Britain’s Jewish Community Statistics 2012

Daniel Vulkan
Board of Deputies of British Jews

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Executive summary

Births

From the most recently available data, it is estimated that there were at least 3,860 Jewish ‘births’ in 2011. The true figure may indeed be somewhat higher than this.

What is undeniable is that the number of births within the strictly Orthodox community has been continuing to increase to the extent that, even by a conservative estimate, they now comprise at least four out of every ten Jewish births.

Marriages

The number of Jewish marriages recorded by the Board fell to 808 in 2011, the lowest figure since the Board’s records began in 1901\(^1\), before recovering slightly to 857 in 2012. The trend still appears to be downwards.

Over the last 30 years, the proportion of marriages taking place under the auspices of ‘central Orthodox’ synagogues (the United Synagogue and other synagogues of a similar orientation) has declined from more than 60% to just under a half. Over the same period, marriages taking place in the strictly Orthodox community have increased from less than one in ten of the total to more than three in ten.

If existing trends continue, strictly Orthodox marriages are expected to comprise a majority of all Jewish marriages within the next decade.

Deaths

A total of 2,452 burials or cremations under Jewish auspices were recorded in 2011 and, despite an increase to 2,575 in 2012, the downwards trend of recent decades is clearly continuing.

Conclusions

The number of deaths being recorded each year is now significantly lower than the inferred number of births. We can therefore conclude that the community is experiencing a period of natural increase. Whether or not this extends to a net overall increase in the Jewish population is subject to some caveats, which are discussed in the final section of this report.

What is abundantly clear though is that the British Jewish community now contains two very different sub-communities (even though the boundary between them is not always well defined). The strictly Orthodox part of the community continues to exhibit characteristics (a younger age profile, earlier marriage and higher birth rate) which ensure that it is growing at a significant rate, and that it comprises an increasing proportion of the Jewish population of the UK. The ‘mainstream’ community, meanwhile, is continuing to experience a gradual decline in size.

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Introduction

The Board of Deputies has been collecting statistics relating to the British Jewish community for over 50 years. This report is the latest in a series covering data relating to births, marriages, divorces and deaths, and covers the period up to 2012. The previous report, covering the period up to 2010, was published in April 2012.

These data are collected on behalf of the whole community. It is the only exercise to do this on a regular basis and therefore the data are unique in being able to show changes over time. From the point of view of community planners, the data represent the most up-to-date portrayal of the Jewish community in Britain.

Although they are indicative of actual demographic trends, they only represent those Jews who have chosen, or whose families have chosen, to associate themselves with the Jewish community through a formal Jewish act, ie circumcision, marriage in a synagogue, dissolution of marriage by a beth din, or Jewish burial or cremation. Consequently, Jews who have not chosen to identify in these ways do not appear in this report.

However, the results of the National Jewish Community Survey, commissioned and carried out by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, and currently being analysed, are expected to shed further light on this particular area.

Further, it should be recognised that these data are collected regardless of institutional denomination. They therefore include some individuals who would not be recognised as Jewish by all sections of the community.

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Births

Introduction

Religion data are not collected by any authority at the time of birth, therefore the Board of Deputies uses data on religious circumcisions (brit milah) as a proxy for calculating the size of the Jewish birth cohort. The data comprise those Jewish (male) babies whose parents chose to use the services of a mohel. They are therefore only representative of the Jewish population who have chosen this form of Jewish identification.

Understanding the data

In order to derive the number of female Jewish births, the total number of circumcisions is factored up using the sex ratio of all births in the national population. This assumes that the Jewish sex ratio at birth is similar to that of the general population. The final figure produced by this methodology is therefore an approximation of the Jewish birth cohort for the year.

The Board collects data from the two bodies representing mohalim in the United Kingdom, the ‘Initiation Society’ (IS) and the ‘Association of Reform & Liberal Mohalim’ (ARLM). The choice of a mohel from one or other of these bodies may not necessarily reflect the denominational affiliation of the parents. It is not therefore possible to produce data split by denomination. It should be noted, however, that the IS will not carry out a circumcision on a boy whose father is Jewish but whose mother is not.

All members of the ARLM are medically qualified. Whilst only a minority of members of the IS hold general medical qualifications, they have all undergone formal medical training with specific regard to circumcision. All members of both bodies carry medical insurance.

Missing data

Both the IS and the ARLM saw the retirement, several years ago, of their long-serving administrators. In each case, this has resulted in some difficulties in obtaining recent data. We have now managed to obtain up-to-date data from the IS for years up to and including 2011. It continues to be the case, however, that some mohalim have failed to report figures for one or more years in this period. The numbers of circumcisions carried out by these mohalim have been estimated based on data from previous and/or subsequent years.

In addition, it is known that there are a number of currently practising mohalim who are not currently registered with either of the professional associations. For those who were previously a member of either the IS or the ARLM, it is assumed that they are continuing to carry out a similar number of brit milah each year.

Furthermore, some babies (that would normally be considered Jewish by one or both of the Initiation Society or the Association of Reform & Liberal Mohalim) are circumcised by doctors without a religious ceremony, such as in the hospitals in which they were born.

These remain unrecorded as do any other circumcisions carried out by active mohalim of whom the Board is unaware, hence the figures in this report are necessarily conservative estimates.
Data summary

Table 1: Circumcisions and inferred births, 1997-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of circumcisions</th>
<th>Multiplier*</th>
<th>Inferred total Jewish ‘births’</th>
<th>3-year average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reported to the Board</td>
<td>Not reported (estimate)</td>
<td>Estimate of total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1,405</td>
<td>1,405</td>
<td>1.951</td>
<td>2,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1,432</td>
<td>1,432</td>
<td>1.951</td>
<td>2,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1,296</td>
<td>1,296</td>
<td>1.948</td>
<td>2,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,427</td>
<td>1,427</td>
<td>1.952</td>
<td>2,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>1.952</td>
<td>2,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>1.948</td>
<td>2,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>1.952</td>
<td>2,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1,579</td>
<td>1,579</td>
<td>1.948</td>
<td>3,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,709</td>
<td>1,709</td>
<td>1.954</td>
<td>3,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1,705</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1,732</td>
<td>1.955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1,439</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>1,682</td>
<td>1.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1,479</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1,779</td>
<td>1.953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,222</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>1,808</td>
<td>1.950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,544</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>1,977</td>
<td>1.949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,635</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>1,983</td>
<td>1.951</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The multiplier is the ratio of all births to male births in the general population for that year, as published by the Office for National Statistics.

There is now a very clear upwards trend in the number of births, which appears to be running at something in excess of 3,500 a year. However, the need to depend so heavily (as shown in Graph 1 below) on estimates of the numbers of circumcisions carried out by some mohalim in recent years is a major concern, and significantly reduces the credibility of these results. As noted above, these figures also totally exclude boys (and the correspondingly inferred girls) whose parents choose not to have them circumcised at all, or circumcised by a hospital doctor without a religious ceremony.
Graph 1: Total Jewish inferred births, 1997-2011

Other sources of data

The 2011 census recorded a total of 263,346 people in England and Wales who identified themselves as Jewish by religion, as at the census date of 27 March 2011 (a further 5,887 were recorded in Scotland, and 335 in Northern Ireland). Subsequently published information relating to age breakdown enables estimates to be made of the Jewish population of England and Wales in single year age groupings. By assuming that the distribution of Jewish births through the year is broadly the same as that of the general population, by ignoring mortality at young ages, and by assuming that emigration and immigration cancel each other out, it is further possible to estimate the number of births in recent calendar years. It is important to remember that the religion question on the census was voluntary, and that these are therefore almost certainly undercounts.

Graph 2 presents a comparison of the number of Jewish births inferred from circumcision data, with the number of births estimated from the census, for the period from 2001 to 2010.
It is obvious that the estimates produced by these alternative methods are not identical. This is not unexpected, since both methods suffer from a number of imperfections. What is evident is that the census data confirm the upwards trend, and a particularly large increase between 2004 and 2005.

**Strictly Orthodox births**

Other sources of data relating to births exist for the strictly Orthodox communities in Stamford Hill (North London) and in Manchester. In these two areas alone, the number of boys born to strictly Orthodox Jewish families was at least 546 in 2007, rising to 683 in 2012. (The particularly high figure of 710 recorded in 2010 may have been an outlier.) This represents an average annual increase of 4.6% over this period, a rate which is broadly consistent with other indicators of the growth of the strictly Orthodox population.

This would infer a total of over 1,000 births (male and female) in 2007, rising to over 1,300 in 2012. Once an allowance is made for the communities in North West London and Gateshead, a total figure of between 1,600 and 1,800 would not be unreasonable, and a

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3 Notices of *shalom zachar* celebrations, which take place among many strictly Orthodox Jews following the birth of a male child, are published weekly in the *Kol Mevaser* newsletter in Stamford Hill. Corresponding data for Manchester are collated by Martin Stern of Salford, who has kindly shared the results with the Board. The use of *shalom zachar* data is addressed more fully in *Population Trends among Britain’s Strictly Orthodox Jews*, by Daniel Vulkan and David Graham, published by the Board of Deputies in 2008 (http://www.bod.org.uk/content/StrictlyOrthodox.pdf).

4 The number of male births recorded in 2012 comprised 474 in Stamford Hill and 209 in Manchester. The 2011 census recorded 211 Jewish children under the age of 5 in Gateshead, suggesting around 42 boys being born in a year, bringing the total to 725. The latest *Shomer Shabbos* directory for London recorded half as many households in North West London as in Stamford Hill which, by proportion, would suggest the birth of 237 strictly Orthodox Jewish boys in 2012, leading to a total of 962. Assuming that strictly Orthodox families in North West London tend to have fewer than those in Stamford Hill, a reasonable estimate would be of 800-900 boys in total, or around 1,600-1,800 children in total.
A conservative estimate would be that the strictly Orthodox community now accounts for 40% or more of all Jewish births.

In Greater Manchester, the 2011 census reported a total of 1,229 Jewish boys under the age of 5, and there were 915 shalom zachar celebrations recorded in Manchester in the five years preceding the census date. This suggests that already around three-quarters of all Jewish births in Manchester are to strictly Orthodox families.

If the number of births in the strictly Orthodox community continues to increase year on year, and the number of births in the rest of the community remains steady or declines (or increases at a slower pace), there will inevitably come a point when a majority of Jewish births across the United Kingdom will be to strictly Orthodox families.

It would be dangerous, given the imperfections in the data already noted above, and the possibility that past trends will not continue into the future, to try and predict when this date will be. However, Table 2 shows the date by which this event would occur under a variety of assumptions as to (i) the current (2012) proportion of births which are strictly Orthodox and (ii) the percentage rate by which the annual increase in the number of strictly Orthodox births exceeds the number of other Jewish births.

**Table 2: Date by which strictly Orthodox births will comprise a majority of Jewish births, under different scenarios**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current proportion of Jewish births which are strictly Orthodox</th>
<th>Assumed additional annual rate of increase in strictly Orthodox births compared to other Jewish births</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45%</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marriages

Introduction

The religion of each spouse is not recorded in official national marriage statistics. Therefore the Board of Deputies collects data on the number of marriage ceremonies carried out under Jewish auspices.

Understanding the data

The way in which marriages are recorded in England and Wales is complex and affects the likelihood of the Board picking up the data. Where the civil ceremony and the religious ceremony take place at the same time, all data are recorded. However, sometimes the civil registration may occur days or even weeks prior to the Jewish ceremony and in a number of these cases we are unable to verify the figures. In some cases only a religious ceremony is carried out and again this makes data collection difficult. It is also possible that no religious ceremony occurs at all and these are entirely missed but probably account for very few instances of Jews marrying other Jews.

In the case of marriages between a Jew and a non-Jew, data are also missing. This is because such marriages cannot legally take place under Jewish auspices, despite the significant size of this group, although both the Movement for Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism do permit their rabbis to carry out subsequent blessings of such unions. Further, same-sex unions (civil partnerships) are also not recorded here whether or not both partners are Jewish.

Under the Marriages (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, synagogal movements will have the option of permitting their constituent members to carry out same-sex marriages. Both the Movement for Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism have indicated that they will be taking up this option, although the relevant section of the Act has not yet come into force.

A further provision of that Act (also not yet in force) will permit Jewish couples to marry through the synagogue of which either the groom or the bride is a member, rather than just that of the groom, as required by the existing legislation.

The Board collects data from the marriage authorisation certificates issued by the Office of the Chief Rabbi (for the United Synagogue and other synagogues operating under his authority, for those marriages which are known to have subsequently proceeded); the total number of marriages carried out each year by constituents of the Federation of Synagogues; and details of marriages carried out by a further 71 individual synagogues (see Appendix for details).

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5 The 2001 census (table C0400) reported 18,000 people in England and Wales who identified themselves as Jewish, and were married to someone who identified as a member of a different religion. A further 8,300 were married to someone who reported ‘No religion’ or did not answer the question. Corresponding data from the 2011 census are not yet available.
Four of these synagogues did not provide data for 2011 or 2012, and it has therefore been necessary to estimate the missing figures based on previous years’ data. The estimated figures amounted to approximately 1% of the total number of marriages in each year.

Data summary

Table 3: Total marriages by denomination, 1992-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Strictly Orthodox</th>
<th>Central Orthodox*</th>
<th>Sephardi</th>
<th>Masorti</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>144</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>490</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
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<td>481</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>113</td>
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<td>864</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>217</td>
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<td>107</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>243</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>879**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>916**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>839**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>857</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Including the United Synagogue, the Federation of Synagogues, and other synagogues recognising the authority of the Chief Rabbi.

** The figures for 2008, 2009 and 2010 are different from those in our previous report, due to previously unreported marriages.

Graph 3: Total Jewish marriages, 1992-2012
The figure of 839 marriages for 2010 was already the lowest recorded since the Board of Deputies started collecting marriage data in 1901. 2011 saw a further fall to 808, but a recovery to 857 was seen in 2012. It is too early to tell whether or not this represents a reversal of the downwards trend of the last twenty years.

It is however known that a number of marriages between UK residents take place overseas each year (particularly in Israel). In 2011, the London Beth Din issued almost 150 certificates (confirming Jewish status) to individuals marrying abroad, and we hope to be able to obtain further data which may indicate whether any trend is detectable in the number of certificates issued.

Marriages by denomination

Graph 4 shows the relative proportion of marriages by denomination for all marriages from 1983 to 2012, in five-year age bands. Whereas in the first period (1983-87), more than 60% of all recorded Jewish marriages were through central Orthodox synagogues (ie the United Synagogue and other synagogues of a similar orientation), this had fallen to just less than half during the most recent decade. By contrast, the proportion of strictly Orthodox marriages increased over the same period from less than one in ten in 1981-85, to three out of every ten by 2006-10.

Graph 4: Marriages by denomination, 1981-2010

Over this period, the number of strictly Orthodox marriages has been increasing at an average annual rate of 3.8%, whilst the number of all other marriages has been decreasing at an average annual rate of 2.0%. If these trends continue (a significant assumption, which may not be borne out in practice), an increase in the total number of marriages should indeed be visible within the next few years, and strictly Orthodox marriages would be expected to comprise a majority of all Jewish marriages within the next decade (see Graph 5 below).
In Greater Manchester in 2012, 67 out of 142 marriages (47%) took place under the auspices of strictly Orthodox synagogues, and only 53 (37%) through central Orthodox synagogues.

**Remarriage**

Marital status was available for 544 of the 857 couples getting married in 2012. Of these, most (78%) were first marriages for both parties; in 12% one of the parties was remarrying following a divorce; in 9% both parties were remarrying following a divorce; and in the remaining 1% one or other party had been widowed (and neither had been divorced). These are broadly similar to the percentages in the other years for which these data are available (2005 onwards).

By contrast, within the general population of England and Wales, only 66% of marriages in 2011 were first marriages for both parties. 19% involved one party remarrying following a divorce, with 15% involving two divorcees. However, for religious marriages (most of which would have been Christian), which currently make up around 30% of all marriages, the percentages are very close to those for Jewish marriages.

**Age at marriage**

Data on age at marriage was available for 535 of the 565 marriages in 2012 not taking place among the strictly Orthodox community. These show average ages at marriage of 35 years for men and 33 years for women. This compares to 34 and 32 respectively in 2011, and 33 and 31 respectively in 2010.

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For weddings in which both partners were marrying for the first time, the average ages in 2012 were 30 years and 29 years respectively. It is likely that the average age at first marriage for strictly Orthodox Jews is considerably younger, possibly around 19 or 20 for both females and males; however, we do not have the data to confirm this.

Among the population of England and Wales as a whole, for marriages taking place in 2011 (the latest year for which data are available), the average ages were 36 for men and 34 for women; for first marriages, the average ages were 32 and 30 respectively. So, Jews (other than amongst the strictly Orthodox) are on average marrying around two years earlier than the general population.

7 Ibid, pp8-9.
Divorces

Introduction

There are no official statistics on the religion of divorcing couples, therefore the Board of Deputies collects data on *gittin* – religiously sanctioned divorces. Since many couples who married under Jewish auspices divorce through the civil courts only, these data are missing large numbers of Jewish divorces. They therefore only show religious divorces, ie they only report on couples whose divorce has been ratified by a *beth din* (Jewish religious court).

The Board of Deputies collects data from nine *batei din* (see Appendix). The Liberal movement does not itself issue *gittin*, but does encourage individuals wishing to remarry in a Liberal synagogue to obtain a *get* where applicable.

Data summary

Despite an apparent increase in 2011, the number of *gittin* recorded in recent years continues the declining trend started in 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Gittin</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>275</td>
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<tr>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Gittin</th>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>220*</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>221*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>188*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Estimated

It should be noted, however, that figures were not available from one *beth din* for the period from 2008 to 2010, and from two (different) *batei din* in 2012. Estimates have been used, based on the average of the preceding three years, and the resulting figures should therefore be treated with caution.
Deaths

Introduction
There are no official statistics recording a person’s religion at the time of their death, therefore the Board collects data on Jewish burials and cremations on behalf of the community. Again it must be borne in mind what these figures do and do not show. They are not the total number of Jewish deaths over the period but, rather, show total deaths among the Jewishly identifying population, ie those who have chosen (or whose families have chosen for them) to be buried or cremated under Jewish auspices. Consequently a decline or a rise in the figures is as much a reflection of changes in affiliation and Jewish identity as it is in the numbers of people who have passed away.

In addition, these figures do not include burials which may have taken place overseas.

Data summary
The Board collects data from the burial societies of the United Synagogue, the Federation of Synagogues, the Spanish & Portuguese Jews’ Congregation and Liberal Judaism; from the Adath Yisroel Burial Society, the Machzikei Hadass Burial Board, the Western Charitable Foundation (WCF) and the Jewish Joint Burial Society (JJBS); the Manchester & District Council of Synagogues and the Merseyside Jewish Representative Council, each of which collate data from their respective areas; and a further 73 individual synagogues or burial societies (see Appendix for details).

The WCF and the JJBS are each responsible for burials across a number of different denominations. An accurate denominational split is not available for years prior to 2005, and it has therefore been assumed that the numbers of Masorti (WCF and JJBS) and Liberal (JJBS) burials for earlier years were the same as in 2005. Whilst burials carried out through these two societies comprise a very small proportion of Liberal burials, they include all Masorti burials. This explains the unchanging figure for Masorti burials over this period, which are however themselves a very small proportion of the total number of Jewish burials.

Five synagogues did not provide data for either year; a further two synagogues were only able to provide partial data. It has therefore been necessary to estimate the missing figures based on previous years’ data. In each year, the total of the estimated burials and cremations amounted to less than 1% of the total burials and cremations in that year.

The total number of recorded Jewish deaths in 2011 was 2,452, a dramatic drop from the previous year’s figure of 2,734, and the lowest figure recorded since the Board of Deputies started collating burial data. 2012 saw an increase to 2,575 deaths – still the second lowest figure ever recorded, and a clear continuation of the downwards trend evident over the past two decades.
Table 5: Total recorded burials and cremations by denomination, 1992-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Strictly Orthodox</th>
<th>Central Orthodox</th>
<th>Sephardi</th>
<th>Masorti</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
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<td>3,120</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>527</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>292</td>
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<td>86</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>246</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>590</td>
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<td>89</td>
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<td>83</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>533</td>
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<td>94</td>
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<td>63</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>2,452</td>
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<tr>
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<td>115</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>2,575</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 6: Burials and cremations by denomination, 1992-2012
Cremation

There were 199 cremations known to have been carried out through synagogues or burial societies in 2012, amounting to around 8% of the total number of deaths recorded, or 30% of those funerals carried out under Reform or Liberal auspices. This is a lower percentage than in previous years, but may partially reflect the incomplete data received from some of these synagogues. By comparison, around 74% of all deaths in the UK generally in 2012 were followed by cremation.8

Jewish natural increase

As noted in previous reports, the community’s demographic profile has clearly turned a corner and, in every year since 2005, the number of inferred births has exceeded the number of recorded deaths. The difference has continued to increase and, in both 2010 and 2011, amounted to more than 1,000. Although there are two important caveats to this data (noted below) and it is too soon to say whether this pattern will continue indefinitely, this does appear to represent a new trend which has not been seen for many decades.

Whilst birth and death remain the main routes into and out of the community, there is no accurate means of assessing migration to or from the UK and, whilst data may be available on the number of people choosing to convert to Judaism, it is not possible to determine how many people decide each year that they no longer wish to identify as a part of the Jewish community (or, conversely, that they wish to return to the community).

Graph 7: Jewish deaths and inferred births, 1997-2012

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Graph showing the trend of Jewish deaths and inferred births from 1997 to 2012. The graph indicates a noticeable increase in inferred births starting from 2005, with the difference amounting to more than 1,000 in both 2010 and 2011. The graph also highlights the importance of assessing migration to or from the UK and the challenges in determining the reasons for changes in community identification.
Appendix: Data providers

The following synagogues and other organisations were approached to provide data for this report. Figures for those organisations marked with an asterisk (*) were estimated for one or both years, since data was either not supplied at all or was not complete.

Births (circumcisions)

Association of Reform and Liberal Mohalim*
Initiation Society*

See further discussion on page 5 onwards.

Marriages

Adass Yeshurun Synagogue (Manchester)
Adath Yisroel Synagogue (Stamford Hill)
Bedfordshire Progressive Synagogue - Rodef Shalom
Belsize Square Synagogue
Bet Tikvah Synagogue
Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue - Cambridge
Birmingham Progressive Synagogue
Blackpool Reform Synagogue
Bournemouth Reform Synagogue
Bromley Reform Synagogue
Brighton & Hove Progressive Synagogue
Brighton & Hove Reform Synagogue
Bristol & West Progressive Jewish Congregation
Buckhurst Hill Masorti Synagogue
Cardiff Reform Synagogue
Cheshire Reform Congregation – Menorah*
Crawley Jewish Community*
David Ishag Synagogue - Neveh Shalom
Ealing Liberal Synagogue
Edgware & District Reform Synagogue
Edgeware Masorti Synagogue
Federation of Synagogues
Finchley Progressive Synagogue
Finchley Reform Synagogue
Gateshead Hebrew Congregation
Glasgow Reform Synagogue*
Hampstead Reform Jewish Community
Harrow & Wembley Progressive Synagogue
Hatfield Masorti Synagogue
Hendon Reform Synagogue
Kingston Liberal Synagogue
Kol Chai-Hatch End Jewish Community
Leicester Progressive Jewish Congregation
The Liberal Jewish Synagogue
The Liberal Synagogue, Elstree
Liverpool Reform Synagogue
Machzikei Hadass Synagogue (Manchester)
Maidenhead Synagogue
Manchester Reform Synagogue
Middlesex New Synagogue
Milton Keynes Reform Synagogue
New London Synagogue
New North London Synagogue
Newcastle Reform Synagogue
North London Progressive Jewish Community
North West Surrey Synagogue
North Western Reform Synagogue
Nottingham Progressive Jewish Congregation
Office of the Chief Rabbi
Ohel David Eastern Synagogue*
Ohel Torah Congregation (Manchester)
Radlett & Bushey Reform Synagogue
Sephardi Congregation of South Manchester
Sha’aarei Shalom - North Manchester Reform Congregation
Sha’aarei Tsedek - North London Reform Synagogue
Sinai Synagogue (Leeds)
South Hampshire Reform Jewish Community
South London Liberal Synagogue
South West Essex & Settlement Reform Synagogue
Southend & District Reform Synagogue
Southgate Progressive Synagogue
Southport Reform Synagogue
Spanish & Portuguese Jews’ Congregation
Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue (Holland Park)
Sukkat Shalom Reform Synagogue
West Central Liberal Synagogue
West London Synagogue
Westminster Synagogue
Wimbledon & District Synagogue*
Woodford Liberal Synagogue
Divorces (gittin)

- Federation of Synagogues
- Glasgow Beth Din
- London Beth Din
- Leeds Beth Din*
- Manchester Beth Din
- Masorti Bet Din
- Reform Beit Din
- Sephardi Beth Din*
- Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations

Deaths (burials / cremations)

- Aberdeen Hebrew Congregation
- Adath Yisroel Burial Society
- Beth Hamidrash Hagadol (Leeds)
- Birmingham Hebrew Congregation
- Birmingham Progressive Synagogue
- Blackpool Reform Jewish Congregation
- Bognor Regis & District Hebrew Congregation
- Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation
- Bournemouth Reform Synagogue
- Bradford Hebrew Congregation
- Bradford Synagogue*
- Brighton & Hove Hebrew Congregation
- Brighton & Hove Progressive Synagogue*
- Brighton & Hove Reform Synagogue
- Bristol & West Progressive Jewish Congregation*
- Bristol Jewish Burial Society
- Cardiff Reform Synagogue
- Cardiff United Synagogue
- Chatham Memorial Synagogue
- Cheltenham Hebrew Congregation
- Cheshire Reform Congregation (Menorah)
- Crawley Jewish Community*
- Darlington Hebrew Congregation
- Derby Hebrew Congregation Burial Board
- Dundee Hebrew Congregation
- Eastbourne Hebrew Congregation
- Edinburgh Jewish Independent Burial Friendly Society
- Etz Chaim Synagogue (Leeds)
- Exeter Hebrew Congregation
- Federation of Synagogues Burial Society
- Garnethill Hebrew Congregation
- Gateshead Hebrew Congregation*
- Glasgow Hebrew Burial Society
- Glasgow Reform Synagogue*
- Grimsby Hebrew Burial Board
- Guildford & District Jewish Community
- Hastings & District Jewish Society
- Hendon Reform Synagogue
- Hull Hebrew Congregation
- Hull Reform Synagogue
- Joint Jewish Burial Society
- Leeds United Hebrew Congregation
- Leicester Hebrew Congregation
- Leicester Progressive Jewish Congregation
- Liberal Jewish Synagogue
- Liberal Judaism
- Machzikei Hadass Communities (Manchester)
- Maidenhead Synagogue
- Manchester & District Council of Synagogues
- Manchester Reform Synagogue
- Margate Synagogue
- Merseyside Jewish Representative Council
- Newcastle Reform Synagogue
- Newcastle United Hebrew Congregation
- Northampton Hebrew Congregation
- Norwich Hebrew Congregation
- Nottingham Hebrew Congregation
- Nottingham Progressive Jewish Congregation
- Oxford Jewish Congregation
- Plymouth Hebrew Congregation
- Portsmouth & Southsea Hebrew Congregation
- Queens Park Charitable Trust
- Reading Liberal Jewish Community
- Sha’arei Shalom Synagogue (Manchester)
- Sheffield Jewish Burial Association
- Sinai Synagogue (Leeds)
- South Hampshire Reform Jewish Congregation
- South London Liberal Synagogue
- South Manchester Synagogue
- Southampton Hebrew Congregation*
- Southend & District Reform Synagogue
- Southend and Westcliff Hebrew Congregation
- Southport Hebrew Congregation
- Southport Reform Synagogue
- Spanish & Portuguese Jews’ Congregation
- St Annes Hebrew Congregation
- Stoke-on-Trent & North Staffordshire Hebrew Congregation
- Swansea Hebrew Congregation
- Swindon Jewish Community
- Torbay Chevra Kadisha
- United Synagogue
- West London Synagogue
- Western Charitable Foundation