



Ilford leaders in 1968, when the JC featured the shul as a 'boom community'. Below: Ilford's building

# Ilford relying on joined-up thinking

BY JC REPORTER

▶ ANOTHER MERGER between Orthodox synagogues in the Redbridge area is in the offing.

Leaders of the Ilford and Redbridge United shuls have written to their members to further a consultation process on the establishment of a new US congregation. Redbridge United was itself the product of a merger between the Clayhall and Newbury Park synagogues.

The letter from the Ilford and Redbridge chairmen, respectively Malcolm Nathan and Mike Callaghan, reports

that the two executives have been in discussion over the future of the shuls.

"We asked for the assistance of the US community services department and together we have developed a community plan which we think is viable, financially sound and provides significant benefit for both communities."

The proposal is that Ilford's Beehive Lane premises will be the home of the new and renamed community and, as part of the merger, "an element of



modern refurbishment" will enhance facilities.

"We will be recruiting a senior rabbi/rabbinic couple, as well as retaining the

services of Reverend [Gary] Newman as the community welfare minister and we will ensure that the administrative team is appropriate for a community of some 2,000 members."

As membership fees for the two shuls are not identical, the suggestion is that those paying Ilford's top subscription rate will have their contributions reduced in 2020 to match the top rate at Redbridge.

Separate open meetings for members of both communities will be held at the end of the month at which the proposals will be outlined in detail.

This will be followed by separate special general meetings in late November. If the majority are in favour of the plans, the US Council will vote to ratify the merger and creation of the new congregation. The hope is that the merged community will come into being next spring.

As the Redbridge Jewish community has dwindled, Wanstead and Woodford United Synagogue and Waltham Forest Hebrew Congregation also merged to create Woodford Forest United Synagogue. Within the Progressive movement, the Woodford Liberal and Bet Tikvah congregations amalgamated to form East London & Essex Liberal Synagogue.

# Cemetery plan gets go-ahead

BY DANIEL SUGARMAN

▶ THE FEDERATION of Synagogues has received the green light to proceed with developments to its cemetery site in Edgware after the Mayor of London reportedly affirmed Barnet Council's decision.

Planning permission has now been granted in full for the cemetery, the Federation's third, an 11-acre plot on Edgwarebury Lane.

The newly approved amendments will allow for the building of an on-site facility for pre-burial purification rituals, as well as a design ensuring that all burials will face Jerusalem.

Federation president Andrew Cohen said: "We are delighted that the Mayor



This is a multi-million pound project'

of London has recognised the great need of the Strictly Orthodox communities of North-West London for a new cemetery – and for that cemetery to be designed in the manner most suited for its purpose.

"This is a multi-million pound project of enormous significance and we are very grateful to Barnet Council for approving both our planning applications."

In 2014, the Federation purchased the former Camden Sports and Social Club, a site large enough for 8,000 burial plots, for £1.6 million. In April 2016, Barnet Council granted permission for the Federation to erect upright headstones in the new cemetery after a battle to override the recommendations of local planning officers. However, the Federation decided to go back to the planning committee to obtain further permission to make changes to the layout of the cemetery and the design of the building.

Its trustees and professional team will now work with consultants to turn the plans into reality, with the cemetery expected to be operational by mid-2020.

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