



MASORTI
J U D A I S M

Impact Report: 2023-2024

Highlighting our achievements this year
and showing in numbers, the impact we've had.



Summary

Masorti Judaism works for 4,500 people in 14 communities across the UK at all stages of development. We are there for Jews who grew up Orthodox, Reform, Liberal, who grew up in the UK, in South Africa, in South America, in Europe, or who didn't grow up Jewish at all.

We are there for Jews who want a meaningful experience of their communal lives in the complicated space between tradition and modernity.

Masorti Judaism wants to offer everyone the opportunity for greater and more meaningful participation in our Jewish tradition as it evolves slowly through generations. We continue to offer a broad range of support to make all that possible.

However, this year was not business as usual. From far away in the UK, our communities have been impacted by the horrible events in Israel on October 07. We've had to respond in hundreds of ways to try to absorb that trauma. Despite that, we've had more of an impact this year than ever.

Building relationships, growing communities and creating space for dialogue; so much of what we do is invisible. Nonetheless, this report highlights our specific achievements this year; showing in numbers, the impact we've had on Jewish life in the UK and beyond.



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Noam Madrichim provided day-care for 40 Israeli children stranded in London after October 07.

The Impact of October 07

“Masorti Judaism believes deeply in the centrality of Israel for the Jewish people. We are strongly committed to the Jewish state and Israel’s right to defend itself. We pray for the end of the terrible war which is affecting so many people in Israel and beyond. We are a far-reaching community whose commitment to plurality is one of our biggest assets. We believe we can use our core values to navigate this difficult time for the entire Jewish people, listening, loving, and empowering each other as we journey together in support of our eternal relationship with Israel.”

We are hugely appreciative of our professional and lay leaders who are grappling with complex challenges that have emerged within communities since October 07.

We believe that the Masorti voice with its nuanced understanding around complex issues, commitment to community, Torah and Israel, and to justice and to loving kindness, can unite us more than ever.”

Rachel Sklan, CEO

Masorti Judaism responses to trauma

- Our Senior Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg and Rachel Sklan, CEO, provided support for our members in the days immediately following October 07. They ran five sessions both online and in person for over 500 people.
- Masorti rabbis and Noam movement workers visited 11 campuses within one month of October 07 to check in on student welfare. They ran processing activities and followed up with anyone who was particularly struggling.
- Noam held open spaces every evening for two weeks, created care packages for our students and organised multiple events for solidarity and prayer for the hostages.
- Noam also reached out to Israeli’s affected by the war. Noam madrichim offered childcare for 40 young Israeli children, during the October 2023 half term.
- For young adults, we set up a helpline to connect young adults in the UK with rabbinic/pastoral support. We created Gather your People, which funded people to host friends for a meal and we gave them resources for discussion and prayers. Over 60 people reached out for support.

Support for our established communities, nurturing our growing communities

Our communities are run by a mixture of professionals and volunteers who step up and step forward to own and build their communities.

Kol Nefesh Masorti Synagogue
Leeds Masorti Community
Mosaic Masorti
New Essex Masorti Synagogue
New North London Synagogue
New London Synagogue
New Stoke Newington Shul
Oxford Masorti Group
Shema (South Herts and Edgware Masorti)
St Albans Masorti Synagogue



As part of our commitment to community building, we've nurtured four emerging congregations:

The Havurah in North London

Focused on meaningful Shabbat mornings with in-depth learning. We give them operational and rabbinic support.

Nahar

Bringing young adults together for sponsored Friday night dinners, learning, and singing.

Brighton Chavurah

An emerging community offering lay-led Kabbalat Shabbat services monthly, and occasional Shabbat morning services. We give them tefillah training and organisational support.

Ohel Mo'ed around Golders Green

Now a vibrant community for Jews in their 20s and 30s. With Masorti Rabbinic and organisation support, they are now a launched community with big plans.

Our potential communities

We also see opportunities for growth in Bristol and Edinburgh, reflecting an interest in Masorti Judaism across the UK.

"Ohel Mo'ed, with Masorti's support, and Rabbi Yael Jaffe's involvement is bucking the trend seen in so many shuls and communities across the country where young people are falling out of love with Judaism, leaving communal life either temporarily or longer-term"

Oli Davidson

Serving our communities

Offering organisational support

- Our Masorti chairs forum, where we offered a support structure and training for twenty community leaders.
- We've run three Strategy days to define direction for specific communities.
- We ran a training day for community leaders entitled: 'Management 101 - How to manage your Rabbi and your professionals'
- We ran our Jewish Community Organising course, where 14 lay leaders from six communities learned how to strengthen their communities and gained skills to lead.



Supporting our rabbis

This year, we offered monthly catchups and a three-day retreat for Masorti rabbis, which provided an essential space for learning, support, and collaboration. This support reinforced collective resilience and helped them to articulate a vision for the future.

"Going on retreat allows us, rabbis, to support one another, talk about things that touch all of us, think about the future, think about big picture stuff that we don't get to share all the time."

Rabbi Zahavit Shalev

Snapshot of our Masorti Communities

10
established
communities

4,500
members

4
emerging
congregations



"I've learned so much about this completely new approach to synagogue life, to community development and organisation"

Luciano Gomez, Kol Nefesh Masorti

Growing rabbinic support for the future

We supported the training of new talent who will join the cohort of our rising star Rabbis and service leaders. These include:

- Sarah-Beth Neville: Currently studying at Yeshivat Maharat.
- Tim Motz: Studying at Conservative Yeshiva and Leo Baeck College
- Jessica Spencer: Recently received Smicha from Hebrew College
- Ayala Gottlieb: Ba'al Tefilah training from the European Academy of Jewish Liturgy

Engaging our youth

The highlights this year:

Summer Camp

240 young people participated in our summer camps, with 150 Madrichim

Winter camp

Noam's biggest winter camp ever, for 60 chanichim, run by Noam UK madrichim and five visiting Israeli madrichim

Veida

The Noam residential camp held in December gave emerging Noam leaders the skills for debate and self-determination

Merkaz

This is Noam's signature leadership training course that takes place over 15 sessions throughout the year to develop 78 future madrichim

Noam Masorti Youth

Noam is Masorti Judaism's Zionist Youth Movement. Led entirely by young people, we run a busy programme of activities for children and teenagers throughout the year, including summer and winter camps and events for hundreds of young people in the UK and Europe. These include a day camp for five-to-eight-year-olds, residential camps for nine-to fifteen-year-olds, and a month-long tour for young people aged 16.

"Noam has and continues to be a space where one is able to express themselves freely and voice their opinions without judgement."

Gilda, Noam gap year participant

78 Madrichim graduated from Noam's weekly leadership course



6 Gap Year participants went to Brazil and Israel

150 Madrichim made magic for **240** Summer Camp participants



Cross-communal resources

Yom Masorti

250 delegates from 14 countries attended Yom Masorti, exploring the challenges and triumphs of being Jewish in Europe today. This event underscored the strength and unity of our global community.



“Judaism first and foremost is about relationship, and the conference in London just underscored that”

Margo Gold, Masorti Olami President

Bet Din

The European Masorti Bet Din works in six key areas: conversion, divorce, Halachic guidance, mediation framework for Rabbinic Halachic Dialogue and kashrut supervision. It is active in 14 countries around Europe and the UK. In 2024, the Bet Din has surpassed 135 cases and is expected to reach 160 by the end of the year.

Kollel

15 students attend Rabbi Chaim Weiner’s weekly Kollel, on Wednesday morning which offers in-depth Halachic learning online and in person.

“I’ve been attending Rabbi Chaim’s Wednesday morning Kollel sessions for some years and continue to be inspired by his teaching based on his amazing depth of knowledge and the way he makes even the most difficult sections accessible. In addition, having hybrid sessions means that I continue to learn with my French chevruta partner.”

Gill Caplin

New Website for synagogue skills

With funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we launched a new website called Shema Koleinu, dedicated to strengthening Masorti prayer skills and making resources more accessible to our community.

Whether you’re looking for a new melody for Lecha Dodi, or you want to familiarise yourself with Acheinu, the prayer for release of hostages,

or you’re teaching Bnei Mitzvah students, this site hosts our musical and liturgical traditions and explains the choreography used in daily prayer, home rituals and lifecycle events. We also delivered six in-person Tefillah training workshops, and two learn-to-leyn courses for Masorti members.



**Explore
masortiprayer.org.uk**

Bringing people in. Bringing people back.

Friday Night Dinners for Noam Alumni

We sponsored monthly Friday night dinners for young people who haven't yet found their adult Jewish community. This was part of the work of establishing an online and face-to-face network of Noam Alumni and Masorti-curious young people who are teetering on the edge of establishing or joining an existing Masorti community.

Creating innovative communities

We've helped to launch and develop communities like Havurah and Nahar, attracting young people between the ages of 23 to 35 with no previous involvement in shul life.

The work of belonging

- Delivered a National Lottery funded three-year LGBT+ inclusion programme, including community surveys, coaching and planning with lay leaders from seven communities, training our rabbinic/cantorial team, and growing the Masorti LGBT+ network
- We shared the wisdom of our Masorti rabbis through a difficult year for everyone
- Through Marom, we hosted events and provided support for students in London, and on eight UK campuses including Nottingham, Leeds, Durham, Manchester, Bristol, Sussex, Cambridge and Oxford



"We've been learning about what the future of our communities will look like, addressing difficult questions that movement faces, and getting excited about what the future holds"

Rabbi Oliver Joseph



Enriching Masorti life

3 strategy days were held for community professionals

15 students

study Talmud at our weekly Kollel



250 delegates from

14 countries met at Yom Masorti

Monthly meetings and a weekend retreat strengthened our Masorti Rabbis

14 people from six communities attended our Community Organising course

One new website launched to strengthen Masorti prayer skills.

Future Outlook

As we look ahead, Masorti Judaism remains committed to growth, innovation, and resilience. We will continue to nurture our communities, support our youth, and respond to global challenges with unwavering dedication.

Thank you to everyone who has supported and been a part of our journey this past year. Together, we are building a vibrant and inclusive future for Masorti Judaism in the UK.

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Rachel Sklan, CEO

