

THE Miracle OF THE Lamp!

As they have done for the last two years, the Edinburgh community planned to come together for a public menorah lighting in St Andrew's Square. This year, however, was different!

When workmen went to check that everything was in order prior to the lighting, they found no Menorah! Where "Edinburgh's Largest Menorah" had proudly stood the day before, there was only the stump of the base.

So what was the organiser, Chabad Rabbi Pinny Weinman, to do? Cancel or find a way forward? He called Edward Green, an Edinburgh resident and Council member of SCoJeC, and together they sprang into action. Edward lent his workshop facilities and labour, and with the help of Rabbi Weinman's brother-in-law from the US, they were able to design and build a twelve-foot wooden Menorah from scratch - and have it ready in time!

But their plans went awry when the truck failed to turn up to transport this enormous structure to the centre of town. Every turn proved fruitless until Edward finally tracked down his roofer! Coming to the rescue on his white steed (actually a white van), Rab loaded the Menorah and headed for town. Edinburgh's roads are, however, gridlocked at rush hour, so news of Rab's progress was relayed to the anxious throng till he arrived, only 25 minutes late.

Atop a hydraulic lift, Mark Loughridge, president of Edinburgh J-Soc, lit the lamps with a blowtorch - the flame of choice to combat Edinburgh's bitter wind! The audience of more than 150 then took refuge in Harvey Nichols at the kind invitation of its General Manager, Gordon Drummond, where they enjoyed doughnuts and other Chanukah fare prepared by Gitty Weinman. They were addressed by Rabbi Weinman, Rabbi Rose of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, Roseanna Cunningham, Minister for Community Safety, and Dana Linnert from the US Consulate. Finally, that good friend of the Edinburgh Jewish community, Councillor and former Lord Provost, Eric Milligan, reminisced that the only public celebration during the big freeze in 2010 was the Menorah lighting.

It proved to be a wonderful example of the Jewish and wider Edinburgh community coming together to create a terrific celebration of Edinburgh's own festival of lights.



THE SILVER-PAINTED WOODEN REPLACEMENT MENORAH ON THE MORNING AFTER

Being Jewish in Scotland

The "Being Jewish in Scotland" inquiry moves into Phase Two with this issue of Four Corners.

We're now planning a series of conversations about some of the recurring themes that have come up in Phase One - see page 6

for a summary - and we're especially keen to talk to people outside the main Jewish communities. Please get in touch if you'd like to help us get a group together.

We've included another copy of the survey with this issue of Four Corners, and you can still download it at www.scojec.org/jewishinScotland.html - please complete it if you haven't already. And if you have already sent us the form but have more to say, please e-mail, call, or write to us with your thoughts.

The newly refurbished synagogue in Dundee, the City of Discovery, had a very busy few days centred on the national Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony in Caird Hall, including a dinner for the guest speakers, an Open Day for the local community, and an interfaith youth event. See more on page 3.

Dundee's Days of Discovery

BELOW, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: THE CROWDED HALL AT DUNDEE SHUL OPEN DAY; A YOUNG PARTICIPANT IN THE INTERFAITH YOUTH EVENT; CHIEF RABBI MELCHIOR AT CRAIGIE HIGH SCHOOL; TAMARA LEVY SPEAKING ABOUT HER RECENT VISIT TO AUSCHWITZ



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"200 YEARS OF Scottish Jews"

DR NEVILLE LAMDAN

The comprehensive survey of the demographic and genealogical history of the Jewish community in Scotland from its origins in the late 18th century till today, which is being supported by SCoJeC, has received a major vote of confidence with the award of a Heritage Research Grant from the Rothschild Foundation.

As reported in *Four Corners* 28, the International Institute for Jewish Genealogy in Jerusalem, headed by Glasgow-born Dr Neville Lamdan, has designed this project to throw light on the paths taken by the often related families who came to Scotland mainly from Eastern Europe within a relatively short period at the turn of the 20th century, and the later influxes of Jews after the Second World War. The project will look at how many came directly to Scotland, how many migrated from other places within in the British Isles, and how many moved on elsewhere, as well as the dispersal and settlement patterns of those who stayed.

The project has now been formally launched with sponsorship from both SCoJeC and the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council. The Genealogical Institute together with the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre will be responsible for the implementation of the project. Detailed research work has already commenced – Michael Tobias, a well-known genealogist in Glasgow with advanced IT skills, is mining official Scottish records online in a search for every Jew living in Scotland in the 19th century, while Harvey Kaplan, the Director of the Archives Centre, has been sharing their considerable assets with the project.

Aside from the intrinsic interest of tracing our roots – and branches – SCoJeC has a particular interest for the purposes of both our Outreach and *Being Jewish in Scotland* projects. It's relatively easy to contact and survey the Jews of the cities, but Jewish people who contact us from remote locations often tell us that they believed themselves to be literally alone until they saw our literature. By telling us where our grandparents settled, the project will be telling us where their descendants may still be found, and where we should be targeting our support. And, of course, the information on the Jews from outlying areas will also tie into this project, thus bringing all three SCoJeC projects together, and, at the same time, increasing the "added value" of the contacts being made.

AJR in Scotland goes from strength to strength

AGNES ISAACS

The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) has appointed a Social Care Worker to work with Holocaust survivors and refugees in Scotland.

Myrna Bernard, who is based in Glasgow, is available to visit Holocaust survivors, refugees, and their families in their homes throughout Scotland. She can provide practical advice, including form-filling and accessing funds and support from a range of programmes established specifically to assist Holocaust victims. As well as liaising with local authority social work departments and assessing financial needs, she is available to provide counselling and emotional support.

She can be contacted, in strict confidence, 07506 627 350 / myrnabernard@ajr.org.uk

AJR's Continental Friends group finished the year on a high with an early Chanukah and New Year Party in Glasgow. The Friends shared a l'chaim while enjoying a wonderful André Rieu New Year concert followed by a scrumptious afternoon tea.

The new year kicked off with a meeting of our Book Club and we are planning many exciting events and outings during 2012 in both Glasgow and Edinburgh.

If you are a first- or second-generation survivor or refugee, and would like to join our activities or use our services, please contact Scotland Coordinator, Agnes Isaacs 07551 968 593 / agnes@ajr.org.uk

If there is no meeting in your area and you know of other former refugees nearby let us know and we may be able to arrange a gathering.

Burns Suppers

IN ISRAEL

The 15th annual Burns Supper at Kibbutz Mevo Hama was attended by more than 40 Israeli ex-Glaswegians. It was chaired by Lenny Levstein (pictured playing bodhran) and Arthur Livingstone addressed the (kibbutz-made) haggis, which was piped in by a Scottish-trained Israeli piper. There were also Suppers in Jerusalem and at the Scots Hotel in Tiberias.



Dundee's Days of Discovery

Sharing Remembrance

BILL SHACKMAN

On the afternoon of Holocaust Memorial Day, more than fifty local people visited Dundee Synagogue. Most had never been in a synagogue before and were excited to discover that Judaism is a living, thriving religion, even in a small community like Dundee. One participant remarked, "I've walked past this building so many times, and I have always wondered what goes on inside."

They were shown round by former Chair, Paul Spicker, who showed them a Torah scroll, and described how Rabbinic interpretation of the Torah serves as the basis for Jewish practice today. Sharon Levy, the current Chair, spoke about growing up in Israel surrounded by the memories of Holocaust survivors. His daughter Tamara then spoke emotionally about visiting Auschwitz, and the need to face the horrors that intolerance and indifference can lead to.

The visitors left the synagogue having shared the duality of Jewish memory that Rabbi Melchior discussed the previous night; the Torah commands remembering both the Sabbath to make it holy and the Amalekites' attack on the weak and vulnerable, encapsulating the obligation to preserve our traditions while never forgetting our hardships. Our guests confronted evils that we can never forget, recognising that the key to preventing these atrocities is to remember them. But they also discovered the traditions of religious observance and active remembrance that have kept the Jewish people alive for so many centuries.

"I never saw another butterfly"
Pavel Friedmann,
Terezin, 4 June 1942

Interfaith Youth Event

ELLEN McCANCE, COORDINATOR OF FAITH IN COMMUNITY DUNDEE

On Sunday 29th January, Dundee synagogue held their first interfaith event, co-sponsored by local charity, Faith in Community Dundee. Young people from Jewish, Muslim, and Christian backgrounds gathered to watch the film, *Freedom Writers*, the true story of a Los Angeles teacher who used lessons from the Holocaust to help her students confront issues about racially-motivated violence in their own lives.

Over a meal of delicious falafel, the group discussed the film and their own experiences. They agreed that, in a society committed to diversity, it is important to focus on the many things that unite us rather than the few that keep us apart, and that holding on to one's unique cultural and faith identity while not excluding others is essential.

Everyone wanted more opportunities to come together, with time just for socialising and fun as well as the hard work of discussion and debate, and Faith in Community Dundee promised to work with Dundee's many faith communities to help make this happen.

A Night to Remember!

SHARON LEVY, CHAIR OF DUNDEE SYNAGOGUE

This year Burn's night in the city of Discovery was extra special. Not only did we come together as a community, but we also welcomed guests from Denmark, Canada, and Japan to dinner prepared in our newly refurbished kitchen. Rabbi Bent Melchior, former Chief Rabbi of Denmark, reflected on the theme of this year's Holocaust Memorial Day: "Speak Up - Speak out". His powerful speech, laced with optimism, humour, and profound wisdom, touched us all, and provided an opportunity to reflect on our role as a small Jewish community.

George Brady, a Holocaust survivor who now lives in Canada, gave us a personal account of life as a young boy under Nazi occupation, and shared some intimate memories of his sister Hana, the heroine of the acclaimed film *Inside Hana's Suitcase*. Fumiko Ishioka then movingly told us how her quest to bring lessons from the Holocaust to Japanese schoolchildren led her to this 13 year old girl who was brutally murdered in Auschwitz, and George's daughter Lara spiritedly reminded us that, as time dims the memory of the Holocaust, it is imperative to collect the personal stories of survivors and to share them with young people across the globe.

PHOTOGRAPHS, TOP TO BOTTOM

SHARON LEVY WELCOMING VISITORS TO THE SYNAGOGUE OPEN DAY; GUESTS IN THE SYNAGOGUE; THE SPEAKERS AT EASTERN PRIMARY SCHOOL; RABBI MELCHIOR AND GEORGE BRADY; RABBI MELCHIOR AT CRAIGIE HIGH SCHOOL.

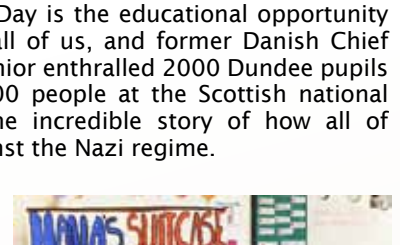
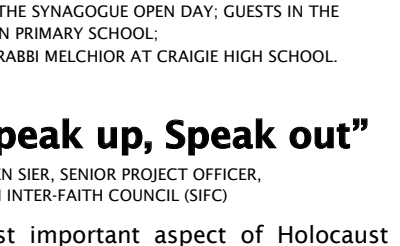
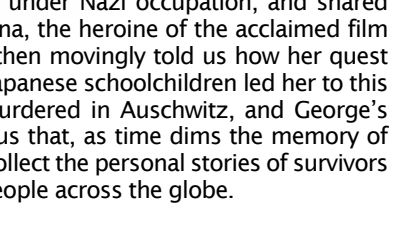
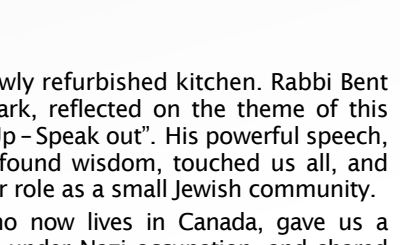
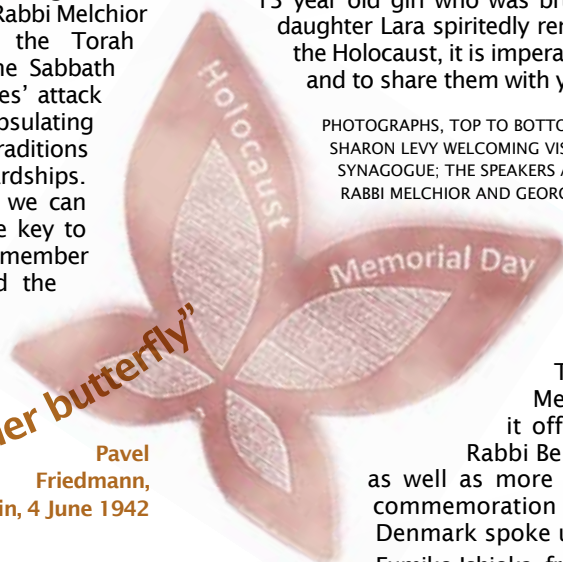
"Speak up, Speak out"

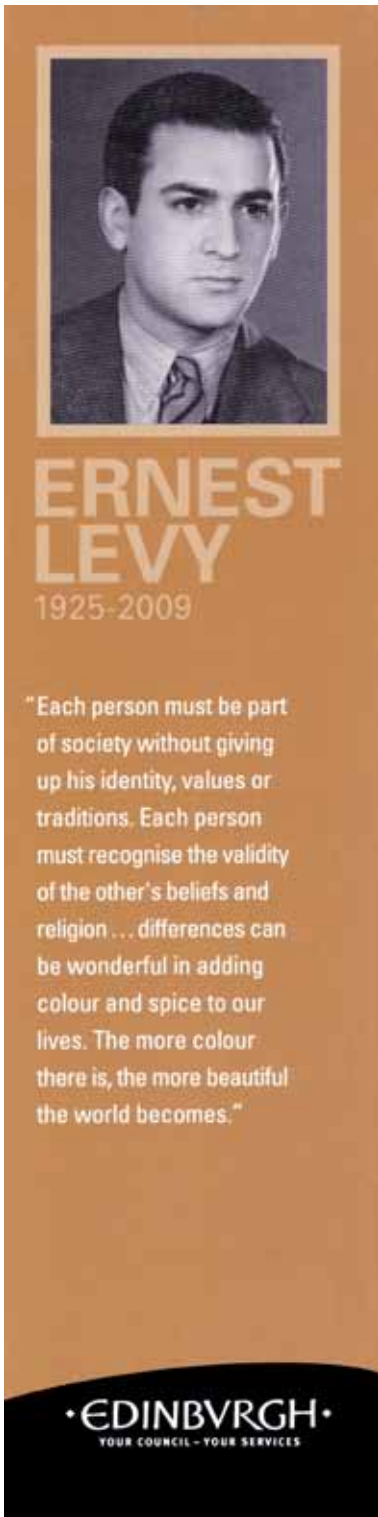
MAUREEN SIER, SENIOR PROJECT OFFICER,
SCOTTISH INTER-FAITH COUNCIL (SIFC)

The most important aspect of Holocaust Memorial Day is the educational opportunity it offers to all of us, and former Danish Chief Rabbi Bent Melchior enthralled 2000 Dundee pupils as well as more than 800 people at the Scottish national commemoration with the incredible story of how all of Denmark spoke up against the Nazi regime.

Fumiko Ishioka, from Tokyo, captivated audiences with her moving story of how she had been sent a suitcase with Hana Brady's name on it, when she asked the Auschwitz museum for an artefact to focus her teaching at her small education centre. She, Hana's brother George, and his daughter Lara, also spoke at a gathering of Head Teachers, and their visit to a Dundee primary school was broadcast to schools across Scotland. The film *Inside Hana's Suitcase* was also screened twice to packed audiences in Edinburgh.

The main event at the Caird Hall on 26 January, organised by SIFC, also included a moving performance by dancers with disabilities, and the reflections of school pupils on a visit to Auschwitz. Candles were lit in memory of all who suffered in the Holocaust, and in honour of those who did their utmost to save them.





Ernest Levy Exhibition

ROBERT ALLANSON,
EDINBURGH CITY LIBRARIES

Ernest Levy, for many years the chazan of Pollokshields and then Giffnock Synagogues in Glasgow, was the survivor of several concentration camps, including Auschwitz and Belsen, from which he was liberated by British troops. Many members of his family perished in the Holocaust, and his attempts to settle in Europe after the war were marred by continuing religious prejudice and political repression. After a brief stay in Israel, he decided to begin a new life in Scotland where some of his family had already found a welcome. Later in his life he would proudly declare he had never met a single instance of prejudice in Scotland, and that moving here was a great decision. As well as being a stalwart of the Glaswegian and wider Scottish Jewish community, in his later years he was tireless in his efforts to educate about the Holocaust, giving dozens of interviews and teaching school children about the horrors of Nazi Europe.

He wrote two books, and his life was the subject of a primary school teaching pack. In 2002 he received an OBE, both for his interfaith work, and for services to Holocaust education in Scotland.

After his death in 2009, Ernest's large collection of manuscripts, photographs and other artefacts were donated to Edinburgh Libraries, which hopes to use this collection to continue his work of teaching tolerance as the basis for a peaceful society. We are proud to be associated with this work and intend to make this unique snapshot of the immigrant experience in Scotland, available to researchers and the wider public.

The work, however, is far from over. Some items, particularly those in Hebrew and Ernest's musical compositions, have presented problems, and Edinburgh Libraries would welcome any help offered by the community.

The exhibition is at Edinburgh Central Library, George IV Bridge, until 15 March.

Purim

DITZA GRANAT

If we read the Purim Megillah without knowing how it ends, it appears to be a sequence of random, unconnected events.

The king of Persia throws a huge party, to which everyone comes, including the Jews. At the party, the king's wife disobeys him, and he dumps her and has to choose a new queen. This new queen happens to be a Jewish woman, who hides this fact from him. Later, a Jewish man overhears two men plotting to assassinate the king and reports them. Then the same man refuses to bow down to one of the king's advisors, who is enraged by this. The king decides to honour the man who saves his life and asks an advisor, who happens to be the one who felt humiliated, how he should do this, and then instructs him to do as he had advised, to the Jewish man.

It is incredibly hard to recall these events without putting in names and connections, because that is how we know this story. We can see clearly how one event leads to another, and how if one thing hadn't happened then the next wouldn't have occurred either.

Looking back from the end of the Megillah, we see how all the details fit together perfectly. For example, if the king's first wife hadn't disobeyed him, he wouldn't have needed a new wife and the Jewish people wouldn't have had an inside track to the king through Esther, the new queen. If Mordechai hadn't been related to Esther he wouldn't have been near the palace to overhear the plot to kill the king.

The Purim story is full of these details and connections, which come together perfectly, in the end, to enable the Jewish people to fight, to defend themselves from the decree written by Haman to annihilate them - to survive.

A year ago I made Aliyah from Scotland. It has been a year full of changes and new experiences and ideas. Reflecting on this past year and my whole life, I am able now to see how things are connected. Things that seemed random - going to school at Hutchie, insignificant - not being able to go to the kibbutz of my choice for ulpan, or incredibly hard - working with street children in Ecuador, all had to take place to get me where I am now, to enable me to be who I am now, and to give me the skills to deal with the present.

It is awesome (in both senses of the word) to identify and appreciate the puzzle of life and how it fits together perfectly. We can never properly understand G-d's plans and reasoning, but just as each cell has a function in the body, each event has a purpose in our lives. Just as we wonder at the perfection of nature, we can marvel at our lives and know that they too have a purpose.

Spring Calendar

Purim: Fast of Esther: WED 7 MARCH
Purim: EVENING OF WED 7 MARCH,
AND THURS 8 MARCH

Pesach: Bedikat chametz (searching for chametz): EVENING THURS 5 APRIL

Biur chametz (burning the chametz): MORNING FRI 6 APRIL

First Seder night: EVENING FRI 6 APRIL (SHABBAT)

Yom Tov: EVENING FRI 6 APRIL TILL NIGHT SUN 8 APRIL

Chol HaMoed (middle days) CONTINUE TILL

Yom Tov: EVENING THURS 12 APRIL TILL AFTER SHABBAT, SAT 14 APRIL



Chanukah

AT EDINBURGH LIBERAL JEWISH COMMUNITY

No Place Like Home

The Glasgow community features in the latest exhibition at the Jewish museum in London, in which the distinguished documentary photographer Judah Passow explores the rich diversity of what it means to be British and Jewish in the 21st century.

Judah, who has won four World Press Photo Awards, is now planning a more extensive project to capture the complex tapestry of Jewish life in Scotland. This will examine the contemporary community's defining characteristics, the ability to acknowledge simultaneously the traditional past, live in the creative present, and build for the future. The photographs will serve as a visual conversation, looking at what it is that drives, defines, and gives meaning to life for Scotland's Jews from Stranraer to Stornoway, and will complement SCoJeC's own research project into "Being Jewish in Scotland".

The exhibition continues till 5th June. See www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/judah-passow



PHOTOGRAPHS © JUDAH PASSOW

Student Shabbaton IN ABERDEEN

RABBI GARRY WAYLAND

In December, my family and I went to Aberdeen to spend Shabbat with the small student J-Soc and the community.

As Shabbat came in, we ran a Kabbalat Service for everyone, followed by a meal for students. Around 10 members of the small J-Soc came, and as Shabbat came in very early, we had plenty of time to get to know the group. Andrea Marks, the J-Soc Chair, who is a medical student from Toronto, told me that although the group is small, everyone is close and has a special bond; I certainly experienced that.

On Shabbat day, we ate with the community. We had initially thought we'd get around 7 or 8 people max; we were surprised when 16 came, including several students who returned for more. We had a Jewish panic as we realised that we had just the right amount of food, and hadn't overcatered at all! I gave a shiur about the forthcoming Chanukah festival, which provoked some really thoughtful questions. Afterwards, many students and community members stayed around for the remainder of the afternoon, making their way through the stock of whisky, and relaxing. We concluded Shabbat with a traditional Havdalah ceremony in the synagogue.

Aberdeen is a small but warm community. We loved meeting the different individuals who form this group, who come from all over the world (I think we had 7 countries represented on Friday night, with different Jewish experiences), and learnt much from them all. We hope that as their building project progresses, they go from strength to strength.



Being Jewish in Scotland



Reflecting the Spectrum

THE STORY SO FAR ... *Tell us what YOU think*

So far I've held focus groups in the beautiful tiny Aberdeen shul and a pub on the north-east coast, had discussions with Aberdeen University students and people in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee, and held a 'listening table' at a Kosher Food Fair. So far, 55 surveys have been returned, and I've met more than 60 people on my travels, but if you've not yet contributed your experiences there's still time before we move on to look at what all your responses tell us.

The reality of the exodus was brought home to me by one group of older people: all their grandchildren and great-grandchildren live outside Scotland. Everyone I spoke to in Glasgow and Edinburgh talked about the shrinking community; many expect their children will leave Scotland in order to 'marry Jewish'.

- Is this your experience?

People in the smaller communities appear very accepting of a wide variety of Jewishness - if there's only one shul, then that's the shul you'll go to! Some parents coach their children at home for their bar or bat mitzvah, or arrange lessons over skype.

- Do you have a story like this to tell?

Some people feel they have a duty to wear their Jewishness like a badge, "to show that we're like everyone else, that we don't have horns", and report an amazing lack of knowledge about Judaism, with questions like "Do you *really* not believe in Jesus?" or "Do you *really* not celebrate Christmas?"

- Have you faced comments like these?

Name-calling in schools seems widespread, with "you Jew" being used as a general insult in the playground. Occasionally parents wanting to withdraw their children from prayers have been met by incomprehension by teachers.

- Has this happened to your children?

Outside schools, people report that most antisemitism is relatively minor, and they're more likely to come up against anti-English than anti-Jewish prejudice! However, people report increasing anti-Israel rhetoric, some of it in antisemitic terms, so that some Israelis pretend they are French or Turkish. It is heartening to hear about joint events between Jewish and Muslim students, but sadly more common for the mere mention of one's Jewishness to lead to an argument about Israel.

- Has any of this happened to you?

We are planning to hold more meetings with Jewish (and 'Jew-ish') people all over Scotland, to discuss these issues and how they can be addressed. See www.scojec.org/jewishinscotland_diary.html for details of future events.

And if any of these issues resonate with your experience, or if you want to tell us something new, please return the form enclosed with this issue or at www.scojec.org/jewishinscotland.html

FIONA FRANK, PROJECT WORKER

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: FOCUS GROUP IN ROSEHEARTY AT THE BAY HOTEL AS GUESTS OF RICHARD SAMPSON (IN FOREGROUND); GROUPS IN EDINBURGH AND ABERDEEN; BOTTOM: FIONA SPEAKING AT DUNDEE SYNAGOGUE



SCOJeC regularly responds to consultations issued by the Scottish Government and others, to enable the views of the Jewish community to be taken into account when policy is being developed. Responses are prepared after consulting individuals and organisations with relevant expertise, including religious leaders from all branches of Judaism represented in Scotland, and reflect the consensus or range of views expressed.

This might have been expected to be more than usually difficult in the case of the recent consultation about same-sex marriage, about which the various branches have very different views. All, however, agreed that SCOJeC should submit a single response, clearly reflecting the divisions of opinion. We also consulted Scottish Rainbow Covenant, a Jewish LGBT network, and other communal organisations, as well as a number of interested individuals, and were gratified by the approval for our submission across the religious spectrum. Rabbi David Rose of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation told us, "I am in total agreement with the response and am extremely impressed with the balanced and sensible approach taken, which reflects well on the Jewish Community in Scotland, and is a tribute to SCOJeC's hard work." Nick Silk, Coordinator of the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community's Religious Affairs Committee, wrote, "I think it reads really well. It shows the Jewish community in a really positive way; given all the publicity that there has been around this issue, this shows that we as a community can agree to disagree!"

SCOJeC's response to the consultation is at <http://tinyurl.com/scojec-spectrum>



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