



# North West Surrey Synagogue

## Community Rabbi

Job Description and Person Specification

March 2025

## Our Community

North West Surrey Synagogue (NWSS) is a warm, inclusive, and dynamic Jewish community, committed to being *m'vakshay ha'derech* - seekers of the way. We are a **thriving, caring, and inclusive** Reform community, engaged in Jewish learning, meaningful practice, and social responsibility.

We celebrate and explore Jewish identity in **religious, cultural, educational, and social** ways. Our next Rabbi will be at the heart of this, helping members **find Jewish meaning in their daily lives** and creating a Synagogue that is **a living space, not just a building**. They will support members across all life stages, **fostering deep relationships and shared Jewish experiences, both inside and outside the shul walls**.

## Job Description

### Key Responsibilities:

#### 1. Spiritual Leadership & Worship:

- 1.1. Lead **engaging, meaningful** services that honour NWSS' traditions while incorporating innovation, such as music, interactive elements, and opportunities for participation.
- 1.2. Support lay leaders in service leadership, **enabling a diversity of voices** to lead communal prayer and **continuing to grow** lay participation.
- 1.3. Ensure that **celebration, not just observance, is at the heart of festivals**, creating excitement and anticipation around Jewish ritual life.

#### 2. Pastoral Care & Community Support:

- 2.1. Provide **compassionate, proactive pastoral support**, particularly for those facing illness, bereavement, or personal crises.
- 2.2. Build relationships beyond formal settings, **creating safe spaces where members feel supported in times of both joy and sorrow**.
- 2.3. Establish clear and transparent processes for pastoral care, ensuring **confidentiality and appropriate communal support**.
- 2.4. In accordance with Synagogue policies, **uphold the safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults**.

### 3. Education & Lifelong Learning:

- 3.1. Together with our Head of Cheder (*Nitzanim*), play a **central role in Cheder and B'nei Mitzvah preparation**, ensuring children and families remain engaged beyond milestone events.
- 3.2. Deliver innovative **adult education** programmes, supporting diverse learning styles including formal, informal, self-study, and modern *hevruta* (paired learning).
- 3.3. Foster a **culture of curiosity and deep thinking**, ensuring that members see Judaism as relevant to contemporary life.

### 4. Lifecycle Events:

- 4.1. Officiate at **weddings, baby blessings, funerals, B'nei Mitzvah and other significant moments** with sensitivity, making each event meaningful and personal.
- 4.2. Ensure that lifecycle events **connect people to the community beyond a single occasion**.

### 5. Community Building & Engagement:

- 5.1. Foster **intergenerational connections**, ensuring NWSS remains a welcoming and diverse space.
- 5.2. Reach out to **families and individuals who may not attend services regularly, creating multiple access points into Synagogue life**.
- 5.3. Support **new and evolving communal experiences beyond the Synagogue walls**, such as *Tashlich*, *Tu B'Shvat*, and *Shabbat* gatherings in homes.

### 6. Ethical & Inclusive Leadership:

7. Embody the **values of Progressive Judaism**, advocating for inclusivity and celebrating different Jewish identities.
  - 7.1. **Create 'brave spaces'** where members can engage in difficult conversations constructively and with empathy.
  - 7.2. Ensure that **marginal and underrepresented voices are heard** within the community.

### 8. Social Action & Wider Engagement

- 8.1. Help **bring social action to life**, making it an integral part of 'Living Judaism' rather than an activity undertaken by a few individuals.
- 8.2. Support and encourage **community-wide participation** in interfaith and social justice initiatives, while ensuring that these do not detract from core Synagogue responsibilities.

## Person Specification

### Essential Qualities & Skills:

- Ability to lead **spiritually uplifting services** that balance tradition and innovation.
- Strong **pastoral skills**, ensuring all members feel cared for and valued.
- Passionate about **Jewish education**, inspiring learners of all ages.
- **Excellent communicator**, engaging across different settings.
- Ability to **build deep relationships**, making Judaism relevant and accessible.

### Desirable Experience

- Work **within a Synagogue community**.
- Previous **leadership** experience.
- Experience engaging **families and young adults**.
- A track record of fostering **lay leadership participation**.
- Ability to **travel** (drive) **within the local area** for pastoral visits and community engagement.

### Terms & Conditions

- Salary in accordance with **MRJ's rabbinic pay scale**.
- Pension and other benefits included.
- **Full-time position**, with flexibility to ensure **wellbeing and work-life balance**.
- Willing and able to **live locally** to North West Surrey.