

Jews on the Jouse

June 2025 Sivan 5785 *Edition 26*

ברוכים הבאים!

Welcome to the Shavuot edition of YLJC's newsletter. In this edition we look forward to Pride month and Shavuot in June. We also have a recap of the Clifford's Tower commemoration and of the planned developments in York which have Jewish significance. There is an update on how one of our nominated charities, *The Place*, has been doing over the last year.

There are three articles about the work of The Board of Deputies of British Jews and the work they have been involved with over the past few months.

For those who are in London towards the end of June, there is still an opportunity to take part in the Maccabi Community Fun Run in preparation for The 22nd Maccabiah Games taking place from the 6th - 22nd July 2025 in Israel.

Chag sameach!

RUTH MORRIS

CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED!

Your community newsletter needs you! Please send your articles to info@jewsinyork.org.uk. The deadline for the next edition of the newsletter is 24th August 2025.



UP AND COMING EVENTS

Join YLJC –for a special Friday night Shabbat Service to mark York Pride 2025. All are warmly invited to this inclusive evening of prayer, song, and sharing through community. There will also be coffee & cake!

Details

Led by: Rabbi Elisheva Salamo

Date: Friday 6 June 2025

Time: 6:00 PM



A Message from Rabbi Elisheva:

We will gather in the spirit of Doikayt, a Yiddish word that means 'hereness.' It is a word used by the 'Bundists' to affirm that Jews belong where they are. The same can be said for all people, and especially those friends who find themselves joining our community for worship, sisterhood, or events. We belong. You belong. Regardless of your circumstances, your identity, your training, or the person you embrace in love. We have a place for you at our table, a bit of challah, and a glass of juice to share with you. Come share your stories. Come in respect. Come with an open heart and an open mind. Let us celebrate being here, our doikayt, together.



All faiths, all backgrounds, all identities — welcome.

Songs | Blessings | Reflection | Community | Celebration

For more information contact:

s.hubbard25@Hotmail.co.uk Accessibility: The venue is accessible. Please contact us for any specific needs.

NB This is advertised on Eventbrite for non-YLJC members: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pride-interfaith-service->



CHAIR'S WORD: JUNE 2025

Dear Friends,

When I sit down to write these reports I remind myself each time just how lucky I am to be part of such a kind and caring community. The past couple of months have been some of the hardest times, but the kindness I have been shown, the love, the messages, the calls, the emails and the hugs have meant everything to me and my family.

I am sorry I missed the Pesach Seder, but from all the reports and feedback it was another resounding success, our events have doubled in numbers over the past couple of years, with thanks to Rabbi Elisheva, the committee and our growing community. We look forward to a wonderful 1st night Rosh Hashanah which we will celebrate together on Monday, 22nd September 2025.

A lot of work goes on behind the scenes keeping YLJC ticking along, working with a wonderful committee who are making amazing strides with regards to our engagement with York Interfaith (one must make mention of Sarah and Rabbi Elisheva in this regard), the work that Howard and Lilian have been doing in regards to the Jewbury Carpark (literally helping change History) and the work that Jay continues to do with the Holocaust Memorial Scrolls, and with Rabbi Elisheva attending and teaching at the Leeds University Scrolls Day. Our representation & visibility with LJ and BOD via Owen and much more. We are becoming with every event, a well-known, well-loved community and my wish is that with your help to be able to continue to grow and support this.

History was made with the EGM last week, and the overall support of merging into one Progressive Community in the UK. Personally I believe this unification will help us stand together and stronger in a world that is getting more and more frightening on an almost daily basis. Thank you to all those who responded and voted.

Part of our growth is stability is in numbers (people and pounds). Please could I ask if at all possible to check that subs and Membership fees are up to date (if you are paying by monthly direct debit especially) it really is a vital part of our us being able to maintain YLJC. If anyone has ideas on Fundraising or is wanting to get more involved in what we are doing PLEASE do reach out to myself or Ben Rich. We would welcome all the support or help on offer.

We continue to have 4 Services a month, Rabbi Elisheva as you know pulled together a Survey to understand what works for the community, she has shared this with the Ritual Committee and they continue to work together to make YLJC the community we all want to be part of. We would love to see you all at services.

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Hopefully you received my email yesterday with a breakdown of the exciting June we have ahead – we will be celebrating the first of a number of Bnei Mitzvot in the coming months and years. We start on the 21st June when we will be celebrating Iris and the Wigginton-Smith family. Please join us and stay for Kiddush and a lunch provided in celebration by the family.

As always, please never hesitate to reach out to me if there is anything more I could be supporting you and your families with regards to YLIC or even just for a chat. If anyone has any questions, or suggestions, wants or needs please know that Rabbi and myself are always available and can be reached via email or phone.

My fondest wishes to you all
SHAAN (YLJC Chair & Security Lead)



LEARNING FROM YORKSHIRE'S HOLOCAUST TORAH SCROLLS

The day-long event of activities for this project hosted by the University of Leeds Centre for Jewish



Studies reunited Holocaust Torah scrolls held by different organisations and communities in Yorkshire, including the University of Leeds Cultural Collections & Galleries and Jewish synagogues across the denominational spectrum, YLIC among them Synagogues and the Collections team learned about the special care and treatment of a Torah scroll, as well as the incredible detail required for the making and scribal composition of a scroll. Rabbi Elisheva Salamo played a central role teaching participants how to 'leyn' (chant) from a scroll and a sofer (Torah scroll scribe) provided a hands-on workshop on the art of Hebrew calligraphy. Holocaust museum curators and provenance researchers drove home the power of objects such as the looted scrolls to testify about the Holocaust, especially now that the last generation of survivors is disappearing.

This project was funded by the University of Leeds and was led by Jay Prosser, YLIC Social Action Lead. It is now being developed into a number of related larger projects working with international museums, researchers and others on contentious cultural heritage.

JAY PROSSER



DeafShul WORKING TO INCLUDE DEAF JEWS

I am D/deaf and for as long as I can remember I have been campaigning for accessibility and inclusion for D/deaf people.

I was delighted when Rabbi Rene Pfertzel (Maidenhead Synagogue) introduced me to BSL interpreter Vicki Ashmore (a member of Bromley Reform Synagogue) the founder of DeafShul with the view to me helping to make the project happen. The project aims to enable D/deaf Jews have access to every aspect of Jewish life from participating in services,

having their bat/bar mitzvah, attend cheder, get married, participate in education or train to be a rabbi! While our communities are committed to inclusion and have good intentions however the reality is the access needs of D/deaf people are always sidelined for another day. Initially DeafShul will allow Deaf

people access to an interpreter and live captions during services. Using a Zoom account, a single laptop can be set up on a Bimah from any shul where a Deaf person might like to attend in person. Captions are switched on. The Deaf person can be given or can bring along their own iPad; anything with access to Zoom. An interpreter can then 'zoom into' a meeting with the deaf person, who holds the iPad and can access the service in real

time. We will not be limited to the Deaf person attending in person. ANY Deaf person can request the link to join the service on Zoom. They will see the Rabbi who is visible from the laptop on the Bimah and see the interpreter signing in a separate box. Captions need only be turned on. An extra bonus – an online Jewish community will develop naturally as regular

attendees meet. The first DeafShul monthly Friday Night service took place on the 4th of April. The service came from Maidenhead Synagogue and was led by Rabbi Rene in his usual relaxed, friendly and warm style. and Y.L.J.C's Pete Simms the host kept us cool, calm and collected! DeafShul had its second erev-Shabbat service

on 2nd May led by Rabbi Rebecca Birk and Finchley Progressive Synagogue who did us proud! The singing was quite lovely, and Rabbi Rebecca welcomed DeafShul warmly. Our next DeafShul will be led by Rabbi Lea Muhlstein at the Ark Synagogue this will be followed by an incredibly special joint LGBTQ+ PRIDE & D/deaf PRIDE celebration at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue (St John's Wood) led by Rabbi Alexandra Wright and coordinated by LJ chair Karen Newman! Coming up after that DeafShul will be led by Rabbi Richard Jacobi at East London & Essex Liberal Community followed by Rabbi Danny Rich at Southgate Progressive Community in September! We would love to have a DeafShul service led by our wonderful Rabbi Elisheva after the High Holy Days, we know it would be special. Everyone is welcome to attend DeafShul services for information e-mail us at deaf.shul@gmail.com



RABBI'S WORD



Dear Khevre,

As we approach Shavuot, we get ourselves ready, once again, to contemplate the Biblical account of the giving of the commandments, Exodus, chapter 20. We did this before Passover as well, when we read it in the Torah on the yearly cycle. This time, it is traditional to stay up all night and prepare ourselves to hear the words of this version of this covenant on a stomach filled with dairy and a barely awake spirit, still ringing with the insights of the long and fascinating night. After a long night of study, we rise to the morning with memories of smoke and thunder on the mountain and the still-clear voice that once spoke the world into being, connecting our ancestors, ourselves, and our descendants to the great mystery that is love. Unlike, but perhaps actually like our ancestors, we know these words: the Holy hopes that in listening and incorporating the wisdom that comes from them, a richer and holy community will be formed. We, standing again with the tribes in the story waiting in trepidation and exaltation, know exactly what will be said - after all, was it not read to us in January? And last year? Do we not teach our children and ourselves to honour parents? Are we not in a conversation with Shabbat that now involves cell phones and football as well as fire and picking up sticks? Have we not regretted a moment of begrudging a friend their bounty when it seems none has been vouchsafed to us? Along with the tsitsit we sometimes wear, I want to remind us that the cyclical rereading is there to remind us of what we lose as the time moves past, to remind us of the ever-renewing possibility of meaningful interaction with others, the self, and the Eternal.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks wrote: Judaism has a dual epistemology (theory of knowledge). There is wisdom, which is the universal heritage of [humankind]. It flows from the definition of humanity as the image and likeness of God... On the other hand, there is Torah, the covenant binding Israel to the sovereignty of God... Torah flows from the highly specific historical experience of the patriarchs and their descendants... Wisdom teaches us facts; Torah teaches us laws. Wisdom tells us how the world is; Torah tells us how it ought to be. Wisdom is subject to proof; Torah requires something else, authentication...

I am choosing to present his argument without a lot of his proofs because I want you to think about this time as one of binding that which we 'know' to that which we 'receive'. It is like eating: we can eat a simple meal and be satisfied, but we do not think of it or speak of it in the same way as a meal of exquisite presentation, a meal cooked by our grandmother with love, a meal co-created with a toddler. We all have access to the biological act of satiating the need to eat. And we can shift that by coming to our tables in gratitude, remembering the farmers who weeded the tomatoes, the child who picked the figs, the small bakery that nurtured the sourdough. We can come to our tables in joy, bringing old friends and new, sitting quietly with our partners, recounting a day thankfully put to rest, or a day of pride and productivity. We can come to our tables in awe, noting the passage of time as our children grow in body and wisdom, feeling freedom from tasks we have accomplished, terror at what is left to be done, pleasure in the respite from seeking. And lastly, we can come to our tables in love: for the gift that is our lives, for the blessings of all creatures who share this world with us, for the give and take of molecules that ties us to trees and planet.

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In Moses' recounting of this moment in the book of Deuteronomy, he changes a word: instead of 'remember' Shabbat, he tells us to 'keep' Shabbat. Here, in the rarified moment of beginning, that beginning which will come back to start us again, we remember: we gather gratitude and joy and love and awe. Later, when the celebration is over and we are living amongst the dirty dishes and the laundry and the noses that need wiping, we keep, for that is also a time of holiness, the time of wisdom: getting the children fed and to bed before they get cranky, making sure the bin goes out, kneeling before the toilet in another effort to get it unclogged.

I want to remind you that our lives, our world, and our humanity are made up of both these things: wisdom and Torah, intuitive and learnt, natural and challenging. We flip between them effortlessly at times, or slog ourselves out of the wisdom and into the numinous by packaging our woes in a metaphorical box, to be set aside, well out of view, please, until we must come back and tackle it. And as such we read this account of the commandments with wisdom and with Torah: we know what is coming; we know why it is good to avoid theft, murder, adultery. We also hold from this text, from the stories our Zayde told us, from the sparks of curiosity we kindle and blow out, kindle and let burn, kindle and share, the great expanse of sacred action that we have inherited. Let both be legacies that we share in many ways at YLIC.



Blessings,

RABBI ELISHEVA

A promotional poster for the Maccabi GB Community Fun Run. The background is a photograph of a group of people, including children and adults, running on a red track. They are wearing white t-shirts with the Maccabi GB logo and "COMMUNITY FUN RUN" text. Overlaid on the image is the text "REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!" in large, bold, white letters. Below this, in a blue banner, is "MACCABI GB", and in a red banner, is "COMMUNITY FUN RUN". At the bottom, in a yellow banner, is "SUNDAY 22ND JUNE 2025". At the very bottom, in a dark blue banner, is the text "FOR A HEALTHY, ACTIVE & PROUD JEWISH COMMUNITY". In the top left corner, there is a small Maccabi GB logo with the text "MACCABI GB For an ACTIVE Jewish Community". At the bottom, there is a URL: "See <https://www.maccabigb.org/cfr> for more information and how to enter."

OWEN POWER'S BOARD OF DEPUTIES END OF TERM REPORT MAY 2025

The Board of Deputies Deputy & Communities Engagement Manager the magnificent Sara Radivan has written an excellent article elsewhere in the newsletter about the work of the board which I am proud to be part of. While as ever, times are exceedingly difficult with the increase in antisemitism and the amount of work needed to counter it on all medias, politicians' utterances and hate marches on the street. However, despite this there is a determination on the board not to forget the endless number of other things that are important. The Education Working Group works hard to



bring the travelling Jewish Living Experience Exhibition to the regions, I help to promote the different options for hosting the exhibition, it can be in a community centre, church, work place, university or college, shopping centre or indeed anywhere people go – in addition to synagogues and schools. There are a range of options as to the size of the exhibition – it can be the complete set using banners and tables with objects or simply the banners only depending on local needs. The exhibition can be for a day, a few days or a week or two. Previously, the exhibition was held in Pendleton Gateway community centre in Salford over five days with a special civic reception for community leaders over coffee and cake, later it went to Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service in Salford for two days and it is planned to go to a special event in Newman College in Preston in June for one day. It would be lovely if our Social Action Committee would explore ways we might take the exhibition to York as an interfaith project, I think it is

doable now we have Pete Simms with us on the team with an extra pair of hands! I am supporting the board's Social Justice Committee by promoting the use of local Healthwatch projects in England for individuals to report their experience of antisemitism in the NHS which is sadly on the increase. I am also working on a Health project led by Judith Prinsley which aims to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health by creating a resource to sign-post support which will be available to synagogues and communities to use on their website. What matters most to me is the board's President Phil Rosenberg's election pledge to build a Disability Commission for the Jewish Community which is now underway. Already changes have taken place to make plenaries accessible, timings of meeting and arrangements for comfort breaks. Much work is being done to engage with charities and care services to bring their expertise to the board which is exciting.

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The strength of the board lies in how accessible and approachable; the President, Honorary Officers and professional staff are, they are always ready to engage – the photos with this article were taken when Phil and Sara came to my place in April for coffee and a catch-up on disability and regional issues. Phil's passion is to empower Deputies, I certainly feel a useful member of the board. OWEN POWER

Photos from previous page 1) Owen with Sara Radivan and Phil Rosenberg 2) Owen with Phil Rosenberg

SARA RADIVAN, REGIONAL MANAGER, BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS

The Board of Deputies of British Jews is the national representative body of the UK Jewish community engaging with the Government, media, different faith communities and the diplomatic corps. Founded in 1760, the Board is made up of 200 member synagogues and communal organisations, including York Liberal Jewish Community (YLJC). Those 200 synagogues / communal organisations have elected more than 300 Deputies, who meet approximately every six weeks as a 'British Jewish Parliament'. Owen Power, YLJC's elected Deputy, is a most active Deputy and plays a key role on the Regional Deputies Council and the Communities and Education Division.



The Board of Deputies will continue to advocate for Israel by calling for the immediate return of the hostages still held in Gaza; at the time of writing this article 58 hostages remain. The Board will continue to work to stop Hamas, Iran, Hizballah and the Houthis from ever being able to repeat the atrocities of 7 October 2023 and its aftermath. These groups bear the fundamental responsibility for the ongoing war and continue to bring devastation to the region. The Board continues to support the delivery of aid to Gaza, ensuring it reaches civilians and is not stolen by Hamas, and continues to emphasise that innocent civilians must not suffer due to the crimes of Hamas. The Board will continue to advocate for lasting peace and security for Israelis, Palestinians and the wider Middle East by advocating for a two-state solution, and expanding the Abraham Accords. The Board's Adopt a Hostage campaign continues and we thank YLJC for adopting hostage Eitan Horn, whose brother Yair was recently released during a ceasefire. We also thank those who read the Board's Reflection at the Seder at their own Seder.

The Board of Deputies is working to make the British Jewish community more united, inclusive, and outward-looking. In his first year as President, the Board's President Phil Rosenberg travelled to every nation and region of the UK. I joined him during his visit to Cardiff and will accompany him again on his upcoming visit to Belfast and the Northern Ireland Assembly. Later this year, the Board will launch a Commission on Disability Inclusion, in which Owen will play a significant role.

To the outside world, the Jewish community is primarily identified through the Holocaust. Holocaust Memorial Day is often seen as the only national event marking Jewish life, and Holocaust education remains the only compulsory teaching about Jews in UK schools. Whilst Holocaust remembrance is hugely important, the Board of Deputies is also determined to show that there are living Jews in the UK today who contribute to society, the economy and our shared culture which is why the Board will be launching British Jewish Culture Month, due to take place in 2026. Look out for more information about British Jewish Culture Month, which will be shared in due course.

The Jewish Living Experience Exhibition continues to "travel the country". It would be great if the Jewish Living Exhibition could be hosted and housed again in York.

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I was honoured to attend the Anne Frank Trust UK's annual Youth Conference in Manchester. This brought together pupils from schools across the country for a day of workshops focused on challenging antisemitism and all forms of prejudice. The pupils discussed the importance of tolerance and the ongoing need to fight prejudice and stand up against discrimination. They delivered excellent, powerful and heartfelt presentations about standing up to prejudice, inspired by Anne Frank's story. I was humbled to sit on the feedback panel and share my thoughts on their outstanding work. The Conference was also attended by local lay leaders, including Owen Power.

I was thrilled to be nominated and shortlisted for a Mitzvah Day Award in the Outstanding Business or Office – Manchester Plenary category. I attended the awards event in London and, although I didn't win, it was an honour to be recognised. I am also proud to share that I have been nominated for the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester's Communal Employee of the Year Award. I'll keep you updated on the outcome in my next article.

Well done to everyone involved in securing protected status for the Jewish cemetery in York. Known as Jewbury, the cemetery has now been designated a Scheduled Monument. This important recognition means that any future development plans for the area must take into account the cemetery's archaeological and historical significance.

As always, I look forward to continuing to work with York Liberal Jewish Community's Deputy Owen Power

The Board of Deputies ensures that the UK's Jewish community can live freely and happily and continue to practise their traditions. The Board of Deputies has an enhanced knowledge and understanding of Jewish life across British society, including the regional Jewish communities.

SARA RADIVAN

Board of Deputies Deputy & Community
Engagement Manager

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The photograph shows from left to right:

Lauren Keiles (Assistant Direct, People and Communities, Anne Frank Trust UK), Owen Power (Deputy YLJC), Sara Radivan (Deputy and Community Engagement Manager, Board of Deputies of British Jews) and Tim Robertson (CEO of Anne Frank Trust UK, but who retired the following week)



REFLECTIONS ON CLIFFORD'S TOWER

On 16 March 2025 York City Council held their annual commemoration of the massacre of York's Jewish community at Clifford's Tower in 1190. The keynote speaker was Dr John Jenkins, teaching fellow and research associate in history at the University of York. He delivered a fascinating lecture on his research into the medieval Jewish community of York, including details about major members of the community, their homes, and the relationship between the Jewish community, the City and the Christian community. The event was fully booked with approximately 40 people in attendance and more watching on live stream; the video of the event has subsequently been watched approximately 500 times on YouTube.

SAM BORIN

Image right: Dr John Jenkins courtesy of <https://www.york.ac.uk/history/people/jenkins/>



Image left from: https://www.yorkmix.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Clifford_DSCF5386CreditEnglishHeritage.jpg

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF ENGLAND

Who Will Rescue Us? is the first scholarly account of Jewish children's flight from Nazi Germany to France—and their subsequent escape to America from the Vichy regime

For the first time, Laura Hobson Faure brings to life the experiences of these children, and the Jewish and non-Jewish organizations who helped them. Drawing on survivors' testimonies as well as children's diaries, letters, drawings, songs, and poems, *Who Will Rescue Us?* re-creates their complex journeys, including how some of them eventually found safety in America.

See <https://www.jhse.org/event-details/who-will-rescue-us> for more details



We are excited that bookings are now open for our Progressive Judaism Northern Chagigah weekend (21-23 November 2025). Originating in the Movement for Reform Judaism, and now a joint event for all northern Liberal and Reform communities, it's a chance for members to meet for a weekend of relaxation, learning, prayer and fun in a gorgeous hotel in East Yorkshire that we will have exclusive use of.

Everyone comes for different reasons – to be spiritually recharged, to enjoy a Shabbat away from everyday routine, to make new friends and/or to be delighted that their children are being looked after and Jewishly engaged. Northern Chagigah is all about what YOU want. Whether it's to be up at the crack of dawn, in the pool, tackling Talmud, having a good sing in a Shabbat service or enjoying a lie in and joining for lunch. We can't wait to spend the weekend with you.

For more details and to book go to The Movement for Reform Judaism - Northern Chagigah 2025



THE ULTIMATE MITZVAH

It is a good thing to give time and expertise to a faith community. It is a mitzvah. It is only through this that most communities survive, especially when the community is relatively new. For example some people must take responsibility for being committee members and these people are generally visible to the congregation. Others have the knowledge and expertise to lead the services, and be involved with the education of the young people and those requiring assistance. There are lots of people preparing food, setting out chairs and generally helping to enable a service to run smoothly; these are indeed fulfilling mitzvot. Most people, especially new members, would love to do something for the community but are unsure what to do.

Let me offer the ultimate Mitzvah: The Chevra Kaddish which is often referred to as "The Sacred Sisterhood/ Brotherhood who perform tahara for those who have passed away. This is the greatest mitzvah of all. As we all know the only certainty in life is that one day we will die, and when that happens we will need to be prepared for burial. It is a very meaningful experience to wash and prepare someone's physical remains. It is performed with care and dignity, working as a team of four people. Some are very experienced whilst others are relatively new to this. But full training will be given, before, during and after the procedure, and no one will be asked to do this without experienced support.

It is important that a Jewish woman/ man is prepared for burial by other Jewish women/men, washing and preparing according to tradition and the faith, reciting prayers. The reason that I think that it is such a huge mitzvah is that you are the last person on earth to be able to help that person, and because of this they cannot say thank you. Also the general congregation don't know who you are so it is like 'Good work by stealth.'

THE TAHARA TEAM



JEWISH SITES IN YORK: JEWBURY, ALDWARD AND EYE OF YORK/CLIFFORD'S TOWER

This has been a very busy few months as I continue to work to promote YLJC's voice as the Jewish' go to' consultee for planning proposals and applications within York. We have so many Jewish related historic sites that are internationally as well as nationally important, and I am delighted to work with English Heritage, Historic England, York Civic Trust, York University's Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture, as well as City of York Council, to make our voice heard and our views known in order to help achieve the optimum results for these sites.

Jewbury

The site of York's medieval Jewish cemetery, known as Jewbury, has now been granted protected status as a Scheduled Monument by the Government, following advice from Historic England. The newly-protected site which lies just outside York's medieval city walls is of critical importance to our understanding of the small, but significant medieval Jewish population of York and, as one of England's first and largest medieval Jewish cemeteries, the site is a rare and exceptional survival. This designation is intended to ensure its preservation for future generations.

The application for scheduling this site was prompted by pre-application planning discussions for a mixed-use redevelopment scheme. The scheduling will not affect existing structures above ground, which are excluded from the designation. The Historic England press release - reported locally, nationally and internationally - advised that this decision followed consultation with key stakeholders including the Office of the Chief Rabbi, The Committee for the Preservation of Jewish Cemeteries in Europe, Foundation for Jewish Heritage, York Liberal Jewish Community, and the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture, all of whom supported the designation. I made a lengthy submission on behalf of YLJC and also had an online meeting with Historic England.

Historic England carefully considered the historic and religious significance of the site in determining the scheduling boundaries, which include both the medieval cemetery and a designated reinterment plot from the 1980s, with their Chief Executive advising: 'The scheduling of Jewbury recognises the exceptional historical and cultural significance of this site. Medieval Jewish Cemeteries are very rare, with only ten having been positively identified in England, and none are as extensively understood as this one. It represents an irreplaceable archaeological and cultural resource that deserves protection.' The designated scheduled area includes the core of the excavated cemetery, the reinterment plot containing the remains of individuals excavated in the 1980s, and a protective margin around the known extent of burials.

YLJC's consultation response advised that as the site is currently at risk from major redevelopment proposals we supported the proposed Scheduling map proposed, so long as it is made clear that any redevelopment of the site must be a comprehensive one. i.e. including the former Sainsburys and Go Outdoor sites to the north, where the bulk of the residential / student accommodation is proposed. Any redevelopment of any / all the land to its north should not take place in isolation and must include proposals to include all of this land too – we are advised that it is in the same ownership and will have major implications for the Jewbury Medieval Jewish Cemetery and its setting. Consequently, we advocate that any future usage (and any planning application) must be comprehensive and be appropriate for the site as a whole.

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We therefore supported this consultation and the desire to protect the site so as not to repeat or compound the offence and upset caused by the earlier interventions. We and many others believe that it is essential that the precise boundaries of the actual Jewish cemetery and any associated structures are first confirmed, so as to respect the extent of the original area which belonged to the community, and within that the precise area in which there are burials identified and scheduled so that there is no further disturbance of the cemetery area.

But we also advocate that the 'status quo' to leave the cemetery underneath a concrete public car park is neither respectful nor appropriate. Therefore the 1st stage must be to determine the actual extent of the Jewish cemetery and the burials within it. Using non invasive technology and undertaken in accordance with Halacha rules. This will inform the minimum area needing to be preserved and undisturbed within the Scheduled Monument, which should then be enlarged to allow for its correct setting and uses to be provided in due course. It will be an important but essential challenge to find ways to then redevelop the site as a whole sensitively with respect to Jewish law and practice, in a way that does not disturb any of the burials within the site.



To provide a context as to how the wider site (hence the need for a comprehensive scheme for the site as a whole) in the longer term can suitably recognise those who are buried here, and to do justice to this inheritance, YLJC advised that our ambition is to:

- Have our own Jewish centre to serve the needs of this community and those that visit us. This building to include a place of worship, of education and social action, and all that goes with a thriving synagogue and community today and its needs for the foreseeable future.
- Ensure that York's Jewish story is remembered and accurately memorialised, while ensuring that it doesn't end with its tragic history. As part of that new Jewish centre, a museum / exhibition space is needed that tells the story of York's long Jewish history: of its people's lives, contributions and deaths, including of those who are buried here.

We have advised the prospective developers of the whole site that it is recognised that this key City Centre brownfield site is in need of regeneration and redevelopment, but only if the proposals properly recognise and respect its historic significance and key location. Within the current proposals, there is no recognition of the important extensive medieval Jewbury cemetery area that exists under much of the southern part of the site, which is worldwide known as the location for the burials for all those who died at Clifford's Tower and many others and cannot be disturbed. We advised that it is essential that detailed further investigations are undertaken to properly ascertain the true extent and number and location of the burials before any revised redevelopment proposals Masterplan can be formulated. These must be undertaken under the proper Jewish supervision, to ensure that Halacha rules that stipulate that graves of Jewish persons should not be disturbed are correctly adhered to. The Scheduling of the site by Historic England would provide an extra layer of recognition and security that this is undertaken sensitively, and set a context for any redevelopment Masterplan for the site as a whole, so long as this would not prohibit the wider need for the removal of the car park in the future as part of this work and the creation of a substantially enhanced environment for the medieval cemetery underneath.

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YLJC advocates that some development on the northern portion of the site that is well designed and suitable close to the City's walls can be supported, but only if the southern part of the site is suitably designed. Whilst potentially student and other residential accommodation (as is being suggested by the current developers / landowner) may be suitable for the northern portion of the site, the southern part where the Jewish cemetery exists cannot be developed and must include proposals that recognise and reflect the Jewish historical significance of this area. Given the importance of the site both within York and the national and international Jewish community, we advocate that the proposals should also include the provision of a synagogue for York's Jewish community, which includes a new heritage centre / museum about Jewish life in York, together with a suitable green memorial contemplative space for those who died and are buried there. Further discussions with York Liberal Jewish Community and other key organisations with knowledge of the site and the City's history will help find the optimum solution for this important site that truly reflects its significance. It is a key City Centre site in an exceptional location and unique history that needs to be well designed, and could provide an outstanding legacy to all concerned if undertaken sensitively and correctly.



Aldwark

There is currently a planning application submitted to City of York Council for the conversion of the old synagogue into apartments - see application ref.25/00494/FUL if you would like to comment. YLJC was alerted to this application by York Civic Trust and we have both made submissions on this application. We have checked with those who have detailed knowledge of the Aldwark synagogue site and its history to confirm that this application is indeed for the former Aldwark synagogue, and not for former residential buildings as is purported on the application form and application description. We are most concerned that the submitted evidence - and in particular the Heritage Statement - contains significant errors.

I have further responded that not only does the Heritage Statement and all associated documents incorrectly site the former synagogue in the wrong building, and makes incorrect statements about historic and current Jewish beliefs and practices, but the applicant's agent has failed to check and advise that the synagogue remains a Registered Place of Worship and that, unless an application is made to remove the registration, which can only be undertaken under the prescribed legislative procedures, it will still be available as a place of public Jewish worship. Further information on this is provided by Professor Helen Codd, who has been working with Howard on the history of the synagogue, who also cites its national and international importance in her submission.

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As York's only formal Jewish community, I have responded that YLJC is extremely concerned about the proposal and how the application will be progressed within this context. There is plentiful knowledge online and in the press and from our Interfaith colleagues and others that there has been a flourishing Jewish Liberal community in York since 2014, seeking to widen its community and services and base and to have its own synagogue (including celebrating Shabbat services and festivals, lifecycle events, learning for all ages, community events etc). We request that we be kept advised as to whether and how this application will be progressed. And in meantime I am working to support York Civic Trust in its design objections, whilst Howard is coordinating with the Leeds community associated with the former Aldwark synagogue regarding its potential deconsecration and what recognition of its former use can be achieved.

Eye of York / Clifford's Tower

Work is continuing with City of York Council regarding the redevelopment proposals for the Clifford's Tower area, together with that of the Castle Car Park and Eye of York area in front of the Castle Museum and Law Courts. Many meetings have been held that include the promise that there will be a proper memorial and quiet contemplative space suitably located near to the existing English Heritage improvements at the foot of the Tower within the new greenspace, but the level of detail to ensure that this is a recognisable space is still under discussion and needs further detail and refinement. I have been working with English Heritage and York University's Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture to advocate this and other details of the proposed Masterplan design, and comments have been submitted by us all accordingly.

When the planning application is submitted shortly, it will be important that comments are made to influence the design and where the committed monies for the scheme as a whole will be spent. External funding will also be needed to supplement the proposals to potentially achieve a statue / memorial that truly credits the site's history and the tragedy that took place here so many centuries ago. In the meantime, we will be working with English Heritage to replace the current plaque at the foot of the tower with its inappropriate wording with one that more truly recognises those who gave their lives here. Please do get involved when the planning application is submitted in due course.

All of these sites need much work and knowledge. If you have any comments that can assist my work on any of these sites, please do not hesitate to contact me at engagement@jewsinyork.org.uk or through our Chair Shaan. In the meantime, I am working with Howard re coordinating with our Yorkshire Jewish friends at LJRC and synagogues in Leeds and beyond nationally to keep each other informed and to work together on these various sites, and Ben has also been speaking with the Jewbury developers and hoping to set up another meeting with them. We are also keeping Progressive Judaism and our Jewish press contacts informed as appropriate.

I will keep you informed as things progress on these various sites.

And would love to hear from you too.

LILIAN COULSON



INTERIM REPORT FROM THE 'PLACE', YLIC'S CHOSEN CHARITY FOR LAST YEAR

Dear friends, partners and supporters,

Over the last few months The Place team have been delivering an outstanding blend of academic support, enrichment and employability opportunities across our membership and alongside our partner schools. Highlights have included an excellent ENGAGE Maths week for the whole Year 6 cohort at Westfield Community Primary School. This week of activity saw this group of primary school children, aged 10 to 11 years old, take part in campus visits to the National STEM Learning Centre and become involved in a collaboration with the Griff Investment Fund, a first of its kind student-led investment fund formed by University of York students.

Growing cultural capital for our young people has also featured highly with trips to museums and sites across York and Yorkshire, while our prized collaboration with York Theatre Royal saw several of our members taking to the real stage to perform in March! Our partnership with York Museums Trust continues to create enriching academic support sessions which we regularly include at our Monday Explore groups.

The list goes on..!

We have been incredibly well supported by our partners as our Employability Programme launched in full force.

Aiming to provide every child in our partner schools - Westfield Community Primary School and York High

School - with a minimum of three career interventions per year from Year 3 (7 to 8 years old) right up to Year 11 (15 to 16 years old), this programme is creating opportunity, building confidence, belonging and curiosity across all abilities, ages and backgrounds. The opportunities for our young people to explore the world of work, link their curriculum to tangible future ambitions, and move through an increasingly supportive network of employers across the city is just priceless.

Another big area of progress, now that we are in our second year of operation, has been cementing relationships across the teams at York High School and York College.

As we add to a regular drumbeat of enrichment, well-being, careers and academic support to secondary-aged children, we are seeing how vitally important it is for The Place to endure and sustain itself in the long term.

All of this is made possible by the very special support of donors and partner organisations, and from The Place team and I, our deepest thanks.

Jo Young, Centre Manager



JCC MACCABI GAMES

The JCC Maccabi Games are an Olympic-style sporting competition held each summer in North America and is the second largest organised sports program for Jewish teenagers in the world.

Bringing together Jewish teens for athletic, cultural and social experiences, rooted in pluralistic Jewish values that culminate in a pinnacle Olympic style global event.

The next JCC Maccabi Games are set to be in Pittsburgh, USA in August 2025.

See <https://www.maccabigb.org/internationalevents> for more details

