

Streets of Bournemouth The Town's Communities

At the beginning of the 19th Century, the villages and hamlets along the lanes beside the River Stour lived on the edges of poverty.

These small communities grazed their animals on the heathland, kept beehives and dovecotes, and wore paths across the heath as they helped the smugglers. Many worked on the farms owned by the Malmesbury and Tapps families. Travelling tinkers stopped on their way between the Purbecks and the New Forest.

As the town grew, separate suburbs grew up in Winton, Pokesdown and Charminster, often around the schools and churches.

Early 20th Century refugees from Europe established distinct communities. Russians with their printing works in the old waterworks off lford Lane, the Jewish community who provided many of the hotels as well as being involved in commerce throughout the town, and many others, brought a strong sense of community. Later years saw the growth of separate communities in housing estates, often around the original villages.



ABOVE

St. Peter's Church

LEFT

The first church in Bournemouth 1838

Streets of
Bournemouth





THE TOWN'S COMMUNITIES

Changing communities

The invisible boundary

Bournemouth's faith communities

Community Severance

A sense of belonging

Changing communities

Modern day Bournemouth is divided into 18 separate ward boundaries. These are the boundaries in which people vote for the councillors who will represent them on the Council.

Boscombe East	Kinson South	Talbot & Branksome Woods
Boscombe West	Littledown & Iford	Throop & Muscliff
Central	Moordown	Wallisdown & Winton West
East Cliff & Springbourne	Queen's Park	West Southbourne
East Southbourne & Tuckton	Redhill & Northbourne	Westbourne & West Cliff
Kinson North	Strouden Park	Winton East

Table 1: Ward names in Bournemouth 2010

Ward boundaries are not static and a periodic review is undertaken by the Local Government Commission for England to ensure parity in the number of people eligible to vote. The last review was completed in December 2001 and came into effect on 1st May 2003. While these may be viewed as political boundaries they still represent an aspect of community in Bournemouth. During the consultation phase the review panel received 311 representations from 482 respondents. Paragraph 27 of the Report reads

"We received 42 submissions particularly concerning the Talbot Woods area, containing 55 signatures. Talbot & Branksome Woods Residents' Association supported the draft recommendations for the Talbot Woods area as did a further 54 residents of the Talbot Woods area. However, the Residents' Association proposed that the name of the new ward should be Talbot & Branksome Woods to better reflect community identity."



A minor modification was made later when the new wards of Kinson and West Howe were renamed Kinson North and Kinson South. While ward boundaries may be artificial, they are based on localities and people can be fiercely loyal to their patch. A description of each ward can be found at www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Council/Wards/Default.asp.

Bournemouth's earliest communities were sited around the lower Bourne Valley, the villages along the Stour with a few settlements in-between. John Dower's map of 1839 shows Moor Down, Muscliff, Throop, Holdenhurst, Dean Green, Strouden Green, Little Down, Stourfield, Tuckford, Wick, Boscomb Alcove, Iford and Iford Bridge. Red Hill and East Howe are on the other side of the county border in Dorset. According to the map, the largest settlement appears to be at Iford which was the main crossing between Poole and Christchurch.

One such community was at Pokesdown centred around Boscombe Lodge. Originally it was the home of Phillip Norris, but in 1841 John Stephenson (or Stevenson), a man of independent means was living there with his wife and family and a large number of servants. Confusingly the house was known as Boscombe Lodge and it appears as Boscomb Alcove as on the 1839 map. The house would eventually become the home of Percy Florence Shelley and part of the Boscombe Manor Estate. Pokesdown was in the parish of Christchurch and part of the Liberty of Westover under the patronage of the Lord of the Manor.

Shelley Park is now in East Boscombe Ward. The neighbouring Stourfield House is in West Southbourne Ward. It was built by Edmund Bott around 1766 on a hill overlooking the Stour Valley. On 30th May 1812 the following advert appeared in the Salisbury and Winchester Journal.

STOURFIELD HOUSE, HAMPSHIRE .TO be LETT, and entered on immediately, for four months, one year, or more,- A most beautiful SUMMER RESIDENCE, completely furnished, and fit for the accommodation of a Nobleman's Family; with coach-houses, stables, hot-house, gardens, shrubberies, &c. situated within three miles of Christchurch, eight of Poole, and within half-a-mile of the sea, where there is a private bathing machine belonging to the house. The family may be supplied with butter, milk, and poultry, from the Farm adjoining.

For particulars apply to - Flodgate, Esq, Norfolk-street, Strand, London; or to the bailiff, on the premises.

It was another house that was to have a number of tenants and was eventually sold and converted to a hospital at the end of the 19th century. For most of the 20th century, it was known as Douglas



House and served different communities. For a while it was a convalescent and holiday home for ex-service men of the Army and Royal Air Force suffering from tuberculosis. All that remains of the original 1776 house is the porch and front steps which were relocated from the old Douglas House to the new block of flats built on the site in 1992.

The ambiguity about the name of the area continued when the railway stations on the main line to London opened. Confused travellers wouldn't know whether they were in Boscombe or Pokesdown. The first station named Boscombe was actually in Pokesdown. Then Boscombe station opened in Ashley Road. The stations had the correct names for most of the 20th century and then in 2009 Pokesdown Station was renamed Pokesdown (for Boscombe). Pokesdown was the original settlement but Boscombe eventually overtook it and is now a major suburb of Bournemouth. Although there were efforts in the 19th century to develop it as the separate resort of Boscombe Spa, it was eventually annexed into Bournemouth. The current Ward names are Boscombe West and Boscombe East.

Pokesdown and Boscombe were at least in the county of Hampshire. When both Poole and Bournemouth were intent on annexing Kinson, the parish council elected to join with Bournemouth. It meant that in 1931 Kinson moved from Dorset into Hampshire. Kinson was a large rural district. The parish of Kinson included Talbot Village, Wallisdown East, West Howe, Ensbury and Kinson village itself. One of the oldest buildings in Kinson is Pelhams which has fared better than Stourfield House. It has been altered on the inside but the outside retains some of the earlier style despite some additions to serve it better as the community centre for Kinson.

Following local government reorganisation in 1974, many of the existing powers and responsibilities held by Bournemouth were transferred to Dorset County Council. This lasted for less than 25 years when Bournemouth became a Unitary Authority in 1997. For ceremonial purposes, such as when members of the Royal Family or their representatives visit, Bournemouth still liaises with Dorset. Historical documents and archives continue to be deposited with the Dorset History Centre in Dorchester. Boundaries matter because they are part of how people define themselves and identify with their local and wider communities. For almost 175 years babies in Bournemouth were registered as being born in Hampshire: now it is simply Bournemouth.

The invisible boundary



Westbourne was a small hamlet of a few houses in the 1850s. The location on the western edge of Bournemouth next to the boundary with Poole at County Gates gives a strategic position. The extension of the Bournemouth boundary in 1884 brought Westbourne within the development control of the Bournemouth Improvement Commissioners. Until then it had been part of the Rural District of Christchurch with the only road access was through Bournemouth to the east. Henry Joy built a shopping arcade in Westbourne linking Poole Road and Seamoor Roads while living himself at Seamoor House.

In 1860 Mr. Charles Allen King laid the foundation stone of Branksome Dene, a mansion he was building on land purchased from Robert Kerley on what is now Alumhurst Road. Shortly afterwards the Herbert Convalescent Home opened in 1865. Until it was closed in 1965, Westbourne was close to the railway Bournemouth West railway station known. These factors all contributed to the growth of Westbourne as a distinct area.

There were three estates all including the name Branksome around Westbourne, Branksome Estate, Branksome Dene Estate and Branksome Park Estate. Branksome Park Estate is in Poole, Branksome Dene Estates straddles the boundary of both Poole and only Branksome Estate is in Bournemouth. But both Branksome Park and Branksome Dene have looked towards Westbourne as the nearest centre. Old postcards and guidebooks even say Branksome Chine or Branksome Park, Bournemouth. It is easy to understand the confusion as the area has a cohesion as the two estates developed next to each other. But one cause was that until 1962 the postal address for Branksome Park, Canford Cliffs and Sandbanks, was Bournemouth. It was postally Bournemouth West and many residents did not want to change to Poole. There is an official boundary. Branksome Dene Chine is in Poole, Branksome Dene, now called Zetland Court is in Bournemouth.



Community Severance

Bournemouth's townscape initially followed the contours of the existing land. As the town grew more houses were needed to accommodate the number of people who wanted to work and live by the sea. Both rail and motor transport have contributed to the modern townscape. Some of the main roads followed the old tracks across the heath but when the common land was enclosed a network of new roads were laid out.

At first the railway only came as far Christchurch but when trains arrived at Bournemouth Station in 1872 little of the town had been developed. This meant that railway engineers had few existing areas of habitation to avoid. Once the tracks had been laid communities began to build up around them especially close to the stations.

Until recently the solution to the increase in the number of car owners has been to build more roads. In particular Bournemouth has had to respond to access both into and beyond the town centre. In the 1960s this meant the construction of the A338 Spur Road. Later the dual carriageway was extended to the town centre and County Gates by the construction of the Wessex Way. Part of the A338 Spur Road was built on the line of the Ringwood to Wimborne railway and a section of the track from Bournemouth West Station. The last bit of the Wessex Way travels along the old railway line. The new road created a physical barrier through a large part of Springbourne and those areas where roundabouts were built. Community severance is a term used by town planners and road engineers to describe the impact of physical barriers on communities. The Berlin Wall would be an extreme example.

A look at a map of Bournemouth before the building of the Wessex Way shows a mixed townscape of curving and straight, more tightly packed roads. A modern map shows how the route of the Wessex Way has severed the streets running between Charminster Road and Holdenhurst Road. Residents were physically cut off from the amenities in either road depending on which side of the Wessex Way they were now living. They were forced to adapt new routes to work or school, and they also lost neighbours either because of the physical barrier or simply from the homes that were demolished to make way for the road. Footbridges and subways are not the most convenient choice for pedestrians. Research has shown the psychological impact of community severance can be detected 30 years after road changes. For some people it would be a lifetime. People born after



the new road would accept that Springbourne had effectively been squeezed into an area south of the Wessex Way and west of Ashley Road



Faith communities

For many people their introduction to a new area can be their faith community. This builds links link to the wider community, as many faiths have associated schools and offer a variety of events held in the building. As people moved to Bournemouth they would align themselves with people of the same faith. Initially this was mostly the Anglican Church, but other Christian denominations found places to worship until they could afford to build their own premises.

One of the first churches in Bournemouth was the Congregational Mission Hall in Pokesdown. The Pokesdown church was founded around 1820 when a weekly evening prayer meeting took place in the cottage of Mr. Burt, led by members of the Christchurch Congregational Church. Meetings then took place at the cottage of Mr. J Troke. The first Anglican church in central Bournemouth was converted from a pair of semi-detached cottages which stood in The Square in 1838. Before this people had to travel to Poole or Christchurch. There were also churches at Moordown and Holdenhurst. St Peter's Church opened in 1845 and welcomed the growing number of residents and the visitors. As summer or winter visitors arrived they would swell the numbers of the congregation. In particular the synagogues welcomed the large number of Jewish people holidaying in Bournemouth for the summer.

Date	Area	Name	Faith
The first churches			
Saxon Chapel	Holdenhurst		CofE
18th century	Kinson	St Andrews	CofE
1805	Moordown	St John in the Wilderness	CofE
1834	Pokesdown	Congregational Mission Hall	NC
1845	Central	St Peter	CofE
1849	Holdenhurst Rd	Congregational Mission Hall	NC
1853	Moordown	St John the Baptist	CofE
The expanding town			
1858	Pokesdown	St James	CofE
1860	Pokesdown	Methodist	NC
1868	Talbot village	St Mark's	CofE
1869	Central	Holy Trinity	CofE
1874	Central	St Michael and All Angels	CofE
1873	Springbourne	St Clement	CofE
1876	East Cliff	St Swithun	CofE
1871	Westbourne	Baptist	NC
1872	Boscombe	Congregational	NC
1874	Lansdowne	Baptist	NC
1874	Boscombe	Baptist	NC
1875	Central	Sacred Heart	RC
1877	East Cliff	Congregational Mission Hall	NC
1880	Boscombe	Wesleyan Methodist	NC
About 1883	Throop	Methodist	NC
1885	Boscombe	Salvation Army	NC
1889	Westbourne	Our Lady Immaculate	RC
1889	Boscombe	Rosebery Park Baptist	NC
1890s	Winton	Christadelphian	NC
1892	Cemetery Junction	St Augustine's	CofE
1896	Boscombe	Corpus Christi	RC
1898	Moordown	Mission Hall	NC

1898	Iford	Mission Hall	NC
1905	Charminster	Annunciation	RC
1905	Charminster	Congregational Mission Hall	NC
1907	Westbourne	St Ambrose	CofE
1910	Southbourne	Immanuel	NC
1911	West Cliff	Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation	Judaism
1912	Central	Religious Society of Friends	Quaker
The established town			
1935	Iford	St Saviour	CofE
1939	Southbourne	Our Lady Queen of Peace	RC
1939	Iford	St Thomas More	RC
1947	East Cliff	Bournemouth Reform Synagogue	Judaism
1958	Central	Methodist Punshon Memorial Hall	NC
1979	Pokesdown	Metropolitan Community Church	NC
2002		Bournemouth Pagan Society	Pagan
Date not known	Central	Bournemouth Islamic Centre & Central Mosque	Islam

Table 2: Examples of places of worship in Bournemouth and when they were founded; CofE = Church of England, NC= Christian, non-conformist, RC Roman Catholic

The establishment of faith communities demonstrates how the town grew. People would meet in their own homes, halls or even the Belle Vue Assembly Rooms, until there were both sufficient members and funds to make a new building viable. This still happens today. St Augustine's Church at Cemetery Junction as well as its own congregation gives space to the Bournemouth Korean Church, the Bournemouth Brazilian Church and the New Creation Life Ministries Zimbabwean-led.

Data from the 2001 census shows that the population of Bournemouth is predominantly Christian. Compared with the South West, there is a larger proportion of residents in Bournemouth who stated "no religion". The area also has a larger proportion of residents who chose not to give their religion.



Bournemouth has a proportionately larger Jewish community than other areas and a larger Muslim community than the South West.

Religion	Persons	% population
Christian	115,893	70.9%
Buddhist	565	0.3%
Hindu	311	0.2%
Jewish	1,667	1.0%
Muslim	1,538	0.9%
Sikh	88	0.1%
Other religions	850	0.5%
No religion	2,9326	17.9%
Religion not stated	1,3206	8.1%

Table 3: Religious diversity in Bournemouth; data from the 2001 census

The number of students in Bournemouth attending the university, colleges, and language schools increases the potential range of faiths and ethnicity of residents. Bournemouth was founded on visitors and the town is no stranger to visitors from all over the world.

The Jewish Communities

A small number of Jewish families settled in Bournemouth towards the end of the Nineteenth Century and in due course played a significant part in the development of the town. A Hebrew Congregation was formally established in 1905 and a Reform Synagogue was set up in 1947.

A Brief History of the Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation

Following the establishment of the Hebrew Congregation, weekly Services were held in temporary accommodation until in 1911 a Synagogue was built, in Wootton Gardens, a cul-de-sac off the main Christchurch Road. The Congregation comprised fewer than 50 families. Since then the community has increased considerably as have the facilities to match that growth.



The foundation stone of the first Synagogue building was laid by Albert Samuel, whose brother, Herbert, later became a Cabinet Minister and subsequently the British High Commissioner for Palestine under the Mandate. The Synagogue is of barrel-vault design, the Ladies Gallery separated in the Ashkenazi tradition.

Fifty years later, it was too small to accommodate up to 900 worshippers, and so the Synagogue was completely rebuilt, under the guidance of Henry Solomon, then Senior Trustee and many times President. At the same time, the social hall that had been erected in 1923, was improved and named to honour Gertrude Preston, a former Chairman of the Ladies Guild. An additional classroom was also constructed.

The ornamental keys provided to open the Synagogue in 1911 and the vastly improved premises, reopened in 1964, are both mounted and fixed in prominent positions in the main foyer.

The Thirties heralded the darkening days of tyranny in Europe soon to plunge the world into another war. The majority of families in the Community played host to refugees or evacuees. Three hostels were created for children rescued from the horrors of concentration camps and the Communal House, in Wellington Road, was used as a refuge for the homeless. It is interesting to note that in 1939 an experiment was commenced to hold committee meetings of the Board of Management in public. Also, in that year, the Public Relations Officer of the Board of Deputies, Rabbi Israel Brodie, came to discuss with the Board of Management matters of anti-Semitism in Bournemouth. The question of Air Raid Protection for the synagogue was discussed at a meeting in September 1939 when it was minuted that no special precautionary measures be taken, and "that nervous members be requested not to attend services".

One further development took place in 1973. An adjacent Hotel was acquired, demolished and in its place the Murray Muscat Centre was built, abutting the Synagogue. This was officially opened by the Chief Rabbi, the Very Rev. Immanuel Jakobovits, in July 1974 and comprises a large banquet hall, the Menorah Suite, which can seat 200 guests, and has both meat and milk kitchens; on the floor above are five fully equipped classrooms, named after individual donors. The second floor has two self-contained flats, occupied by Synagogue staff. The entire Centre is named to honour Murray Muscat, the Congregations' former Trustee and Honorary Solicitor.



For his personal contributions in securing the site and handling all legal aspects of this development, current Senior Trustee, Life President and many times President, Harry Ellis, was honoured by the Plaque and Key now fixed adjacent to the main entrance of the new Centre.

On the occasion of the Opening Ceremony, an Illuminated Address was presented to Mr. John Kasmir, the Trustee, who was President during the rebuilding and the moving spirit behind the fund-raising drive to pay for the centre.

The Congregation's Third Trustee, Mr. Sam Marks, became Treasurer in 1971 and subsequently President. In his three years in that office, he supervised improvements to, and maintained close liaison with the Architect, Surveyor and Builders, engaged on the Project, over the entire period of the contract.

The Congregation, supported by the Social Services Department, opened a Day Nursery. This accepts children several mornings a week in the Gertrude Preston Hall. The "Yavneh Kindergarten" is staffed by qualified nursery teachers and is exceptionally well equipped. From the next age group upwards, children between 5 and 13 are encouraged to attend the Hebrew Classes where they have the benefit and skills of 8 experienced and well trained teachers.

Since 1976 through the zeal and effort of Rabbi Silberg, the Congregation was able to offer the facility of a most modern 'on-the-site' Mikveh - Ritual Bath - built in just a year - integral to the Synagogue complex. In 1980, the Beth Hamedrash in which the Synagogue holds its weekday morning and evening Services was completely refurbished, and where a library was gradually formed. Within the Synagogue proper, a Bookshop staffed by volunteers opened on Sunday mornings.

No aspect of the growing community was overlooked by the founders of the Congregation, and as early as 1906 they took over an area from the Bournemouth Corporation for use as a Cemetery. In 1950 additional space was obtained at Kinson. There, and at Boscombe, Prayer Houses, where last rites and funeral services take place, were built and consecrated. Victims of both the First and Second World Wars have been interred at Boscombe and, among them, somewhat surprisingly, Jewish prisoners-of-war captured during 1915 from German and Austrian forces engaged in France and Belgium. In 1995 land was acquired at Throop and a new cemetery was opened.



Members of the Jewish Community in Bournemouth acquitted themselves creditably in both Wars in the Armed Services and in Civil Defence. Those who gave their lives are recorded on a memorial plaque in the Synagogue. Jewish men and women of Bournemouth were volunteers in the Nursing and Fire Services, the ARP and the Home Guard. In the build-up to the landings in Normandy, large numbers of co-religionists in the Allied Forces stationed in Bournemouth had unlimited hospitality from the Synagogue and Ladies Guild Forces Committee. At the end of hostilities, a hand-carved Plaque was presented by American Jewish personnel: this is now displayed in a prominent position in the main Synagogue foyer.

Since 1945 the Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Women holds an Annual Reunion Dinner and Dance when it presents a cheque to the incumbent Mayor for his own major Appeal.

In charitable work a number of Welfare Committees co-operate with the Synagogue. Bournemouth Hebrew Ladies Guild has given 92 years of voluntary service backing up WVS and the Red Cross sending volunteer visitors into local hospitals and nursing homes comforting the bereaved and assisting the homebound invalids of the Community. Bournemouth branch of the League of Jewish Women is solely concerned with welfare and social work and, for the past 42 years, has assisted in schools, Kindergarten, 'meals-on-wheels', 'mobile library' services and assisting local disabled in their limited range of activities.

Youth groups have quite naturally been founded only to flounder in later years as the youth matured into adults. In the Twenties, Bournemouth boasted a Jewish Scout Troop and a Girl Guide Brigade and, later, an active cricket eleven; later still, there were numerous top class table tennis teams. The 5705 Cricket Club achieved fame, touring Israel and having success in the local area League. In 1980 there seems to be a revival of fortune for the 5705 Club, the B'nai B'rith Youth and the B'nei Akivah movement under new leaders. Functions and social events of their own choice contribute widely to diverse and deserving causes.

At the other extreme, Social Centre activities are similar to better-known 'Darby and Joan' clubs; its weekly afternoon meetings attract a large attendance into a friendly and sociable atmosphere.

All groups are represented on the Bournemouth Jewish Representative Council which embraces the local Congregation and the Council for Christians and Jews. A high level and keen spirit of co-operation exists between the Congregation and the Bournemouth Corporation whose past Mayors include several members of the Jewish Community.



The development of the Community continues with many members serving the town. In 1992 Ivor Weintroub, long-time member of the Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation and Past President became the first Jewish judge. He served as District Judge of the High Court and County Court and was appointed a Recorder of the Crown Court and County Court in 2003. The Community has also provided several Magistrates, Volunteers for the Citizens' Advice Bureau and other local organisations.

The Community has also provided many businessmen and members of several professions, all of whom contributed to the welfare and economic growth of Bournemouth.

Traditionally the Jewish Community has always and continues to contribute to many local charities and generously supports the local hospitals.

And what of the future? Today's thriving Congregation is made up of Jewish people from many walks of life and from diverse areas of the United Kingdom and overseas. Many first visited Bournemouth on their honeymoon, or on a holiday, and, taken with the mild climate and friendly community, were moved to adopt the Town as their new home. This process continues. Throughout the summer, the Synagogue Services attract a large number of 'future immigrants', and why not? for the Congregation is served by an extremely likeable and competent Clergy and Officials.

Bournemouth Reform Synagogue

Shortly after the end of the Second World War a small group of Jews, mostly just demobbed from the forces, met to discuss the possibility of starting a Reform synagogue in Bournemouth. And so, in 1947, Bournemouth New Synagogue (as it was then called) was formed (under the chairmanship of David Kaye) as a constituent member of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain.

The first priority was finding a spiritual leader and the first minister appointed was Rev. Charles Berg who built the congregation up from the handful in the original group to 100 families by the time he left in 1953. He was followed by Rev. Stanley Solomons who guided the congregation for 16 years until ill health forced him into retirement. All this time the members met on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings for religious services at the Holy Trinity Church Hall in Old Christchurch Road (near Wootton Gardens but now replaced by an office block!)



In 1957 the land at 53 Christchurch Road was purchased through the generosity of Mr. Maurice Mauray who was President at the time. The new building was inaugurated in 1958 and some years later, following a fund raising effort, central heating was installed, enabling the members to use the building mid-week for social activities. However, there were still no classrooms and when Harold Vallins became minister after Rev. Solomons the Hebrew classes were held on Sunday mornings at Kings School of English in Braidley Road. Although the facilities there were excellent it was felt that classes should be 'in house'. The synagogue also lacked a Community Hall, so once again funds were raised for an extension. Unfortunately, once the toilets and kitchen had been demolished the builders went bankrupt and work stopped! The Chairman at the time, Harold Wilson, asked Brian Cowan to organise the project and he supervised the building of classrooms plus a small kitchen, ladies and gents toilets, a library, office, and of course - the Simcha Social Hall. With these new facilities it was possible to increase activities on the premises including the Monday Day Centre for Senior citizens. This is a cross-communal project started in 1981 by the League of Jewish Women and still going strong...

During the 33 year ministry of Rabbi David Soetendorp, there were several other developments - in the 1980's a group of progressive Jews in the Winchester/Southampton area came together to form the South Hants Jewish Community under the umbrella of B.R.S. and this also continues to thrive.

Rabbi Soetendorp saw the need to treat the dead with dignity and respect, so a Burial Society was formed - the first Reform Synagogue in the U.K. to carry out this good deed and some other Reform congregations have now followed this practice. In 1999 it was felt that a Prayer House was needed (on site) and following an appeal at the next AGM the money was donated by the late Golda and Harold Hayman, with others, and the premises were built on the Christchurch Road side of the building.

When Rabbi Soetendorp retired, a newly ordained young Rabbi, Neil Amswych was appointed. One of his priorities was the setting up of a B.R.S. web-site which now advertises the synagogue to the outside world.



A sense of belonging

At the time of the 2001 Census the population of the borough stood at 163,444. The latest figure from the Office for National Statistics, the 2008 mid year estimate, shows a very small increase to 163,900. The largest proportion of the population is White British (92.5%) with a 7.5% minority ethnic population. There are significant groups of White Other, White Irish and South East Asian with increasing numbers of people from Eastern Europe, Poland in particular.

There is a high proportion of single people (33.8% of the population) and those in one-person households (35.3%). Bournemouth has the fifth largest gay community in Britain. Bournemouth has attracted tourists and retirees for many decades so its hospitality industry is an important part of the economy. The elderly population is above average (22% of the population are 65 or over) but the fastest growing resident age group is working age, and the under 15 age group is also growing at a greater rate than in neighbouring areas. Bournemouth has a significant student population, including large numbers of foreign students.

Extracted from *A Picture of Bournemouth 2009* published by Bournemouth Borough Council

A click on the Bournemouth Borough Council website shows that information is available in Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, French, Spanish, German, Korean, Polish and Portuguese. People from around the world come to Bournemouth, for a visit, to study, or to work. From its earliest days Bournemouth has welcomed people to its beautiful coast and mild climate. At first, people came from Dorset and other parts of Hampshire but as the town expanded people came from further afield in England and Great Britain, and later, other parts of the world. From the 1870s onwards the birthplaces recorded in the census returns reveal the diverse origins of people living in the town.

From 1897 a number of Russian exiles fleeing Czarist oppression set up a community at Tuckton. They were led by wealthy former imperialist Count Vladimir Tchertkoff whose mother Countess Elizabeth Tchertkoff had earlier bought a house in Belle Vue Road which she used as a summer residence. Tchertkoff was a close friend of the writer Count Leo Tolstoy. He purchased Tuckton

House and the nearby Iford Lane Pumping Station and set up the Free Age Press and published many of Tolstoy's later books which were banned in Russia.

The Waterworks, Tuckton					
Name	Relationship to head of household	Age/Marital status	Occupation	Born	Status
Ferdinand Schrecker	Head	32	Typograph compositor	Bohemia	Foreign subject
Magdalena Schrecker	Wife	29		Bohemia	Foreign subject
Ferdinand Schrecker	Son	6		Bohemia	Foreign subject
Tuckton House, Tuckton					
Vladimir Tchertkoff	Head	46	Editor of publications	Russia	Exile
Anna Tchertkoff	Wife	41	Publisher of literature	Russia	Exile
Vladimir Tchertkoff	Son	11	School work	Russia	Exile
Joseph Detrichs	Brother-in-law	32 unmarried	Domestic gardener	Russia	Russian subject
Sergius Albrio	Boarder	26 unmarried	Translator of Russian into English	Russia	Russian subject
Alexander Zims	Boarder	19 unmarried	Clerk & bookkeeper to publisher	Russia	Russian subject
Gouthar Vlaskay	Servant	26 unmarried	Domestic gardener	Russia	Russian subject
Herman Poonga	Boarder	22 unmarried	Cashier, clerk & bookkeeper to publisher	Russia	Russian subject
Anna Morozof	Servant	31 unmarried	Domestic housemaid	Russia	Russian subject
Agrippina Morozof	Servant	28 unmarried	Domestic cook	Russia	Russian subject
Helene Morozof	Boarder	6	School work	Russia	Russian subject

Table 4: Some of the Russian Community in Tuckton 1901



One of the ways in which people assert their heritage is setting up restaurants. In 1959 the Nanking Chinese Restaurant had opened in Albert Road, and within another four years, the Taj Mahal Indian restaurant opened in Poole Road. Today Charminster Road has a wide range of international restaurants alongside cafes that serve English steak and chips or the traditional chippy. The choice of where to eat includes Persian, Turkish, Lebanese, Japanese and Thai cuisines as well as the more familiar Chinese, Italian, and Indian.

It all makes for a lively and exciting atmosphere but it would be unwise to ignore that there can be discord between cultures. The Council manages a Safer and Stronger Communities Team. Their November 2007 newsletter reported that *“Around 500 people came along to celebrate the cultural diversity of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole at the multi-cultural day held on Saturday 27th October at the Pavilion. The event follows from the success of the first multi-cultural day that was held in Poole last year. It included live performances of Dance and Music from Africa, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Iran and many more. The event was organised by the Iranian and Farsi Speaking Association in partnership with the Arts Institute at Bournemouth and with support from Bournemouth Borough Council. The event gave the community an opportunity to gain a wider understanding of the many cultures in the area.”*

Along with the many informal links made by school exchanges, cultural learning visits, visiting musicians, and not least individuals, Bournemouth has two formal links overseas as part of the Town Twinning Scheme. Bournemouth is twinned with Lucerne in Switzerland and Netanya in Israel.

Written by Louise Perrin, with contributions by Rhona Taylor (The Hebrew Community) and Eve Cowan (Bournemouth Reform Synagogue)

Additional reading

Bevans, Edna *Kinson 1894-1931* 1993

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