

ANNUAL REVIEW

September 2023 – August 2024



Introductions

From the Chair of Trustees



Robin Moss,
Chair of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of KeshetUK, I'm proud to share with you our 2023-24 Annual Review. It's been a year of continuity but also change for KeshetUK.

What has continued has been our exceptional, growing and vital work within the Jewish community in the UK. Our vision, of a world where no one has to choose between their Jewish and LGBT+ identities, continues to inspire and animate us to work in and with every community and institution who wishes to engage with us – and the outputs and impact of our work continue to increase year after year.

What has changed is three-fold. Firstly, the community, along with the whole Jewish People, was shaken by the appalling events of 7 October 2023, and the aftershocks of that day continue to have a profound impact a year later. Secondly, we said goodbye to our exceptional Executive Director, Dalia Fleming. Dalia was a first-rate communal professional, guiding KeshetUK for six and half years, including through the turbulence of the pandemic, and the outpouring of good wishes when we announced her departure was enormous. We wish Dalia the very best as she returns to local government. We are also delighted to have appointed Ariel Chapman as our new Executive Director, and look forward to you all getting the chance to meet him in the months ahead. Finally, 2023-24 saw Michelle Jacobs and Stephen Shashoua leave our Board, and Jo Ziff and Matt Lewis join. I thank Michelle and Stephen for their immense contributions to KeshetUK, and am already delighted by the expertise and enthusiasm that Jo and Matt have brought.

What is KeshetUK's vision?

KeshetUK has a vision of a world where no one is forced to choose between their LGBT+ and Jewish identities. KeshetUK engages Jewish schools, youth and young adult organisations, synagogues, and wider community organisations about the importance of LGBT+ inclusion. KeshetUK then enables these organisations to become more inclusive of LGBT+ people through education and training.

From the Executive Director



Ariel Chapman,
Executive Director

Growing up under Section 28, I know how it feels to not see yourself reflected in the education system. Always wondering where you 'fit in' and going into adulthood wondering if you will always feel so alone. Luckily, I found

my support network but this is not always the way, even after two decades since the repeal of Section 28. It is with enormous pride that I joined as Executive Director, helping to ensure no young person ever feels as alone as I did. It's particularly poignant that I am writing this report at a challenging time for both the Jewish and LGBT+ communities.

Looking ahead, 2024-25 will continue to be a challenging year. This makes KeshetUK's presence and work crucial. We know that we must continue to expand our reach across the UK and we plan to build our connections with communities outside of London. We are so grateful for the continued generosity of every single individual and organisation that has supported us, whether financially or just telling others about our work. As budgets get tighter and our work expands, we know that to continue our vital work we simply could not do it without you. Your support means that LGBT+ Jews feel less alone, less isolated and are not forced to choose between two inseparable parts of their identity and instead feel celebrated and uplifted in being themselves at a time when feeling proud of who you are matters more than ever.

KeshetUK's Impact in 2023-24

KeshetUK has had to navigate an extremely challenging year for the Jewish community. Last year was our first since 2019 with no pandemic impact, but the events of 7 October 2023 and the aftermath meant that for much of the year the Jewish community was processing how to support each other, and this meant that some of our programming was slowed down. Given this, we are incredibly proud that we have been able to achieve almost all our strategic goals.

Our data this year shows that, following our schools and community life work across the academic year 2023-24:

90% of attendees on our community life training strongly agreed or agreed that the training has improved their knowledge

77% of school pupils said they now have a better understanding of why some things said to LGBT+ people might be hurtful

97% of community life training attendees strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied with their overall learning experience

77% of school pupils said they learned how they can respond with words and/or take small actions to reduce harm to LGBT+ people

Our workshops don't just build pupils' understanding of why acts of allyship are important. They also help to give pupils the practical skills and ideas for action that they need. This year, two-thirds have gained new ideas for small everyday acts of allyship, and three-quarters have learned skills to enable them to be an active bystander when they witness discrimination or harassment.



North Cheshire
Jewish Primary School

Below we have included a small number of comments written by pupils in their own words to give a flavour of the impact of our work:

"I now understand that it is important for people to express themselves. I understand that people shouldn't discriminate against other people"

Year 7 pupil at JFS

"You've taught me how harmful some words can really be, [and] how important it is to stand up for people"

Year 7 pupil at JCoSS

"I've learned how to empathise with the LGBTQ+ community. People shouldn't have to choose between their Jewish and gay identity"

Year 9 pupil at JFS

It is simply unimaginable that these kinds of statements would have been shared by pupils from Jewish schools a decade ago when we started our work. KeshetUK truly has made, and continues to make, a substantial and significant impact on entire generations of young British Jews.

Interested in finding out more?

If you have questions or want to find out more about our work in synagogues, community groups, organisations and schools then email info@keshetuk.org

What has KeshetUK achieved in 2023–2024?

Working with schools

KeshetUK works with teachers, wider school staff and young people. We provide inclusion training for teachers and support staff, deliver school-specific activities for pupils, and support senior teaching staff with curriculum and planning development. All of this aims to create a school culture where Jewish LGBT+ people feel valued, respected and included.

In 2023–24 KeshetUK:

- Delivered workshops and assemblies for over 3,950 pupils from five Jewish secondary schools, ten secondary school Jewish societies, and five Jewish primary schools;
- Ran training for 73 secondary school staff. Including ten teachers from a number of different schools via a teacher training programme run by the London School of Jewish Studies;
- Worked with a group of Year 12 pupils at JCoSS as part of their ‘Ambassador’ training programme;
- Ran programmes for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in five primary schools, including two schools in Manchester for the first time;
- Partnered with UJS¹ to deliver workshops as part of the JAMS² programme, using a menu of KeshetUK workshops created specifically for Jewish Societies in non-Jewish secondary schools. We delivered JAMS workshops to more than 220 pupils across ten schools, including one in Glasgow;
- Supported staff in a number of schools (both Jewish and non-Jewish) to develop lesson content and pastoral approaches to improve inclusion for Jewish LGBT+ pupils.

1 Union of Jewish Students

2 Jewish Activities in Mainstream Schools

Working with youth and young adults

KeshetUK co-produces context-specific leadership training and other learning activities with Jewish youth organisations, synagogue youth groups and young adult groups. We created a significant amount of new programming this year, including a set of workshops for synagogue pre-bat/bar/bnei mitzvah education programmes, and a special workshop for primary school pupils that aims to reduce levels of hurtful language.

In 2023-24, we delivered LGBT+

- inclusion training and sessions to nine youth movements / groups, including:
- 51 Habonim Dror³ *madrichim* (leaders) as part of their pre-summer-camp training;
 - 64 FZY⁴ *madrichim* and 59 FZY *chanichim* (participants) as part of their term-time *hadracha* (young leadership) programme;
 - Three Noam⁵ staff and youth leaders who received training on a number of aspects of LGBT+ inclusion as part of a wider communal awareness programme, and 25 *madrichim* as part of their pre-summer-camp training;
 - Five Bnei Akiva⁶ *madrichim* as part of their training for leading Israel Tour;
 - Five BBYO⁷ members as part of their training for leading Europe Tour, and 10 members as part of their pre-summer-camp training;

In 2023–24, KeshetUK also worked with communal organisations and youth and young adult organisations including:

- Young and Teen Limmud, delivering two sessions to 19 young people;
- Alyth Synagogue, delivering pre-b’nei mitzvah workshops for 35 young people;

3 Socialist Zionist culturally Jewish youth movement

4 Federation of Zionist Youth

5 Youth movement of Masorti Judaism

6 Orthodox youth movement

7 Pluralistic Jewish teen movement

“We have worked with KeshetUK in a number of capacities this year, including running assemblies on diversity/inclusion and working with our Sixth Form Kavod (‘Respect’) committee supporting them planning peer-led PSHE sessions. I am really grateful to KeshetUK for their continued professionalism, commitment and ability to adapt their work to our setting.”

Matt Kendler, Assistant Head Teacher, Yavneh College

- Radlett Reform Synagogue, delivering pre-b’nei mitzvah workshops for eight young people;
- Brighton and Hove Reform Synagogue cheder, delivering workshops for 18 young people;
- UJS Convention, running two sessions for a total of 56 students from university JSocs across the UK;
- A UJS LGBT+ online session that reached at least 300 students across the UK;
- Delivering talks to over 200 students at Jewish Societies including societies at the Universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh, Oxford and Bath.

Working with synagogues and rabbis

Synagogues are important centres of Jewish life and experience for many Jews. KeshetUK works with synagogues and rabbis regardless of denomination, so that LGBT+ people and their families can feel included within the synagogue’s tradition.

This year we began our Belonging In Ritual Project in earnest as we began focussing on birth including Brit Milah, naming ceremonies and Pidyon Habden. The aim of this project is to work in partnership with Masorti Judaism, Liberal Judaism and Reform Judaism to ensure every community and individual Jewish LGBT+ person knows what options exist for their ritual and lifecycle moments. We are beginning with collecting and collating ritual templates that are inclusive of LGBT+ people, and then working with rabbis/cantors to create resources that present the various options for rituals at every stage of the lifecycle.

We are also pleased to be partnering with Belsize Square Synagogue as the first full ‘client’ for our Consultation Support Service. This involves an in-depth, rigorous and multi-month engagement looking at all aspects of the synagogue’s policies, activities and culture. We believe this is a very powerful model to make lasting change within institutions.



FZY hadrachah training



Session with Jewish students at the University of St Andrews Jewish Society



Yavneh Primary school pupil workshop

“Working with the team at KeshetUK was very smooth. They took the time to really listen to our unique context and work with us to shape trainings that would suit our needs and our different audiences. The result was lively conversation and a lot of food for thought.”

Adam Rossano, Executive Director, Limmud

Year 9 assembly
at Yavneh College



“It was a helpful and positive experience having KeshetUK deliver training. This training raised the knowledge and confidence of our members of staff.”

Yaffa Goschalk, Referral & Assessment
Manager, Norwood

In 2023–24, KeshetUK:

- Continued our listening campaign, making new connections with Rabbis across the country, including three communities in Manchester;
- Trained eight members of staff and gave a talk to 19 Trustees of Belsize Square Synagogue;
- Delivered training to nine members of staff from New Stoke Newington Synagogue and ten members of staff from New London Synagogue;
- Gave training to 13 members of staff from Masorti Judaism and Noam;
- Delivered a D’var Torah for East London and Essex Liberal Synagogue as part of their Pride Shabbat as well as at Edgware and Hendon Reform Synagogue;
- Supported Masorti communities to be more inclusive of Jewish LGBT+ people and their families, as part of the third year of our partnership, thanks to funding from the National Lottery;
- Formed a joint Masorti Judaism, Liberal Judaism and Reform Judaism working group for our Belonging In Ritual project, with an aim of collating ritual templates that are inclusive of LGBT+ Jewish people.

Working with parents and the wider Jewish and LGBT+ communities

KeshetUK works with community organisations to become more inclusive of LGBT+ Jewish people. This helps to ensure that services and spaces meet the needs of LGBT+ people and their families. Beginning in September 2022, we have rolled out a series of programmes aimed specifically at parents of LGBT+ young people. After a successful pilot of the sessions with JW3, during 2023–24 we have continued to host them both in partnership with external organisations and online.

In 2023/24 KeshetUK:

- Ran our first session for six parents and carers in Scotland, bringing together people from a range of religious affiliations living in and around Edinburgh;
- Ran a parent/carer ‘taster’ training session at Limmud, for 13 participants;
- Ran online educational sessions for parents, carers and family members of LGBT+ people.

As part of our wider Jewish community work we have delivered training for organisations such as:

- 16 Norwood Staff Members;
- 13 Jewish Care senior leadership staff;
- Nine members of senior leadership staff at Limmud;
- Ran training, a focus group and social spaces for over 80 people at Limmud Festival;
- Created a session for the Jewish Leadership Council’s International Women’s Day event – the second year in a row that we have been invited to be a part of this event.

“KeshetUK have worked with JFS for a number of years, but this year we built on last year’s success in having KeshetUK deliver assemblies and then teach LGBTQAI+ topics within JS lessons. This is to ensure we have a co-ordinated approach between the Jewish identity of our students and any questions they may have regarding LGBTQAI+ topics.”

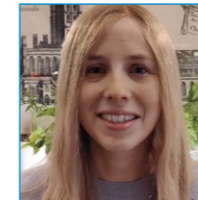
Geoff Peddie, Assistant Head Teacher
and Director of Personal Development, JFS

Organisational development and sustainability

Organisational structure

In 2023–24 we began to deliver our new five-year strategy and welcomed two new members of staff and new members to our Trustee board. During 2023–24 we said goodbye to two trustees, Michelle Jacobs left us in December after three and a half years on our board and Stephen Shashoua stepped down in September 2024 after four years. We thank them both for their dedication and commitment to KeshetUK throughout their time with us.

Within the last year we have gained two new trustees – **Dr Joanna Ziff** and **Matt Lewis**.



Joanna is an experienced analyst, specialising in the evaluation and monitoring of Government health policy and research. She has a PhD in genomics and has a particular interest in genetic screening. She has worked across the public sector, academia and in third sector roles, focused on improving availability and equity of access to public services for under-served groups.



Matt is a senior finance professional in the charity sector. He is Associate Finance Director at a large health data science charity, holding overall responsibility for the organisation’s financial management and internal audit function, and where he also established the charity’s LGBTQ+ staff group.

Our first Executive Director, Dalia Fleming, left KeshetUK at the start of the summer. Dalia had been our Executive Director since 2017 and had been a volunteer with us since we first started, even before we were a charity, in 2012–13. Dalia was an inspiring and exceptional leader of KeshetUK. Following an extensive recruitment process, the Board of Trustees appointed Ariel Chapman to the post of Executive Director and Ariel joined us full time in October 2024.



Ariel Chapman joins us as an inclusion and diversity specialist with nearly a decade of experience across multiple sectors. His extensive background includes work on national

and international education research projects, such as peace education initiatives in Israel, as well as leadership roles within higher education. Ariel has also served as an Associate Lecturer, focusing on topics like LGBT+ inclusion in education and the impact of antisemitism in schools. In recent years, he has supported numerous national and global organisations in fostering more inclusive cultures.



Esther Odze joined us as Programme and Volunteering Officer in April. Esther was raised within the Orthodox community and has spent two years as a

Community Development Worker within the United Synagogue. With her extensive background in education across diverse contexts, Esther’s journey is deeply rooted in community engagement and educational advocacy. Esther brings a wealth of experience and dedication to her new role as Programme and Volunteer Officer at KeshetUK, delivering sessions alongside our volunteers in a range of environments such as Jewish schools, and youth and young adult organisations



Volunteer Channukah social

Volunteer recruitment and development

Supporting KeshetUK is a passionate and committed group of volunteers who assist with community engagement, programme development and delivery and fundraising. We are very grateful to all those who have volunteered with us in 2023–24. We are committed to supporting and developing our volunteers, and making sure they have a good experience with us.

This year we have had three new volunteers start their induction with us, and we currently have 15 active education volunteers.

If you want to find out more about volunteering please go to:
www.keshetuk.org/volunteer.

Finance, fundraising and supporters

KeshetUK has been a registered charity since September 2015 and relies primarily on the generosity of individual and institutional donors to support its work. Building on a strong base of regular monthly donors, we have focused on creating relationships with charitable trusts and foundations, while requesting fee-for-service from institutions. We are exceptionally grateful to the individuals who recognise and support our work.

In 2023–24 KeshetUK received approximately £185,000 income from:

- Approx £13,000 from individual major donors, regular monthly subscribers and community fundraisers.

Grants (including amount committed) amounting to approximately £165,000 including from:

- All Aboard;
- Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies;
- David and Ruth Lewis Family Charitable Trust;
- Four family foundations who wish to remain anonymous;
- Greenbaum Family Foundation;
- Jewish Youth Fund;
- Pears Foundation;
- Shores Trust;
- The Children's Aid Committee;
- The Ostrich Charitable Foundation.

Fees for services delivered:

- £2,200 in fees for services delivered (routine KeshetUK activity or speaking events).

Gifts in kind:

- Payroll support from The Payroll Bureau.



keshetuk.org
info@keshetuk.org
[@KeshetUK](https://www.instagram.com/KeshetUK)

To get involved in any of our projects, start a conversation with your organisation or make a donation, please get in touch.