



Chigwell & Hainault
SYNAGOGUE



Creating a new Centre for Jewish Life
in Chigwell and Hainault

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Our vision

Our vision is to make the Shul a community centre, a family home, so that whatever your age, gender or level of observance you will feel welcomed by its modern look, inclusive atmosphere and the thriving community within.

Our community is growing, particularly amongst the younger age groups, and those with young children. The buildings must evolve to meet the changing needs of the times and to match the vibrancy of the community.

We want to fulfil the requirements expressed by the community in our last survey and subsequent dialogue.

To do this, to cater for the next 20 years, there is an urgent and obvious need to improve the infrastructure within which we pray, learn, play and celebrate. This proposal sets out how, by adding areas to the Shul, repurposing others, and brightening up the whole estate, we can provide a building fit for a growing, successful, welcoming community.

Chigwell and Hainault needs the changes outlined in this brochure to allow the community to grow successfully and provide the environment and facilities for the future.





“ Chigwell & Hainault is the jewel in the crown of United Synagogue communities. ”

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z”l

The proposal

This proposal sets out the need for a radical redevelopment of Chigwell and Hainault Synagogue and takes into account all of the changes we are making to services and facilities following the COVID experience.

Our building is outdated and no longer fit for purpose. With our young demographic, large and still growing membership and educational events attracting world-class speakers, we need a building that reflects our vibrancy and engages more of our members more of the time, ensuring an exciting future for our community.

A synagogue is not just a place for prayer but a meeting place (Beit Keneset). Now more than ever, as we come out of COVID-19, our Beit Keneset needs to reflect that.

We propose to refurbish all parts of the site, make significant improvements to the layout and facilities, and link the two buildings with a beautiful new foyer.



The effect of this will be to provide a modern bright environment with updated and increased facilities and amenities in a much safer space.

We need to raise £1.35 million to do this as well as upgrade the Community Hall to make it suitable to generate revenue as a viable Simcha Venue. We are thrilled that half this amount has already been pledged by a very generous family, on the condition that the other half is raised from within the community. We know your generous support will help us reach our goal.



“ Last year’s Towards 2020 set the bar impossibly high but Reflections 2020 actually shifted the bar even higher. ”

A quote from a shul member

Overview of the community

Just over 43 years ago, the merged Chigwell and Hainault Jewish communities built a permanent home in Limes Avenue, having previously had several temporary locations in members’ houses. The first services in our building took place on Rosh Hashanah 1976, with 270 members.

The first services in our building took place on Rosh Hashanah 1976 and since that time we have grown almost six-fold. We have an excellent rabbinic team of Rabbi Baruch and Rebbetzen Nechama Davis, and Community Development Rabbi Rafi and Rebbetzen Chaya Brocha Goodwin, who are all held in high regard by the membership.

Their guidance and leadership is a large contributory factor to our continued development and success. Their commitment to education, engaging programming for our young people and a strong belief in the centrality of Israel to Jewish life ensures a strong following amongst our membership.

Our wonderful staff, lay leaders and volunteers run a very wide variety of activities in the building, catering for every age group. These include the daily Shul nursery, weekly toddler group, Chigs Jewish Youth Club, Bat Mitzvah club, adult education, guest speakers, JACS and of course the daily synagogue services and children’s and youth services on Shabbat and festivals.

We aim to be a truly inclusive community, notably around the High Holyday period when we welcome over 1000 adults, toddlers, children and youth for a variety of services.

A recent example of our success and vibrancy was our ‘Reflections 2020’ programme in February 2020, attended by 233 people. There was an amazing range of sessions from some of today’s best Jewish speakers, with food and children’s programming provided throughout.



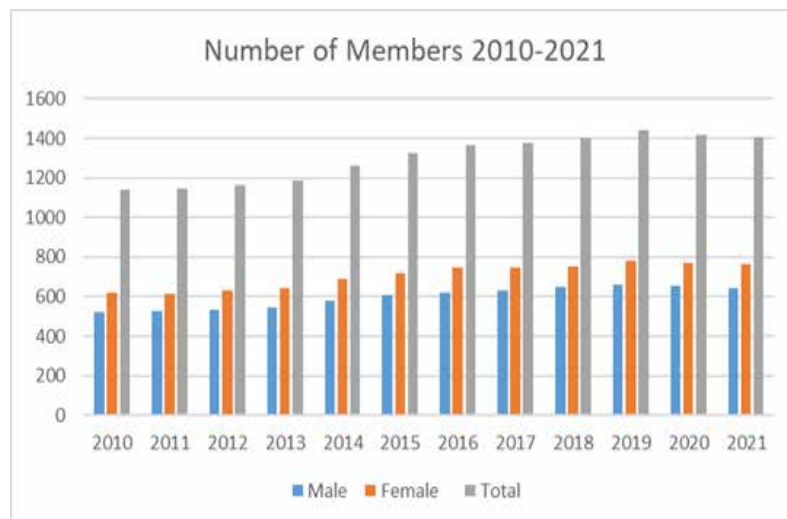
“ It’s a friendly shul with a great community spirit.
 It’s a vibrant, growing and enthusiastic community.
 This is a lovely community, with lots of
 opportunities for us to be part of shul life. ”

Quotes from shul members

Demographic changes in Chigwell

We are a growing community with one of the youngest average age demographics in the area.

This coming year we have 32 simchas in Shul.



We have many more children and a younger overall profile in our community than others in the area. Last year alone we celebrated 43 bar and bat mitzvas.

There is a huge future in this community, with a growing number of younger families. We want a building where everyone can feel comfortable, valued and engaged.

Numbers of children ages 0-18

Year	Children
2015	298
2017	304
2019	332
2020	321

Age Stats	Male	Female	Total
0 - 3	13	14	27
4 - 7	24	22	46
8 - 10	23	20	43
11	13	16	29
12	8	11	19
13 - 15	38	34	72
16 - 18	33	27	60
unknown	10	4	14
Total	162	148	310

The continued growth in Shul membership is extremely positive and, with our very young demographic, it looks set to increase.

In 1998 the building was refurbished and the community hall was added to meet the increased membership at that time, but no updates have been made since. The partitions, offices and toilets have remained largely unchanged since they were built in 1976.

Why we need the redevelopment

Today:

- ▶ the whole architectural experience is dark and drab, especially the current entrance area which is poorly lit, cramped and unwelcoming
- ▶ the amenities for children and youth are very poor. Toddlers' services have to be conducted in a corridor on rusty chairs. The over 8s and youth services are held in the room where the kiddush is being set up. Our young people deserve better
- ▶ the arrangement of seating in the Shul causes many women and girls to feel marginalised and disengaged. Women and girls are seated at the back of the hall, unable to hear or see the main focus of services as well as the men can, which can be especially problematic during one of our frequent family simchas



- ▶ the scope of services and programming has changed substantially. Our Rabbinic Team, working closely with lay members, is looking at ways to make services and events more appealing, where Jewish education and prayer can take place in a more meaningful environment – not simply 'frontal teaching' from the pulpit in Shul. We often have top speakers giving multiple-stream lectures, in facilities that are woefully inadequate
- ▶ the toilets are shabby and in great need of replacement
- ▶ the security of the Shul needs to be upgraded. The current system is old and the cameras and other security hardware need updating. The front entrance in particular has very poor security, with just a low gate separating it from the road.

Programming

The facilities on our current site have restricted our programming. For example, on a Shabbat morning we simply don't have enough room for all the Children's services and the Toddlers' service has been held in a passageway.

The following are examples of changes that can now be planned with the new facilities, especially bearing in mind the Chief Rabbi's essay on the way forward after COVID. As he stated "Covid has led to an historic moment to consider what comes next". We are also determined to relaunch an exciting series of events, with the completion of the redevelopment project. The objective will be to encourage people of all ages and from all areas of the community to engage with Jewish life at whatever level they choose.

The Reflections 2020 event attracted world-class speakers and over 250 members



Future programming plans include:

- ▶ **Friday Night Service**
 - > Kiddush - themed where possible
 - > Carlebach style with singing, dancing and musical instruments
- ▶ **Shorter Shabbat Morning Services**
- ▶ **Alternative Shabbat Services - including a chill-out room**
- ▶ **Revamped Children's Services**
 - > Creche 0-18 months
 - > Toddlers
 - > Under 7s
 - > Over 7s
- ▶ **Revamped Teenage programme**
- ▶ **Revamped Kiddushim**
- ▶ **Non-religious programmes are under development and include:**
 - > Cheese and Wine
 - > Whisky, wine tasting
 - > Film evenings
 - > Music events
 - > Family games evening
 - > Book club
 - > New members evenings



Security

The current site has its main entrance on Limes Avenue and is very exposed, particularly when people stop to chat on entry and exit. Making this secure would be difficult, very expensive and cosmetically unattractive.

The redevelopment places the main entrance to the new foyer within an already secure compound, proving safer access for all. The entrance to the secure car park area is from a smaller, quieter road which is easier for surveillance. There will be proper external facilities including a covered area by the new pedestrian entrance for our security team, which will raise the profile of our security both externally and internally.

The works

The results of a membership survey in 2017 about the building showed a clear desire for change. The size of the words in the image below indicate how frequently words were used in members' responses.



It has since become clear that the expense of knocking down the existing building and constructing a new one would place an unsustainable financial burden on the community. Instead, this project provides for most of the requirements from the survey, at a manageable and sustainable cost.

Timing

It is proposed that the building works will begin in Summer 2022.

The works will be phased so that everyday Shul life is disrupted as little as possible.

We are very excited to announce that full planning permission has been granted.

The works - the main proposals

New entrance/foyer

The new entrance will be moved to what is currently the space between the two synagogue buildings. It will be extremely light, bright, spacious and inviting, offering direct access to both parts of the site. There will be excellent security systems and electronic information screens.

Main sanctuary

The Shul space will be entirely modernised and reoriented. The women's and men's sections will be side by side. The Bimah will move towards the centre of the room, much closer to the women's section, enabling all parts of the community to feel more involved and engaged with the service. The Bimah itself will be light and movable, enabling the layout to be transformed when necessary, and the dais in front of the Ark will be reduced, allowing for more seating. The seating will be comfortable and fit for purpose, with storage and book rests.

Classrooms

There will be four classrooms, each with its own entrance and three with movable, sound-proofed partitions to allow them

to be joined to the main Shul space when necessary. The classrooms will be furnished so as to be multi-purpose and suitable for both social and educational purposes. Their main function will be for the daily nursery and the different children's services on Shabbat and Yom Tov.

Beit Midrash/Meeting Room

One of the spaces currently used by the nursery will become the Beit Midrash, used for weekday services, Friday night services and youth services. It will be renovated and sound-proofed to become a beautiful and uplifting place for prayer. Again there will be movable partitions to allow it to be joined to the Shul space when necessary.

Offices

The Shul administrators and nursery will have their own offices in their current locations. The rooms will be refurbished and modernised, making them a suitable and comfortable place for our staff to work and hold small meetings.

Toilets

All the toilets across the site will be totally refurbished.

Youth Room/Board Room/Library

The space gained by extending the existing front entrance out to under the existing canopy will be transformed into a new multi-purpose meeting room, giving our youth an appropriate space to meet.

Kitchen

The kitchen will be refurbished and modernised, enabling our volunteers and external caterers to cater for large and small events with greater ease.

Function Room

The community hall requires refurbishment and a new audio-visual system. This project provides limited improvement to the community hall. This could provide an income stream going forward, with hall hire for both synagogue members and the wider community.

Accessibility

The whole site will be fully accessible to those with mobility issues. There will be a new toilet added for those with physical disabilities.

Budget

We estimate the cost to be £1.35 million.

The proposed budget is as follows:

Item	Estimated cost
Main Shul building	£700,000
Link extension	£380,000
Function hall	£150,000
External works and landscaping	£120,000
Total	£1,350,000

Sugar Family commitment

The Sugar Family are very committed to this project and see this being a Community Project.

They are very generously partnering with us by pledging £600,000 on the basis that the community partners with them, and matches this pledge fully.

Our exciting community fundraising event will take place on **Sunday 30th and Monday 31st January 2022**

Community Fundraising

30th and 31st January 2022

On Sunday 30th January we will kick off our 36-hour campaign to raise the remaining funds for our exciting project. We hope that you will want to be part of this once-in-a-generation community project, whereby we can build a wonderful new centre for Jewish Life in Chigwell and Hainault. There will be lots of ways to get involved.

Firstly, we are seeking out **Chigwell Champions** to lead the effort on the 30th and 31st January. We will be asking our Champions to reach out to family, friends, colleagues and loved ones to ask for their support. We understand that everyone's circumstances are different but any amount – big or small – will bring us closer to our goal of raising a further £300,000.

In whichever way you help, the community will benefit, and we will all be grateful. We also hope to have some fun events in Shul on Sunday 30th and a special Shabbat on January 29th.

To get involved, please let us know either via the office, email refurb@chigshul.org.uk or call one of the team (details on the back). We would love you to become a Champion.



The next step...

We'd love to discuss any part of this proposal with you further. Please be in touch with Rabbi Davis, Lindsay Shure or Colin Franklin.



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Thank you
for helping to create a new Centre for
Jewish Life in Chigwell and Hainault

For further information or questions please contact one of the building project team.

- ▶ Rabbi Davis - 07711 231560
- ▶ Lindsay Shure - 07768 997891
- ▶ Colin Franklin - 07808 783306