



To pray. To learn. To live. Together.

## Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the period 1 January to 31 December 2017

North Western Reform Synagogue (known as ALYTH)





North Western Reform Synagogue (known as ALYTH)

**Trustees Report and Financial Statements**

**Year Ended 31 December 2017**

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North Western Reform Synagogue (known as ALYTH)

**Legal and Administrative Information Year Ended 31 December 2017**

**Address:** Alyth Gardens. London. NW11 7EN

**Auditors:**

Nyman Libson Paul  
Regina House  
124 Finchley Road  
London NW3 5JS

**Bankers**

NatWest Bank  
45 Tottenham Court Road  
London  
W1T 2EA

**Honorary Solicitor**

Lawrence Radley LLB  
Reed Smith LLP  
Broadgate Tower  
20 Primrose Street  
London EC2A 2RS

**Investment Advisors**

Investec Wealth & Investment  
30 Gresham Street  
London  
EC2V 7QW

**Members of Council:**

**Members:**

Noeleen Cohen*	Chair.
Russell Baum*	Vice Chair.
Peter Backman	President. Appointed May 2017
Colette Levy	Vice-president. Retired May 2017
Rolfe Roseman	Vice-president.
Margaret Harris	Vice-president.
Andrew Gellert	Vice President. Appointed May 2017
Mark Harris	Immediate Past Chair
Michael Simon*	Senior Warden

**Elected Members:**

Catherine Becker	Appointed May 2017
Howard Bogod	
Cheryl Brodie	Appointed May 2017
Irit Burkeman	
Mark Ebner	Treasurer. Retired May 2017
Nicola Feuchtwang*	
David Finlay	
Richard Fraiman	Appointed May 2017
Jackie Goymour	
Caronne Graham*	Honorary Secretary. Appointed May 2017
Sue Haskell	
Gary Lipman	
Clare Lubin	
Arieh Miller*	
Nicky Minter-Green*	
Nick Morris	Appointed May 2017
Fran Moscow	
Michael Overlander*	
Lanny Silverstone*	
Honor Small	
Ruth Smilg*	

\*Trustee of the charity and member of the Executive Committee

The title to the synagogue building in Alyth Gardens is held by the trustees of the North Western Reform Synagogue.



North Western Reform Synagogue (known as ALYTH)

## Legal and Administrative Information Year Ended 31 December 2017

### Rabbinic Team:

Rabbi Mark Goldsmith	Rabbinic Partner
Rabbi Josh Levy	Rabbinic Partner
Rabbi Hannah Kingston	Rabbi Appointed September 2017
Rabbi Colin Eimer	Rabbi Part Time

### Core Leadership Team (includes Rabbis):

Adam Martin	Community Director
Lynette Sunderland	Welfare and Lifecycle Director
Samantha Brunner	Youth & Education Hub Coordinator

### Early Years Head Teachers:

Tor Alter	Alyth Kindergarten
Sharon Lee	Shofar Daycare Nursery

### Representatives to the Board of Deputies of British Jews

Annabelle Daiches  
Michael Daiches  
John Fulcher  
Jackie Naftalin  
Noam Tamir

### Representatives to Reform Judaism (RJ)

Paul Winter	Treasurer of RJ
Paul Langsford	Trustee

### Representatives to the Jewish Joint Burial Society

Hilary Roer	
Steve Miller	Alternate

### Organisations with which Alyth is affiliated:

EUPJ – European Union for Progressive Judaism  
WUPJ – World Union for Progressive Judaism  
IMPJ – Israel Movement for Reform & Progressive Judaism  
Board of Deputies of British Jews  
Pro Zion (Progressive Judaism in Israel)  
Zionist Federation of Great Britain  
Citizens UK

## **Basis of Preparation of Financial Statements**

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of North Western Reform Synagogue (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2017. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the charity comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).



To pray. To learn. To live. Together.

# 2017 In numbers

28

chavurah suppers and lunches for members

700

people click on our live feed every month

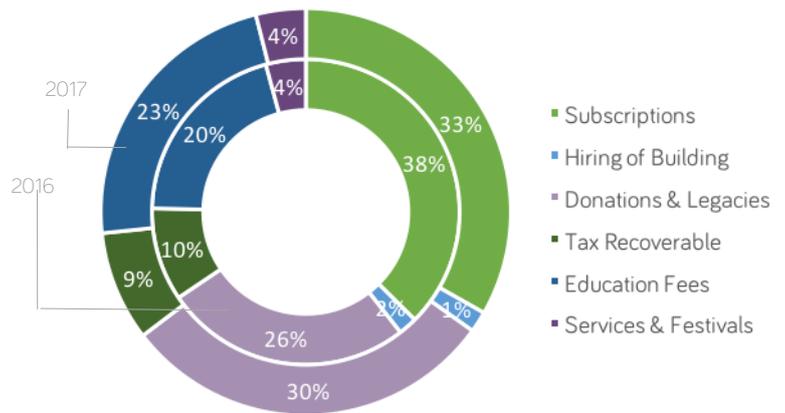
41

of our young members became bar and bat mitzvah

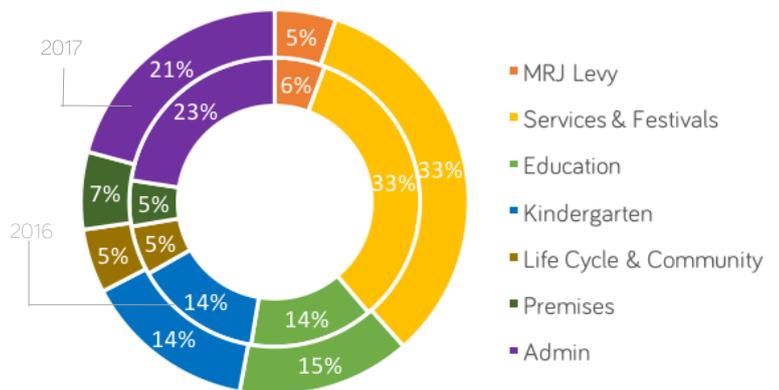
82%

of our members live within a 5 mile radius of Alyth

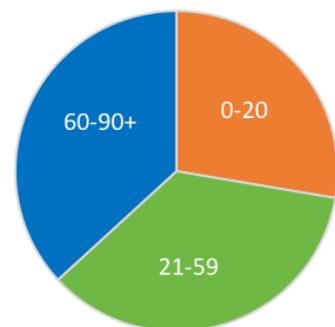
Income 2016 & 2017



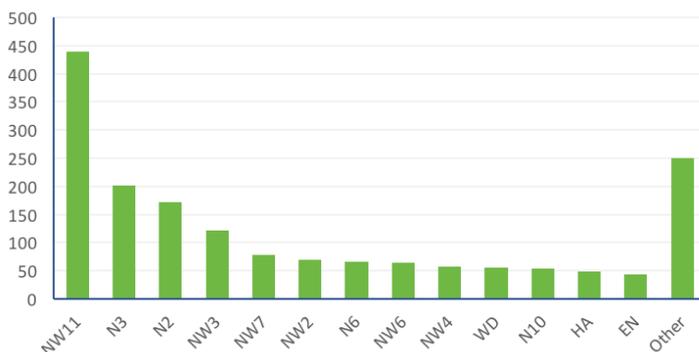
Expenditure 2016 & 2017



Alyth Age Demographic



Alyth Households by Postcode 2017



0-20 21-59 60-90+

## 2017 Highlights





# To pray. To learn. To live *Together*

## To pray

We believe that prayer is central to a meaningful Jewish life. We aim to create opportunities for worship that are intellectually rich, grounded in Jewish tradition and inspiring for all.

The prayer needs of our community are diverse. In order to meet these needs, we hold a number of services over **Shabbat**, on festivals and the **High Holy Days**. Services include a Friday night (**Kabbalat Shabbat**) service that is one of the most inspiring and well-attended services in the UK today. On Saturday mornings we have our classical service in which we host a bar or bat mitzvah most weeks. There are alternative services most Saturdays: **Kollot** – the ‘sound of voices’, our family friendly Big Bang service and **Kuddle up Shabbat** – an early service for parents with very young children. We also have creative services one Shabbat a month and a regular lay-led Sunday **Shacharit** (morning) service. The all new **Sensory Shabbat** has been a wonderful addition to our services, enabling our very youngest members and their parents to enjoy Shabbat together.



### Rabbinic Team:

Alyth has a dynamic, dedicated and professional rabbinic team, led by **Rabbis Mark Goldsmith and Josh Levy** who work closely together in a rabbinic partnership to manage, inspire and lead the professional team and the community. They are innovative, compassionate and are committed to building engaging and meaningful relationships with members across the community.

In September we welcomed **Rabbi Hannah Kingston** to the team. Rabbi Hannah was ordained at Leo Baeck College in the Summer of 2017. She stepped straight into leading services and study sessions, and giving her first sermon on the High Holy Days; and has been an integral part of Alyth life ever since. **Rabbi Colin Eimer** continues to work as part time member of the rabbinic team, providing a high quality of rabbinic, pastoral and teaching support.

We are grateful for the support of our volunteer choir led by our Head of Music, Katie Hainbach, to our lay service leaders and readers, and a star team of wardens who ensure that the community prays, sings and learns together week after week.

## To learn

We believe that Jewish learning is central to a meaningful Jewish life. We aim to create opportunities for study that are intellectually rich, grounded in Jewish tradition and inspiring for all – both accessible, grown-up Jewish learning, and learning that nurtures and challenges our young people.

Learning is at the very heart of all we do at Alyth. We offer learning for those who are new to Judaism, those who want to increase their Jewish knowledge and those for whom learning is central to their lives. Different stages in members’ Jewish journeys provide different opportunities to learn, before getting married, whilst at school, as a family, preparing for b’nei mitzvah and all the way through our adult lives.

## YOUTH & EDUCATION HUB



Our Youth and Education Hub is driven by a dedicated and ambitious team of young professionals who continue to innovate and inspire our children as they embark on their Jewish journeys. Sam Brunner our Youth & Education Hub Coordinator and her team of educators, Mike Mendoza and Chloe Kimmel, work collaboratively with Alyth families to provide learning and Jewish engagement for our almost 1,000 members under 21.

**Sunday Morning Galim:** is a nourishing space for young people to build, develop and explore their Jewish identity.

**The B'nei Mitzvah programme (Ruach):** runs on a Friday evening and provides an opportunity for those approaching their b'nei mitzvah to build their knowledge of and relationship to Judaism

There are **regular weekday and weekend activities** for our youth as well as summer and winter residential camps, weekends away for different age groups, festival related activities, and music and drama groups for every age. This year groups of teenagers travelled to Milan & Venice and Budapest where they made new connections with other Progressive Jewish communities.

Many of our young people join the **Hadracha (Leadership training) programme** that prepares our young people to lead on our residential and day camps and on the RSY Shemesh camps and Israel tour. Our post B'nei Mitzvah children have the opportunity to join the **mentoring programme** that supports upcoming bar and bat mitzvah students with their preparation.

**Drama groups** include: PACT (Preparatory Alyth Children's Theatre) for ages 4-7; ACT (Alyth Children's Theatre) for ages 7-13 and AAPA (Alyth Academy of Performing Arts) for ages 13-18.

**Music groups** for our young people: Kids Choir, for anyone aged 4-12 and the Alyth Youth Singers, open to anyone aged 13 -18; continue to be a place to sing and socialize.

## EARLY YEARS

### Kindergarten



Tor Alter took on the role of Head of the Alyth Kindergarten in September 2017. Under her leadership the Kindergarten has continued to thrive and is very much a part of the Synagogue community. The teachers and classroom assistants work closely with our Rabbis and the Youth and Education Hub team. Alyth Kindergarten provides a high quality of learning and care for children aged 2 to 4. The secure, creative and educationally sound environment supports the development of independent, sociable, learning-ready little people.



### Shofar Daycare Nursery



From the moment Shofar Daycare Nursery opened its doors in 2015, it has been a welcome addition to both Alyth and Finchley Reform's early years provision. Shofar provides daycare for babies and children aged six months to five years old in a Reform Jewish setting. As well as meeting a need in the area, this inspiring collaboration between Alyth and Finchley Reform Synagogue (FRS) has enabled us to work together to bring a stimulating and inclusive Judaism to young families in the area.

## ADULT LEARNING



There are many learning opportunities at Alyth that meet the needs and interests of our members. They provide a welcoming space for learning together in a spirit of shared enquiry with people who care about what others have to say and where questioning is valued and welcome. Regular **shiurim** on Shabbat mornings, **Monthly Midrash in the**

**Morning**, and our weekly **Talmud** and **Jewish Essentials** classes and sessions on **Reform Jewish Decision Making** provide engaging learning opportunities. Speakers and scholars in residence ensure that a wide range of topics are covered in our learning for adults.

## To live

**Alyth is built on a foundation of mutual care in which we share one another's joys and sorrows and accompany one another through our life journeys.**

**Alyth is a community that cares.** There is no greater joy than living as part of a community that offers support when we are failing and shares our joy and success in happy times. Our Director of Welfare & Life Cycle, Lynette Sunderland is a dedicated professional who has created a culture of care and commitment to people at every age and stage of their life journey. Care is built into the fabric of everything we do at Alyth.

### CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY BIRTH BAR & BAT MITZVAH CONVERSION MARRIAGE BEREAVEMENT

We continue to care for the older members of our community as well as those who have special needs and disabilities. There are regular gatherings to talk about the news (**Soup, news, views and schmooze**), to socialise and to share meals at our regular **Bayit Cham** lunches and Friday night **Shabbat b'yachad** dinners. We continued to extend a warm welcome to those with special needs from JAMI (The Jewish Association for Mental Illness) and Jewish Care's Shalom Centre.

The **Senior Club** is a place for 'seniors' to come to be together with friends to share a meal and be entertained by a wide range of speakers, musicians and singers, and to engage in interesting discussions on a range of topics. The **Monday Club** under the guidance and commitment of Dennis Sher, has been running for over 40 years providing a regular, friendly meeting space for people with learning difficulties.

Our Rabbis and Director of Welfare & Life Cycle, and our Community Director accompany many members through a range of lifecycle events. This past year we celebrated **8 weddings, 41 B'nei Mitzvah**, welcomed dozens of new **babies** into the community and supported many families through the **loss** of a loved one. Illness in all its guises is an inevitable part of communal life, and giving care and support to those who are ill and their families, is at the core of Alyth.



Alyth is at the forefront of caring for our own and in the wider community. Isolation and loneliness is an issue in all communities. Looking at how we can do more is vital. Our Director of Welfare and Lifecycle, Lynette Sunderland continues to be at the forefront of driving the Reform Judaism "Care in Community" initiative.

**Care is built into the fabric of everything we do at Alyth.**

# Together

## Be with Us

**We believe that nothing is more important in the life of the community than the relationships that we build and the welcome that we can give to one another.**

To be a community is to share a broader range of interests and activities, in addition to prayer and learning. At Alyth we do this with enthusiasm, a sense of fun and always, inclusiveness. We sing, act, cycle, ramble, paint, cook, eat, meditate and go on outings together. We share the joy of the moment and find time to listen to one another's stories.



Our building is full every day of the week with our many groups and clubs running activities for members across the community. We also welcome non-members to a range of activities knowing that it is an opportunity to socialise and enjoy time together.



### To Be With Us means:

Every week our Kindergarten children join with our seniors to enjoy music, chatting and a snack as part of the **JOY Programme** (Joining Old and Young).

The **Jewish Mindfulness Group** continues to provide a warm and welcoming opportunity to practice mindfulness and meditation, and for meaningful reflective, spiritual practice.

Clubs include our **Senior Club** for over 60's which is organised by a team of dedicated volunteers. The **Alyth Film Club** meet to read, watch, listen and share ideas. The **Bridge Club**, **Toddler Group** and regular **Yoga** classes continue to run at Alyth.

The **Alyth Cycling community** and **Alyth Ramblers** are always on the move, creating friendships and promoting physical wellbeing. Both groups explore cycle routes and walks in the area outside London. The Alyth Ramblers went on regular walks in and around the UK, as well as on their annual walk in Israel.

Once again the **Tekiyah Committee** ran a successful **Supper Quiz** in November. This has become a much anticipated, fun filled evening that raised funds to support the cost of running our new MINIBUS.

### In October we leased our Minibus.

Looking after our members and making it easier for them to come to Alyth, is a core value and a priority. We used the funds donated by a charitable trust to lease our minibus to bring members from home to services on Shabbat and to take people to activities and events in and around London. A team of drivers and hosts is being trained and already has 10 active members who meet and greet and drive our members to and from Alyth on Shabbat mornings.



## MUSIC:

**Music is at the very heart of Alyth.** Led by our Head of Music and Arts, Katie Hainbach, our choirs continue to bring music to every part of the community. The **Alyth Youth Singers (AYS)** and the **Kids Choir** are places for our young members to come together to sing and to be with one another. This year, AYS travelled to Venice and Milan where they sang and met members of the Progressive Jewish Community. They have also performed at events both in Alyth and in the wider community. Katie works closely with the **Synagogue choir** to develop their repertoire and their voices. The “new music evenings” are an opportunity to learn new music and liturgy, and have introduced a range of music to members of the community beyond the choir.



**The Alyth Choral Society**, made up of members and non-members, performed three concerts this past year. Viv Bellos our Emeritus Director of Music leads the “**Singing for Pleasure**” group that meets on Sundays to sing and socialise. Viv has also brought singing into the Drop-In for Recent Refugees, and has helped to establish the **Drop In Choir**, who are enjoying learning new music and unlocking their voices.

## Act with us

**We believe in a Judaism that is utterly engaged with the world around us, both within the Jewish people and in the wider community.**

To be Jewish is to care about the world around us and to take responsibility for it. Alyth is home to the social awareness and activism that Judaism demands of us. From our willingness to have difficult conversations about Israel, to working out how to support our partner community in Kerch in the Crimea; from our volunteer-led monthly **Drop In for Recent Refugees** and working with the Golders Green Parish Church to run our part of the **Together in Barnet Winter Shelter for the homeless**, to our work to enable those with mental illness to enjoy Jewish life; from our campaigning work for social justice to the extraordinary contributions of our members to life in the wider community. **Alyth is a community engaged in the world around us.**

Alyth is always engaged with **Israel** but is never afraid of dealing with Israel's complexities. In May 2017 a group of members joined Rabbi Josh and Rabbi Mark on a trip to explore *tefillah*, music and culture, and the socio-political elements of Israel that inspire and challenge us. The Synagogue programme included a number of encounters which opened up Israeli society to our members. Through sermons in our services, open forums, panel discussions and talks at the Synagogue and in members' homes we heard from speakers with wide ranging views and engaged with the issues facing Israel and Israeli society today. Our relationship with the **Leo Baeck Education Centre in Haifa** continues, and once again, two of their young leaders joined our Alyth youth leaders on Summer camps, bringing the voice of Israel's youth to the heart of our Youth and Education Hub.

The annual **High Holy Days Appeal** is a wonderful way for our members to support activities that happen within Alyth but that are not supported through subscription income. Donations made to **The Rabbis Accessibility Fund**, the **Welfare Fund** and the **Social Justice Development Fund** support the work that we do both within Alyth and the social justice initiatives closer to home. The 2017 High Holy Days Appeal raised £48,200 (2016: £45,000). **Distribution of funds:** Money distributed through the Rabbis Accessibility Fund ensures that every member is able to participate in Alyth life (trips, camps, outings). The Welfare Fund supports the transport services that we offer, and supports the hosting of members at our regular *bayit cham* lunches and *chavurah* suppers. The Social Justice Development fund supported the work of the Refugee Drop-in and the Winter Shelter as well as Eco-Shuls and our participation in Citizens UK.

## VOLUNTEERS

**Alyth, in common with many charities, relies on the contributions made by the many volunteers who work alongside the professional staff in all areas of Synagogue life.**

**Volunteers** support the work of the professional staff by helping with the organisation and planning social events, setting out Kiddush, preparing (and often delivering) meals for different groups of members, providing support on outings for all ages, visiting members and making phone calls. Our social justice work with recent refugees and the homeless is volunteer led and our security teams are entirely lay led and supported.

**Our youth** are core to supporting the work of the Youth and Education Hub. As leaders and assistants, they are at the heart of our youth activities during the week and at weekends, and lead on residential and day camps. Many of our post b'nei mitzvah children choose to be mentors, helping the next cohort of friends and peers with their bar and bat mitzvah preparation and inspiring more and more leaders and Jewishly engaged teens.

**Lay leaders** are at the heart of the work of the community. As members of Executive and Council they work collaboratively with the Rabbis, professionals and staff team to create a vibrant, dynamic and community focused home for all our members.



**We estimate, that 1 in every 6 of our members volunteers in one or more of the areas shown in our Alyth “volunteer cloud”.**

### The numbers

The Executive Committee are the Trustees of the Synagogue and are responsible for the management of risks faced by the Synagogue. Having reviewed the principal risks and uncertainties facing the Synagogue, the Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified have been adequately mitigated where possible. It is recognised that systems can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately identified. The task of monitoring the charity's financial control systems is delegated to the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) who meet quarterly.

The total funds at 31 December 2017 were £3.1m (2016 £2.9m). Of these, the restricted funds were £2.5m (2016 £2.3m).

The income during 2017 comprised subscriptions of £601k (2016: £604k) and donations & legacies of £938k (2016 £419k). Of the latter, £436k (2016: £65k) was taken to restricted funds and legacies were £96k (2016: £13k). There was also income tax recoverable of £157k (2016 £159k). Overall, there was a surplus arising on the net movement of funds in 2017 of £217k (2016: deficit -£95k).

The surplus arose primarily from trustees maintaining their focus on fundraising for the building development project. Included within the overall surplus was a small surplus of £26k (2016: deficit £2k) on unrestricted funds. The FAC felt that it was prudent to increase the defined contribution pension provision by a further £41k in the year.

Fundraising for the development of the building will continue in 2018 and the foreseeable future. Prioritising fundraising for the building means that less emphasis can be applied to fundraising for general activities. The trustees continue to be vigilant in monitoring expenditure and to look for

additional sources of funds (i.e. grants and trusts) to support the ongoing programming needs of the community. Legacies and bequests are an important source of funding and whilst it cannot rely on them, the Synagogue is always extremely grateful for the generosity of members who remember us in this fashion.

It was noted that subscription income fell marginally despite an inflation linked rise in standard rates. Non- or late paid subscriptions have affected income in the past year. It is our aim to achieve budgetary break even. The trustees will continue to monitor the demographic profile of members as well as reviewing payment arrangements for individuals.

The Synagogue is a member of a multi-employer defined benefit scheme which has been converted to a defined contribution scheme. The deficit in the scheme was apportioned in early 2013 over the member charities. Full provision for the deficit is included in the accounts. This has reduced free reserves by about £82k. An actuarial valuation is expected in May 2018. With this information to hand, the trustees will be able to make a decision whether or not to continue in the scheme. The FAC has already prepared a detailed report for trustees' consideration and will make further recommendations accordingly.

The Synagogue is a member of the Jewish Joint Burial Society (JJBS). It is a requirement that every member of the Synagogue contributes to the JJBS. The annual payment of £49 (2016 £48) entitles every full member to a burial at Cheshunt Cemetery or a cremation, normally held at Golders Green Crematorium. During 2017, £103k (2016 £100k) was collected from the members and £104k (2016: £101k) was transferred to the JJBS. There is a designated fund which is set aside to help with any shortfall required to pay for a funeral.

# Investments

## Investment Policy:

The investment policy was reviewed in 2017 when Investec was appointed the new discretionary investment manager. The Synagogue invests funds so as to generate reasonable long term capital and income growth commensurate with the need to finance its long term expenditure requirements and to protect the Synagogue's capital against the risk of inflation. The overall objective is a balanced investment strategy, agreed with the investment manager, to invest so as to generate long term capital appreciation over the full investment cycle, typically five years, with a spread of asset classes to ensure adequate diversification on a medium risk profile.

The asset allocation at the year-end was: 20% in fixed interest bonds, 66% in UK & overseas equities and 15% held in property, alternative assets and cash.

The investment manager is responsible for asset allocation and for making investments through a carefully selected group of both internal and external fund managers. A number of restrictions have been placed on Investec's management of our portfolio, including the following: to avoid excessive portfolio concentration; not permitting alternative investments such as hedge funds; and only permitting foreign exchange transactions for hedging currency risk and not for speculation. The Total Expense Ratio should be less than 1.25%.

The investment performance is considered regularly by the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) that meets four times per year. The FAC have discussed and agreed an ethical investment policy in order to identify social, environmental or ethical areas in which the Synagogue should not invest.

The FAC took this into consideration when appointing Investec as our investment manager. They have a dedicated charity investment team that invests funds in a broad range of funds rather than individual equities, only an immaterial percentage of the fund might be invested indirectly in any company which might conflict with the Synagogue's values. It has been agreed that ethical restrictions would not be necessary.

**Performance:** As at 31 December 2017 the Synagogue held an investment portfolio of £946k (2016: £1,035k). Annual performance comparison is difficult to measure given the handover to the new investment management part way through the year. The total return before expenses for 2017 was £69,524 which represent an uplift of 6.8% on assets held at the start of the year (2016 8.1%). £150,000 was drawn down in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to defray the new building fund costs incurred over the past 2 years, so these percentages are not strictly comparable. The benchmark for 2017 had the funds been managed by Investec for the whole of the year would have been 9.3%. The actual performance of the portfolio for the year was therefore below the industry standard, in part due to the requirement for lower risk assets and in part due to the withdrawal in the year.

From the final quarter's report the portfolio rose by 4.0% compared to a +3.7% change in the benchmark, which would suggest that the investment performance is back on track. Despite the relative underperformance, investment returns in absolute terms over the past few years have been positive.

Going forward, the investment manager will continue to review the Synagogue's particular circumstances to ensure their mandate remains suitable. They have reiterated that they are comfortable maintaining a medium-term investment horizon of up to 5 years.

## Reserves

### Reserves Policy:

The trustees aim to maintain sufficient general and contingency reserves so as to be able to meet unexpected operating costs of the Synagogue and to contribute to such contingencies as the maintenance of the building. The free reserves at 31 December 2017 amounted to £673k (2016 £646k).

This compares to the annual cost of staff remuneration including pension provisions of £979k (2016: £883k) and total unrestricted expenditure on charitable activities excluding JJBS contributions of £1,861k (2016 £1,714k).

The free reserves include £273k (2016 246k) that has been allocated to various projects and causes which are regarded as part of normal charitable activities and these allocations are internal and can be amended by the trustees if required.

Free reserves therefore represent just over 4 months' cover over normal charitable activity expenditure and this is slightly lower compared to the beginning of the year despite the surplus arising in 2017. The trustees and the FAC monitor this KPI keenly and it is currently operating within its target range. Particular attention is given to monitor its likely trend over the foreseeable future in order to set an appropriate budget strategy. The restricted funds of £3.1m (2016: £2.9m) predominantly comprise the value of the land on which the building sits. No formal valuation has been carried out. There are additional reserves of £738k (2016: £496k) the use of which is mandated by trust deeds, the largest fund being £405k (2016: £145k) set aside for the new building project.

## Our Governance

### CONSTITUTION & PURPOSE:

Alyth is constituted by a Deed of Trust dated 23 February 1966 and registered with the Charity Commission under charity number 247081. The most recent major amendment to the constitution was in May 2008 with a minor update in May 2015.

The Synagogue is a Congregation of the Jewish Religion, whose purpose is the pursuance of Reform Judaism in the spheres of public worship, and religious, educational, cultural, social and charitable activities.

Alyth is a member of the Movement for Reform Judaism in the United Kingdom. Reform Judaism is an informed and questioning, compassionate and egalitarian expression of a unique faith and culture, rooted in the tradition of the Torah, yet in dialogue with modernity. Alyth is committed to the advancement of the tradition of Reform Judaism and to playing its part in the development of the

Progressive teaching of Judaism as a constantly evolving tradition. Alyth exists in order to sustain and develop a Jewish centre for its members based on Progressive Jewish values and ethics, to meet its members' religious and communal needs, and to contribute to the wider Jewish and non-Jewish communities. The purpose of Alyth as set out in our constitution is the development of Reform Judaism in the spheres of public worship and religious education, cultural, social and charitable activities.

In April 2015 a framework was adopted to achieve a shared sense of values. This emphasises that nothing is more important in the life of a Jewish community than the relationships that are built and the welcome that is given to one another. It strives for equality, inclusion and mutual care. Prayer and Jewish learning are central and the aim is to create opportunities for worship and study.

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

The Synagogue Council is responsible for the overall policy and direction of the Synagogue and the overall religious and ritual direction of the Synagogue. Council consists of 26 members, 8 of whom are ex-officio. Members are elected annually in May for terms of 3 years (renewable). One of the Rabbinic Partners attends the meetings, as does the Community Director. There are normally 11 Council meetings held each year.

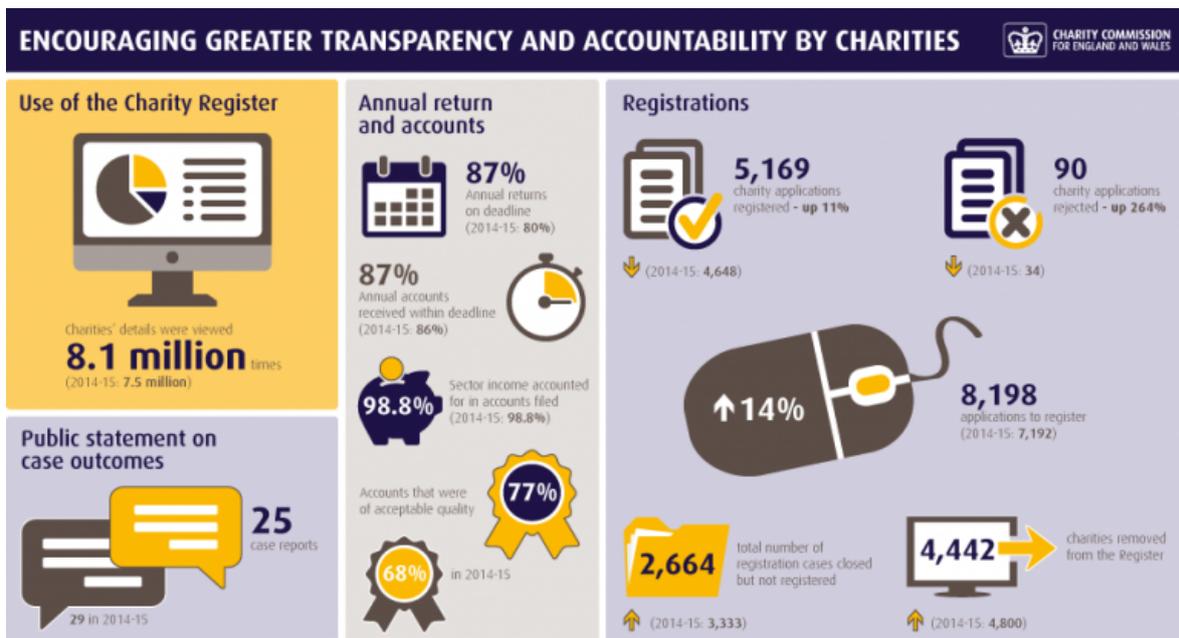
The Executive Committee, who are the trustees of the Synagogue, carry out the management of the affairs of the Synagogue. Members of Executive are responsible for implementing the policies and direction of the Synagogue. They have oversight of the management of the operations and the financial affairs of the Synagogue. They delegate much of the day to day management of the Synagogue to the staff but remain responsible for oversight of the work. All members of the Executive Committee are also members of Council. There are 11 members of the Executive Committee and they meet monthly, 11 times a year. As trustees, members of the Executive Committee are required to act in the best interests of the Synagogue and in line with the recommended guidelines of the Charity Commission.

There is an informal induction programme for those coming on to Council for the first time. New members of Council are taken through the key

aspects of the constitution and governance structure by the Chair. A review of the governance of the Synagogue is currently taking place. During 2018 Alyth will, with the agreement of the membership, move to become a company limited by guarantee (incorporated). This provides an opportunity to draw up new governing documents (Memorandum and Articles of Association) and for the membership to consider the recommendations of the Governance Group that has been convened to review the governance.

In shaping the objectives for the year and planning the activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. They aim to engage with the outside world, both within the Jewish people and in the wider community. To this end the Synagogue engages in a wide range of activities with other faith groups and community based organisations. These activities enable the congregation to develop relationships with and gain a better understanding of the local and wider community and to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

The two most senior employees are rabbis whose remuneration is set with reference to the Rabbinic Scales provided by Reform Judaism. Salaries in general are reviewed with reference to RPI and changes in average earnings.

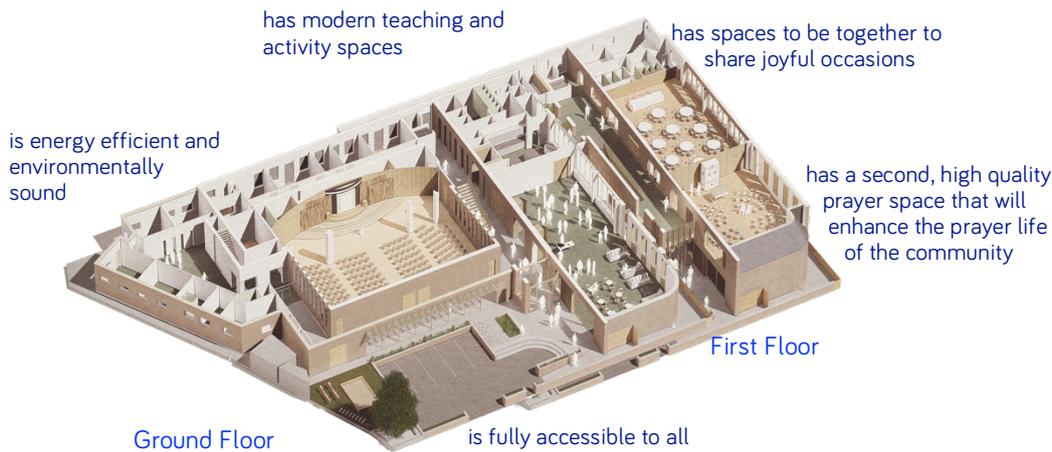


# Our plans for the future

## The redevelopment of our building will be a major focus in 2018.

At the time of the AGM in May 2018, we have raised over £1.5million meeting members at the building walk-around evenings that we are hosting. We look forward to meeting many more members at one of these evenings. The vision that Alyth is a home to generations of members, young and old, who love being a part of our welcoming and vibrant community, is what drives all that we do, both in what we offer and in the building in which it happens.

## Our community needs a building that...



## Raising funds to enable us to build the building that our community needs is vital

The renewal of the building is a project for the whole community. The support that has been given to the project to date has been exceptional. The walk-around evenings that started in the summer of 2017 have been the perfect way to spend time with members, and to raise awareness for what is needed, and the funds to do the work. These evenings will continue into 2018 to enable the rabbis and lay leaders who are driving the building project forward, to share the vision of the project with many more of our members and to continue to raise funds.

Support from across the community will be a priority as we move through 2018 to 2019. Many members have made suggestions for fund raising opportunities. We hope to see a number of these coming to fruition in 2018-19. We anticipate financing a portion of the funds needed to enable us to begin building in 2019. Doing so will enable us to complete the build in mid-late 2020 and to begin to use the newly refurbished building. We will continue to raise funds and bring in income from rental of the premises to Alyth members and local charities and businesses.

## Governance will be a priority for Alyth in 2018

Following a review of the governance of Alyth, undertaken by a Governance Group appointed by the Executive Committee; the Synagogue Council recommended that a resolution to become a company limited by guarantee (incorporation) be taken to the AGM in May 2018. Agreement to incorporate will enable the drafting of new governing documents as required by Company Law, and the formation of a governance structure that responds to the needs of a thriving, multifaceted membership organisation like ours.

## **There will be a focus on operational efficiency and delivery in 2018**

Alyth is a community that is fortunate to be led by our dynamic, inspiring Rabbinic Partners, Rabbi Mark Goldsmith and Rabbi Josh Levy. They continue to lead the community in a unique partnership that brings with it a sense of shared commitment to the members and the lay leadership, and to the professional team that they lead and develop.

In 2018 the work of the Core Leadership Team will be prioritised to ensure that the delivery of prayer, learning and the range of activities offered by the synagogue continues to be done with the standard of care and quality that we have come to know and appreciate. As we head into a period of developing our building, it is key that we are reflective, that we operate effectively and that we continue to meet the diverse needs of our members.

Rabbi Hannah Kingston has quickly become an established member of the Rabbinic Team. She will continue her work with young families, bringing them into Alyth to continue on their Jewish journeys and build relationships with Alyth and with one another. Working with an expanded rabbinic team, that includes part time support from Rabbi Colin Eimer, Rabbis Josh and Mark are able to oversee the delivery of all aspects of prayer, learning, development and operations of the synagogue.

## **Collaborative working**

As the community enters a time of development of the building and our governance, it is the collaborative partnership between the lay and professional leadership that will ensure that this time of development and building our new home, will yield success for the community. The leadership will continue to be in conversation with the membership, to seek their guidance and to listen to their concerns and continue to provide excellent services and support for all our members.

## **TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT:**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required

- to select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- to observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- to make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- to prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The report was approved by the Trustees on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and signed on their behalf by:



Noeleen Cohen (Chair)