



Support - Advocacy - Opportunity

JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF GATESHEAD



May 2022-23

Impact Report



We **support** the local community - We **advocate** for its needs - We provide it with **opportunity**



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OUR PARTNER PROJECTS



Background:

The Gateshead Jewish Community

Established over 130 years ago, the Gateshead Jewish community is the third largest Orthodox Jewish (or Charedi) community in the UK. It is located in an area ranking on the bottom decile (lowest 10%) on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Numbering some 620 families (3500-4000 people), the community continues to experience year-on-year growth as people are attracted to live in this thriving, dynamic and close-knit community.

Members of the community follow a religious way of life, perpetuating deeply-held traditions and beliefs, and passing them on to their children. The community is characterised by strong family values, and the positive attributes of tolerance, compassion, social action and civic responsibility play a central role.

The faith's religious, social and cultural norms and distinctiveness can result in social inequity in the form of various barriers and challenges around poverty, employment and health, inhibiting life chances

and limiting opportunity for the community. The community is often referred to as a 'hard to reach' group for these reasons.

Established in 1997, the Jewish Community Council of Gateshead exists to bridge the gap by delivering crucial support, advocacy and opportunity to the community in a culturally appropriate way.

We know that without our help, people would miss out on life chances. Through a wide range of programs and initiatives, and working with a range of local and regional partners, the JCCG plays a key role in improving the social, economic and health prospects of this BAME community, by working actively to break down barriers and bridge gaps, with clearly demonstrated positive outcomes.

The Gateshead Jewish community provides a bedrock of stability to the borough, and through its activities, the JCCG seeks to facilitate the community's continued positive contribution to the local area.



Introduction

The period covered by this report represents a particularly robust year of activity. Of note is the impact of the cost of living crisis which began in late 2021 which, coupled with high levels of inflation, have pushed people and families further into poverty. The North East is particularly impacted by disproportionately high rates of child poverty.

Within this context, the demand on the JCCG's services – both current and planned – have seen a significant uptick. Add to the mix once-in-a-generation changes to the welfare system, and the need to ensure adequate support for community members has never been greater. We have innovated with a new employment and business support program to improve people's economic prospects, supported individuals through Paperweight, and through our

trusted liaison with the Local Authority ensured that financial assistance has been made available to local people.

The Labriut Healthy Living Centre continues to tackle health inequalities and disadvantage, innovating social recovery programs such as a rich offering of exercise sessions, mother and baby sessions, and educational events and workshops to reduce social isolation and improve health outcomes.

Thanks to funding from the National Lottery, the Tudor Trust and others, the JCCG, as a community anchor organisation with a physical presence at the heart of the Community it exists to serve, continues to ensure that barriers are broken down for local people and culturally appropriate access to the services people want is made available. Without this support, people would miss out on vital opportunity.

Please take a look at the achievements detailed in these pages, of which we are very proud.

David Schleider
Trustee

Aron Sandler
Board Member

Jonathan Klajn
Project Director



The support I have received from the JCCG has been immeasurable."



Local Context - Challenges Facing The Community



Poverty, deprivation & disadvantage

- Neighbourhoods ranking within lowest 10% on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- Low income households, compounded by large household size (6+ on average) and cost of living crisis
- Many people in receipt of in-work welfare benefits
- Barriers to accessing skills training coupled with low level of professional qualifications result in economical inactivity and stunted opportunity



Health inequalities

- Barriers to accessing health provision result in health inequalities
- Lack of access to health messaging disseminated across media, especially social media
- Mental health (especially in mothers of young children) can be negatively impacted as a result of social isolation and wider determinants of poor health
- Lack of outdoor space and insufficient opportunity for physical activity



Barriers to accessing support

- A BAME community, often described as 'hard to reach'
- Strongly rooted faith values can create barriers to accessing support and services in the wider community
- Cultural and religious needs can prevent individuals and local groups from progressing and thriving



Digital exclusion

- Limited access to media, internet and social media
- People miss out on essential messaging around health and employment opportunities
- 91% of people rely on print media (the Community Advertiser) for information



Thank you for a wonderful service. Much appreciated."



A Month In Numbers



100

people work out in the Fitness Centre



220

households access the internet at the IT drop-in



50

people receive tailored welfare guidance support



25

volunteers help out



122

people attend 43 exercise sessions



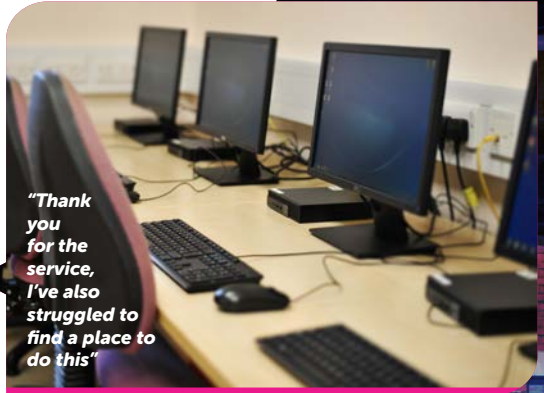
220

people take part in 87 football games



30

people take part in 8 netball games



"Thank you for the service, I've also struggled to find a place to do this"



"Thanks for an outstanding event, I learnt new skills"



Economic Development

With the goal of increasing household income and reducing dependency on welfare benefits, the JCCG runs a number of economic development initiatives. We focus on giving support to those economically inactive and distant from the workforce, leading to improved financial resilience. Raising aspirations around employment and improved mental health and self-esteem are equally valuable 'soft' outcomes of the programs

הכנה לפרנסה
Training, Employment & Business Support



12 Learners on AAT accountancy course
100% of learners rated the course 'excellent' or 'very good'



Job matching service – bulletins sent to over 100 local businesses and employers



65 People attended business breakfast
93% Of people said they networked and met new people at the event



"I felt supported seeing everyone wanting to help others in their business."



Impact

Learners report...

197% increase in knowledge, confidence & skills

100% greater confidence to enter the job market income opportunities

83% increased knowledge & understanding of enhanced household income opportunities

Case Study

"At the age of 45, having lost my job, the JCCG has helped me onto this course. I have learned new life skills which has enabled me to succeed with a new career in Bookkeeping.

Without the JCCG, I would not have been able to know what course to choose from, and I would not have been able to afford the full fee for this course without the subsidiary grant arranged by the JCCG "

30 businesses at women's small business mall

"Thank you for this opportunity, I wanted to study accounting for a long time and this has given me the push to do it. I am currently working as a bookkeeper for a few hours a week as a result of the course."

"JCCG has made this course extremely accessible."

"Now that I have passed the Level 2 exams, I feel empowered and more confident to tackle Level 3. The JCCG have really gone out of their way to accommodate my needs and I am really grateful for the support."

Summary
**The JCCG's
Economic &
Financial Support
Services**

**Welfare &
Benefit
Support**



**Job
matching
service**



**Business &
Enterprise
Support
program**



**Mesila
signposting
& Money
Advice
Sheet**



**Paperweight
Citizens
Advice**



**Employer
Engagement**



**Skills
training
program**



The Voice Of Experience Tells The Story

C's Story

After my first baby was born, I really struggled to come back to myself. Until then, everything had been just fine, with a full social life and surrounded by a loving family. But now, I found myself becoming more and more down and alienated from everyone.

It took a long time until I understood what I was dealing with. And only later, after speaking to many people who had had similar experiences, did I discover that so many others had gone through the same. And everyone I spoke to thought they were the only one...



Reaching Out

So I reached out for help.

It was a journey. Along the way I learned about the world of post-partum depression, and what women need at a time like that: information about what they're going through, support to get through it, and access to resources that can provide that.



Partnership Working

Labriut Healthy Living Centre was just the place for all of that. They invited me and a friend to join them in co-designing a support structure for mothers in a way that would fill our needs.

The first outcome was creating the new Mother and Baby groups, now very popular and enjoyed by lots of mothers every month.



"You have created a wonderful opportunity for the mothers."

"So amazing for me – I hope this will carry on - the more often the better!"

"The atmosphere was fresh, welcoming and relaxing. Truly a treat."

Place-Based Intervention

80 mothers improved their mental health by attending **4** sessions



We use feedback from the mothers to learn what they need the most and how to best cater for them.

Proper Pampering

baby massage

access to advice

self-care stalls

After attending our sessions:



91% experienced improved mental wellbeing



91% felt more confident in their parenting



we asked mums why they chose to attend. **73%** responded "the opportunity to mix and relax with other mums"

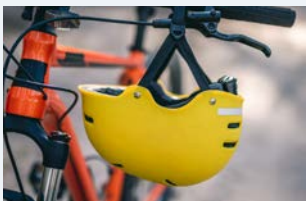




Looking back, I was in such a lonely place. Having the mother and baby sessions give me a monthly opportunity to see other mums and chat, strengthening bonds and creating new friendships.

Other Labriut activities

170 Pieces Cycle Safety Equipment distributed at cost price



Immunisation Catch Up Sessions: **3** Sessions



Exercise Sessions

Labriut Healthy Living Centre's suite of ground breaking exercise sessions for men and women of all ages continue to provide a vital opportunity for local people to improve their health. Sessions are tailored to suit the community's lifestyle, delivered in single gender groups and scheduled according to the Jewish calendar, and at a time of day most suitable. In addition to reducing health inequalities, the sessions are proven to aid in tackling social isolation and promoting Covid recovery.

Impact

"The instructor is amazing! I have lost 20 kg."

"A very good overall workout accommodating the various levels of participants."

"Classes have been wonderful. It has impacted my life greatly. I am enjoying them tremendously and I hope they will carry on."

"Helps me sleep better! Thank you!"

Stats

EACH WEEK			
100	10	14	79
participants	exercise sessions	- youngest participant	- oldest participant



physical and mental health improved by **1/3**



96% felt improvement in their overall health and resilience



96% reported improved mood and lowered stress



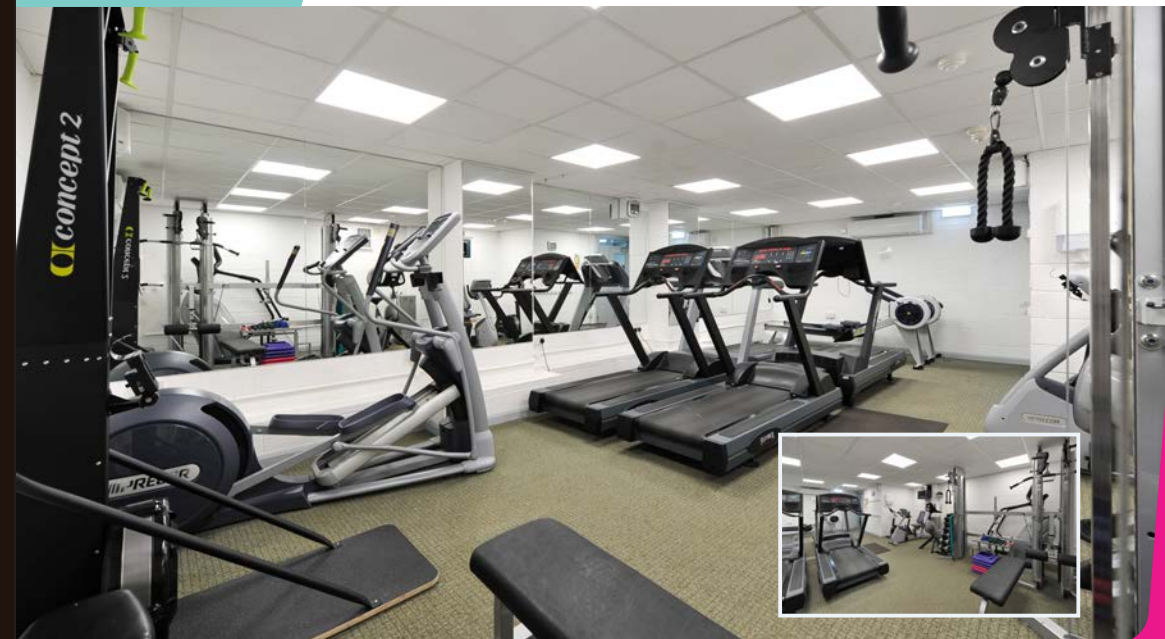
95% reported increased stamina and energy



100% used the sessions to socialise and interact with others



95% would recommend the class to others



Cultural Awareness

Delivered **9** sessions to **150** people

94% rate the session very good or excellent

Our Cultural Awareness sessions form a central part of our mission to enable more effective interaction and communication for the Community with external bodies. The engaging sessions give a comprehensive overview of many aspects of the Jewish faith, breaking down barriers and enabling better understanding and together working.



Attendees report a **115%** increase in knowledge, skills and confidence



100% feel better equipped to interact with the Jewish community




"Really, really interesting and educational. I enjoyed hearing about your culture. The speaker was brilliant: engaging, funny, open and open to questions, encouraging, respectful..."

"Excellent session. Every professional working in Gateshead should do it to learn more about the Jewish community."

"With more knowledge and awareness, I feel more confident to interact with Jewish people respectfully. Very thorough and interesting presentation, giving an excellent basis for understanding Jewish Culture."

Welfare and Benefits Guidance

Our free sessions are designed to ensure that the client has all the information they require when navigating the welfare system. Clients undergo a 'benefits health check', receiving expert advice and guidance and referral to partners organisations for further support when necessary.

91% rate the support excellent 

Attendees report **85%** increase in knowledge, confidence & skills 

97% reported increased knowledge & understanding of enhanced household income opportunities 

Case Study

"I'm emailing you to thank you for your invaluable and indispensable public service.

I'd been sent a bill for roughly £15,000 from my local council, together with several pressurising letters demanding repayment and detailing unpleasant consequences should the bill not be settled. As it turned out, the claim was not properly justified, however the council provided no reasoning for their decision or room for flexibility. A couple of discussions with Rabbi Sugarman allowed me to see the matter in perspective, understand my rights and present a considered appeal to the bill. Eventually the council retracted their demands, and the success of my challenge was certainly helped by the competent and thorough advice offered by Rabbi Sugarman."

Case Study

"I thought I would have to pay back a few months of a benefit received, however I was shown a few points I had missed (and no one else would have told me) which meant it was fine. I was saved from going into debt. Really grateful."

Stats

544 targeted advice sessions
472 hours of direct support delivered
230 unique beneficiaries

Adult Social Care Workshop

Bespoke session for parents and carers of children and adults with special needs to advise on all aspects of adult social care.

Attendees reported **141%** increase in knowledge, confidence & skills 

"Valuable information on the law and my rights. Will help planning for my son's future."

"I'm now more confident in engaging with the Local Authority in an efficient way."

"Fantastic knowledge and quick advice."

"This service is essential for us to understand accessing the benefits system. We would feel lost without this guidance."



Advocacy & Community support



Paperweight

Paperweight is a Citizens Advice Service drawing on local caseworkers providing practical guidance and support in responding to any financial, administrative or paperwork issue. Paperweight's uniqueness lies in its mission to ensure full consideration and understanding for a client's cultural background, making it a highly valuable service for those who would not feel comfortable accessing the mainstream Citizens Advice Bureau.

17 cases concluded around:

- Council tax rebanding
- Bereavement support
- Personal independence payment
- Blue badge
- Household budgeting

Case Study

Mrs A was drowning under a host of personal and financial issues. Her Housing Benefit was stopped with no explanation given, she was encountering difficulty with childcare payments, and her high energy bills due to the cost of living crisis were adding huge strain.

After reaching out to Paperweight, the caseworker took action to tackle each issue head on. After filing an appeal with Housing Benefit, the benefit was reinstated and Mrs A also received full back pay of her entitlement. The caseworker provided energy saving advice to the client, which were gratefully received, and she continues to work on resolving the childcare issue.

Household Support Fund

£115,000

awarded to local families in partnership with Gateshead Council to assist with the Cost of Living

Liaison with External Bodies



Many thanks for introducing me to the heads of Social Care at Gateshead Council. Through this connection we were able to achieve a successful outcome for one of our girls."

– Mrs Katz,
The Chev' Youth Club

"We could not help but be impressed with your work across the Jewish community and the positive impact it is creating. We were struck by the importance of ensuring our communications and involvement efforts reflect those communities who can be, too often, seldom heard. We were equally struck by the role your members fulfil within the wider community and NHS as part of the chaplaincy duties they fulfil within local hospitals.

– Sam Allen - Chief Executive,
North East & North Cumbria
Integrated Care Board



Case Study

Avrohom Sugarman, founder of Haskel Special School, relates: "The Children and Young People Service (CYPS) has a long waiting list - approximately 2 years. One of our pupils, a 17-year-old young man with complex disabilities, needed urgent medication. Although the parents had called CYPS repeatedly for help, the response was that he was on the waiting list.

"We had previously met Sam Allen, head of the ICB, through a meeting brokered by the JCCG. She had encouraged us to stay in touch and to contact her with any issues. In light of the young man's needs I sent an email to Sam highlighting the urgency. I couldn't quite believe it when the crisis team attended to the case that very day. We were so gratified to see the patient back to normal within two weeks and cannot thank the JCCG enough for making this important introduction that has directly benefited the wellbeing of one of our young adults."

Case Study

"Ateres High School for Girls are looking at a proposal to convert to Voluntary Aided status.

As part of the process we have consulted widely with stakeholders to support this initiative. Jonathan Klajn of the JCCG used his diverse connections with the Local Authority to help set up an extensive visit and tour of the school which was attended by over 10 Councillors accompanied by the Leader of the Council.

In addition, Jonathan helped arrange a follow up focus group which was attended by the school's governors with Suzanne Dunn (Service Director - Education, Schools and Inclusion), Helen Fergusson (Strategic Director, Children's Services) & Councillor Gary Haley (Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People's Service). The JCCG's help has been invaluable."

Samuel Rosenthal – Deputy Head



Charity Support

A central focus of the JCCG's activities revolve around assisting local groups and charities with funding support, compliance, and general advice and signposting. **Over 50 local charities and voluntary organisations** receive regular bulletins including signposting to funding opportunities, support with bid writing and guidance on governance and associated issues.

70% of groups said they find our email bulletins useful.

Beth Jacob arrange activities for children and young adults from the community. The JCCG assisted Beth Jacob in accessing funding for summer holiday activities. Almost 600 children took part in soft play and ice skating.



We are grateful to our partner organisations and funders who work with us to deliver improved outcomes for the local community





Founded in 1997, The Jewish Community Council of Gateshead (JCCG) plays a key role in improving the social, economic and health prospects of the Orthodox Jewish Community in Gateshead. As a 'community anchor body' the JCCG provides liaison between the Jewish community and the Local Authority in addition to other statutory bodies and services including regional Hospital and Mental Health Trusts, Northumbria Police, and numerous community and voluntary sector groups across the wider North East region and beyond. The JCCG is also involved in advocating with Government on a variety of issues, working with partner organisations in Manchester and London. It is also a registered provider of social housing via its subsidiary Adler Housing.

The JCCG also provides a range of employment services, welfare & benefits advice and support, and support to local charities. It is also the North East partner of London-based Paperweight Trust.

Its flagship project, the Labriut Healthy Living Centre, provides highly-acclaimed health and wellbeing programmes and education to the community in a culturally appropriate way, improving access to services and reducing health inequalities for the community.

The work of JCCG is high impact and far-reaching, enabled through its continually growing reputation as a trusted partner that understands and identifies the community's needs, and advocates on their behalf.

 www.jccg.org.uk

 @thejccg