

Our Visitors

Visitors are welcome in our Synagogue; presentations can be given tailored to a specific group. The experience contributes to the religious and secular education of school children and the wider community.

We also have guests at our services which are conducted in Hebrew. Special services are held from time to time with explanations in English; please do ask for further details.

Access

Simple ramps are available for visitors in wheelchairs.

Archives

Synagogue archives are kept in Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucester. They can be contacted by email: archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Cemetery

The Synagogue has one of the oldest Jewish cemeteries still in use in the UK. Established in 1824, it is located in Elm Street, just off Tewkesbury Road.

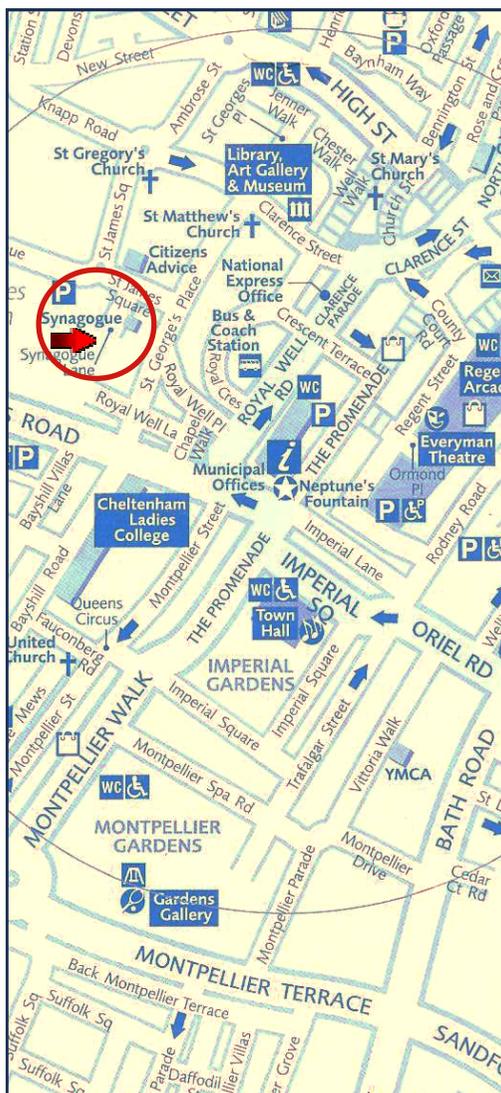
For further information please email our secretary: info@cheltenhamsynagogue.org.uk

Cheltenham Hebrew Congregation
The Synagogue
Synagogue Lane
St James Square
GL50 3PU
Cheltenham, Glos.

Cheltenham Hebrew Congregation is an independent incorporated charity.
Charity number 1156818

Design by J M Silverston Images David Savill

Where to find Cheltenham Synagogue



Map by permission of
Cheltenham Information Centre

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Welcome to Cheltenham Synagogue



Cheltenham Synagogue is home to a small, traditional Orthodox Jewish community.

Enter our beautiful Synagogue, take a step back in time and be delighted by this Regency gem complete with a beautiful dome, decorated with cornice and fretwork.

cheltenhamsynagogue.org.uk

History of our Synagogue

William Hill Knight, who later became an important Cheltenham architect, was awarded the contract to design our Synagogue.

Local craftsmen worked on the project which was completed in 1839 and allowed the Cheltenham residents, who had founded a Jewish community in 1823, to pray in their own premises for the first time.

The Synagogue has Grade 2* Listed status

Features of our Synagogue

The Ark

The sacred scrolls, our Torah, are behind closed doors and a **parochet** (curtain).



One of Cheltenham's decorative curtains is thought to have been made in India in the 18th century; a white one is always used at Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) to symbolise sins that become as "White as snow".

In front of the Ark is the "Eternal Light"; above, a plaque displays the Ten Commandments.

Visitors familiar with synagogues anywhere in the world will feel at home

The Bimah

Services are conducted from this central platform by a Reader who faces the Ark and consequently east towards Jerusalem.



Furniture

Our furniture is even older than the rest of the synagogue; it was donated by the New Synagogue in the City of London which was relocating at that time. Originally installed in the New Synagogue in 1761 it is the oldest Ashkenazi Synagogue furniture in the UK.

Prayer Panels

Look up at the walls of the Synagogue and you will notice two panels, one each side, each containing a prayer. One is in English, a prayer for the Royal Family and the other, in Hebrew, a prayer said on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. Queen Victoria is the named monarch but we know that the work predates the Victorian era as during renovation of the panel the name of George II was revealed beneath the existing text and the makers of the frames had gone out of business by 1730.



Fletcher Window

The colourful stained glass Fletcher Window was installed in 1957 in memory of Mr J Fletcher's generosity to the Community. The window on the other side of the Ark was commissioned by the Community in 1966 to complement the Fletcher window.



The Ladies' Gallery



Women and men sit apart during services. Our Ladies' Gallery offers the best view in the house.

Our Books

Examine the book shelves and you will find versions of the **siddur**, the daily prayer book, **chumash**, a printed version of the Torah and **machzor** for festival prayers. These books tend to have Hebrew on the right side with English on the left.

Hebrew is written from right to left in horizontal lines