**Welfare report for New Essex Masorti synagogue - September 2020**

Since I took over the role of welfare officer in November 2019 it has been an exceptionally busy time for maintaining contact with the community.

I have made over 200 calls to members, having spoken to people who I have never met but all of whom are glad that the shul is keeping in touch. Several older members have been contacted weekly and I am glad that some have been able to access the online services with the help of Eyal and Paul Adams.

I made a point of calling or messaging the families of children returning to school this month after an unprecedented break. Many were starting a new secondary school, which is always daunting and especially so this year.

Prior to yom tovim I have been in touch with lots of people, and am grateful for Eve, Cathy and Shim’s help in this and throughout the last 6 months. Members living in Southend always seem to be glad of a call to keep them in touch with NEMS and Rabbi Zahvit arranged a virtual tea party with Jacqui’s assistance.

Rabbi Zahavit and I have been in touch regualrly regarding vulnerable and bereaved members and her calls to them have been most welcomed.

Sadly there have been 6 bereavements in the community, and hospital stays for members, which have been hard in these restricted times when no visitors are allowed.

On a happier note, I have sent out 3 new babies cards ( 2 in one family!) and lots of birthday greetings, including 90th celebrations this week.

There have been new homes to celebrate too and a real sense of community even when we cannot be together in person.

Please G-d, the next year will be one of healthier and happier times. I am really looking forward to seeing the faces of people I have spoken with, and joining them in our new rooms in SWESRS.

Janet Kogan