

ANNUAL REPORT



A Year Like No Other

2020 was a year nobody could have predicted and one that shook us all to our cores. The impact of Covid-19 upon our lives, personally, professionally and communally cannot be understated and we have all faced great losses, particularly amongst the Jewish community and other ethnic minority groups.

At Mitzvah Day we knew we had to respond to the urgent needs that were exacerbated by Coronavirus and we swiftly encouraged individuals to check on isolated neighbours and to support them. Following this we launched **#EveryMitzvahMatters** – an online, interfaith, social action programme.

Throughout 2020 we focused on two major crises worsened by Covid-19, **food poverty** and **combatting loneliness.**

We worked closely with our charity partners to create Covid-19 safe projects and with Government officials to create pandemic-safe Mitzvah Day guidelines to protect volunteers, charity partners and beneficiaries.

With a second lockdown announced directly before Mitzvah Day we decided we had to do more in the face of the additional restrictions, and we launched **A Month of Mitzvahs,** filling lockdown with kindness.

It has been a privilege to lead Mitzvah Day through this extraordinary period as we shifted to homeworking, moving out of our offices, and adjusted our operations to be Covid-19 safe.

We made the difficult decision to furlough staff when we realised that our regular year-round interfaith, social action events wouldn't be feasible, operating with a reduced team. Rather than risk possible transmission we decided not to produce or distribute merchandise and instead encouraged everyone taking part in Mitzvah Day 2020 to wear an old Mitzvah Day t-shirt or something green when doing their small acts of kindness. Yet despite the challenges we have shown how, even during a pandemic, everyone can do small acts of kindness for others.

I must end with words of thanks to the thousands of volunteers, and the incredible individuals and faith communities that have been, and continue to be, at the forefront of social action initiatives giving so much of their time to make a real difference in their neighbourhoods. Throughout this incredibly challenging period the Mitzvah Day Trustees have provided invaluable advice and support and the Mitzvah Day team have been understanding, flexible and remained unwaveringly positive in the face of much uncertainty. My gratitude also goes out to all our supporters for continuing to believe in the work of Mitzvah Day.

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Thank you for joining us on this journey and being part of the Mitzvah Day family. Wishing you good health and hoping that, in the near future, we can once again join together in person,

Georgina Bye Chief Executive



What is Mitzvah Day?

Mitzvah Day brings people, of all faiths and none, together through Jewish led social action. Based upon the Jewish values of gemilut chasadim (acts of kindness), tzedek (justice) and tikkun olam (repairing the world), it is the largest multi-faith day of social action in the UK, and is a key calendar event in Jewish communities in over 30 countries.

We bring thousands of people together, to give our most valuable possession, our time. We strive to make a positive difference to the communities around us on Mitzvah Day and throughout the year by encouraging and celebrating volunteering, and building relationships with people we may not usually meet to build a stronger civil society.

On Mitzvah Day, communities and individuals are empowered to engage in a wide variety of social action projects including: visiting older or lonely people; collecting clothing to donate to refugees: replenishing food bank stores: cooking for homeless people; taking part in environmental projects; and many other initiatives. All of these projects facilitate genuine connections between communities, individuals and the charities they support, using social action as the way to connect.









#EveryMitzvahMatters

Throughout the past year we have all seen and felt how much a small act of kindness can put a smile on someone's face and brighten their day.

As we isolated to protect loved ones, the NHS, frontline workers and strangers, so many people have gone above and beyond to reach out and support local causes. Whether it has been grocery shopping or picking up prescriptions for our neighbours, cooking meals for vulnerable or isolated family or friends in our local areas, or sending gratitude packs or home-baked treats to frontline heroes, these small actions have truly made all the difference.

To show people that caring is easy, even from home, we created **#EveryMitzvahMatters** so that everyone could get involved and do good deeds, little or large.



Our online sessions allowed people all over the UK and around the world to connect, to laugh together and to hear from people of all faiths and backgrounds. Sharing our stories and our strength without barriers has allowed us, even when we are far apart, to feel more together than we could have imagined.



A Month of Mitzvahs: **Filling lockdown** with kindness

With a second lockdown announced right before Mitzvah Day our overwhelming belief was that instead of feeling restricted or limited by the lockdown, we had to do more.

A Month of Mitzvahs was born as we were determined to fill the whole second lockdown with kindness and good deeds.

A huge number of projects took place on Mitzvah Day itself and in addition to these we facilitated projects every single day throughout the second lockdown.

Although we couldn't paint the town green as we usually do, we were able to spread joy and kindness in a deeply meaningful and impactful way. The vast number of street collections for local foodbanks, the thousands of handmade cards and letters sent, as well as video messages recorded for care home residents, ensured that acts of lovingkindness were shared across the globe even when we had to remain apart.



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MMUNITY NEWS

Mitzvah Day in the media



Police officers assist an arresting mitzvah idea

BY JC REPORTER

NORTHWOOD UNITED Synagogue enlisted officers from South Oxhey Police to make its belated Mitzvah Day event run smoothly.

The officers helped Northwood members pack and deliver goody bags to three local nursing homes, as well as to tenants at Jewish Blind and Disabled's Cecil Rosen Court in Bushey.

MitzvahMatters initiative, which pro-Police vans were branded with motes small everyday acts of kindness during the pandemic orthwood United

All the magic of Mitzvah Day 2020



B COMMUNITY NEWS

Good deeds aplenty throughout the land

















COMMUNITY NEWS

Manchester volunteers

THEICCOM



Synagogue insignia for the day.

On arrival at the JBD property, the

volunteers were greeted by JBD chief

executive Lisa Wimborne, who said

the delivery had "brought excitement and smiles to everyone at Cecil Rosen

Court. On behalf of our tenants, a huge thank you to everyone for some much welcomed Mitzvah Day cheer."

The project was part of the #Every-

were joined by those from Jewish youth group FZY and Muslim commuaders to participate in a lively for



Mitzvah Day volunteers at a food hul



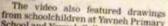
Different faiths and communities unite

MTH leaders, schoolchildren, parents, a charity, a Jewish youth group and sup-portive members of the public came together in a display of unity at the

Mitzvah Day, a Jewish-led day of so-cial action, was marked differently this year because of the pandemic.

But volunteers and guests were still ble to carry out charitable and com-nunity-led activities on Sunday across Gorehamwood and Bushey with the theme of Food Brings us Together' and Celebrating Diversity'. As part of the day, a video was

ed live in which messages of ce and friendship were shared by aith leaders from Hertsmere's Chris tian, Jewish, Hari Krishna and Muslim communities, together with the coordi-nators of Gratitude - a charity which upplies food and other goods to people



















Irene, 101, is Mitzvah

Day's oldest volunteer





Passing your driving test with Mitzvah Day

AN innovative programme to help refugees pass their driving tests formed part of the Altzvah Day programme in Cumbria on Sur

Minutes for Miles involved Jewish student volunteers from Leeds, Edinburgh and Bristol universities

Supporting refugees with tuition to gain a UK driving licence, Minutes for Miles was set. up during lockdown by Jewish volunteer Abigail Mann, who is supported by a team of volunteers many of whom were referred her by the Jewish Volunteers Network.

ers provided one-to-one tuition online, to refugees, to help them pass their triving theory test.

Driving language support sessions via Zoom vere held, whilst other volunteers worked collaboratively online to create driving ocabulary e-learning resources to be use by refugees on the programme going for

Abigail Mann, who has run Mitzvah Day events in Cumbria for the past four years,



told the Jewish Telegrap eers from across the country who are, on again, generously donating their Mitzvah Day. In these unprecedented tin work together to support those less fort ate than ourselves and make a las ference to people's lives, even thou

Keir in the community Our day of good deeds has just got longer









Whitefield marks Mitzvah Day

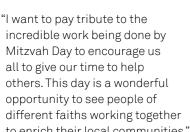


Mitzvah Day Annual Report 2020

What They Said



Sir Keir Starmer Leader of the Opposition



all to give our time to help others. This day is a wonderful opportunity to see people of different faiths working together to enrich their local communities."



Rabbi Charley **Baginsky** Liberal Judaism CEO

"Mitzvah Day shows the very best of our Judaism in action - as we unite with those of all faiths and none to do something for those who need it most. Mitzvah Day has become such an important part of our calendar that it's hard to remember a time when it didn't exist."



will be appreciated."

"Mitzvah Day is an excellent example of how Jewish values are harnessed for the benefit of all communities. Whether it be providing food to those who need it or reaching out to those experiencing social isolation and loneliness, all these acts of kindness, no matter how small, are significant and

"Mitzvah day is another example of

makes to our city. By encouraging

today and volunteer in support of

good causes, you're helping to show

that our diversity isn't a weakness but our greatest strength."

London's Jewish community

Londoners of all faiths and

backgrounds to come together

the profoundly positive contribution

Sadiq Khan

Mayor of London



Chief Rabbi

Ephraim Mirvis

"I would like to congratulate Mitzvah Day for encouraging us all to do more for those who are seriously affected by the pandemic – both on Mitzvah Day itself and indeed throughout the whole year."





Mitzvah Day has become a great British tradition. I am delighted and not at all surprised to see all the inspirational Mitzvah Day volunteers rise to the challenge of COVID - not just maintaining this fantastic Jewish-led day of good deeds, but going further and creating an entire month of mitzvahs!

People of all faiths are working together, side by side in spirit, to ensure volunteering efforts continue safely at a time when people need them the most. Mazel tov on your fantastic achievements and thank you to everyone who is working so hard to fill November with kindness.

15 November 2020



10 DOWNING STREET LONDON SW1A 2AA

Challenging **Real Social Need**

It would have been easy this year to have taken a step back. We might have accepted that it just wouldn't be possible to do Mitzvah Day in the way that we have done for the past 12 years.

However, that isn't our style and nor would it have been right. With the impact of Covid-19 we knew that instead of doing less we had to do more. **#EveryMitzvahMatters** recognised that in lockdown we needed meaningful and fulfilling ways to connect and do small acts of kindness for our neighbours and for people alone and vulnerable.

Divisions in society are driven by isolation, fear, misinformation and a need to look for blame.

Our job at Mitzvah Day, this year in particular when we have been more separate than ever due to lockdown restrictions, has been to find ways, even when we are apart, to bring people together; to connect, share, support one another and to understand difference.

Mitzvah Day provides the reason, the projects the connections and the glue. The participants, led by an army of volunteer coordinators across the globe, do the rest.

Mitzvah Day is the highlight in the faith communities' calendar for social action and the springboard for doing good all year round. It's a key connector that allows us to reach out to people of all faiths

and backgrounds and despite the challenges we will continue to reach out and build relationships across religious, generational and societal divides.

Most of all we are now looking ahead to the future, when we can be reunited with our loved ones, family, friends and community. We also look forward to coming back together with people from other faiths and backgrounds united in our desire to improve the world around us for #MitzvahDay2021.

Laura Marks OBE Founder and Chair



Mitzvah Day International

Mitzvah Day has experienced tremendous international growth over the past 12 years. More than ever, the message of partnership between different faith communities and social action projects that serve local needs, resonates deeply with communities all over the world.

2020 saw Mitzvah Day projects in 35 different countries. In partnership with our Mitzvah Day hubs in Australia, Brazil, Germany, Latin America and South Africa and Mitzvah Day newly established in Switzerland with a multi-lingual site, we are able to spread our grassroots model of engagement, building more communal partnerships around the world.

This year we established a new partnership with Maccabi Europe, which we will continue to deepen and expand, alongside our partnerships with Lazos and the Commonwealth Jewish Council.

We are delighted and proud that Mitzvah Day Australia celebrated their 10th anniversary this year, albeit not as planned, but with a plethora of Mitzvah Day projects responding to local fires, supporting food collections and distribution as well as befriending projects.

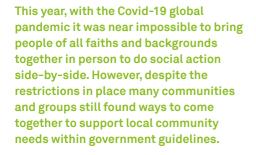




Mitzvah Day Interfaith Bringing people of all faiths and backgrounds

together to do social action side-by-side

Spotlight on Interfaith: Social Action in 2020



Through **#EveryMitzvahMatters** – our online, social action programme – we brought faith leaders and people of all faiths and backgrounds around the world together on screen. We shared how we were managing during lockdown and how we were celebrating Passover, Easter and Ramadan.

During a Month of Mitzvahs many groups maintained and even built new community relationships between different faith groups.





Mill Hill

The community in Mill Hill and Mitzvah Day coordinators were determined to ensure that this Mitzvah Day, as with previous years, was spent working hand-in-hand with other faith groups to support local needs whilst sticking closely to the guidelines and restrictions in place.

Together with the local church and mosque, vulnerable and isolated individuals were gifted plants and hand made cards that had been decorated by local children.

These were delivered on Mitzvah Day making a profound impact on the recipients who found Mitzvah Day 'socially enriching'. One of them shared the following message of thanks:

"Just to say thank to you for the potted plants that I received from the lovely person who knocked at my front door and how nice it was to have a socially distanced chat. It raised my spirits and I hope I did the same for the lovely person visiting".





Borehamwood Gratitude Project

Gratitude works to tackle food poverty and adapted their original plans to bring together people of all faiths to renovate the new Islamic centre following the lockdown announcement.

They adjusted their plans to run a virtual session where they welcomed the new Muslim community members with posters and messages of support from primary and secondary school children at Yavneh and the local Jewish community.

Their online interfaith session encouraged others to make foodbank collections, which were then sorted and distributed by volunteers, including FZY participants.

Thank You to our **Mitzvah Day Supporters**

Kol Hakavod to our **Mitzvah Day Partners**

Maior Donors

Bianca and Stuart Roden	Pears Foundation
Bloom Foundation	Peter Oppenheimer
Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust	Rachel Charitable Trust
Clore Duffield Foundation	Sara and Paul Philips
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Mitzvah Day Friends

ABG Group Alexandra Marks Anita and Jeffery Walker Benson Black Bianca and Garv Sakol Camden Giving Carolyn and Mark Mishon Debra Morris Denise and David Joseph Edwin and Esther Shuker Gabrielle and Mark Adlestone Gloria and Raymond Freeda Hilda Worth Jeremy Franks Joy & Malcolm Lyons Foundation Judy and Paul Dewinter Jusaca Charitable Trust Laura Marks and Dan Patterson Lee Sidney Loftus Foundation Lord Howard and Lady Jennifer Leigh Lord Jon and Lady Nicola Mendelsohn Michael Harris Michael Lewis Nimrod Capital LLP Roberta Benscher Ruth and Jeremy Smilg Shirley and John Marks Sir Trevor Chinn

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& other anonymous donors.

With Special Thanks

Pears Foundation, for its indefatigable partnership, guidance and support.

Graphical, for the years of inspired designs that have brought the Mitzvah Day brand to life.

A special thank you goes to all our charity partners, with whom we work so closely, to create sustainable Mitzvah Day projects supporting the essential work they do.

The Mitzvah Day Trustees for their unwavering support and commitment to ensuring our sustainability especially throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

UK Participating Organisations

20th Finchley (Woodside Park) Scout Troop 3rd Edgware Scouts 7 Hills Sheffield & District Reform Jewish Congregation AAK Ltd Adat Yeshua Messianic Synagogue Ahavas Yisrael Akiva Primary School Allerton Synagogue (Liverpool Jewish Community) Alma Primary Alonim Kindergarten Alyth Synagogue, Cheder and Nursery Apples And Honey Nightingale Nursery Apples and Honey Wimbledon Barnet Multi Faith Forum Barnet Synagogue BBYO Bedfordshire Progressive Synagogue (Rodef Shalom) Belmont United Synagogue Belsize Square Synagogue and Cheder Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue and Cheder **Bevis Marks** Birmingham Central Synagogue Birmingham Hebrew Congregation and Cheder (Singers Hill) Birmingham Jewish Society Birmingham Progressive Synagogue and Cheder Rnei ∆kiva Board of Deputies of British Jews Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation Bournemouth Reform Synagogue

Brighton and Hove Progressive Synagogue and Cheder Brondesbury Park Synagogue, Cheder and Nursery BT Bury & Whitefield League of Jewish Women Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School Bushey Gan Bushey United Synagogue Cardiff United Synagogue Central Synagogue London Chabad Liverpool Chai Cancer Care Claire Randall Consulting Ltd Clore Tikva School Community Security Trust (CST) Costco Foodies Crouch End Chavurah, Cumbria Dublin Jewish Community Dublin Jewish Progressive Congregation and Cheder East London and Essex Liberal Synagogue and Cheder Eden Primary School Edgware and Hendon Reform Synagogue Edgware Masorti Synagogue

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- Bromley Reform Synagogue and Cheder
- Calderwood Lodge Primary School Cardiff Reform Synagogue and Cheder Childwall Hebrew Congregation Durham University Jewish Society Ealing Liberal Synagogue and Cheder
- Edgware United Synagogue and Cheder
- Elstree and Borehamwood Masorti Community Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School **Finchley Federation** Finchley United Synagogue- Kinloss FMCB Chartered Accountants Friars Mead Assisted Living Care Home FRS Synagogue and Kindergarten F7Y Garnethill Hebrew Congregation Gesher School Gilah Nursery Golders Green Synagogue Habonim Dror Youth Movement Hakorot Book Club HaMakom Cheder Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue and Cheder Hampstead Synagogue Harlow Jewish Community Heathlands Village Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation Hendon United Synagogue Hertsmere Jewish Primary School Holocaust Education Trust Holocaust Memorial Day Trust Holy Trinity & St Silas Primary School Ilford Federation Synagogue Jersey Jewish Congregation Jewish Care Jewish Chaplaincy Uni of Surrey Jewish Labour Movement Jewish Volunteering Network Jewish West Midlands JES School JLGB Mill Hill Juniors

Kol Hakavod to our **Mitzvah Day Partners**

Mosaic Liberal Synagogue

Kol Hakavod to our **Mitzvah Day Partners**

JW3 Trust Ltd Kantor King Solomon High School Kenton Synagogue Kerem School Keren's Nursery Kingsley Way Kikar Kids King David Primary School Liverpool King's College Junior School, Wimbledon Kingston Liberal Synagogue and Cheder Kipling Way Collectors Kol Chai Hatch End Jewish Community Kol Nefesh Masorti Svnagogue Labour Friends of Israel Lady Nafisa Secondary school for Girls Lajna Imaillah North London Lake View Neighbours Lambeth Emmaus and friends including Jewish Labour Movement Langdon Brady League of Jewish Women Northwest Region Leeds Jewish Society Little Goldies Nurserv Liverpool Jewish Community Playgroup LJY-Netzer Youth Movement LSJS Lyndhurst House Preparatory School M.I.K.E. Leadership Course Maccabi GB Maccabi GB Scotland Maidenhead Synagogue and Cheder Manchester Liberal Jewish Community March of the Living UK Mathilda Marks-Kennedy Jewish Primary School Menorah Synagogue Mill Hill East Jewish Community Mill Hill Synagogue Mosaic Jewish Primary School

Mosaic Masorti Synagogue Mosaic Reform Synagogue Nagila Pre-School Nancy Reuben Primary School New Essex Masorti Synagogue New North London Synagogue and Cheder New West End Synagogue Newcastle Reform Synagogue (Ner Tamid) Newcastle United Hebrew Congregation Nisa-Nashim Nisa-Nashim Wessex Noam Jewish Primary School North West London Jewish Day School North West Surrey Synagogue Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue Northwood United Synagogue Nottingham Liberal Synagogue and Cheder ORT UK Oxford Jewish Congregation Oxford University Jewish Society Peterborough Liberal Jewish Community Pinner United Synagogue PJ Librarv Project ImpACT PWC Radlett Reform Synagogue and Cheder Redbridge Jewish Community Centre Resuscitation Council UK Richmond United Synagogue and Cheder Rimon Jewish Primary School Rosh Pinah Primary School and Nursery Royal Bank of Scotland - Islington RSY-Netzer

Sacks Morasha Jewish Primary School Saint Martin's Catholic Academy Salaam Shalom Kitchen - Nottingham Scottish Council of Jewish Communities Sha'arei Tsedek. North london Reform Synagogue and Cheder Shofar Daycare Nursery Sidney Corob House Simon Marks Jewish Primary School Solihull and District Synagogue and Cheder South Bucks Jewish Community South Hampstead High School South Hampstead Synagogue and Cheder South London United Synagogue South Manchester Synagogue (Bowden) South West Essex & Settlement Reform Syngaogue Southend and Westcliff Hebrew Congregation Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue Holland Park Spanish and Portuguese Sephardi Community Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue Lauderdale Road St Margaret's School St Mary's and Christ Church Hendon St. Albans Masorti Synagogue and Cheder St. Albans Masorti Synagogue and Cheder St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School Surrey University Jewish Society Telereal Trillium The Becket School

The Fed The Friendship Circle The Henrietta Barnett School The Jewish Museum The Liberal Jewish Synagogue and Cheder The Liberal Synagogue and Cheder, Flstree The Matana Club Scotland The Village Shul Hampstead and Cheder UJIA UJS United Synagogue Head Office United Synagogue Sheffield University of Bristol Jewish Society Watford & District Synagogue Wembley Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue Wessex Liberal Jewish Community West Boldon Primary School Westminster Synagogue and Cheder Whitefield Hebrew Congregation Winchester's Jewish Community and Friends Wohl Ilford Jewish Primary School and Nursery Wolfson Hillel Primary School Woodside Park Synagogue and Cheder Worcestershire Interfaith Forum Yavneh College Yavneh Primary School Yeshurun Federation Synagogue Yeshurun Hebrew Congregation Gatley York Liberal Jewish Community and Cheder Young Norwood Young US

International Organisations Polotsk Jewish Community Jewish Community of Bermuda Queen's Hillel Maccabi Zagreb Judaisme en Mouvement Keren Or Synagogue Libérale de Lyon Maccabi Deutschland Athens Jewish Community B'nai B'rith - Lodge "Philon" Athens Maccabi VAC Maccabi Monferrato Escuela CIM ORT Maccabi NL Galicia Jewish Museum Jewish Community Centre of Krakow African Jewish Congress Temple Israel Cape Town Union of Jewish Women, Johannesburg Comunidad Masortí Bet El Neder Barcelona Jewish Reform Congregation Shirat ha-vam Congregation Beth Shalom Alaska J-Teen Leadership/ UJA Fed of NY κδηδι The Jewish Council of North Central Florid International Satellite Offices

LAZOS Mitzvah Day Latin America Mitzvah Dav Australia Mitzvah Day Brazil Mitzvah Day Germany Mensch Mitzvah Day South Africa Mitzvah Day Switzerland





Save the date! 21st November 2021

It's never too early to start planning for Mitzvah Day - so get ready for 21st November 2021!

There are also opportunities to volunteer all year round, just check out the Available Projects page on the Mitzvah Day website www.mitzvahday.org.uk

Please get in touch for ways you can support great charities throughout the year.

