

In the News

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Chabad Lubavitch Centres of North East

London & Essex
wish all of our friends
and supporters
a very Happy Chanukah

On behalf of Executive Directors:
Rabbi & Mrs Sufrin MBE,
of Chabad Gants Hill
and Rabbi and Mrs Brandman of
Chabad Buckhurst Hill

Chabad also has offices in
Epping & Westcliff on Sea

www.chabadilford.co.uk
www.chabadonthehill.co.uk
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Bucking the trend at Buckhurst Hill

BY LAURIE
ROSENBERG

CHABAD in Buckhurst Hill is bucking the trend of what is perceived to be happening in north east London and Essex, even in terms of synagogue attendance.

Over 200 people packed into the welcoming premises on Epping New Road in the heart of Buckhurst Hill on the first day of Rosh Hashanah. Numbers did not dwindle on the second day either; and Yom Kippur, Succot and Simchat Torah were equally packed.

A salt beef wraps Kiddush on Succot, BBQ Kiddush complete with steaks, chicken kebabs and everything in between on Shmini Atzeret and a cocktail barman in shul on Simchat Torah were just some of the features of a successful month.

The services were jointly led by Rabbi Odom Brandman, director of the Centre, together with guest cantor Rabbi Zali Rodal, whose singing put an Italian twist to the stirring melodies.

The numbers may not seem so large; but for a new and growing community that started from scratch a little over 11 years ago, Chabad Buckhurst Hill has grown into a full-blown Jewish Community Centre with an active and sought after synagogue,



Celebrating Succot at Chabad

a full variety of programmes and activities for every age group from babies and toddlers through kids, and teens and beyond. It is renowned for its weekly Shabbat services and festival celebrations, not to mention the most delicious Kiddushim, that bring an enjoyable sociable end to every service.

This New Year the syna-

gogue filled to capacity its brand new extension, opened by the Chief Rabbi in April; and Rabbi Brandman joked in his sermon that, "we may have to build another extension in time for next Rosh Hashanah!"

The secret behind this growth lies, perhaps, in the non-judgemental and open approach to welcoming every Jewish fam-

ily and individual by Rabbi Odom and his indefatigable Rebbetzin, Henny. They work tirelessly with a small volunteer team; and that is, perhaps, the key to their success.

Rabbi Brandman is clear in his objective – "To create a home away from home for all Jews, and to become a beacon of light for the entire wider community".

And as long as the light of the Torah emanates from Epping New Road, there is a secure future assured for Jewish families in this part of Essex.

Different to other shuls which require membership to attend or celebrate simchas at them, Chabad Buckhurst Hill welcomes many otherwise unaffiliated Jews, enables them to celebrate Bar- and Batmitzvahs; and is catering for many families, who may otherwise not mark these important life cycle events and maintain a connection with the community.

The coming weeks are filled with many plans, youth and educational events and other celebrations, as the community is always active and busy serving others and reaching out, expanding and bringing others in.

The fact is that there are large numbers of Jews living in the neighbourhood, many have moved slightly further afield, and Chabad in Buckhurst Hill is becoming the link to the community for these people. Rabbi Brandman is determined to ensure he can be accessible to everyone who needs him.

Whisky Galore

IT was drinks all round at Chabad Buckhurst Hill when the organisation's events team held another of their whisky tasting evenings. The audience were entertained by a lively and informative discussion on the various whiskies by an expert, and wasted no time in sampling the bottles. So keen were they that several of them bought up the remaining bottles for their own collections.

Just to make sure that the

audience didn't drink on empty stomachs, they dined on chicken pie, potatoes and vegetables, followed by apple pie and ice cream prepared by Andrew Kennard and his volunteer helpers.

Rabbi Aryeh Sufrin MBE said later that this was the Chabad events team's first event held at Buckhurst Hill, and it helped to raise funds for Chabad Lubavitch centres in north east London and Essex's social services.