



US Chessed Ensures a Sweet New Year for Members

It's nearly Rosh Hashanah, so our minds turn, amongst other things, to honey cakes.

This year, once again, US Chessed has been delighted to work together with our many volunteers in delivering honey cakes to members. It is very much a joint enterprise between us at Head Office and our local communities. Head Office organise the buying of the honey cakes (we have again used Carmelli's, which was very successful last year and I am sure they will taste just as nice this year!) and the local Synagogues decide who in their community should receive the cakes and the Rosh Hashanah card – usually the more senior members of our communities, people who have been or are unwell, people who have been recently bereaved or people who find it difficult to get out and about. 42 Synagogues participated in this project, with nearly 1300 cakes being delivered. We know that people like to receive the cake – but more than that, it lets our members know that we care about them and that they are not forgotten about over the Yom Tov period, regardless of whether they go to shul or not. Our volunteers use this as opportunity to drop in and have a chat with members, to ask how a person is getting on and, in some situations, ask if they need support from our community care teams and to let them know what is available.

Rosh Hashanah (together with Yom Kippur) is probably unique in that it is a time when so many people reflect on what has happened in the past year, both positive and negative, and think about what the coming year will bring. It can be a particularly difficult time for those people who have suffered a bereavement or other loss. That's why it is so important that we at US Chessed and the Community Cares groups show members that they are part of a community that cares about them.

Honey cakes are still being delivered as I write this article, but I have already received several phone calls from people telling me how thrilled they were to receive the cakes and how much it meant.

Below (LEFT) is a photo of Annette Viner, a member of St Johns Wood Synagogue whose cake and card were delivered by Melody Salem, one of the Care Co-ordinators for the St Johns Wood Community Cares team (as you will read elsewhere in You and Us, Melody, Gillian and their team were the runners up in the JVN Award for Synagogue Team of the Year Award on the 7th September. Below (RIGHT) is Mrs Pearl Arram of Hendon United receiving her honey cake from Shmuel Dulberg.



Very many of our shuls also make a special effort at this time of this year to telephone their older members to wish them a happy New Year and to ask them about their general well-being. This year both Golders Green and Muswell Hill synagogues used our offices in Finchley to make their phone calls. Both groups of volunteers had specific training to help them with this, to make sure they were able to pick up and deal with any issues that arose.

Susan Freiburger (Community Care Co-ordinator) with Loretta Sumeray

Thank you to all our volunteers who manage to juggle their lives so that spending time with people in need is one of their priorities. If you have not volunteered so far but are thinking about it, please e-mail chesed@theus.org.uk [1]. If you are a person who could do with some extra support from their synagogue, but are not sure what help is available, either contact your shul office and they will point you in the right direction or you can phone us at 020 8343 6238.

Date Uploaded: Wednesday 9th September 2015

Source URL: <https://www.kosher.org.uk/article/us-chesed-ensures-sweet-new-year-members>

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[1] <mailto:chesed@theus.org.uk>