias@bod.org.uk. Include as much information as you can, but in particular, the date/time and media outlet/platform. Please cc bod@maidshul.org. Our BoD representatives are Leigh Dworkin and Sapir Tal.

Rabbi Dr Rene Pfertzel

07495 491325

rabbi@maidshul.org

Maidenhead Synagogue:

Grenfell Lodge

Ray Park Road

Maidenhead

SL6 8QX

01628 673012

admin@maidshul.org

The office is staffed

Monday to Thursday.

Synagogue Website:

www.maidshul.org

Forgotten your password?

Click on *Members Area* and
press *Reset Your Password* and
enter your email address.

For any problems email:

admin@maidshul.org

Kosher Shop:

Tamar Leeper

tamarleeper@hotmail.com

Community Projects:

Barbara Grossman

07855 801937

projects@maidshul.org

HADASHOT

is the monthly community magazine of
MAIDENHEAD SYNAGOGUE

A Charity Limited by Guarantee

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Editors: Katharine Rooney and
Sapir Tal

Email: hadashot@maidshul.org

Submissions are welcomed from all
sections of the community, but we
**reserve the right to edit all
contributions.**

- Material should be provided as a Word document and photographs as jpg files.
- Articles for publication in *Hadashot* should normally be between **150 and 200 words in length.**
- Copy deadline is the 8th of the month preceding the issue date.

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Maidenhead
Synagogue is a
member of the
Movement
for Reform
Judaism.



June 2025 DIARY

Every Wednesday	11:30 AM	Wednesday Social
Every Thursday	10:00 AM	Mothers & Bumps/Babies/Toddlers Ganon: 2 ½–5 years old
Every Friday	7:30 PM	Erev Shabbat Service
Every Saturday	10:30 AM	Shabbat Service
Every Sunday	9:30 AM	Children's Choir
	10:00 AM	Cheder

Sunday	1st	5:00 PM	Shavuot Study Session
		7:30 PM	Erev Shavuot Service
Monday	2nd	10:30 AM	Shavuot Morning Service
Wednesday	4th	6:00 PM	After Work Drinks
Thursday	5th	7:00 PM	Soferet Talk
Friday	6th	7:30 PM	Musical Shabbat with Tom Smith
Saturday	7th	9:15 AM	Torah Breakfast
Sunday	8th	7:30 PM	Shul Theatre Group
Saturday	14th	11:00 AM	Tiddlers Service
Sunday	15th	10:15 AM	The Forum Discussion Group
Wednesday	18th	2:00 PM	Backgammon
Thursday	19th	1:00 PM	T Group with Pam Fox
Friday	20th	6:30 PM	Erev Shabbat Service
		7:30 PM	Friday Night Dinner
Sunday	22nd	9:45 AM	Clothes Swap
		3:00 PM	Shul Theatre Group
Sunday	29th	12:30 PM	Summer Picnic
Monday	30th	9:30 AM	Regular Co-working Day
		7:30 PM	Women's Interfaith Group

All services at Grenfell Lodge are now in-person and livestreamed.
Visit www.maidshul.org – the link is in the upper-right corner of the homepage.

To access Zoom Kiddush
for both Erev Shabbat and Shabbat mornings immediately after each service

Meeting ID: 963 7834 1361 & Password: 891244