



new london
synagogue

ANNUAL REPORT

**New London Synagogue AGM
18th May 2009**

**Founder Rabbi: Dr Louis Jacobs zt"l
Rabbi: Jeremy Gordon
Chairman: Adrian Marks**

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Annual Report – May 2009

RABBI'S REPORT

What is going well

The heart of a Shul is the Shabbat morning service and our Shabbat morning services are buzzing. Visitors and new members constantly remark how welcoming and friendly they find their time with us. This energy infuses our *avodah* – liturgy and inspires me to attempt to provide *torah* - teaching which is both substantial and moving, I hope I sometimes succeed. The other truly extraordinary development at New London is the influx of young adults. Much of this is driven by the conversion programme, now led by Rabbi Elaina Rothman and taught so wonderfully by Angela Gluck. We have around 50 students engaged in weekly learning and Synagogue attendance. Walking into Shul on Shabbat one feels this energy which in turn creates the sense that this is a community with a bright future.

Highlights

This year has been the first time I have led Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services at New London and the first time for several years that the Synagogue has had a permanent Rabbi in place for these important services. They were certainly a highlight for me. Shortly after this our wonderful Chazan began a much deserved sabbatical. The fact that we survived his absence is in itself a tremendous achievement. In terms of education I want to mention the Quest lectures with Professor Eisen and Dr Rapaport-Albert and keynotes on Money and the Binding of Isaac. And there are many others.

Challenges for the Future

The strategic direction of the Synagogue needs attention. The world and the Jewish world are changing fast. New London is changing also; many of the lay leaders who have led the community for the past four decades are looking to step back and we need to inspire, recruit and train newer members to take on leadership positions in the Synagogue. We also need to make and implement decisions around finances, programming and priorities. I hope that the incoming Council and I will prioritise stepping back a little from the day-to-day management of the Shul's affairs to take charge of our longer-term future before it takes control of us.

Thanks

My partners in the office, Stephen Cotsen, Ronnie Cohen, Sarah Koffman, Kira Mendelsohn, Susannah Alexander and Ruth Ben Adir have been a tremendous support and their hard work deserves the recognition and thanks of all.

The lay leadership of the Synagogue, at Council and Executive and in so many other ways too, have worked hard and led well. Thank you.

The retiring Adrian (and I don't think he hasn't been called that very often) has been a well of encouragement, energy and good advice. Congratulations on achieving the last great challenge of leadership (stepping aside) with the same style and grace as you have achieved so much else.

And to all the membership who have offered support and encouragement on this, my first full year as your Rabbi. Thank you, I am most grateful.

Thank you.

Rabbi Jeremy Gordon

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This year has been one of consolidation following the appointment of Rabbi Gordon last year. It has also been a busy one, as is only too apparent from our schedule of events and services. Attendances at our regular services are on the increase and there is no doubt that the attraction of the New London Synagogue to new members and visitors is in no small part due to the enthusiastic and first class work of our Rabbi and the invaluable contribution of our Chazan, Stephen Cotsen, who have both played their part in carrying the message that we are a vibrant and forward-looking community.

A particular source of pleasure to me is the significant growth in our cheder and increased attendance at children's services during the year. The cheder compliment at present has grown to 35 children and I have no doubt that this will increase significantly in the years to come. May I pay a special tribute here to the splendid work of Susanna Alexander, our head teacher and her teachers and helpers and to Gina Sanders, Margo Schwartz and their team in respect of the children's services.

As you are aware, I am stepping down as Chairman following the coming AGM. This is not because I have not enjoyed my tenure as chair of the Synagogue - quite the contrary as I have made many good friends and have found the role to be both stimulating and interesting - but I took the view prior to agreeing to chair the Synagogue that it was not in the best interest either of myself or of the Synagogue for any chair to undertake the roll other than for a limited period and in our case, that period is three years. The appointment of a new chair will, I feel, bring a fresh impetus to the planning for the future of the Synagogue and he or she will have my full support in the days to come.

The future is very exciting. With a dynamic Rabbi and vibrant congregation we are well placed to consolidate our position as one of the leading synagogues in the U.K. with fresh ideas and an inclusive approach to Judaism. This approach is one which is stressed by our Rabbi as being of paramount importance. It is pleasing to hear from visitors to the Synagogue in the kiddush on shabbat that there is such a friendly atmosphere. That is a start but we need to build on that so that every visitor coming across the threshold of the Synagogue feels welcome and stimulated by what is to be found within our doors. In this latter respect I must pay tribute to Angela Gluck and her team in the Minyan Chadash for their splendid work and for the substantial progress made in developing and consolidating their services and activities.

I would also like to pay further tribute to those who quietly contribute in so many ways to the smooth running of the Synagogue. Ronnie, Sarah Kira and Sam have ensured that the office and the shul generally have run smoothly during the year and their courteous and helpful approach I am sure is much appreciated. Special attention has been given this year to ensure that regular contact is kept with our older members who are sometimes unable to attend our services but who remain fully committed to and interested in our activities. Our special thanks go to Ruth and the Helping Hands team in this regard.

Others give of their time to the full and I pay particular tribute to Rabbi Elaina Rothman for her tireless work through out the year and for agreeing to take over the running of our conversion classes, which go from strength to strength and to Angela Gluck for her splendid work. Gerald Rothman has been of immense help to us all in the office and elsewhere, especially as chair of our Building Committee and his eye for detail in ensuring that our paperwork is produced on time and is in order is painstaking.

I could not have functioned as chair without his help and indeed the help of other members of Council and in particular the Executive. In this latter respect may I thank Stephen Rosefield and his committee for all their hard work in processing the Constitutional Reform during this year.

This has generated a significant amount of paperwork and is a matter of complexity with which he has dealt with quiet and efficient diplomacy.

Lastly, may I thank our various committees for their hard work during the year and may I also thank you, our members for your support during my tenure and for your kind wishes during my recent illness.

Adrian Marks

EDUCATION REPORT

Since our last report, the Cheder has grown in size, and now provides weekly Jewish education for 35 pupils. Pupils are grouped in six classes according to age. Through our teaching assistants, support is provided for pupils who need extra assistance with their Hebrew, or who attend Jewish day schools and therefore require a more advanced level of Hebrew teaching. Our staff includes a ceramicist, a theatre director and a published author, so we are able to offer a wide range of learning activities to enhance our Jewish Studies curriculum.

We take the professional development of our staff team seriously, and encourage every member to attend in-house training, and take advantage of seminars and courses run by other organisations. This year, we offer particular congratulations to Alex Games, who has successfully completed a four-term Foundation Certificate in Jewish Education at the Department of Jewish Education at Leo Baeck College. Two further members of staff are considering this qualification in the next year.

This year we have aimed to provide more outings for the children, so that they can connect their Judaism with aspects of life outside the Synagogue. At the beginning of term, the entire school visited the National Gallery to investigate Biblical paintings. In October, the senior class had an outing to Golders Green to purchase a *lulav* and *etrog* for the community. Further outings are planned to visit a *sofer* and a Kosher kitchen.

Children have had opportunities to take their Judaism beyond the Synagogue in other ways as well. In summer 2008 members of the *cheder* sang in an inter-denominational service to celebrate the State of Israel's 60th anniversary. Our *Chanukah* play, which discussed the issue of child refugees, enabled us to collect money, clothing and toiletries for two Jewish charities meeting the needs of refugee children today. On Tu B'Shevat we made gift boxes of fruit for Jewish families in Britain who are not able to afford their own gifts, and on Purim, we made *mishloach manot* packages to give to the residents of Ellis Franklin House. These events ensure that children have an ongoing opportunity to put Jewish values into practice.

Family study mornings have proved an extremely popular way of involving parents, and enabling them to spend 'Jewish time' with their children. This year, we hosted an extremely successful *Tu B'Shevat* Seder, and a family learning day for Pesach. Later this year, we will be hosting our annual *Shavuot* cheesecake party, a Friday night family supper, and our end of term barbecue.

As always, the safety of our pupils is paramount, and to this end we have implemented new fire evacuation procedures with the advice of Stephen Greene, and we run CRB checks for all new adult staff.

Two members of staff, plus the Chair of Education, have received paediatric first aid training, and Ann Rau Dawes runs an annual child protection seminar for all staff.

We have been extremely fortunate that Gina Sanders has sponsored an upgrade of the classroom opposite the Beit Midrash. This will now be a lovely venue for children's services as well as providing an extremely positive learning environment. We have also secured funding from UJIA to develop an 'outdoor classroom' project, which will enable us to buy materials, develop resources and provide training for staff to deliver lessons in Bible, history and the environment out of doors. We hope to launch our outdoor classroom before the end of the academic year.

We are mindful that in order to continue to provide a high quality service it is necessary to have aspirations for the future. Our targets for the next academic year include:

- ✧ To increase the number of pupils to 40
- ✧ To complete and use the outdoor classroom facility
- ✧ To develop a Hebrew reading scheme which allows parents and children to read at home together at an appropriate level
- ✧ To revisit the possibility of making provision for the 13-15 age group
- ✧ To look at ways in which interested parents can become more involved

None of this year's achievements would have been possible without the help of all our parents. We would like to thank every single parent and carer who has helped this year by making snacks, providing costumes and resources, and helping with events. In particular, we would like to thank Rachel Mann, who is especially active with hosting children's services and special events such as 'Havdalah in Pyjamas', Margo Schwartz, who organised this year's Chanukah party, and of course Louise Spencer-Hope, our Chair of Education

Susannah Alexander

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

We have been only too aware what a challenging year this has been as we have been inundated with so many enjoyable and stimulating things in the shul diary ranging from talks to films and meals. In the earlier part of the year they were excellently orchestrated by Sarah Koffman, Stephen Cotsen, and members of the shul, with Freda Hooberman Deere continuing in the chair. Latterly it was 'all change' as Stephen Cotsen went on his sabbatical, Sarah Koffman went on maternity leave to have her baby (muzzaltov) and Freda Hooberman Deere stood down. At the end of 2008, I agreed to hold the reins of this committee until such time as Stephen Cotsen returned from his sabbatical and a new Council is elected and in place.

Of the subsequent events and activities, I would like to single out the Film Club that showed films related to events in the Jewish calendar. This was run by us with The Jewish Museum in the period of their closure (as they are undergoing a massive enlargement before reopening later this year). I have mentioned this as it shows a development for NLS to work in partnership with another organization. I am excited by this notion as it might well be the way to proceed in the months ahead. Whether or not that happens, I am delighted to say that we

are planning to continue this Film Club and linking up films with our festivals and other important days in our calendar.

Plans are afoot for the forthcoming year. Arranging successful activities and programmes requires a lot of efficient and effective planning. With Stephen Cotsen's experience, assistance and guidance the committee are preparing a paper for the new Executive and Council to consider the best way forward. I can only see this as challenging for all of us as we are very aware of the diversity of the needs and wishes of our members.

Before ending this short report, on behalf of our committee I would like to recognize that there is no way that the activities and events could have gone so well without everyone's support, assistance and attendance. I would particularly like to single out the professional staff - Sam who has always been there to help and, on occasion come to our rescue on the night; and Kira who made all the necessary arrangements for refreshments and security.

It is not known who will take over, but in the meantime, we are on the lookout for new ideas and new committee members. I will be delighted to receive any ideas, so feel free to contact me (on asrd@asrd.co.uk or 07710 124 451).

Ann Rau-Dawes

SECURITY COMMITTEE

There was a discernible increase in tension at the beginning of the year as a result of the war in Gaza. There were a few incidents at the synagogue which led us to take extra precautions and increase the security presence at the premises. Tensions have subsided but the Jewish community remains on the alert under the ever-watchful direction of the CST. We maintain close links with the CST, attending regular meetings and training courses.

On most occasions, when the synagogue's doors are open for a communal gathering – either a religious or a social event - there is a guard on duty. With the exception of the high holidays, we rely on an accredited private firm to provide our security. However, over the yomtovim, when the perceived threat is greater and the number of congregants on the premises is higher, we also call for volunteers to join a security rota. Once again, may I express my gratitude to all those people, male and female, young and old, regular attendee and “3-day-a-yearer”, who responded and gave so willingly of their time. The NLS is unusual in not requiring its members to participate in a regular security duty and we are looking at ways of involving members at times other than the High Holy Days.

I would also like to recognise the important security role played the members of the shul's professional team, in particular our community administrators and caretaker. During the past year, Kira and Sarah have monitored the diary and arranged guard bookings. Sam looks after the premises on a daily basis and thereby ensures that the building is secure at all times. I would like to express my gratitude for their tireless and conscientious work.

I welcome the introduction by the Council of a “Shabbat Greetings Rota” and I thank all those members who come early to shul to be “on duty”. As well as ensuring that members and guests are greeted with a cheery smile, the presence of someone in the lobby is of great use to our Security guard when visitors come to the synagogue.

Our Security Committee still consists of Milton Woolf, Jonathan Silver, Gideon Falter and myself. Between us, we try to make sure that at least one member of the committee is present

at the shul at most services and events. In addition, Milton looks after the cctv system, Gideon plays a key role in the planning and execution of the high holyday security coverage and Jonathan continues to provide unfailing support and wise advice which I greatly value.

Stephen Greene

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

During the financial year 1/3/08- 29/3/09, there were the following changes to membership

New members	78 adults (51 units)
Resignations	27 adults (19 units)
Deaths	20 adults

In the current year, from 1/3/09 – 18/5/09, there were the following changes

New members	11 adults (9 units)
Resignations	3 adults (2 units)
Deaths	2 adults

The membership at 18/5/09 is made up of:

Adults 658 (441 units) plus 121 children under 21

The 441 units are made up as follows;

Full members	198
Single males	52
Single females	87
Outside M25	9
Associate members	43
Members Age 25-30	48
Members Age 21-24	4
Total	441 units

In addition, we have 63 units who are 'Friends of NLS'

Ian Green

QUEST COMMITTEE

This year has been an exciting year for QUEST, and for the synagogue community. Our way of taking things further has been in the foot steps of last year. I am delighted to confirm that our committee of June Jacobs, Stephen Latner and Stephen Rosefield has been much enhanced with the addition of Ivor Jacobs. We have also been much helped in our publicity by Adam Arnold and by all the office staff. In the summer, Rabbi Jeremy Gordon and his team made sure the third edition of the QUEST magazine was published. It is a very interesting read, but unfortunately there are many copies in the office, copies that we would like to see being taken by interested people and groups. The successful event in the QUEST summer calendar was the presence of Chancellor Arnold Eisen of the Jewish Theological Seminary who joined us for the weekend, and delivered his lecture "Taking Hold of Torah:

An International Perspective on the Future of Jewish Commitment and Community”. The lecture was stimulating and exciting.

In the winter we were so lucky to have a second exciting and stimulating lecture in a different subject matter when Dr Rapoport-Albert spoke on “From Prophetess to Madwoman: The Displacement of Jewish Female Spirituality in the Early Modern Era”.

Several of our members had heard her speak previously at NLS, and I feel sure that everyone who was there will agree with me that in future we will go out of our way to hear her again.

It is a team effort to successfully extend invitations to speakers of the correct high calibre that QUEST demands. It must be said that these lectures, the publication of the QUEST magazine and the arrangements for future lectures, such as Rabbi Melchior who will be delivering this year’s Rabbi Louis Jacobs Memorial Lecture, would not happen without the combined efforts of the QUEST committee, our Rabbi and the other professional staff.

In addition, we are always on the lookout for new ideas, new committee members and more ways to stimulate intellectual debate at NLS. Please contact me (on asrd@asrd.co.uk or 07710 124 451) with any suggestions and ideas.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

1. The Building Committee, comprising Gerald Rothman (Chairman), Anthony Filer, Sam Graff and Cyril Korn, met (formally and informally) on a number of occasions during the year, to deal with a various works, the need for which arose during the year. In relation to the matters referred to in paragraph 3 below, the Committee has also been assisted by several Synagogue members with specialist knowledge.

2. As indicated in last year’s report, the committee started this year with decorative and repair works to the entrance lobby and staircases. Shortly afterwards, it became necessary to replace the security grills on the Marlborough Place frontage of the synagogue and around the same time, with the help of a grant from the Community Security Trust, to whom we are most grateful, glass hazard protection was installed to the most vulnerable external windows of the building.

3. At the request of the Executive and the Rabbi, a number of meetings were held to consider possible ways of reducing energy consumption within the building and, at the same time, minimising our carbon footprint.

The possibility was explored of installing solar panels, which, while initially seen as an attractive proposition, turned out to be too expensive (even with a generous government grant) at the present time and burdened with too long a pay-back period. A number of other possibilities have been and are being considered (ranging from low energy bulbs –which are installed – to additional insulation) but, although investigations continue, the committee is not yet in a position to make any recommendations. This work is regards as work in progress.

4. It has also been a year of the (largely) unexpected. There was a suspected leak in the water main serving the building, which required investigation but turned out not to exist, and a leak in the central heating system of the main building, which was not suspected but definitely turned out to exist (after lengthy investigations) and required urgent repairs, which in turn (as is almost inevitable in a building as old as ours that has not received regular maintenance over the years due to lack of funds) gave rise to other matters requiring attention. For good measure and for unconnected reasons, another cold water storage tank recently sprang a leak

and required replacement and there have been a number of minor matters requiring remedial work.

5. We hope that it has been noticed that hot water has been restored to the ladies' and gentlemen's toilets on the ground floor and new taps have been installed. In truth, there is a great deal of work (both of similar and more serious nature) that should be undertaken around the building but for which it is felt there is currently insufficient funds.

6. In the new year we are beginning essential work to check and secure the safety of the electrical systems in the building.

7. I express my appreciation for all the invaluable assistance received during the year from the members of the committee, those Synagogue members referred to in my first paragraph, our builders, Broadfields, and last but not least, our caretaker Sam, who knows all our secrets!

Gerald Rothman

SERVICES COMMITTEE

We act as a sounding board for ideas of the Rabbi and Chazan on ideas for minor changes to the services. Any major changes are considered and recommendations prepared for the Synagogue Council. In addition we make arrangements for all the honours at the high holy days, and consult on the running of special services for Tisha B'Av, Yom Hashoah etc. Any member is welcome to send us their views on the way a service or services in the main shul are run, for us to discuss and act upon.

Edward Teeger

FINANCE COMMITTEE

It has been an extremely challenging year for the Committee in the light of economic turmoil, wealth destruction across the globe and falling interest rates worldwide. The committee has been mindful of its duty throughout the year, at its regular meetings, to carefully husband the windfall monies we received from the sale of the Clifton Hill house.

We were unanimous in our assessment that the environment was not one in which we wanted to invest in anything with risk and that we would keep all the monies in the bank. This then posed its own problems of which banks to keep the money in, so we split the deposits among a number of banks as a matter of prudence. Indeed, we switched out of some banks and into others if we became even slightly concerned about the viability of some of the banks which held some of our monies.

We are however aware of our long term duty to diversify out of cash at some time. We therefore met with a number of investment/fund managers during the course of last year and we have agreed, that when the time is right, we will place some funds with UBS and Coutts investment managers. We had originally decided to open the accounts and transfer the funds

in December 2008 but we felt there was still too much risk in the market. We are in the process now of completing the forms to open the accounts but a final decision on the timing of the transfer of the funds to the investment managers has not yet been taken.

We would rather be 25% too late getting into the 'market' than 10% too early.

Our next concern is how to plug the gap left by falling interest rates. The spectacular increase in membership this past year is helping to offset some of the lost income and our careful monitoring of expenses will also help.

We have further decided to form a fund raising committee and we are looking for volunteers to join the two volunteers who have already said they will step up to the plate..

We have responsibility for all matters financial , including setting membership levels and categories, expenditure generally , setting fees for hall hire , salary levels , insurances , maintenance contracts and so on, all of which are dealt with at our meetings.

The committee is comprised of myself , Peter Bartfeld , Olivier Blechner, David Cohen, Cyril Korn, Stephen Latner ,Stephen Rosefield and Gerald Rothman

Stephen Hope

MINYAN CHADASH

It's motza'ei Shabbat as I write and I'm mulling over the service in the Minyan Chadash just twelve hours ago. A new face appears a few minutes after the service starts and one of the regulars greets her with a smile, quietly introduces himself by name and gives her his siddur, open to the right page. As the Torah service begins, our shammas for this service offers her a mitzvah, which is accepted with joy. She offers hagbah to a man who's been to the Minyan several times but—I discovered later—he's injured his arm but she invites him to have an aliyah to the Torah. The shammas is Sian who's skilful and sensitive: she's never performed the role independently before, although she did serve her apprenticeship under Gina, who's an accomplished old hand. There's a woman who lives abroad that we haven't seen for ages but she's here because—she told us over lunch—she always comes to the Minyan if we have a service when she's in London. There's a girl, with her mother, in the Minyan: too young to have a mitzvah in her own right, she's asked if she'd like to see the Torah up close and is brought to the scroll where she can look over—or is it *under?*—the shoulder of the person leyning one of the aliyot; and she gets to help with g'lilah. I'm thinking, too, of Robert's calm collectedness, of the clarity of Stephen L's leyning, of Ariella's assuredness as gabbait, of the uplifting power of Joseph's davenning, of Roi's interactive and thought-provoking teaching—and those are only the key players today. I'm also thinking of two—at least—mistakes that I made and the firm but gentle way I was put right.

All in all, I'm thinking that these special qualities are, paradoxically, entirely normal for the Minyan Chadash: the warmth and intimacy; the equality of men and women; the opportunity to participate to the extent that one wishes; the spirited singing; the chance to grow with support and a profound feeling of being accepted entirely; and, above all, the palpable sense of engagement with prayer and study, and with each other.

It doesn't have the majesty or the smooth professionalism of a formal service and the style is not to everyone's liking. It doesn't have to be. It doesn't aim to be. We are one synagogue with two minyanim, each serving particular needs and aspirations, each contributing to the

rich and vibrant community that is New London Synagogue. We're intensely proud and privileged to be part of that.

Recent developments

We've had a busy time since the High Holy Days.

Probably the most public development was the creation of a specially designed Torah mantle, table cover, Ark curtain and Torah cloth, commissioned by the Minyan in memory of Ester Gluck, who was one of its devoted members.

The aim, said Debbie Usiskin, former coordinator of the Minyan, was "that we look as good as we sound". With those items came a beautiful, larger and sturdier table—also specially made for us. These items can be used by the whole community whenever there is a service in the synagogue hall. Gina Sanders organised the dedication of '**Project Ester**' on 20 December 2008. The textile artist, Lana Young, and the carpenter, Robert Mullen, generously donated their time and skill but Gina also spearheaded the fund-raising to pay for the materials. The dedication—just before Chanukah, with its themes of human rights—involved a talk by Eiri Ohtani, director of ASAP (Asylum Seekers Appeals Project), after kiddush; it was followed by a lunch to which the whole community had been invited.

There have been other physical changes... Our **seating arrangements** in the hall now create a 'corridor' down the window side so that those passing through the hall do not feel so embarrassed to be disturbing our service. We have new **signs**, for the wall in the foyer, which Adam Arnold designed for us. He also set—very creatively—the text that we composed of a **welcome and introduction sheet** for newcomers.

We're on **Facebook**! This is used for sending information about services, meetings and other matters, in addition to the mailings from the synagogue website.

We've made a change to one of the English prayers. For about two years, we've been using the *Sim Shalom/Or Hadash* siddur, which was edited by Rabbi Reuven Hammer. Its clear and spacious layout, modern translations and helpful notes serve us well, except for **the prayer for our country**—which is not the USA: we needed a text that was contemporary but suited to Britain. With the permission of Rabbi Jeremy Gordon, we have adopted—and slightly adapted—one composed by Rabbi Jonathan Wittenburg for New North London Synagogue.

We'd had a number of queries about the **logistics of and the regulations concerning the Torah service**, for example, what to do when the person who was expected to read the Torah is ill... So we asked Rabbi Jeremy Gordon for a teach-in, which he gave on 11 December 2008—entitled 'When the Ark would go out'—open to the whole community. The dozen or so regular Minyan Chadash members who attended found it extremely beneficial.

Because we sometimes invite people from other communities or from the Association of Masorti Synagogues (AMS) to lead prayers or a teaching session, we produced a **clear statement about our customs**. This is also useful as an aide-memoire and as a complement to the training received by those who are not new to the Minyan but are taking on such a role for the first time.

Alongside this, we stream-lined the **organisation of the 'runners and riders' of our services**, as invited and organised beforehand: we now do this through a simple template giving the gabbai/gabbait and the shammass a simple sheet with all the information they need about who's undertaken to do what.

In January 2009, we were delighted to learn from Jacky Chernet of the European Academy of Jewish Liturgy (EAJL) that we had been chosen by EAJL and AMS as one of five minyanim

to be invited to nominate a person to **receive ten hours of tuition through EAJL in leading High Holy Day Services.**

The timing was perfect because we'd decided that, from the coming year, we would increase the number of people who lead Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. For many years, there was only one and in 2008 there were two; in 2009, there will be three leading the main services, with others leading the Torah services and Yizkor. This is in keeping with our aims to be participatory and inclusive, and to develop our skills.

Last but not least, we are now recognised as a **committee of the NLS Council**, which entitles us to a speaking but non-voting member.

Membership of the Minyan Chadash committee, from November 2008:

- Overall coordination and communications: Angela Gluck
- Minutes of meetings: Sian Jacobs
- Financial advice: Robert Buckle
- Representation on NLS Council: Roi Cohen Kadosh
- Calendar of services and invitations to prayer leaders: Gina Sanders
- Invitations to teachers: Roi Cohen Kadosh
- Invitations to read Torah and Haftarah: Joseph Finlay, Ariella Levine and Debbie Usiskin
- Group lunches and hospitality for individuals: Roberta Rosefield

Planned developments

For three years, the Minyan Chadash has held a **Tikkun Leyl Shavuot**—overnight study, followed by prayers and breakfast—in a member's home. As with all services and activities, it was open to all members of the community. The number who attended last year suggested that we needed to try a larger venue and so this year (28—29 May) it will be held in the NLS hall.

In the weekend of 20—22 November 2009, members of New London Synagogue are invited to be the guests of the Adath Shalom Congregation in Paris—a response to their visit to us last year. There are possibilities of home hospitality and tours of the places of Jewish interest are being arranged, as well as Shabbat services, meals and activities. The Minyan Chadash committee has offered to make the arrangements for our community: it's a wonderful opportunity for us to be, and to travel, together.

Why should only the children have havdalah in pyjamas? At some point in the winter of 2009, the Minyan Chadash will hold a motza'ei Shabbat event for adults in the community, mirroring those organised for the young. For adults, **havdalah in 'pyjamas'** will be interpreted very liberally and casual day clothing worn!

We remain ever grateful to Rabbi Jeremy Gordon for the advice he readily offers us—for occasionally being leading a learning session during a Shabbat or festival service and, more frequently, for popping in from 'next door'—and to Stephen Cotsen for his willingness to tutor individuals in the skills of leyning and leading prayers. Their support is invaluable.

Angela Gluck

THE LADIES ASSOCIATION

The main function of the Association, which is a registered charity, is to raise money for the weekly Kiddushim and wherever possible to donate money to various charities in Israel, as well as, in this country. During the past year, this has included Magen David Adom, Ziva Nativ, an Israeli organization for the children with special needs and UJIA. All were gratefully received.

On the purely social side, a very enjoyable Gilbert and Sullivan evening was hosted by David and Marion Cohen and attended by a large audience of Synagogue members. Further outings are planned for the current year.

The present membership stands at just over 60 and efforts are being made by the committee to bring in new members.

The committee meets every 5-6 weeks and I would like to express my thanks to all committee members, especially my co-chairman, Lily Davies, our Treasurer, Marie Alpert and our secretary Sylvia Shaw, who have all done sterling work. My thanks also to the synagogue office for their help and to Sam who ensures the meeting rooms and refreshments are always at the ready.

Sheila Finer

BOARD OF DEPUTIES

Eleanor Lind and I are the two representatives of New London on the Board of Deputies. Deputies are elected for a three year term and the current term is shortly to expire and it is for our members to elect new Deputies at our Shul AGM in May. Eleanor and I are both willing to stand again.

The Board has been active in the past 12 months on a wide range of issues, some of which are set out below. The President, Henry Grunwald is about to retire after holding the office, with enormous distinction, for the past six years and a new President will be elected by the Board in its own elections, also in May.

I should mention that Eleanor and I were both elected by the Executive Committee of their Board to serve on the Board's constitutional committee, one of the functions of which is to supervise the election for the President and for the other senior officers of the Board.

Some of the areas of activity of the Board over the past 12 months are as follows:

In **Defence and Group Relations**, the Board

- ran a successful voter registration and anti-BNP campaign that put voter turnout on 1 May in targeted areas at an all-time high
- joined the Government's Antisemitism Working Group to implement the recommendations of the All-Party Inquiry into Antisemitism
- monitored moves affecting *shechita* and *brit milah*
- organised the Fair Play Campaign Group monitors and responds to anti-Israel boycott activity

- represented the interests of employees and students faced with exam clashes and difficulties getting time off work over the Chaggim

In the **International arena** the Board

- organised a special 60th Anniversary ‘Diamond Delegation’ to visit Israel to meet with those living in Sderot, senior clerics in Jerusalem, Israeli Foreign Ministry officials and the State President and President of the Supreme Court
- took the lead in ‘Day for Darfur’ rallies in London seeking Government’s response to mass killings in Darfur
- coordinated our community’s involvement in the United Nations review of the world conference against racism in order to avoid a repeat of the appalling antisemitism that blighted the conference in 2001

In the area of **Community Issues** the Board

- worked on detailed submissions to the government on behalf of Jewish schools and held regular meetings with the Department for Children, Schools and Families as a result of which the Board won unequivocal support to ‘preserve the ethos’ of Jewish schools
- launched the innovative Regional Development Project, winning praise from Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Hazel Blears for its contribution to community cohesion
- produced various publications including the pioneering ‘Guide for Jewish Adults with Disabilities’
- continued to organise, maintain and raise funds for many Jewish cemeteries
- redesigned and expanded the travelling Jewish Way of Life Exhibition

Tony Leifer

Founder Rabbi

Dr Louis Jacobs zt"l, C.B.E.

Rabbi

Jeremy Gordon

Chazan

Stephen Cotsen

Chairman

Adrian Marks

Senior Warden

Roy Green

Treasurer

Steven Hope

Trustees

David J. Cohen

Anne Cowen

Stephen Rosefield

Jonathan Silver

Hon. Solicitor

Brian Fraiman

Board of Deputies

Eleanor Lind QC

Tony Leifer

Executive Director

Ronnie Cohen

Community Administrator

Sarah Koffman

Kira Mendelsohn

Ladies Association

Committee Chair

- Sheila Finer

Elected Members

Adrian Marks* (Chairman)

Marc Bornstein

Sue Leifer

Julian Dawes*

Ann Rau Dawes

Freda Hooberman Deere

David Franks

Ian Green*

Stephen Greene

Rabbi Elaina Rothman*

Gina Sanders

Margo Schwartz

Robert Gore

Anthony Filer*

Sam Graff

David Immanuel

Co-opted

Adam Arnold

Gerald Rothman*

Ex Officio

Rabbi Jeremy Gordon*

Chazan Stephen Cotsen

Steven Hope* - Treasurer

Louise Spencer Hope - Chair, Education

Roy Green* - Senior Warden

Tony Norton* - Junior Warden

Sheila Finer - Chair, Ladies Association

Brian Fraiman - Hon. Solicitor

Stephen Rosefield* - Trustee Representative

Invitee Committee Chairs

Edward Teeger - Services

Roi Cohen-Kadosh - Minyan Chadash

* = Member of the Executive