

HULYA
APPLICATION FORM
FOR ShabbatUK

Shabbat Lech Lecha – October 23rd – 24th, 2015

Please fill answer the following questions and return them with the required documents:

Name of the community/the group: **Whitefield Hebrew Congregation – Young Whitefield/Whitefield Forum**

Address: **Park Lane, Whitefield, M45 7PB**

Name of the Rabbi/organizer: **Rabbi Jonathan Guttentag, Dovi Colman/Mychiel Balshine**

Position: **Whitefield ShabbatUK Chairs**

Email: **rjg@theforumwck.org**

Phone numbers **+44 7980 262 767**

Why did you decide to organize this event/project?

Last year, we organised the first Shabbat UK for Whitefield and were overwhelmed by the community's response. They proved that there was a willingness to learn and an enthusiasm for Shabbat that could bring the community together after a summer of despair following the events in Israel. Projects such as Young Whitefield – a networking group for young adults and families in the community – were created off the back of last year's Shabbat UK success and so it seemed appropriate to make this year's event even bigger and better. Again, with the recent rise in antisemitism at home and away, it seemed more important than ever to get the whole community – old and young, frum or not to celebrate being Jewish as one.

The international success of the Shabbos Project and Shabbat UK seemed to be excellent engines to plug into for the benefit of our own local community.

What were your objectives for ShabbatUK?

This year, we wanted to make sure there were activities for all walks of the community. The idea was to create religiously inclusive events with both informal and formal activities. A special focus was also placed on the younger community this year with the realisation that they are the future of our community and have previously been perceived to be apathetic towards communal and religious events.

Other objectives included communal participation as well as promoting Whitefield shul as a place to meet and Whitefield as an area to live.

And above all to place Shabbat awareness onto the community agenda and facilitate the uptake of increased Shabbat observance and spiritual growth amongst families and individuals throughout the community.

Please provide details of the activities organized for ShabbatUK (study activities, talks, walks, prayers, songs, ceremonies, etc): Please provide the number of

participants who attended the different events (Reception ceremony, meals, concluding ceremony (Melave Malka): *Answers merged below*

1. Promotional events
 - a. *Whitefield 250* – an incentive to get 250 people together on one night to discuss, “Shabbat – a 3000 year old institution – Is it still relevant today?”. 304 people across 14 homes led by educational leaders from all over Manchester.
 - b. *Poker tournament*. Young Whitefield’s first annual Poker Tournament Charity Fundraiser. 80 people. Raised £1200 for Shabbat UK and Duchenne Now.
 - c. *Football tournament*. 14 teams. Raised funds for community events over Shabbat UK.
2. Run up events
 - a. *Kids Challa bake* –60 children make challah and Havdalah candles and besamim spice packs.
 - b. *Whitefield Shul at the Great Manchester Challah Make*, Event City. Coach transported 55 Whitefield members who ' kneaded it together 'at Event City.
3. Shabbat UK events in Whitefield
 - a. *Kids Pre-Shabbat Funfair*. Pre-Shabbat activities at shul began with 70 children burning off excess energy with a bounce on the bouncy castle, followed by a creepy crawly show with a tarantula, scorpions, cockroaches and a selection of snakes.
 - b. *Young Whitefield Friday night Dinner*. 216 adults, families and children came together under Abraham's tent in Whitefield Shul to enjoy a fabulous catered four course meal and hear Nissim Black talk about his life.
 - c. *Whitefield Friday night Street parties*. 25 houses hosted over 400 people in communal Friday night dinners on each street.
 - d. *Nissim Black - Teens service*. Around 35-40 15-19yr olds in an interactive question and answer session with Nissim Black.
 - e. *BarMitzvah boys & family Luncheon with Nissim Black*. 60 people.
 - f. *Jerusalem Bimah* - transformation of the shul’s bimah into the Old City of Jerusalem. It was the focus for our smaller children to become part of the service, as they sang David Melech Yisoel parading around it. They could also put messages into the “wall” which were sent to Jerusalem after Shabbat.
 - g. *Have I Got Jews For You - Panel Quiz*. Attended by over 150 people. WHC Jewish panel Quiz, which premiered last year in ShabbatUK.
 - h. *Community Seuda with Nissim Black*. 180 people attended for a catered seuda and to hear Nissim’s life story
 - i. *Musical Havdalah*. Attended by approximately 200 people outside at the front of the shul.
 - j. *Variety Show* - Whitefield Shul motza’ei Shabbat.
 - k. *Melave Malka with Nissim Black*. Over 70 young people gathered to hear Nissim’s best songs.

How was the programme run (please provide details of elements of the programme which you feel set it apart from other similar events)?

The Rabbi hosted an open meeting for all those interested in helping with Whitefield’s Shabbat UK in June of this year. A small group drew up the plans for the whole Shabbat and then sub committees were formed. Each event subcommittee would report to two heads – Dovi Colman and Mychiel Balshine, both Whitefield shul forum and informal

educational leads. They would be in charge of liaising with the shul administrators and oversee each event.

The main element of the programme which set it apart from other events was that we would be flying over internationally acclaimed ex Rapper Nissim Black to tell us his inspirational life story.

Nissim was raised by his family as Damian in a black Seattle community against a background of drugs and violence. Even moving into the music profession as a rapper did not let him find any escape. Instead he found that the demands of that music scene demanded even more violence, and the only way to avoid being killed by his rivals was seek out and kill them. But Nissim could not do that. After a phone call with one of his rivals they both discovered each was equally afraid of the situation they found themselves in. Nissim sought out answers to his questions of how he could find another life. Over several years, through twists and turns in one belief system then another, he found Judaism. So too did his wife and his best friend and girlfriend. Where there were gaping holes in answers or a complete refusal to contemplate his questions by other beliefs, Judaism gave Nissim a way to understand what Hashem is. He no longer has any connection with his Step-father, who continues to live in the community that Nissim left. He lost his mother to a drugs overdose. His one supporting family member is his biological father, who escaped that culture and became a Christian Preacher. In the near future Nissim with his family and his best friend's family will make aliya to Israel.

From the start, the organisers of our Shabbat UK events had a belief in Nissim's story which we felt would unite the community. With this passion we promoted and sold out each event that was put on. Once the community met and heard Nissim, they too shared the belief and positivity which Nissim radiated.

What were your main achievements from ShabbatUK:

Each event was a sell out with largely positive feedback (detailed below). The youth and younger community were inspired once more to participate and give back to the community. For example, the Young Whitefield Friday night has inspired more people to keep Shabbat or elements of it. In addition, the shul are hosting the Chief Rabbis of Rome and Poland to speak about their lives alongside a dinner event. These will no doubt be sell-out events based on the success of Shabbat UK.

Please provide feedback from participants in the event/project:

Elan Cohen, Nissim Black's manager:

“ Nissim Black and I traveled from America to Manchester this past Shabbat with the goal to inspire the Whitefield and Young Whitefield community. We didn't have a clue that we would walk away equally as inspired as the audience. The remarkable warmth, hospitality and inclusiveness lifted us to a state where we received just as much out of the Shabbaton as the community. There was such an honest, humble interest in learning from and getting to know each other regardless of background or affiliation. I imagine that if every Shabbat was like this in every community, we would not need unity programs, as there would already be an aura of acceptance and connection densely present in the air. Though we were only there for about 36 hours, we were surprised at how hard it was to leave. We felt we acquired a new extended family and we are eagerly anticipating our next opportunity to visit the wonderful Whitefield community.”

A fantastic evening, everything was incredible from the decor to the food. Nissim was quite possibly the coolest Friday night speaker I've ever listened to! Already excited for next year's Young Whitefield Shabbat!! Rachel Harris.

Roxanne Stross, "Shabbat UK Friday night dinner at Whitefield shul was a really fun evening! The room looked fabulous and the atmosphere was great. The whole evening was a really fun night as everyone said. Well done to all who put such hard work into it - thank you"

Georgie Borson, "Really enjoyed the weekend, really well put together and gave a real campus feel. Speaker was interesting. Proud to be part of the community."

David Jacobs: ShabbatUK allowed me to completely switch off from work, tv and social media. It is only when you don't have these distractions can you really appreciate the important things in life, spending time with friends and family as well as being part of a community"

Ben Bentley visiting from Edgware: "It was amazing to see such a close knit community come together and want to be part of an inspirational Shabbat with so many different things going on. The speaker had an incredible story to tell and was treated with such warmth by the community. Was great to see so many people getting involved in making Shabbat UK a Shabbat to remember."

Guy Samuels "It was fantastic! I've never seen the Jewish community get so close together for such a happy event. I really hope this happens again next year."

Please provide 3 stories of participants which illustrate the success of the program:

JL, 32 year old father of 2. Brought up in a non-frum but traditional family came to the Young Whitefield dinner where the Chazzan led the families in saying the bracha for the children. He asked all the children to stand on their chairs whilst he led them in the words of the blessing. On the tables, there were magnets with these blessings inside to take home. JL told us afterwards that he put this on his fridge and wants to now use it every week to bless his children.

16 year old child, kept a full Shabbat for Shabbat UK. His family is traditional but he usually goes to the football or visits friends on a Saturday. This year he decided after learning about Shabbat to observe the laws and found the experience positive and meaningful.

MC, 25 year old, had never attended any "Jew do" before and especially never participated in a communal Friday night at shul. He told us that his experience had been extremely positive and he especially enjoyed the atmosphere on the Friday night in shul as well as afterwards at the dinner. He now intends to attend more Jewish networking events run by Young Whitefield.

What were the key factors that made the event/project successful:

Events for all the family and all religious levels.

Nissim Black – a true inspiration with a fantastic story to tell, as well as important and powerful message for all.

Meticulous organization and planning from an early stage.

Previously successful events by Young Whitefield, meant that there was a blueprint to follow as well as a household name that community members were familiar with and therefore wanted to support.

What challenges did you face when putting on the event/project?

Fundraising – all projects were self-funded.

The Young Whitefield Friday night dinner was run by a largely secular non Shabbat observing committee. They saw the success of last year's Shabbat UK and wanted to be involved with organizing this year's. Along the way, we ran into issues about maintaining religious inclusivity at our events whilst not coming across as having a "frum" agenda.

Delegating and encouraging others to take on events. Especially Whitefield 250 which, in itself, was a frightening platform to the non religious.

Persuading the community that Nissim Black would be as inspirational as he turned out to be considering that only a very small minority had heard of him!

Documents to Append:

1. CV of organizer - below

2. LINKS TO PHOTOS

<http://www.thewhc.co.uk/photos-from-shabbat-uk-2015/>

3. LINKS TO VIDEOS

Video - Hashem Melech

<https://vimeo.com/143542847>

also on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/youngwhitefield/videos/1638131059760494/>

Video - Former Seattle rapper Nissim Black performing live in Whitefield - Manchester , following one of the most inspiring Shabbats the community has seen.

<https://www.facebook.com/youngwhitefield/videos/1638265616413705/>

Musical Havdalah. Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8o4KroRqK8>

RABBI JONATHAN GUTTENTAG
Curriculum Vitae
October 2015

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PERSONAL

Born 12th November 1959, Newcastle upon Tyne

Married 16th August 1983 to Deborah (nee Halle) b. London 24th August 1962.

Six Children: 4 boys 2 girls

Four married children; eleven grandchildren

EDUCATION

Menorah Primary School Sunderland

Royal Grammar School, Newcastle, GCE O Levels and A levels

Gateshead Yeshiva

Yeshivot ITRI and Mishkan Hatorah Jerusalem

Jews College London BA Hons

Semicha Rabbinical Ordination from Gateshead Yeshiva and Rabbi Elchonon Halpern

RABBINICAL POSITIONS

1984 – 87 Rabbi Southport Hebrew Congregation, Merseyside

1987 – present Rabbi Whitefield Hebrew Congregation www.thewhc.co.uk

COMMUNAL INVOLVEMENTS

Founder and Chairman Trustees, The Forum Whitefield Community Kollel (1990)

Founder and Director, Whitefield Mikveh

Founder and Driver, Whitefield Eruv Project

Initiator, Whitefield Student Houses Project (2006 -)

Initiator, Chinuch Training Chaburah (2002 – 2004)

Founder Maalot Whitefield, Degree Programme

Chairman, Manchester Rabbinical Council (2011 -)

Member of the Standing Committee, Conference of European Rabbis (2001 -)

<http://www.confEurorabbis.org/en/about/sc.html>

Trustee, Jewish Memorial Council (2006 -)

Jewish Faith Representative to the Metropolitan Borough of Bury Education Committee (1990 – 2003)

Founder and Chairman, National Association of Orthodox Jewish Schools (2007 -) www.najos.org

Member, Schools Strategic Implementation Group, Jewish Leadership Council, (2008-12)

Initiator and Organiser, Public Rally for Israel During Lebanon War, Manchester City Centre, (July 2006)

Convenor Big Tent For Israel UK Conference Manchester 2011 www.thebigtentforisrael.org

Member, Greater Manchester Faith and Communities Leaders Group (2001 -)

Joint President, Manchester Council of Christians and Jews (2008 -)

Chaplain, Manchester Jewish Community Care (2006 -)

Architect of project to build proper facilities at Whitefield Cemetery
Founder and Convenor Federation of North Manchester Burial Boards

Hi - My name is Mychiel Balshine

I was born in Vancouver Canada on the 21st March 1987.

Moved to Israel when I was 4 and to the UK at age 8.

I attended both Menorah primary and Grammar schools in London and then went on to further my Jewish studies in the great Gateshead Yeshiva as well as Yeshivas in America and Israel.

During my youth I lead camps for the Ezra youth movement as well as ran the youth minyan in my shul.

I began a geography Degree with LSE in 2010 and hope to complete it this year. Together with my degree studies I have been living in Whitefield for the past 5 years together with my family, studying part time at the Whitefield Community Kollel and working part time in kiuruv and community education for the Whitefield community.

With the help of Hashem we have succeeded in creating an educational infrastructure for the youth of our shul including bar and bat mitzvah programs and one to one learning

Dovi Colman CV
166 Park Lane
Whitefield
Manchester
M45 7PX

D.O.B 31.12.1988

Education

Menorah Primary School

Menorah Grammar School

Gateshead Yeshiva (3 years)

Heichal Hatorah (Yerushalayim)

Work Experience

Madrich and Head Madrich on a number of Ezra Camps

Past and Current Work

Regional Director of Ezra Youth Movement in Manchester 2012 – 2014

Whitefield Community Kollel – 2012 - 2014

Whitefield Forum Community Worker 2014 – present

Broughton Jewish Primary School Kodesh teacher – 2014 – present