

# THE ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS IN THE UK



c/o WIZOUk, Charles House, 108-110 Finchley Rd., London NW3 5JJ  
Website: [www.ajwo.org](http://www.ajwo.org) Chairman: Anne Lyons

## **Annual General Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> November at West London Synagogue, Upper Berkeley Street.**

The chairman Anne Lyons welcomed 40 guests and introduced the new co-Vice Chairman, Fiona Arghebant of the Movement for Reform Judaism. She also said farewell to Marianne Cohen, affiliate member for United Synagogue Women, who has been involved with AJWO for almost twenty years and also represented the organisation on the Education Committee of the National Council of Women.

Her review of the events of the last year included the successful summer Seminar on “Life Online- a Blessing or a Curse?” in which a panel of experts dealt both with the advantages of social media, and the dangers of internet fraud and identity theft. A large audience joined in the discussion before lunch was served.

A new project is being launched in March 2017, which it is hoped will raise the profile of AJWO and provide an exciting new venture for Jewish girls.

An afternoon Conference, hosted by Hasmonean Girls School, will bring together a total of 200 Sixth Form girls from Yavneh, JCOSS, Immanuel, JFS and King Solomon Ilford schools to discuss the topic “It’s Great being a Girl”. It is hoped that the panel of speakers will inspire the audience and there will be informal discussion amongst the girls. It is modelled on similar conference arranged by the National Council of Young Women, across the country, and the heads of the Jewish schools are very enthusiastic about it.

A summer Seminar is being planned for June 2017.

The Treasurer reported that our finances are in a healthy state and our expenses have been low.

The guest speaker at the AGM was David Assersohn from Anti-Slavery International who spoke on “The Slave near You”. He gave a powerful and disturbing account of modern slavery, that still exists throughout the world, and particularly referred to Africa and Asia, where young children are working in harsh and cruel conditions.

He highlighted the hardships faced by forced labourers when cotton is harvested and processed, before being made into clothes for Western shops. He discussed the role of retailers in this country in combatting the evil, and recommended the Ethical Trade Initiative. He spelt out the difficulties of influencing African states where slavery is endemic, and whether withholding foreign aid would help. He also read us first-hand stories of the hardships endured by some workers.

In the UK, many sex workers and people working in the catering trade and the construction industry are living in terrible conditions with no proper wages, deprived of their passports and unable to escape. The Prime Minister has set up a task force and a new Act is going through Parliament which will strengthen the powers of the police.

The audience were most concerned by the speaker’s report on modern slavery, and it is hoped that more people can be educated about this scourge on our society.

### **Affiliate Organisations:**

Agunot Campaign • Association of Masorti Women • B’nai B’rith Women • British Emunah • Chana • FHUJI Women’s Group • Jewish Women’s Aid • League of Jewish Women • Liberal Judaism Women • PaperWeight • Reform Synagogue Women • Sephardi Women • United Synagogue Women • WIZOUk • Women in Jewish Leadership • 35’s Women’s Campaign for Soviet Jewry