

US induction for new Chairs

11th June 2025



First of all...

**THANK
YOU!**



Jo Grose

Chief Executive



United Synagogue - one charity, one family

We ARE
all ONE



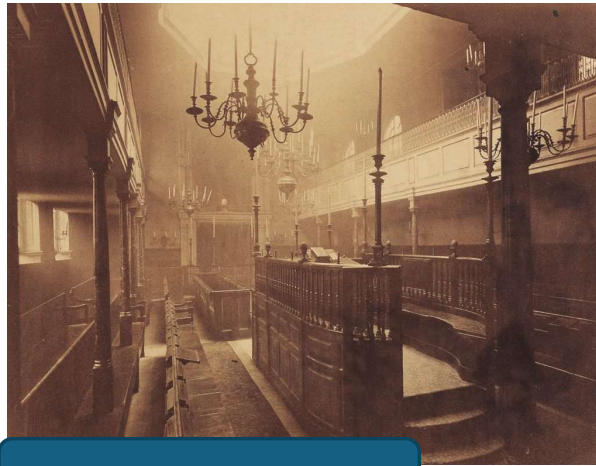
How did we get here?



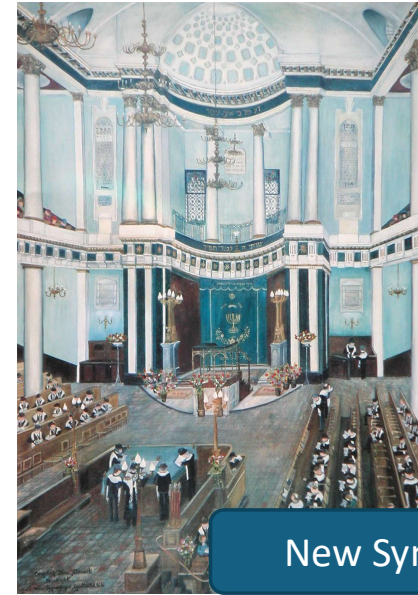
Chief Rabbi Nathan Adler urged an alliance of the five leading Orthodox synagogues



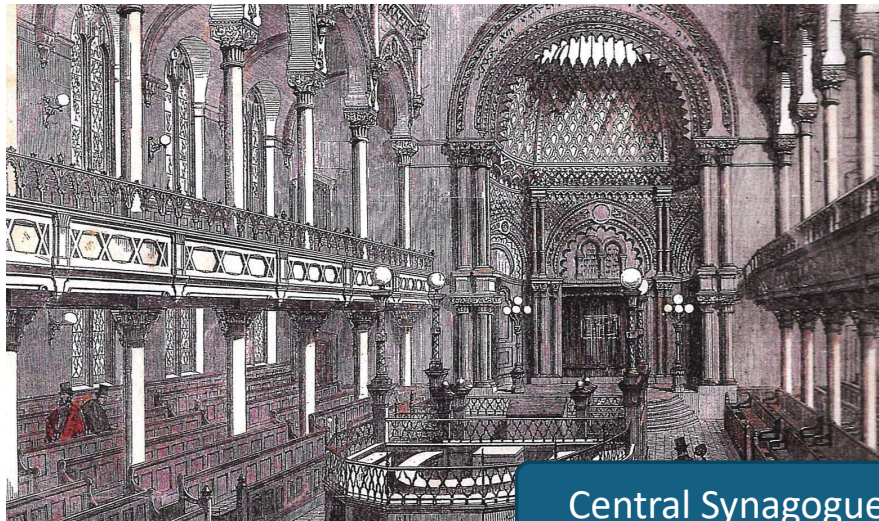
Great Synagogue



Hambro Synagogue



New Synagogue



Central Synagogue



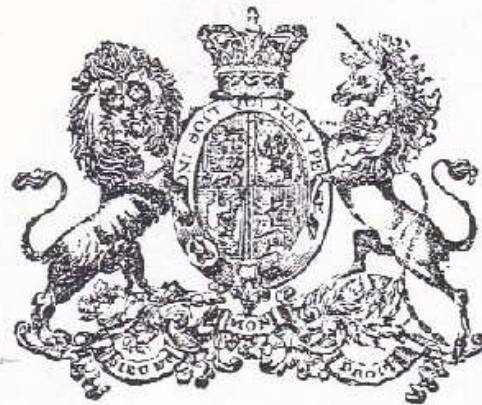
Bayswater Synagogue

United Synagogues Act of Parliament—1870

[33 & 34 VICT.]

Jewish United Synagogues.

[Ch. cxvi.]



CHAP. cxvi.

An Act for confirming a Scheme of the Charity Commissioners
for the Jewish United Synagogues. [14th July 1870.] 1870.
—



United Synagogue's Hebrew name

קהילה קדושה כנסת ישראל

A gathering of Israel, A holy community



Powering the British Jewish Community

56 communities and supporting infrastructure	Rabbinic development and recruitment	Chesed (Community care, prison and hospital chaplaincy)	KLBD - Kashrut	London Beth Din
Office of the Chief Rabbi	Nurseries	Burial Society	Marriages	Tribe –camps, schools, resource youth directors
Eruvin	Adult Education and Publications	Heritage	Young Adult programming	Social Action

And a significant stakeholder in:

*London Board of Shechita * Ten Schools * University Jewish Chaplaincy
*Initiation Society * Affiliated communities



Our Vision

Creating a community of inspired Jews, with enriched lives, passing our heritage on to future generations.

More Jews doing more Jewish things more of time



US by numbers

- 56 diverse member synagogues
- 6 affiliate synagogues, 1 associate synagogue
- Over 36,000 adult members
- Over 18,000 youth and children
- Over 100 Rabbis & Rebbetzens
- 850-900 staff
- 700 lay leaders across all communities

... and hundreds and hundreds of volunteers

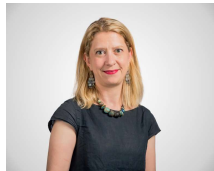


US Governance: Trustees

- 9 Trustees elected
- 1 President and remaining 8 split evenly by gender
- Currently 10 Trustees (including one co-opted)
- Forthcoming elections 14th July
- Electorate US Council
- 4-year terms- with a 2-year stagger



Michael Goldstein



Claire Lemer



Fleurise Lewis



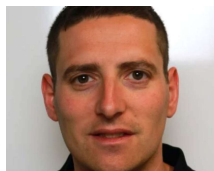
Maxwell Nisner



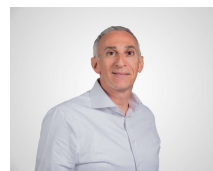
Nicola Rosenfelder



Rachel Hartog



Simon Mitchell



Tristan Nagler



Jacqui Zinkin



Saul Taylor



Governance: US Council

- Made up of Life members and shul council appointees
- Approx. 220 members
- Shul representation given based on number of members – check your allocation!
- Meet 4 times per annum. Elected for 3 years.
- 5 powers:
 1. Elect US Trustees
 2. Open a new US community
 3. Close a US community
 4. Review the annual budget
 5. Amend US Bye-Laws

Rabbinic leadership

- Chief Rabbi is the US rabbinic authority
- Court of the Chief Rabbi (London Beth Din)
 - Dayan Gelley (Rosh Beth Din)
 - Dayan Binstock
 - Dayan Englander
 - Dayan Simons
 - Dayan Zobin
- Centre for Rabbinic Excellence (CRE) - Rabbi Nicky Liss
- RCUS – Rabbi Elchonon Feldman
- RRUS - Rebbetzins Jacqueline Feldman & Eva Chapper



US Governance: Community leadership

Rabbinic Team
Rabbis and Rebbetzens

Lay Leadership
Honorary Officers and
Council

Shared Vision and Strategy for Community
Rabbi holds Halachic Authority



Governance: Honorary Officers/Executive

- United Synagogue Trustees delegate day-to-day management of communities to a team of local, elected Honorary Officers, typically:
 - Chair/s, Vice Chair/s, Warden/s, Financial Representative, Women's Officer/s
- Key responsibilities include:
 - Setting and implementing community strategy (in partnership with Rabbinic team)
 - Running religious services
 - Overseeing the full range of programmes, care, outreach
 - Managing synagogue finances and membership
 - Line management of professional and Rabbinic staff
 - Upkeep of building and security
- Supported by an elected Synagogue Council and teams of volunteers

Governance: Synagogue Council

- Must meet at least four times a year
- Determine number of HOs and length of office (1/2 years) in February/March
- Determine composition of Synagogue Council and Executive
- Act as forum for discussion
- Assist HOs in running of community – should have explicit portfolios
- Review budget
- Key role in Rabbinic recruitment

Lay leader protection

- The United Synagogue would not be able to function without the dedication and commitment of the hundreds of volunteers across our communities
- We maintain Directors and Officers Liability Insurance. This coverage extends to the Honorary Officers and Council members of all our Member Synagogues
- It also extends to any volunteer who has taken on a responsibility on behalf of the US.
- It provides protection for you against loss and extends to defence costs, damages, compensation and settlements together with the claimant's legal costs and expenses.
- The insurance will provide cover for almost all liability which you might personally incur, in discharging your role at the Synagogue.
- Only very rarely do we draw upon this.
- Familiarise yourself with our policies

Be in touch early if a problem - we're here to help



US Centre Directors

Jo Grose

Tamar Berman

David Collins

Rabbi Elie Schoemann

David Frei

David Goldberg

Rabbi Nicky Liss

Barnaby Nemko

Vickie Wiltshire

Richard Verber

Lali Virdee

Chief Executive

Schools Strategy Director

Chief Operating Officer

Director of KLBD

External and Legal Affairs, Registrar of Beth Din

Fundraising Director

Director of the Centre for Rabbinic Excellence

Director of Community Life

HR Director

Communications Director

Property Director



Part of the Whole

- Draw on breadth of charity
- Our commitment to support you
- Community of best practice
- Strength in coming together
- Space for challenging conversations - l'shem shamayim
- From one generation to the next - our golden thread



Michelle Mervish

Head of Membership and Community
Administration



Rabbi Nicky Liss

Director,
Centre for Rabbinic Excellence (CRE)



Seven Pillars of CRE

- Review & Goal Setting
 - Torah learning
 - Professional Skill
 - Joint project with HOs
- Group Supervision
- Training - in person and online
- Collaboration with Community Division to support - HOs and Rabbis
- Recruitment: Interns programme and Rabbinic pipeline
- Induction, foundation and onboarding
- Mentoring and Coaching

Claudia Kitsberg

Head of Safeguarding and Welfare



Safeguarding

- Effective safeguarding creates a safe and supportive environment that prioritises the protection and well-being of vulnerable individuals
- It is everyone's responsibility
- Abuse can and does happen in our communities
- If you see or hear something of concern – just report it

Safer Recruitment

- What is it?
- Why do we need it?

Which Roles Require Safer Recruitment?

- Rabbinic
- Youth Directors
- Cheder staff
- Nursery staff
- Summer Camp Staff

Vickie Wilshire

HR Director



Ben Vos

Head of Community Development Team



Barnaby Nemko

Director of Community Life



David Collins

Chief Operating Officer



Also available via US Centre:

- Fundraising support for Kol Nidre appeal; legacies, etc:
- Operational support via HR, Property, Safeguarding, IT, Burial and Finance departments
- Programmatic support:
 - Education & Events: Young US, community trips abroad; Shabbatonim; speakers.
 - Tribe: all provision (central and local) for children and youth including children's service training.
 - Chesed: welfare and social responsibility

Community Development Team

- Ben Vos – Head of Community Development: bbvos@theus.org.uk (inc Community Strategy and Rabbinic recruitment)
- Naomi Cohen – Community Development Manager: ncohen@theus.org.uk (inc HO training and women's engagement)
- Jonny Ison – Community Development Manager: jison@theus.org.uk (inc Communities of Potential, HO training and the Think Tank)
- Daniella Neifeld – Community Participation Manager: dneifeld@theus.org.uk (inc volunteering and aspects of Inclusion (accessibility))
- Tali Ross – Community Engagement Manager: tross@theus.org.uk (inc Synagogue Councils)
- Michelle Mervish – Head of Membership and Community Administration + Community Partner: mmervish@theus.org.uk



