



MAGEN AVOT

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20



MAGEN AVOT

48 FINCHLEY LANE, LONDON NW4 1DJ



SHUL LEADERSHIP

- **Rabbi and Sarah Kenigsberg**
- **Chairman** – Simon Bentley
- **Vice Chairman** – Joy Kay
- **Financial Representative** – Cecil Taitz
- **Gabbaim** – Elkan Adler, Daniel Ehreich
- **Women's Officer** – Chaya Langerman
- **Council member** – Patti Adler
- **Council member** – Esther Bentley
- **Council member** – David Berke
- **Council member** – Shoina Kass
- **Council member** – Moshe Langerman
- **Council member** – Julian Maurer
- **Council member** – Sara Spizzichino



MAGEN AVOT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019/20

MESSAGE FROM RABBI AND REBBETZEN KENIGSBERG

Dear All,

We have been honoured to join Magen Avot in our role as Rabbinic couple and begin to get to know you all over the past year. During this time we have found a Kehilla that is warm and inclusive, that provides an enjoyable and respectful atmosphere in which to daven and that proudly lives up to the ideals of Torah and Chesed in line with a Modern Orthodox and Zionist ethos.

We were privileged to join a wonderfully active community and have placed our focus on supporting existing community initiatives whilst expanding into new areas as well, engaging with all sectors of our diverse Kehilla. Alongside formal programming, we have thoroughly enjoyed being together with you in shul, be it for davening, a communal Shabbat lunch or Melave Malka, or a Friday night dinner or Israeli shuk with the youth.

Unfortunately, over the past few months with the outbreak of COVID-19 we have all been prevented from meeting face-to-face. Social distancing has meant that chats at the Kiddush have had to be replaced by midweek phone calls and our open house just before Sukkot seems a distant memory. Plans for future communal events and hospitality have sadly had to be put on hold but we very much look forward to resuming these in the near future, when circumstances allow.



MESSAGE FROM RABBI AND REBBETZEN KENIGSBERG

Thankfully, despite the social distance, we have remained as active and connected together as a Kehilla as ever. Our community WhatsApp group has taken the place of the pulpit and weekly Drashot and video messages have continued and I plan to continue these until we can return to our regular setup. The weekly Chabura has moved to Friday mornings and my weekly shiur, together with pre-Chagim programming and other special virtual events all continue via zoom.

The children and youth of Magen Avot remain as integral a part of the community as ever and we are working hard to ensure that even whilst our services are on hold, everybody continues to feel a part of the Kehilla. To that end, craft packs were delivered to families with younger children ahead of Yom Ha'atzmaut and several virtual and non-virtual initiatives are being planned for the coming months, including the launch of a brand new Bat Mitzvah program.

It has been an exciting year despite the challenges we all currently face. Thank you to the selection committee for placing your confidence in us from the outset, to the Executive and Council for your continued support, and to each and every member of Magen Avot who make it the wonderful community it is. We look forward to the year ahead and eagerly anticipate our return to shul, the gradual easing back to normality and the continued strengthening of the Kehilla and the shared values that guide us all.

With warmest wishes,

Rabbi Joel and Rebbetzen Sarah Kenigsberg



LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN, MR SIMON BENTLEY

I'm enjoying the privilege granted to me in February when you agreed to accept my nomination as Chairman. I had no idea then of the kind of challenges that we would all be facing in these unprecedented times. The Jewish community has suffered tragic losses, economic uncertainty, and huge constraints on our personal liberties, including being unable to attend shuls, levayot, shivas, smachot, or even davening with a minyan.

We at Magen Avot, under the inspirational leadership of Rabbi Joel and Rabbanit Sarah Kenigsberg, have risen to these challenges, with organised, sensitive, Chesed programmes, for the older and more vulnerable members of the kehilla, and with online Zoom shiurim, davening, and other cultural and educational events. Rabbi Kenigsberg and his wife Sarah continue in these difficult COVID-19 circumstances, to provide dedicated educational, Chesed, and spiritual leadership which enables our kehilla to stay in touch and thrive.



LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN, MR SIMON BENTLEY

On behalf of our Vice Chair Joy Kay and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the amazing team we have on the Executive, and the Council, who all work tirelessly on our varied events programme and on other daily Magen Avot responsibilities. Thanks also to everyone who has helped with the delivery of the Chesed and Support, and the additional Chinuch, programmes.

We're working continually on plans for the future development of the community, both spiritually and physically, so that when this difficult period is over, we can take Magen Avot forward, building on its strengths and reputation. Even in these socially distanced times I am proud that we are still so united and close as a community, and I look forward, אם ירצה השם, to when we can all be back together in shul once again.

Our thanks are due to those who are the founders of Magen Avot, together with other past members of the executive team, who devoted so much time and energy on the establishment and development of our Shul. This is greatly appreciated and not taken for granted.

I miss you all. Stay alert, Control the virus, Save lives.

Warm best wishes

Simon Bentley





CHANGE OF PERSONNEL

- The introduction of part-time rabbinic couple, Rabbi Joel and Sarah Kenigsberg – a post designed to meet the religious and spiritual needs of members of the community
- The introduction of a new Honorary Officer position of Women's officer - a post designed to meet the religious needs of female members and enable their greater participation in services
- Appointment of a new Chairman and Vice Chairman



FINANCIAL REPORT 2019 (CECIL TAITZ)

- The total income for the year ended 31 December 2019 was £17,000 higher than originally expected. This included a United Synagogue grant of £10,000 with Magen Avot being noted as a “Community of Potential”.
- Total expenditure for the year was in excess of budget by £11,000, reflecting our good fortune in appointing a Rabbi for the community, which hadn’t originally been budgeted. Following the appointment of Rabbi and Sarah Kenigsberg we held more events, which although highly successful and appreciated, had not been budgeted.
- Costs were tightly controlled in 2019, thanks to the diligence of the army of members involved in the sourcing, purchasing, and vetting of products and services. We could not function without them, and are very grateful for their involvement.
- The net deficit for 2019 was £7,145 against a budgeted deficit of £13,310.





FINANCIAL REPORT (CECIL TAITZ)

- The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge effect on our previous financial expectations for the current year ending 31 December 2020.
- Our income has fallen, reflecting a substantial reduction in donations received and the effect on some members where economic hardship is effecting their ability to pay the annual membership fees due.
- In the short-term, variable expenses like security and cleaning have reduced but our fixed costs like the rent payable continue. When we re-open, the cleaning and security costs will rise as there will be the need to clean more thoroughly, and more often, based on the possible need to have multiple services.
- Our deficit for 2020 is therefore currently projected to rise to between £20,000 and £25,000. Our budgeted deficit for the year was £12,000.
- We are now actively seeking a variety of regular sponsorships for; events, our weekly newsletter, shiurim, the weekly Parsha and more!

If anyone has any questions please email me at treasurer@magenavot.com

Thank you and stay safe!

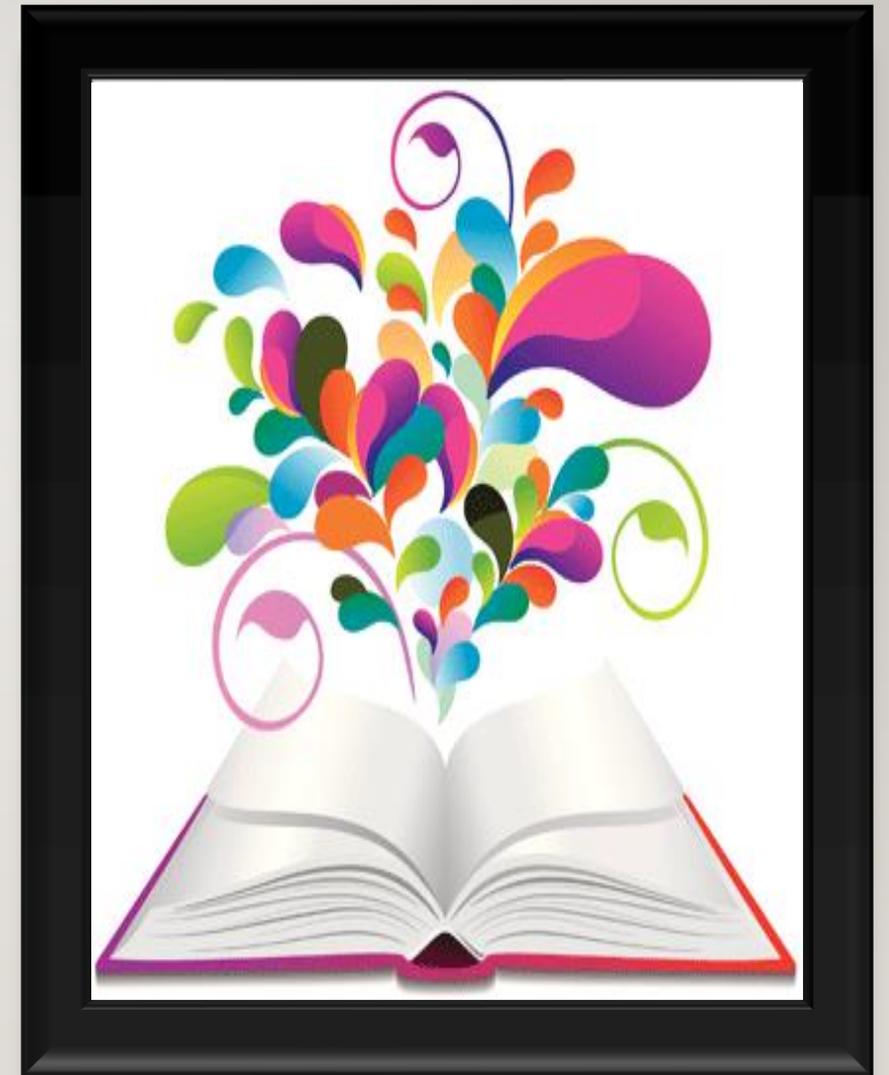
Cecil Taitz





LEARNING

- The introduction of weekly Drashot on Shabbat morning and Chagim delivered by Rabbi Kenigsberg
- The introduction of weekly shiurim and extra shiurim before the Chagim
- Weekly Chabura
- Guest speakers from Israel





CHESED INITIATIVES

- Raising awareness of Men's Health issues via our MoCheshvan Mogen Avot initiative
- Raised £2,166 for JAMI and Chai Cancer Care
- Expansion of the Magen Avot Chesed committee





WOMEN INITIATIVES

- Knead to Learn featuring Rebbetzen Kenigsberg and other guest speakers on Erev Rosh Chodesh
- First Eshet Chayil Shabbat
- Women speakers after Mussaf included: Lindsay Simmonds, Gila Sacks, Chagit Blass, and Joanne Greenaway
- Breakfast programme for women on Simchat Torah
- Women's Kabbalat Shabbat together with Alei Zion

Women

Welcome



YOUTH INITIATIVES

- The introduction of Y@MA for youth led to a growth of 5 fold (from 5 to 25) in less than a year
- Y@MA organised and hosted Israel Shuk for the community with successful attendance of 100 people, and raised close to £300
- Y@MA Friday Night Dinner at Rabbi Joel and Sarah Kenigsberg was attended by 20 youth members
- Nightly Kahoot quizzes run by Elliot Berke (Youth Director)





CHILDREN INITIATIVES

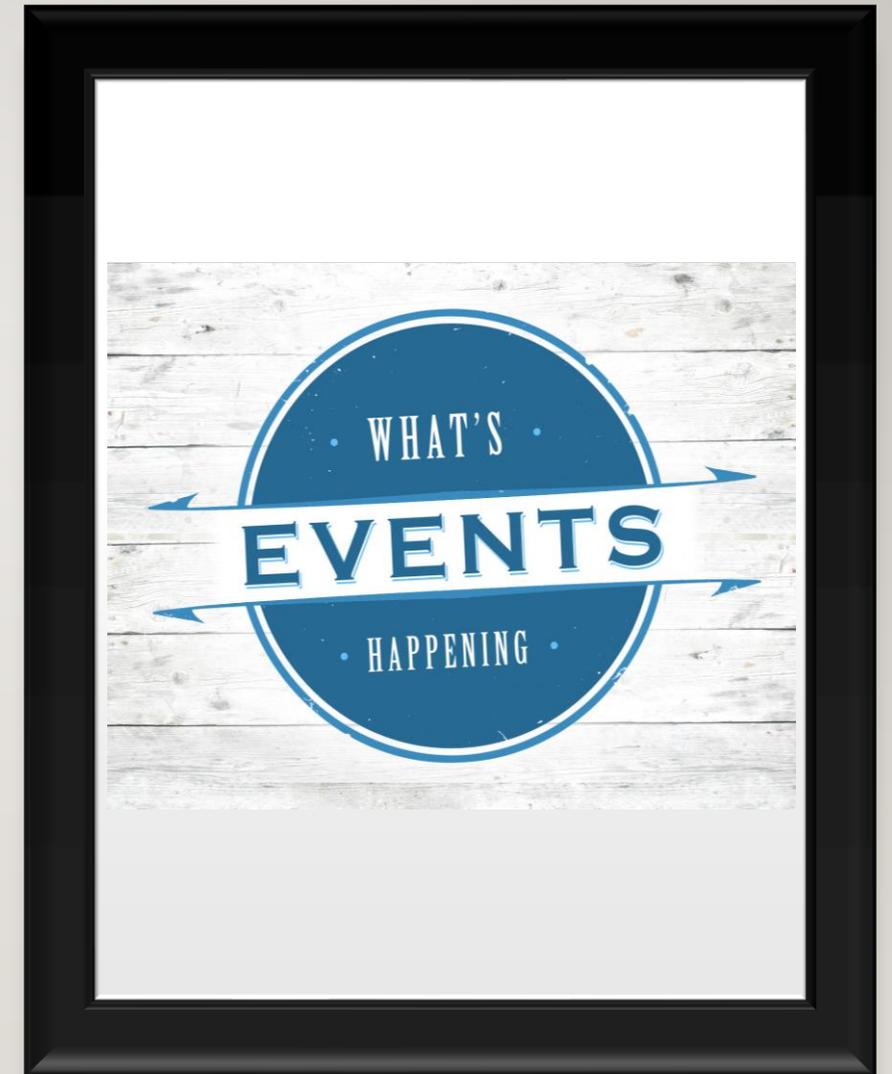
- Successful weekly activities (Magen Minis and Maxis)
- Successful fifth season of Horim Veyeladim with over 300 lottery tickets and coverage of Melachim stories
- Succah decorating competition
- Youth Shuk for children
- Succah Crawl
- Pre-Purim Arts and Crafts
- Pizza and Chesed Project for Kids
- Erev-Shavuot Storytime for children with Ruth Ehreich
- Arts and Craft Packs handed out before Yom Ha'Atzmaut





EVENTS

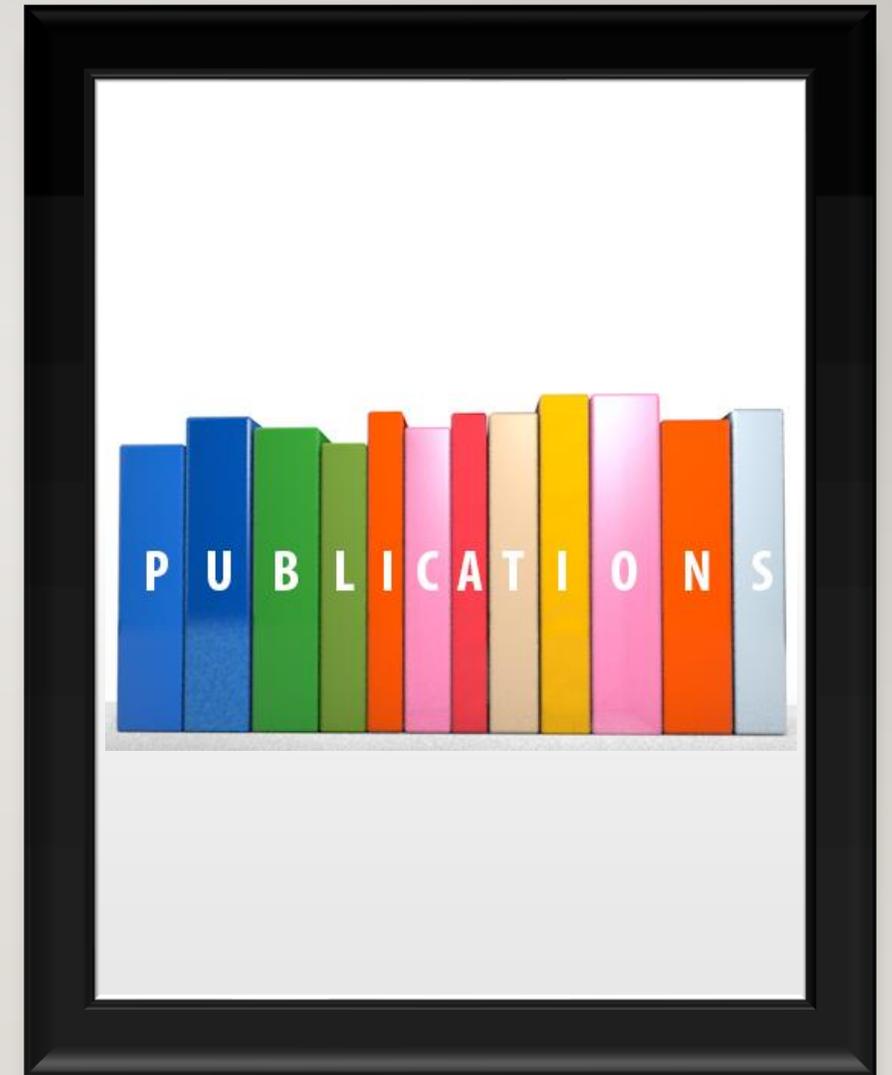
- Midnight Selichot run by Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and introduced by Rabbi Kenigsberg
- Open house at Rabbi and Rebbetzen Kenigsberg before Succot
- Simchat Beit Hashoeva for the whole community
- Special lecture by Sivan Rahav-Meir, media personality and lecturer
- Chanukah tour of British Museum led by Rabbi Dr Raphael Zarum
- Entebbe Operation Testimony by Rami Sherman and Melave Malka
- Communal lunch with Rabbi Gideon Weitzman, a fertility councillor at PUAH in Israel





PUBLICATIONS

- Expanded Weekly Newsletter
- Larger Social Media presence
- Seasonal Magazine (HaMagen)
- Chag Publications
- Tikkun Leil Shavuot Learning Pack





COVID19 RELATED INITIATIVES

- Creating a community WhatsApp group to share important messages and Divrei Torah
- Social and learning events via Zoom: shiurim, coffee mornings, baking demos, virtual museum tour and even smachot!
- Chesed Committee maintain communication with members of the community, and support those in isolation





STAY SAFE – SEE YOU SOON IN SHUL PG!

