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Manchester Jewish Housing Association

A study of the housing needs of the Jewish communities in Greater Manchester

Executive summary

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Commissioned by Manchester Jewish Housing Association

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University of Salford
A Greater Manchester University

The study

There has been a Jewish community in Greater Manchester since the early 19th Century. Greater numbers of people migrated to the area during and after the Second World War when refugees and survivors of the Holocaust settled in a number of the boroughs. Indeed, the largest Orthodox Jewish community outside London is situated within the boundaries of Salford, Bury and Manchester. The overall aim of this study was to provide an assessment of the housing needs of Jewish communities in Greater Manchester. In particular, the study aimed to do the following:

- Map population change, household sizes, ages and the location, size and types of housing occupied by Jewish households;
- Examine whether there has been significant movement of the Jewish community (domestically and internationally);
- Identify a range of demographic trends amongst the sample population, including housing circumstances and characteristics; economic activity, age, employment, education / study, membership of a synagogue and the particular denomination;
- Identify any housing needs relating to health, disability, age of the individual, condition of the property, security of tenure, appropriateness of location, proximity of the property to a place of worship, community infrastructure and retail provision;
- Explore economic circumstances and housing costs, particularly in relation to the financial capacity of the household and whether housing costs are being met, whether the household has any affordability issues relating to its housing needs now and in the future, and what barriers exist to specific housing products such as affordable housing;
- Identify housing expectations, looking specifically at the type, tenure, location and size of housing the household might expect in the short term future at intervals of 5 years and 10 years;
- Explore future aspirations, focusing on longer term needs and aspirations of the household including need arising from childbirth, aging; needs related to health, disability or other factors over the next 5 years and the next 10 years;
- Assess the extent to which lifestyle, level of practice of religion or other reasons motivate or demotivate household movement;
- Assess whether the existing home meets the current needs including religious and cultural needs; and
- Measure the level of community cohesion with the wider community in Manchester and measure the extent of anti-social behaviour, harassment, incidence and fear of crime.

The study was commissioned by Manchester Jewish Housing Association in December 2010 and was conducted by a team of researchers from the Salford Housing & Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) at the University of Salford. The study was greatly aided by research support from a number of community interviewers and was managed by a steering group composed of representatives of Manchester Jewish Housing Association, Bury Council, Manchester City Council and Salford City Council.

Methods

- A survey of **249** Jewish households carried out by community interviewers; and
- Additional qualitative consultation with **33** people through three focus groups; one for each of the main local authority areas (Bury, Manchester and Salford).

This summary outlines some of the key findings from the consultation with Jewish communities. A full analysis of all data sources can be found in the main report.

The survey sample

Local authority area

- 46% of the sample currently was living in Bury; this was followed by Manchester (25%) and Salford (24%). A smaller number of interviews were carried out in other local authority areas.

Table i: Number of interviews by local authority area

	All	
	No.	%
Bury	114	46
Manchester	62	25
Salford	60	24
Stockport	6	2
Trafford	5	2
Bolton	1	<1
Rochdale	1	<1
	249	100

Age and gender

- Around two thirds of the sample (67%) was in the working age range (18 – 64), while just under a third (32%) was over the age of 65. Nearly a quarter of respondents were aged 50 – 59 (24%).
- 63% of the sample was female and 37% was male.

Level of religious practice

- Over a third of respondents (35%) identified themselves as Traditional; however, the sample included a diversity of respondents ranging from Strictly Orthodox to non-observant.
- Salford had the highest percentage of people who identified themselves as Strictly Orthodox (53% of the Salford sample).
- The respondents who identified themselves as Cultural and those who were non-observant appeared to be more likely to be living in Manchester.

Table ii: Level of religious practice

	All		Bury		Manchester		Salford		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strictly Orthodox	48	19	13	11	2	3	32	53	1	8
Shabbat observant	32	13	24	21	4	6	4	7	-	-
Traditional	88	35	44	39	22	35	17	28	5	38
Reform	30	12	16	14	8	13	3	5	3	23
Liberal	7	3	4	4	2	3	-	-	1	8
Cultural	17	7	5	4	11	18	1	2	-	-
Non-observant	15	6	5	4	7	11	2	3	1	8
Other	12	5	3	3	6	10	1	2	2	15
	249	100	114	100	62	100	60	100	13	100

Household information

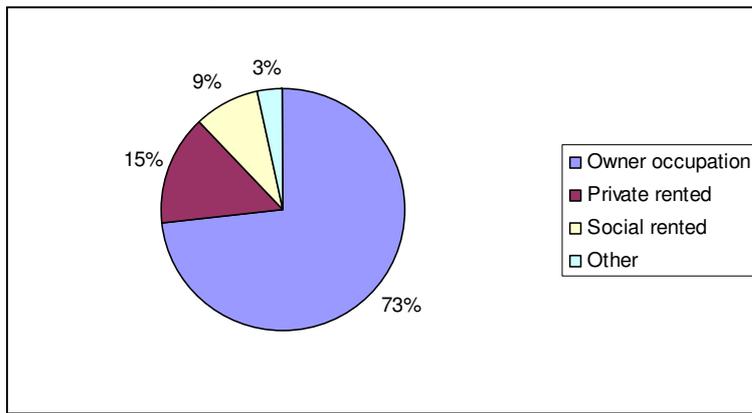
- 53% of respondents were single; 43% were married; and 4% were cohabiting. The percentage of respondents who were single was highest amongst the Manchester sample (74%), while the Salford sample had the highest percentage of those who were married (57%).
- 35% of the sample was single person households, with a further 35% of the sample being two-person households.
- 22% of the sample had children living in their household. The number of children ranged from one to six children; the majority, however, had between one and three children. The respondents with larger families (e.g. four to six children) all identified themselves as Strictly Orthodox.

Accommodation

Property type and tenure

- The most common property type was a house (61%); followed by a flat (33%). The Bury sample had the highest percentage of people living in houses (73%), whilst the Manchester sample had the highest percentage of people living in flats (61%).
- 73% were owner-occupiers; 15% lived in private rented accommodation; and 9% in socially rented accommodation.

Chart i: Property tenure



- Looking in greater detail at tenure, 45% of the sample indicated that they were mortgage free; this percentage was highest in Bury (57%). Looking at the age of those who were mortgage free, 66% were over 60, with a further 26% aged 50 – 59.

Rent or mortgage costs

- Rent / mortgage costs ranged from under £130.00 up to £1,295 per month; however, people most commonly were paying between £256 and £775.
- Respondents paying more than £776 were all living in Bury. With the exception of one respondent – who was living in a Council property – those paying more than £776 were all owner-occupiers.

Satisfaction with property

- 84% of respondents were satisfied with the size of their home, while 12% were dissatisfied. The respondents in Bury were most likely to be satisfied (90%).
- Nearly a third of the Manchester sample felt that they did not have enough space in their current home, while 27% of Salford respondents said they did not have enough space. The sample revealed cases where five people were living in two bedroom properties, plus individuals who indicated that they have seven or eight household members and were living in three bedroom properties. These respondents were all living in Salford.
- The majority of respondents (96%) felt that their current property met their cultural / religious needs.
- The issue that people appeared to have most dissatisfaction with was the amount of storage space within properties.

Aspirations to move

- 17% of the sample wanted to move in the next 12 months, while 11% aspired to move in the next 2 – 5 years.
- Half of the sample indicated that they would be staying in their current property indefinitely.

Table iii: Would you like to move to a different property?

	All		Bury		Manchester		Salford		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
In the next 12 months	41	17	9	8	16	26	14	23	2	17
In the next 1 – 2 years	23	9	12	11	8	13	3	5	-	-
In the next 2 – 5 years	26	11	13	12	7	11	5	8	1	8
In the next 5 – 10 years	11	4	5	4	1	2	4	7	1	8
Staying here indefinitely	124	50	64	57	26	43	29	48	5	42
Other	5	2	1	1	1	2	3	5	-	-
Not sure at moment	16	7	9	8	2	3	2	3	3	25
	246	100	113	100	61	100	60	100	12	100

Note: excludes three missing cases

- Size of property was one of the most common reasons for wanting to move. This was not just in terms of needing a larger property and a number of respondents indicated that they wanted to downsize.
- Overall, the people who wanted to move wanted to remain in the local authority area where they currently lived.

Views on affordable housing options

- Around three quarters of the sample had never heard of most of the different affordable housing options. Shared ownership and shared equity were the options of which people were most likely to be aware.
- A number of concerns were raised in the focus groups in relation to the affordable housing options, which related to how affordable they were actually and concerns about property value.
- Location was also a key issue in relation to affordable housing and people were concerned as to whether the products would be available in the areas where the Jewish community lives.

Future needs from household growth or family movement

- 21% of respondents indicated that members of their household (e.g. son or daughter) would require their own home in the next five years. This percentage was higher amongst the Salford sample (26%) and lowest amongst the Manchester sample (12%).
- Thirty-two respondents indicated there was one household member; ten respondents indicated that there were two household members (e.g. two sons, son and daughter); and one respondent indicated there were three household members who would require their own accommodation in the next five years. Therefore, there were potentially 55 new households requiring their own home over the next five years.
- 4% of the sample indicated that family members would be moving to their areas from elsewhere in the UK, while 2% had family moving to their area from overseas.

Views on the local area

Satisfaction with local area

- Over half of the sample (53%) was very satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, with a further 31% indicating that they were fairly satisfied.
- The respondents interviewed in Manchester were most likely to express dissatisfaction with their neighbourhood, with 24% indicating that they were fairly dissatisfied.
- 89% of the sample indicated that their local area met their cultural / religious needs. This percentage was highest amongst the Salford and Bury respondents (95% and 93% respectively).

Experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour

- Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced any of the following: crime against property; crime against person; hate crime; or anti-social behaviour. Of this list, anti-social behaviour was highlighted most frequently (24% of respondents).
- Forty-six respondents (18%) had experienced hate crime. This percentage was far higher amongst the Salford sample (38%), while the Manchester respondents were least likely to have experienced hate crime (11%).
- With regard to level of religious practice, 57% of those who had experienced hate crime were Strictly Orthodox; followed by Shabbat observant (17%) and Traditional (13%).

Health and social care needs

- 142 households (57%) included someone with a disability or health condition. Out of these households, five (4%) had children with health problems / disabilities; the remainder were adults within the household.
- The health problems / disabilities that people referred to most frequently were heart problems, visual impairment, mobility problems and arthritis.
- Out of the 142 households, 42% indicated that the person(s) in their household with a disability / health condition required assistance with daily tasks due to their condition. The daily tasks that people commonly needed support for were cleaning, shopping, laundry, as well as generally moving around the property.
- The facility that people did not have currently but which was required most commonly was a disability adapted bath or shower (14% indicated that they needed this), this was followed by a downstairs toilet (9%).
- 15% of the sample indicated that they or someone in their household would be interested in moving to a scheme specifically for older people.

- With regard to the respondents who were not interested in schemes for older people, when asked what their preference would be when older, the majority (91%) indicated that they would prefer to live independently with support in their own home.

Conclusions

The following provides a summary of the main conclusions based on the findings of the study.

Accommodation needs, aspirations and affordability

The study has highlighted a predominance of owner occupation (73% of the sample), with a large proportion of respondents indicating that they were mortgage free. Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who were mortgage free fell into the older age ranges, with the majority being over 60. Following owner occupation, the most common tenure was private rented accommodation, particularly amongst those interviewed in Salford and Manchester. With regard to socially rented accommodation, only a small proportion of respondents were renting from the Council or a housing association.

The sample was divided fairly equally between those who wanted to move to a different property and those who would remain in their current property indefinitely. The majority of those who wanted to move (70%) indicated that they wanted owner occupation. This was followed by renting from a Jewish housing association (9%) or renting from a private landlord (9%). What is interesting is that while no one appeared to want to move to socially rented accommodation, when asked later on if they would consider renting from the Council or a non-Jewish housing association, nearly a quarter of respondents said they would consider it, with socially rented accommodation in some cases being perceived as preferable to private rented accommodation. One focus group session also highlighted positive views on socially rented accommodation as providing an affordable, but also regulated, option.

In terms of future need, 21% of the sample indicated that members of their household would require their own home in the next five years; this was particularly evident in the Salford sample (26% of respondents). Given the preference for owner occupation – as with many communities – this study highlighted affordability as a key issue, particularly for young people and young families who want to ‘get on the property ladder’. While there was limited response to the question on level of savings, the majority of those who did respond indicated that they had no savings or were currently in debt.

One aspect of the study was to explore awareness of, and views on, different affordable housing products through the survey and a series of focus groups. It was evident from the survey that the majority of respondents had not heard of most of the different options available, which suggests an issue around the need to raise awareness of the affordable housing products. Indeed, the focus group discussions highlighted the need to think about how to market the different options, including some comments around the complexity of some of the products. Furthermore, the focus group sessions highlighted that written information alone is not necessarily adequate to provide people with an understanding of the nuances of different products, and the opportunity for people to ask questions about the options was vital to being able to make an informed choice.

However, an overwhelming issue throughout the study was the issue of location: in particular the desire to live in close proximity to Jewish communities and community facilities. While it was suggested that some people might be willing to live in other areas of Greater Manchester, it was highlighted cultural and religious facilities would need to be easily accessible. Thus, while people were open to exploring the affordable housing options, particularly for first time buyers or for those looking at alternatives to private renting, the main concern was whether such products would be available in the areas where they wanted to live.

Health and social care needs

Over half of the sample indicated that someone within the household had a health condition or disability. The interviews suggested that a large proportion of these individuals (42%) required support or assistance with everyday household tasks such as cleaning and shopping, but also mobility around the property. The needs and experiences of carers may be an area where further information is required. It was also evident that individuals within the household were undertaking a caring role, either on their own or alongside other family members and outside agencies. Such individuals need to be aware of the types of support available to assist them with their caring role, and the needs and experiences of carers may be an area where more in-depth information is required.

With regard to specialist accommodation (e.g. accommodation without stairs, accommodation with alarm call system, etc.), the survey interviews suggested a low level of need. Looking at preferences when older, for example, respondents wanted to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. We need to recognise, however, that people – particularly younger people – are not able to anticipate the type of support they will need in the future. Indeed, discussions in the focus groups revealed that while people wanted to remain in their own homes, they recognised that as they got older and as their health deteriorated they would require sheltered accommodation or some form of supported accommodation. There were mixed views on whether or not such accommodation should be Jewish-only. While there did appear to be a preference for Jewish-only provision, there were a number of people who welcomed the idea of a mixed scheme as long as cultural practices were respected.

Community cohesion

While the focus of this study was housing experiences, we did explore wider issues in relation to views on their local area as well as asking respondents about any experiences of hate crime. Forty-six respondents (18%) indicated that they had experienced hate crime. It was apparent that there was an issue of 'visibility' in relation to hate crime, with the Strictly Orthodox community being most likely to have experienced anti-Semitic comments. Indeed, a common experience that emerged from the survey related to abuse from passing vehicles. The focus groups also reiterated the issue of hate crime being directed at those who are 'visibly Jewish', particularly in areas – such as Salford – where there is a large Orthodox community.

Reflections on the scope of study

While the study endeavoured to be as inclusive as possible in terms of local authority coverage, in some areas (e.g. outside main population areas – Bury, Manchester, Salford) it was more difficult to engage with Jewish communities in the fieldwork period that was available for the study. Therefore, in the future, more work may be needed focusing on Jewish communities in the areas of Greater Manchester where there was less representation. The study was also based on a particular methodology (i.e. a community interviewer approach), and while this has a number of benefits in terms of engendering a greater sense of ownership of the study, there are certain limitations to the sample that need to be taken into account.

The survey approach in this study has enabled us to collect data on a range of different issues. However, the study represents a ‘snap shot’ of a population at a given time. Therefore, it is recognised that there is a need to ensure regular monitoring of the population. The brief for the study was ambitious in its scope, focusing on Greater Manchester but also trying to capture data on different levels of religious practice. In many respects, the data provides a starting point for key stakeholders to look at how to take the findings forward or where further information is required, for example, in relation to the needs of young families, or housing related needs of older people.