



WHERE JEWISH VOTES MAY MATTER MOST:

**THE INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH POLICY RESEARCH
GUIDE TO THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTION IN THE UK**

JONATHAN BOYD

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Introduction

The 2015 UK election, which takes place on May 7, promises to be one of the closest in history. Recent polls have consistently placed David Cameron's Conservative Party and Ed Miliband's Labour Party more or less neck-and-neck, and with significant numbers registering their support for other parties, the results are too close to call.

As a group, Jews have little influence over the final results. Not only do they represent less than half a percent of the total population of the country, they also do not vote in any way as a bloc. That said, Jews do cluster geographically in certain parts of the country, so in a small number of constituencies, the way Jews vote can have some bearing on the results locally.

The question of how Jews vote has long been debated. The common wisdom, based on longstanding survey evidence, is that the political preferences of British Jews fall somewhat to the right of the British population as a whole – i.e. whatever the current national polls reveal, collectively, Jews tend to be more right-wing. This tilt to the right is not surprising given the proportion of British Jews in middle class professional occupations – there is a relationship between voting behaviour and socio-economic status. However, when one compares Jews with those among the general population who are in the equivalent social-economic groups, survey data show that British Jews fall consistently to the left of those in equivalent occupations. For example, Jewish doctors and health professionals are noticeably less likely to vote Conservative than non-Jewish colleagues in the same professions. The same is true for business people and managers.

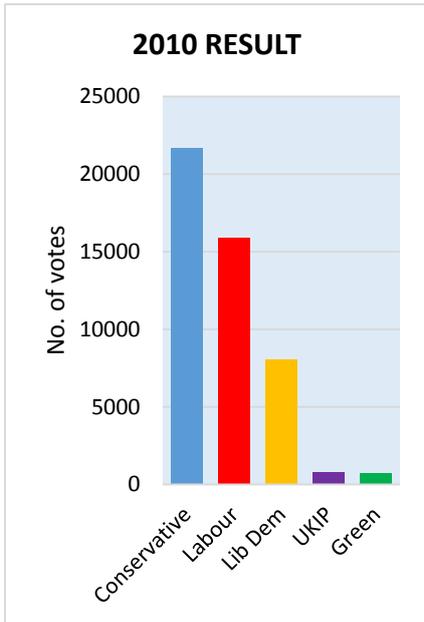
Survey data on Jews also reveal that there is a relationship between levels of religiosity and political preferences – the more observant tend to be more likely to vote Conservative, the more secular tend to be more likely to vote Labour. Education also plays a part – better educated people (measured by highest level of qualifications attained) tend to vote Labour. Age and gender are also factors, with males and older people more likely to vote Conservative than females and younger people. Therefore, as the demographic profile of the Jewish population changes, we would expect to see changes in how Jews vote, irrespective of political developments in the country. However, fundamentally, Jews are citizens like everyone else, and survey data demonstrate that they vote first and foremost as British citizens, concerned about exactly the same issues as everyone else, such as the economy, employment, health and education.

This report contains short profiles of the twenty constituencies around the country with the largest numbers of Jews living within them. Using data from the 2011 Census of England and Wales, it allows us to see that even in the constituencies with the largest Jewish populations, Jews comprise no more than about one in five of the electorate, and in most cases, far smaller proportions. Furthermore, in understanding the figures, it is important to bear in mind that the counts for Jews in this report include those aged under 18 who are ineligible to vote, whereas the counts for election results obviously only include those of voting age. Whilst the age profile of the Jewish population varies significantly depending on the geographical area investigated, across the country approximately 22% of the Jewish population is aged under 18. On the other hand, religion data from the census are based on a question which is optional, so all counts, by definition, understate the reality to some extent.

This analysis demonstrates that there are only five constituencies in the country where Jews comprise more than 10% of the electorate, and only six in which Jews are the largest religious minority. It further reveals that it is only mathematically possible in eight to ten constituencies for Jews to be able to overturn the existing majority (assuming non-Jews vote in 2015 as they did in 2010), and in as many as four of those cases, it would require a level of uniformity in Jewish voting patterns that is so statistically unlikely as to render that possibility meaningless.

In the first instance, this report profiles the ten constituencies around the country that are home to the largest Jewish populations, eight of which are in London and the surrounding area, and two of which are in Manchester. Six are currently held by the Conservatives, and four by Labour, and only two have a majority of less than 3,000.

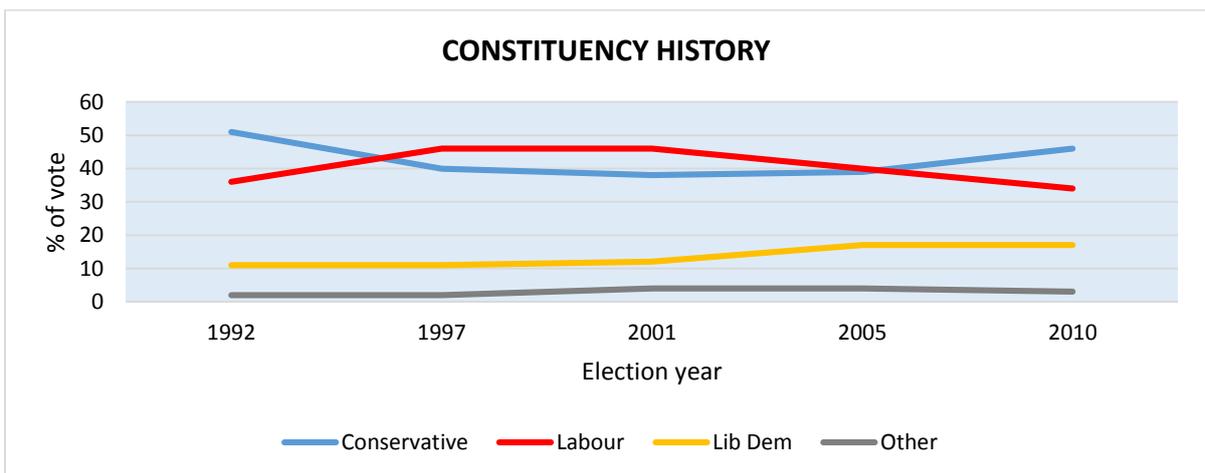
1. Finchley and Golders Green (Conservative)



Finchley and Golders Green has the largest Jewish population of any parliamentary constituency in the UK. It is home to 25,400 Jews, who constitute almost 10% of the entire Jewish population of England and Wales, and 21.1% of the constituency.

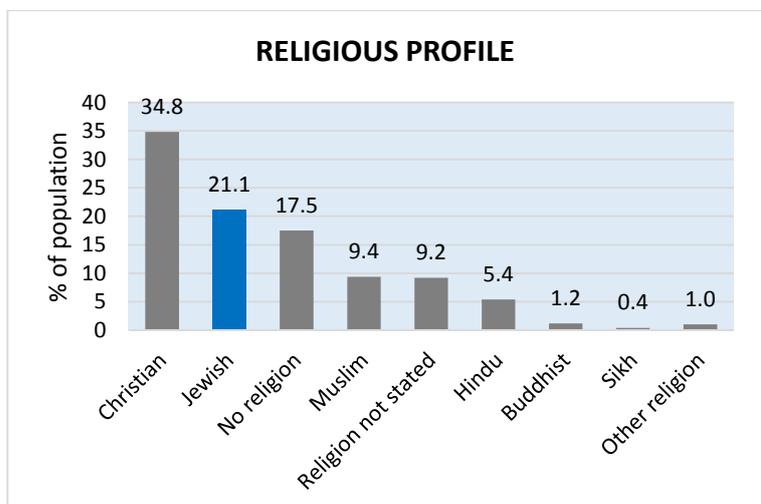
The seat is currently held by the Conservatives, represented by Mike Freer MP, who won it for the first time in 2010. Previously, it was held by Rudi Vis (Labour), but it is most commonly associated with Margaret Thatcher, who won it in every election from 1959 to 1992.

Mike Freer currently holds a majority of 5,809. His main challenger is the new Labour Party candidate Sarah Sackman. Other candidates are Jonathan Davies (Liberal Democrat), Richard King (UKIP) and Adele Ward (Green).

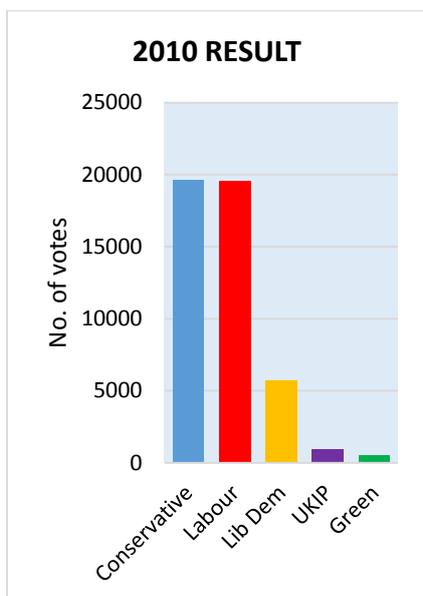


Jews constitute the largest minority in the constituency; there are more Jews living in Finchley and Golders Green than all other minority groups combined.

At the same time, it has become an increasingly multicultural area. Today, the total Christian population is slightly outnumbered by all those professing a minority religion.



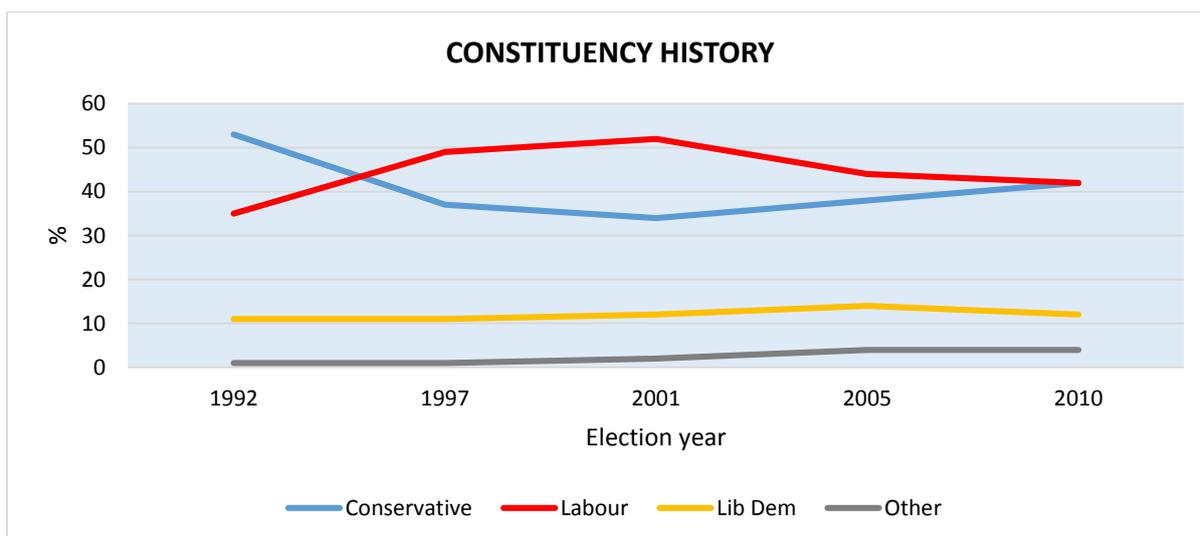
2. Hendon (Conservative)



There are 21,061 Jews living in the Hendon constituency, and they constitute 17% of the local electorate. In terms of actual numbers of Jews, the constituency comes second only to Finchley and Golders Green in size.

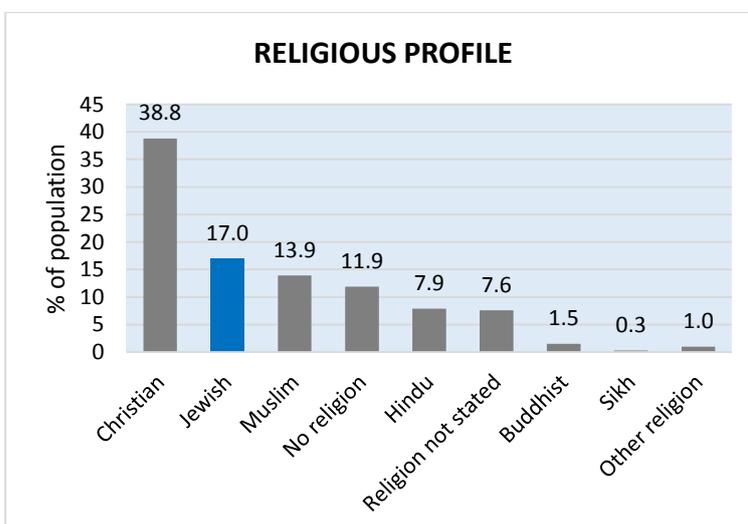
The seat is currently held by the Conservatives, but only just. Conservative MP Matthew Offord won it in 2010, but with one of the slimmest majorities in the entire country – just 106 votes. In the three previous elections, Labour secured quite comfortable majorities.

The defeated Labour Party candidate, Andrew Dismore, is standing again this time round, along with Alasdair Hill (Liberal Democrat), Raymond Shamash (UKIP) and Ben Samuel (Green).

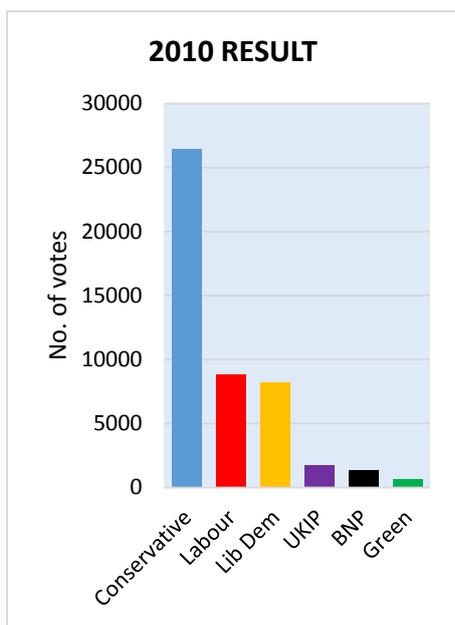


Hendon is one of just six parliamentary constituencies in the UK where Jews comprise the largest minority group. It includes strong Jewish communities in Hendon itself, as well as in Mill Hill and Edgware.

Like many other parts of London, the area is becoming increasingly multicultural, and there are quite sizeable Muslim and Hindu populations there.



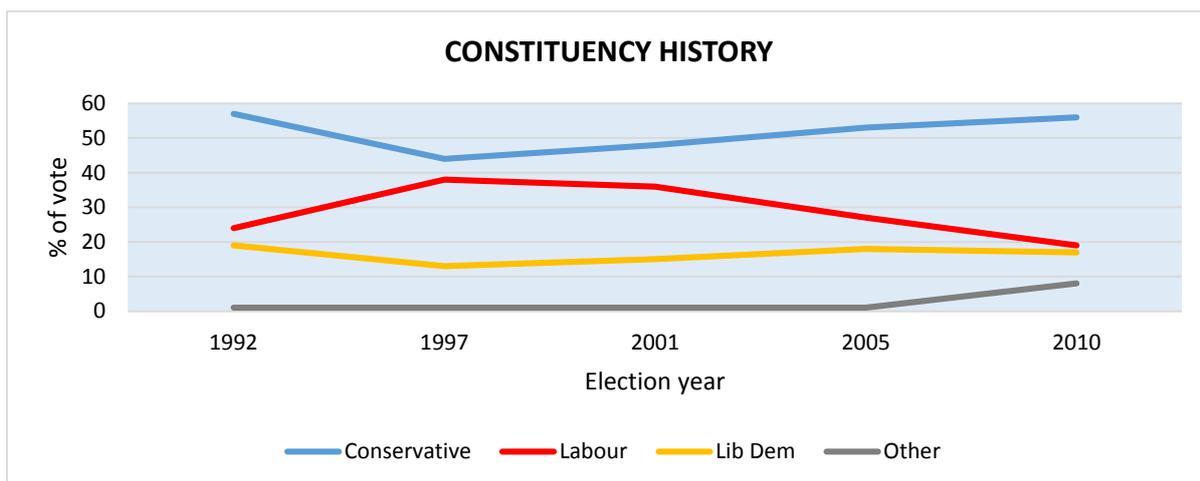
3. Hertsmere (Conservative)



There are 14,293 Jews living in the Hertsmere constituency, an area which has seen significant Jewish population growth in recent decades. The actual number of Jews living there is slightly smaller than in Hackney North and Stoke Newington, but they make up a slightly larger proportion of the constituency's electorate.

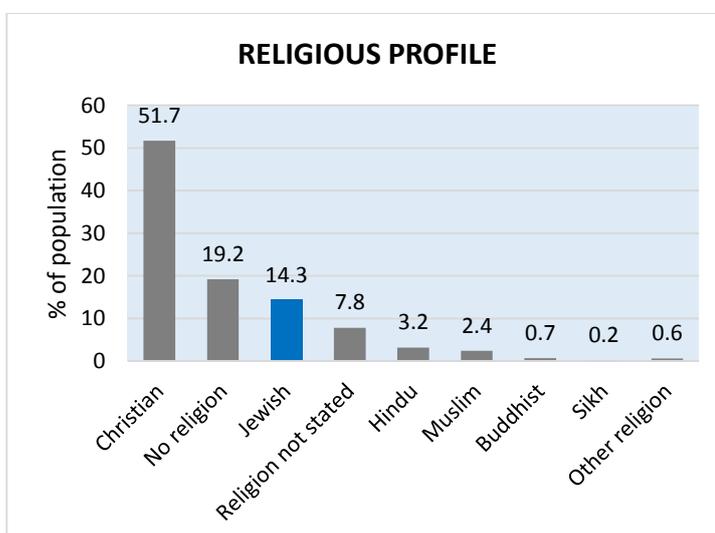
Hertsmere is a safe Conservative seat that has been held easily since it was first created in 1983, its most famous incumbent being Cecil Parkinson.

At present its MP is James Clappison, who has held the seat since 1992, and who won a majority of 17,605 in 2010. However, there is a new Conservative candidate this time round – Oliver Dowden – who is being challenged by Richard Butler (Labour), Sophie Bowler (Liberal Democrat) and Frank Ward (UKIP).

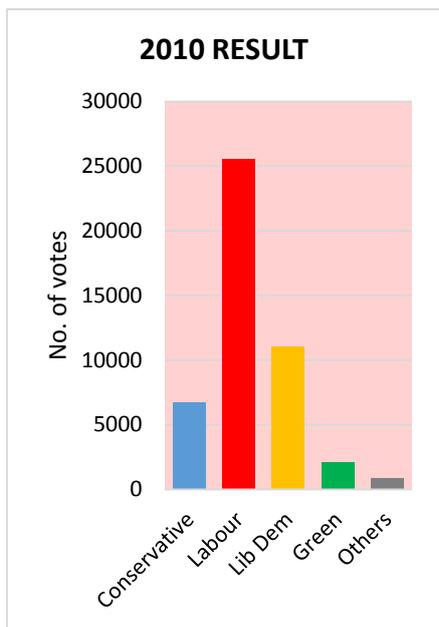


One of only six parliamentary constituencies in the country in which Jews comprise the largest religious minority (14.3% of the whole), and, like Finchley and Golders Green, there are more Jews living there than all other minorities combined.

The constituency incorporates the areas of Bushey, Borehamwood and Radlett, all of which have seen major Jewish population growth in recent times.



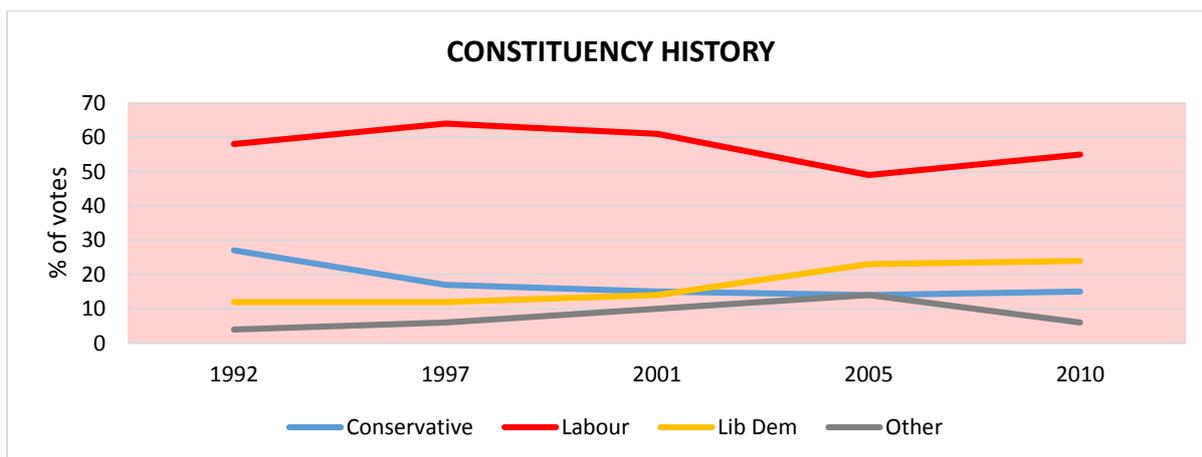
4. Hackney North and Stoke Newington (Labour)



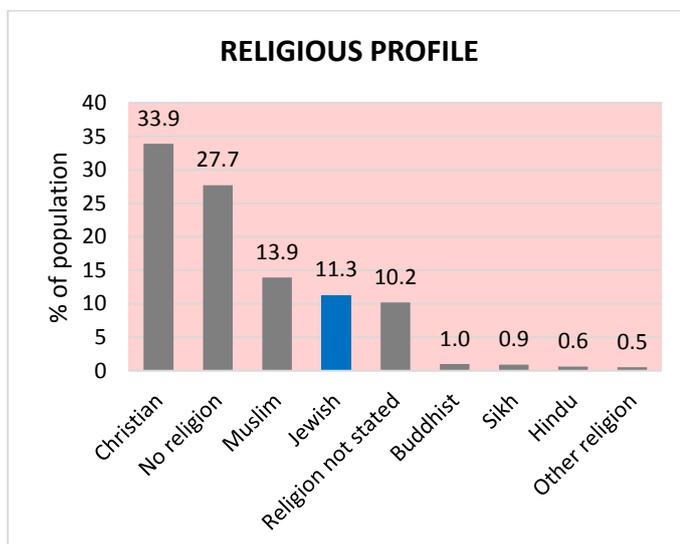
With 14,433 Jews living in the constituency, Hackney North and Stoke Newington is one of the most Jewish areas in the country. Inhabited predominantly by *haredi* Jews, the area has seen huge Jewish population growth in recent decades, largely due to high Jewish birth rates.

The constituency is a very safe Labour seat. It is currently held by Diane Abbott, who has been the sitting MP for the constituency since 1987, and who won a 14,461 (31.1%) majority in 2010 – which is more than the total number of Jews living in the constituency.

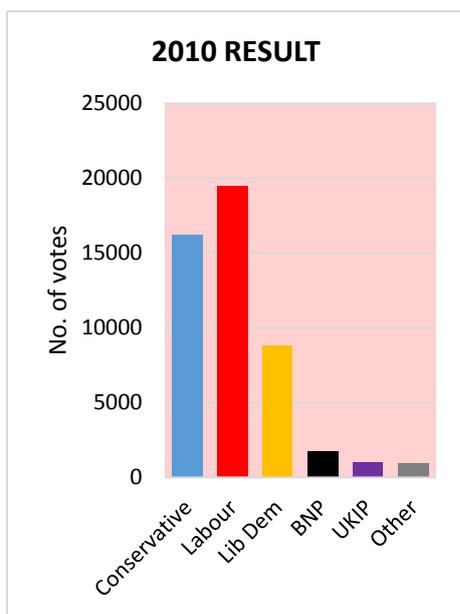
Alongside Abbott, who is running again, the seat is being contested by Amy Gray (Conservative), Simon De Deney (Liberal Democrat), Keith Fraser (UKIP), Heather Finlay (Green), Jonathan Silberman (Communist League) and Jon Homan (Animal Welfare).



Jews comprise an important part of the electorate in the constituency at 11.3%, but they are not the largest minority group. That position is held by the slightly larger Muslim population. It is also worth noting the sizeable 'No religion' group – an increasingly important part of the electorate nationally – who have no religious affiliation at all. Since this is a Jewish population that is expected to grow over time, Jews are likely to become an increasingly important part of the constituency's electorate.



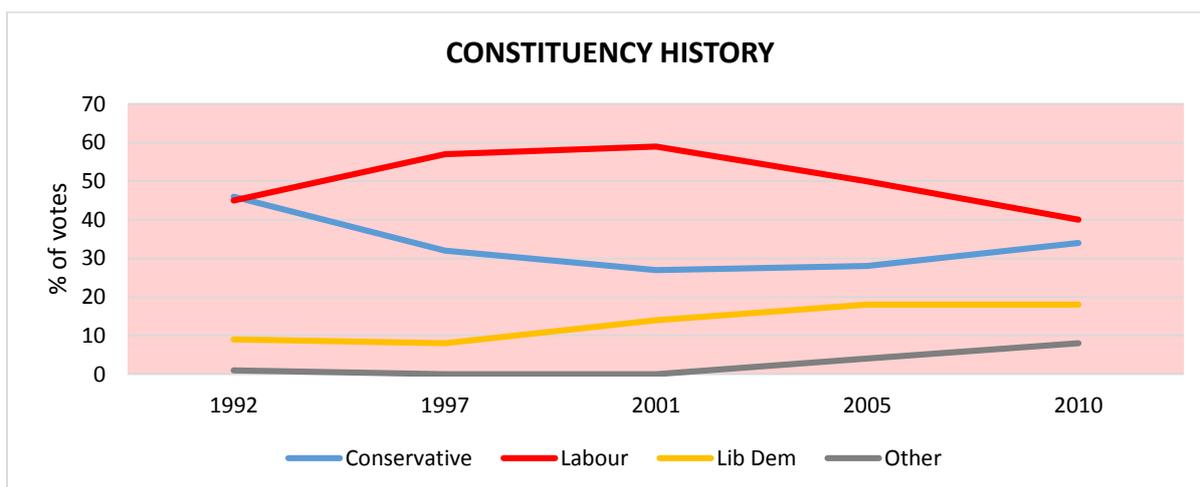
5. Bury South (Labour)



Bury South constituency is home to 9,970 Jews, who make up 10.2% of the electorate. It notably includes the areas of Prestwich and Whitefield in north Manchester, which have become centres of the *haredi* Jewish community, and which, like Hackney North and Stoke Newington in London, have seen significant Jewish population growth in recent times due to high birth rates.

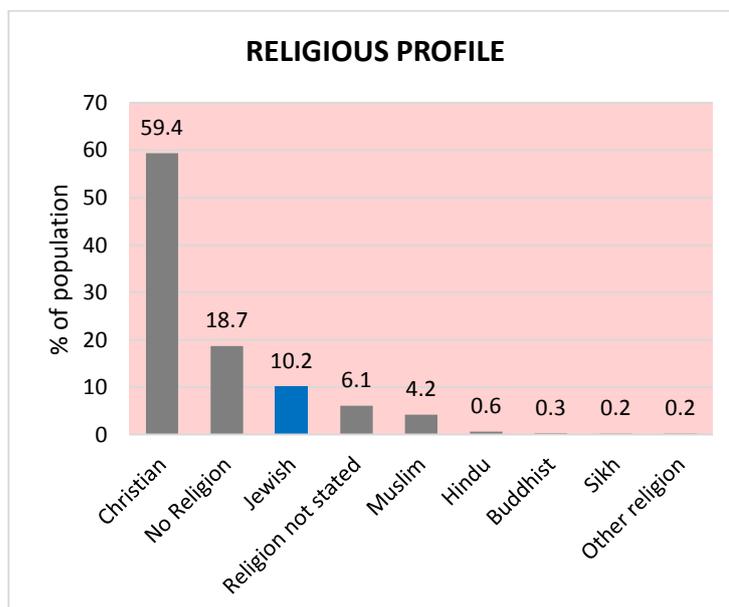
The constituency has been held by Labour since 1997 when Ivan Lewis, the current sitting MP, won it for the first time. He holds a majority of 3,292.

The seat is being contested in this election by Daniel Critchlow (Conservative), Paul Ankers (Liberal Democrat), Seamus Martin (UKIP), Glyn Heath (Green) and Valerie Morris (English Democrat).

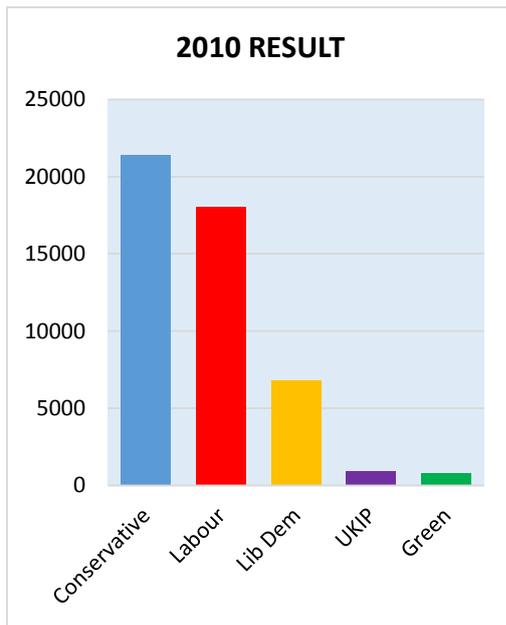


One in ten of the electorate is Jewish, and Jews make up the largest religious minority in the area, outstripping all other religious minorities put together. And this is a Jewish population that is growing over time, dominated as it is by *haredim*.

That said, the Jewish community in the area is actually split between different constituencies, as geographically, it straddles three different metropolitan areas: Bury, Salford and Manchester.



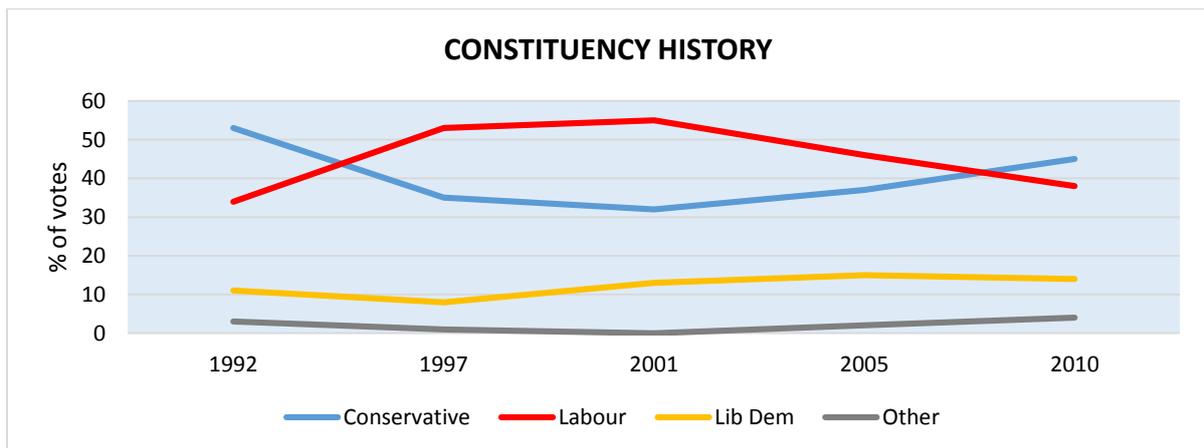
6. Harrow East (Conservative)



Harrow East is a Conservative marginal that has seen both Labour and Conservative victories in the past five national elections. The area is home to 7,553 Jews, constituting 7.3% of the constituency's population, but this is a declining Jewish population due primarily to ageing, as well as a degree of migration to other parts of London.

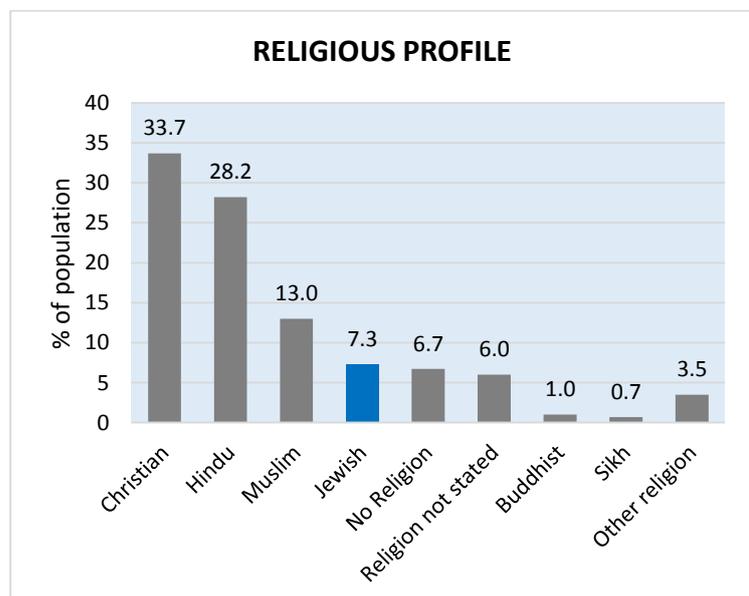
It is currently held by Bob Blackman, who first became an MP when he won the seat at the last election in 2010. He holds a majority of 3,403.

He is standing again this time, alongside Uma Kumaran (Labour), Ross Barlow (Liberal Democrat), Aidan Powlesland (UKIP), Emma Wallace (Green) and Nana Asante (Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition).

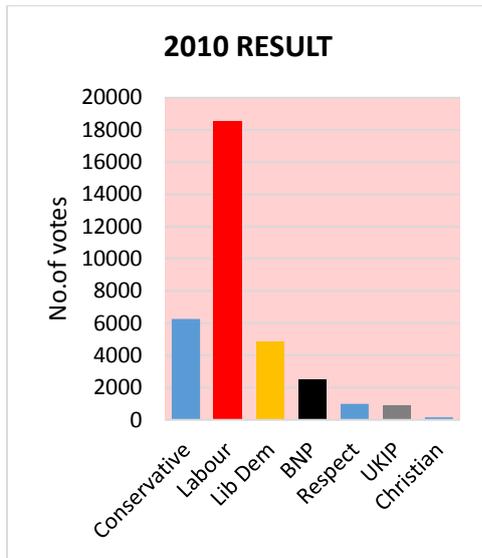


Harrow East is the most multicultural constituency of the top ten listed here. With its large Hindu and Muslim populations, it is the only one in which religious minorities constitute over half of the population in the area (53.7%), compared to a national average of 8.6%.

As a result, it also has a comparatively small number of people with no religion – just 6.7% of the total, compared to a national average of 25.1%.



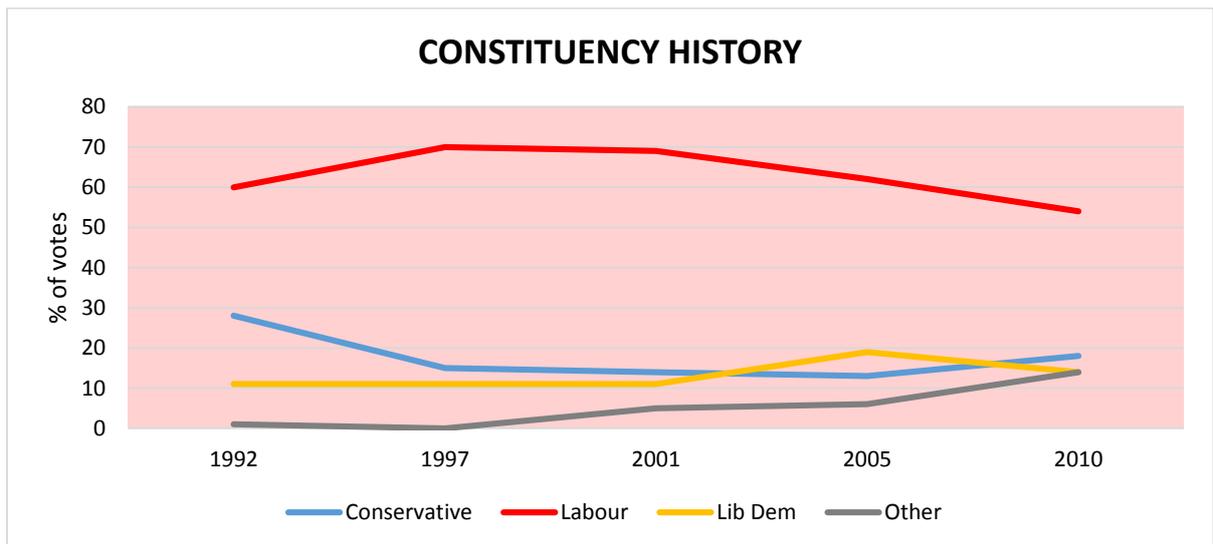
7. Blackley and Broughton (Labour)



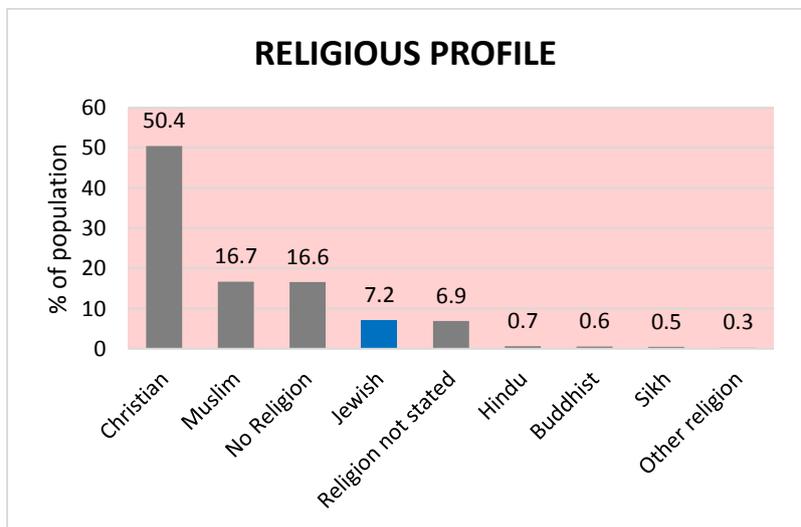
Whilst the constituency has undergone two boundary changes over the past couple of decades, Blackley and Broughton has been a safe Labour seat for years, and is currently held by Graham Stringer, who has been the sitting MP for the area since 1997.

The constituency has a large Jewish population – 7,991 people – largely based in Kersal and Broughton Park, and predominantly *haredi* – and they constitute 7.2% of the population.

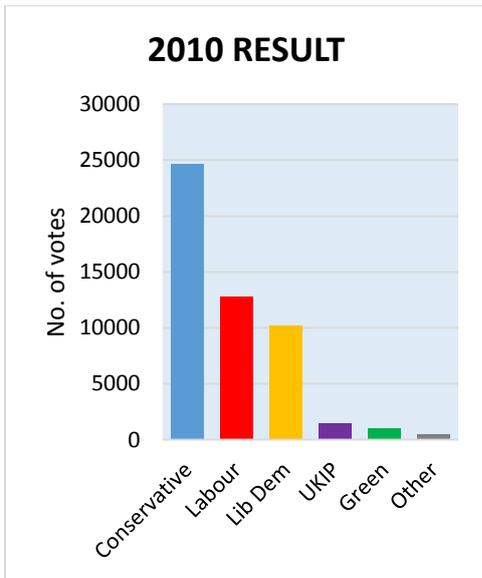
With a majority of 12,303, this is a Labour stronghold. It is being contested by Michelle Tanfield-Johnson (Conservative), Richard Gadsden (Liberal Democrat), Martin Power (UKIP) and David Jones (Green).



Blackley and Broughton is the area to the south of Bury South, and its Jewish population is very much part of the same *haredi* community situated across the constituency border. Yet it is noticeably smaller than the community in Bury South, and, from a parliamentary point of view, located in a more multicultural area with a strong Muslim population.



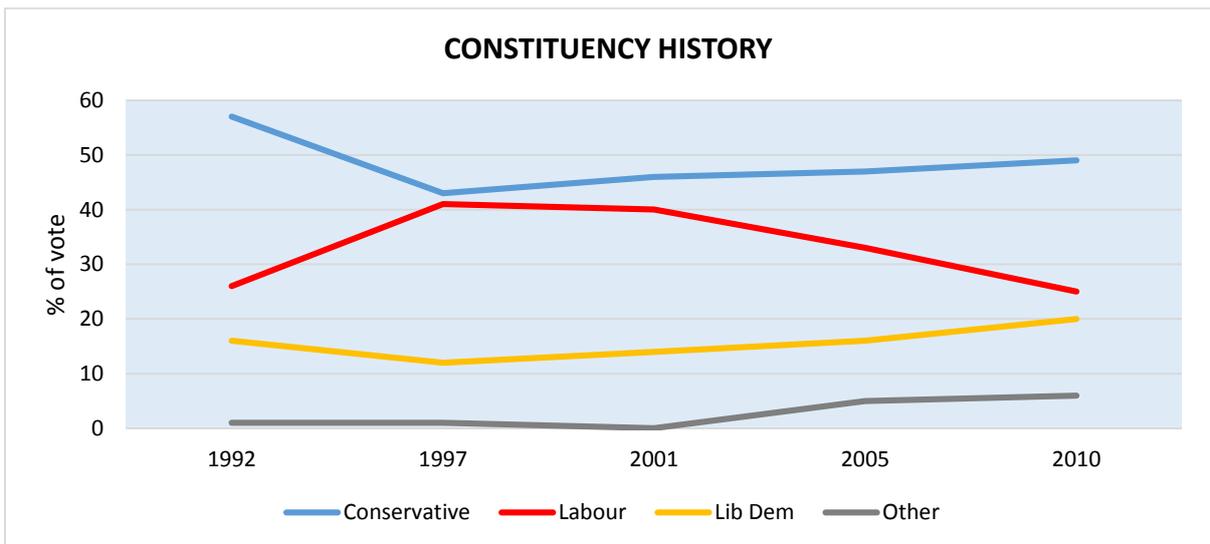
8. Chipping Barnet (Conservative)



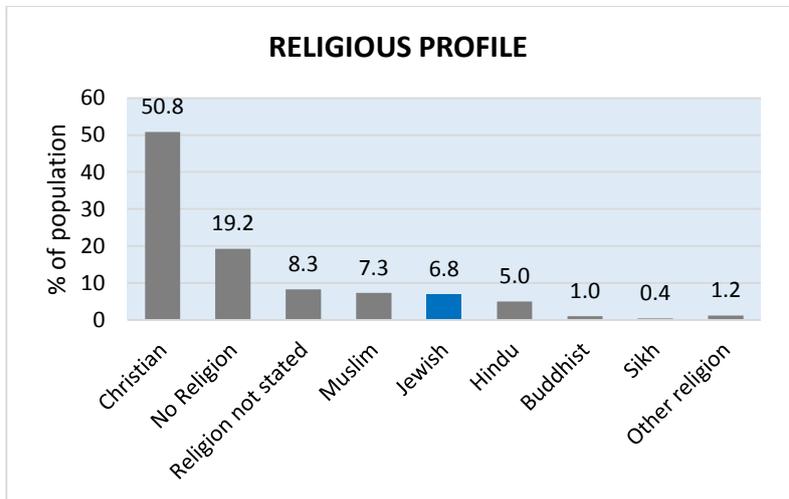
Despite two sets of boundary changes over the past couple of decades, Chipping Barnet has remained a very safe Conservative seat, currently held by Theresa Villiers with a majority of 11,927. She has been MP for the area since 2005, and a member of the Cabinet since 2010.

7,623 Jews live in the constituency – notably in Totteridge and Oakleigh Park – and comprise 6.8% of the population.

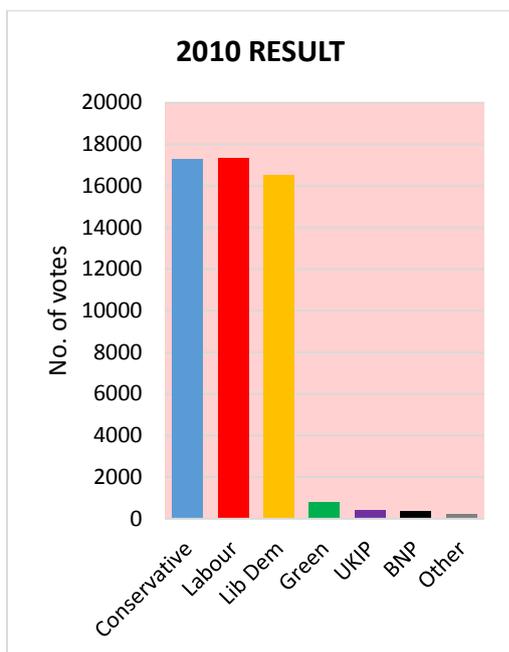
Villiers is standing again in 2015, and is being challenged by Amy Trevethan (Labour), Marisha Ray (Liberal Democrat), Victor Kaye (UKIP), A. M. Poppy (Green) and independent candidate Mehdi Akhavan.



Situated to the north of the Jewish heartland of Finchley and Golders Green, and to the north east of Hendon, Chipping Barnet has become increasingly diverse from a religious point of view, with similar size Jewish, Muslim and Hindu populations today. At the same time, compared to other parts of London, it retains quite high numbers of Christians.



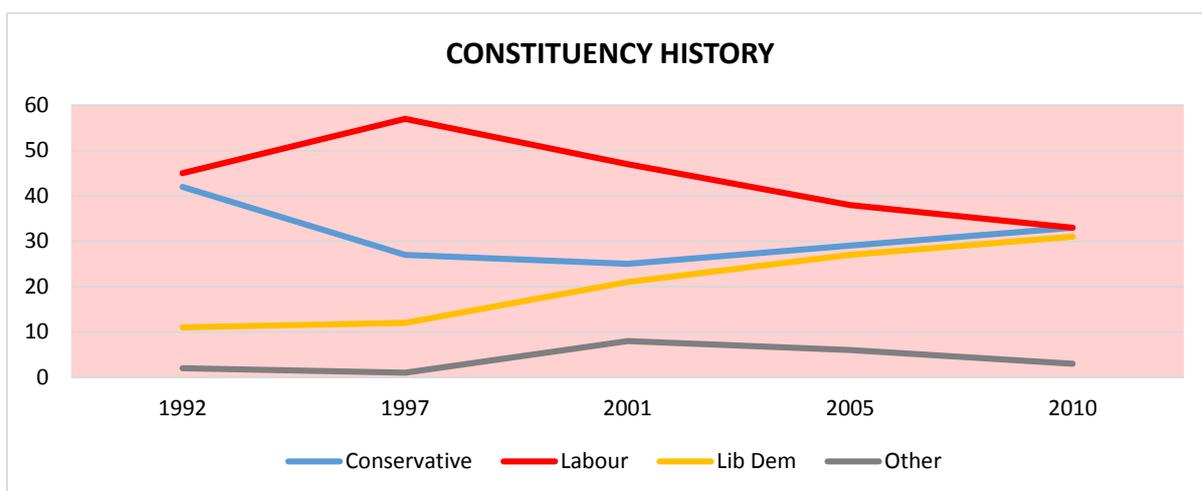
9. Hampstead and Kilburn (Labour)



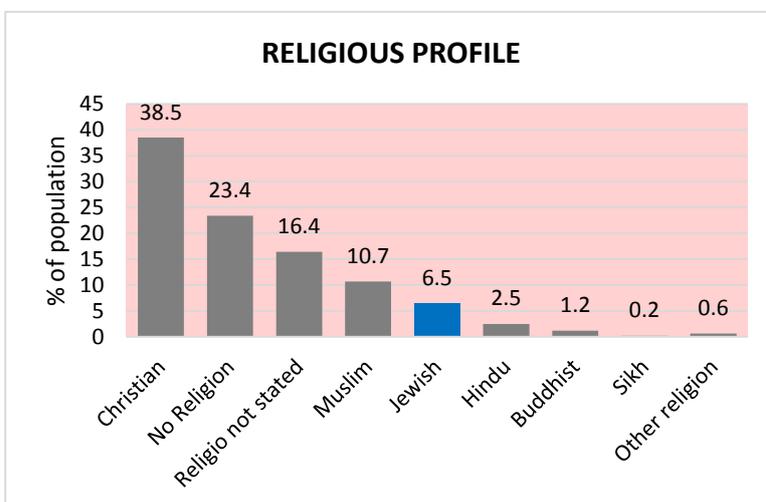
A seat that has long been held by Labour, Hampstead and Kilburn became a three-way marginal in 2010 when Glenda Jackson won it with a majority over the Conservatives of just 42, and only 799 more votes than the Liberal Democrats.

It is home to 8,482 Jews, making it the sixth largest Jewish population by constituency in the country, although they constitute 6.5% of the electorate in the area, which, proportionately, places them ninth on this list. The area includes large Jewish clusters in Frognal, Swiss Cottage, Hampstead and Belsize Park.

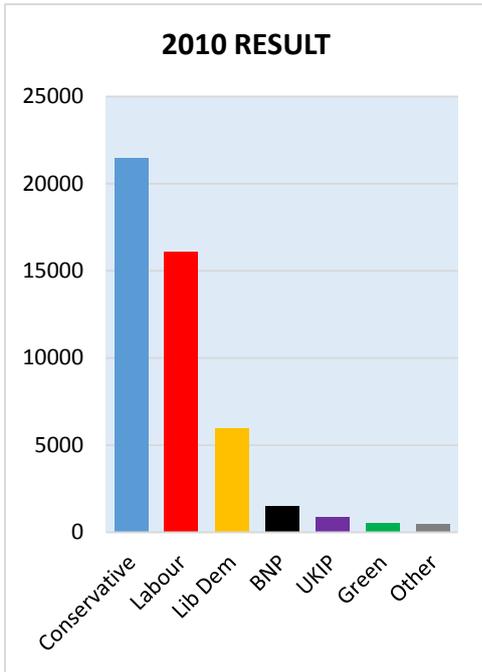
With Glenda Jackson standing down, the Labour candidate in 2015 is Tulip Siddiq, who is standing against Simon Marcus (Conservative), Maajid Nawaz (Liberal Democrat), Magnus Nielsen (UKIP), Rebecca Johnson (Green) and Robin Ellison (U Party).



The 'Religion not stated' group in this constituency is much larger than expected, and it is distinctly possible that a small proportion of these are ethnically or culturally Jewish. Yet even taking this into consideration, Jews are not the largest religious minority in this constituency – that position, as is the case nationally, is held by the Muslim population.



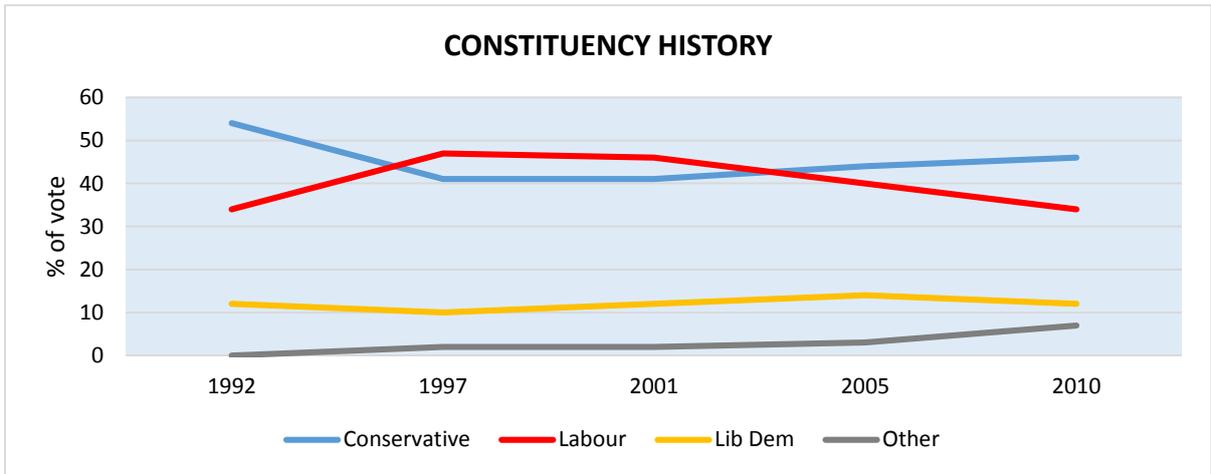
10. Ilford North (Conservative)



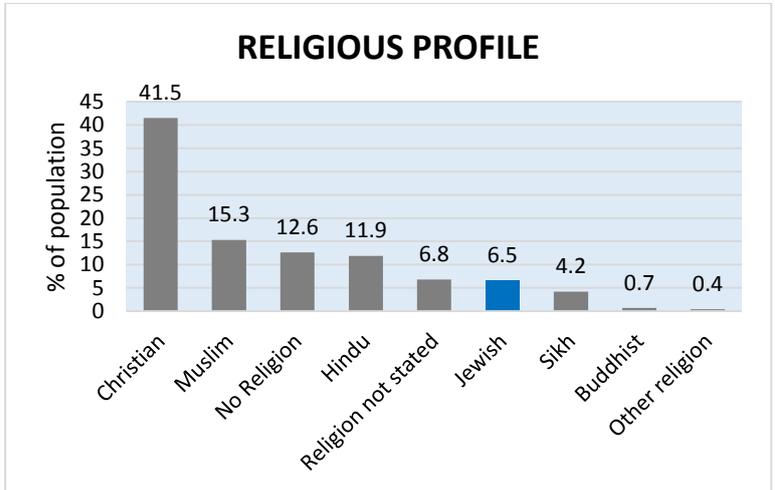
A semi-marginal Conservative seat, it has been held by Lee Scott since 2005. It has a Jewish population of 6,627, comprising 6.5% of the constituency, but numbers have been declining significantly in recent years as a result of ageing and migration to other parts of the country. Nevertheless, large and significant populations remain in the area – particularly in Barkingside – as well as several other parts of the constituency.

The Conservatives currently hold a majority of 5,404, but as Labour has won the seat twice in the past five elections, Ilford North is regarded as a semi-marginal.

Lee Scott is standing again, alongside Wes Streeting (Labour), Rich Clare (Liberal Democrat), Philip Hyde (UKIP), David Reynolds (Green) and independent candidate Doris Osen.



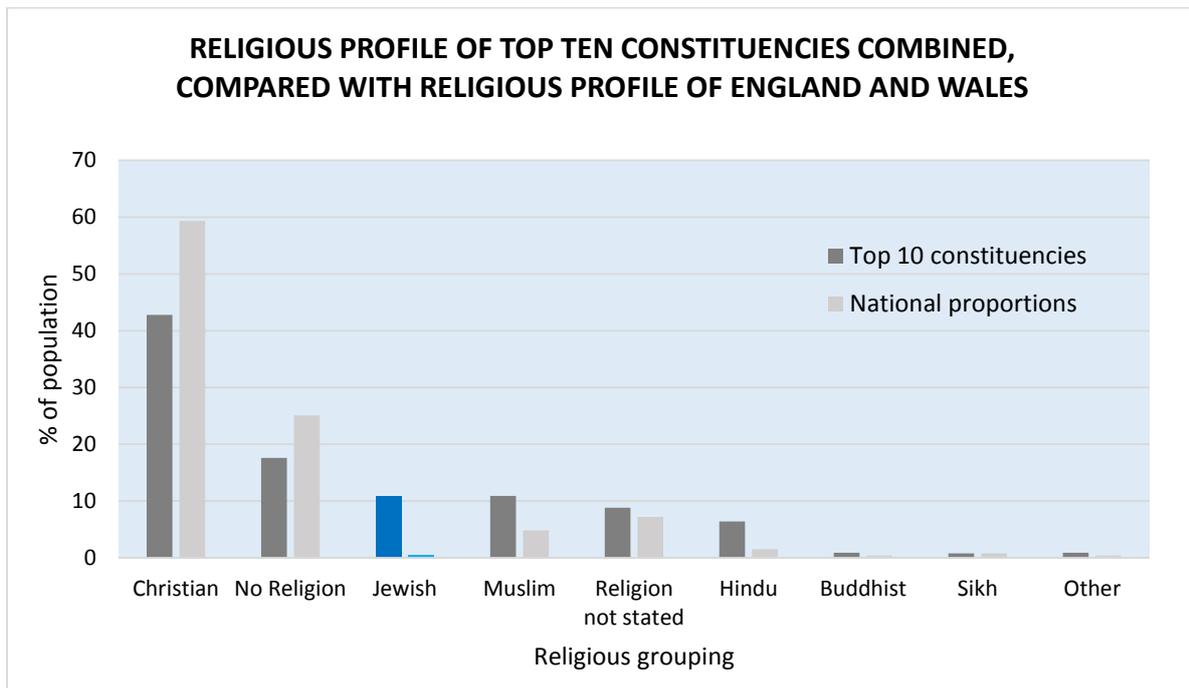
Jews comprise a declining proportion of the constituency's population, and hold less prominence as a religious minority than they once did due to the growth of other minorities – Muslims, Hindus, and, to a lesser extent, Sikhs. Ilford North is very multicultural – there are almost as many people from minority religions living there as there are Christians.



Summarising the top ten

Almost half of the country’s entire Jewish population lives in one of these ten constituencies. If Jews were equally distributed across the entire country, we would expect to find just 2% of them here, but for social, cultural and religious reasons, Jews, like all minority religious and ethnic groups, exhibit a tendency to cluster together in certain parts of the country. These ten areas, more than any others, are the centres of Jewish life.

The chart below explores how the proportions of different religious groups in these ten constituencies compares with the national average. Not surprisingly, Christians dominate – they comprise 42.8% of the population living in these areas, although that is a noticeably smaller proportion than their share across England and Wales, which stands at 59.3%. Those with no religion are the next largest group – they make up 17.6% of the whole here, which is also a significantly smaller proportion than they have nationally (25.1%). Neither of these facts is particularly surprising – the proportions of Christians and people with no religion are generally lower in London than elsewhere in the country, and seven of these constituencies are in Greater London. Jews are the next largest group, but only just – indeed, the total number of Jews living in these ten constituencies is almost exactly identical to the total number of Muslims: both comprise 10.9% of the total share. Yet, viewed from a national perspective, this presents a hugely distorted picture, because, whereas the Jews living in these areas make up just under half (46.9%) of the entire Jewish population of the country, the Muslims living here comprise just 4.5% of all Muslim in Britain today.



There are a disproportionate number of Hindus and Buddhists living in these places, although the numbers are fairly small – whilst Hindus comprise 1.5% of the total population of England and Wales, they make up 6.4% of the population in these constituencies, and whilst Buddhists comprise 0.4% of the total population of the country, they make up 0.9% of the population in these constituencies.

The picture can be seen in more detail by referring to the table below, which gives both the total counts for the different religious groups living in these ten constituencies, and the proportions they

comprise of the total population of each religious group. For example, there are 483,464 Christians living in these ten constituencies, and together, they make up 1.5% of the total Christian population of England and Wales. Given that 2% of Britain’s population lives in these ten areas, we would expect to see 2% of each religious group here, if they were distributed randomly across the country. What this tells us is that not only are these areas dramatically more Jewish than would normally be expected, they also tend to be considerably more multicultural, and considerably less Christian or atheist.

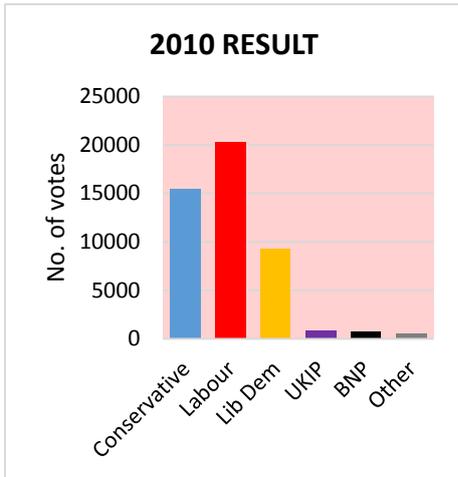
Religious group	Number	Proportion of whole
Christian	483,464	1.5%
No religion	199,080	1.4%
Jewish	123,433	46.9%
Muslim	122,599	4.5%
Religion not stated	99,032	2.5%
Hindu	71,888	8.8%
Buddhist	10,713	4.3%
Sikh	8,728	2.1%
Other religion	10,451	4.3%
Total	1,129,388	2.0%

The next section of this report focuses on the group of constituencies with the next largest Jewish populations – numbers 11 to 20 on the list. Six of these are in Greater London, and one – Epping Forest – borders it. The other three are in Leeds, Manchester and Gateshead. Five are currently held by the Conservatives, four by Labour, and one by the Liberal Democrats.

Census data reveal that there are 35,359 Jews living in this second group of ten constituencies, and together, they comprise 3.4% of the total population in the areas. From a national Jewish perspective, they make up 13.4% of the Jewish population of England and Wales, which means that an estimated 60% of all Jews in Britain live in one of the top twenty constituencies.

Only in Westminster North, which comes thirteenth on our list and includes the areas of St. John’s Wood and Maida Vale, is the voting Jewish population larger than the size of the majority held.

11. Leeds North East (Labour)

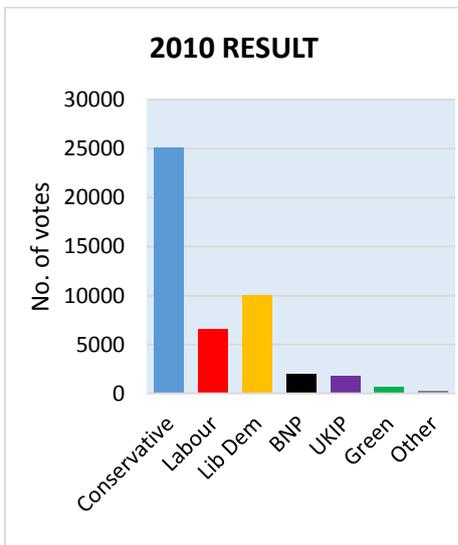


For many years, Leeds North East was a Conservative stronghold, famously associated with Sir Keith Joseph for thirty years. However, social change has affected the area, and since 1997, it has been held by Labour MP Fabian Hamilton, who won with a majority of 5,262 in 2010.

Census data indicate that there are 4,882 Jews living in the constituency, comprising 5.3% of the population. The largest religious minority is Muslim (9.7% of the population), and there is a sizeable Sikh population too (4.1%).

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
91,640	4,882	5.3%	47.4%	No religion (23.4%)	Muslim (9.7%)	Jewish (5.3%)

12. Epping Forest (Conservative)



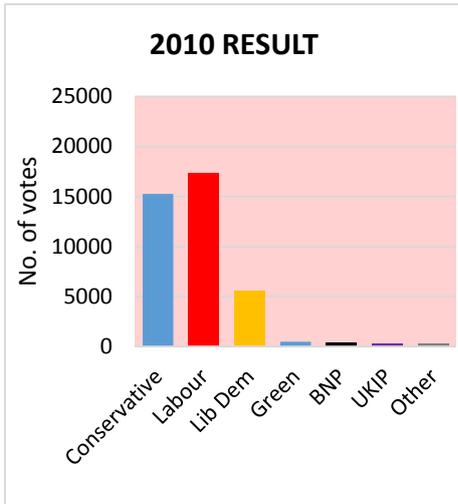
A very safe Conservative seat, Epping Forest constituency includes the areas of Chigwell, Buckhurst Hill and Loughton, all important centres of the Jewish population in the area, which numbers 3,606, and constitutes 3.8% of the total population.

Eleanor Laing has been the MP for the constituency since 1997, and is standing again in 2015. She holds a majority of 15,131. The seat has been held by the Conservatives ever since it was first established in 1974.

Epping Forest is one of only six constituencies in the entire country in which Jews comprise the largest religious minority.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
95,084	3,606	3.8%	60.1%	No religion (22.6%)	Jewish (3.8%)	Muslim (2.3%)

13. Westminster North (Labour)

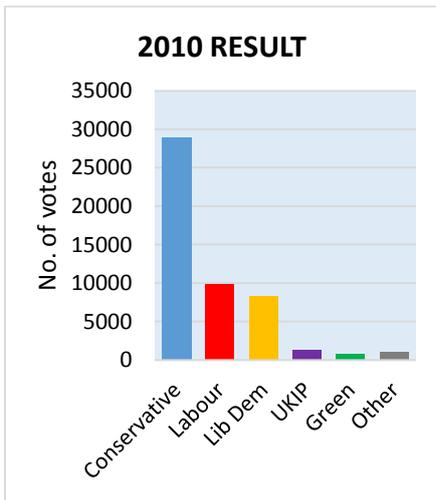


Westminster North stretches from Regents Park in the east to West Kilburn in the west, and includes the prosperous areas of St. John’s Wood and Maida Vale. It houses several flagship synagogues of various denominations, and there are 4,375 Jews living in the constituency, constituting 3.7% of the population in the area. It also houses the London Central Mosque, and there is a very large Muslim population in the constituency – 26,431 people (22.6% of the population).

Karen Buck has held the seat for Labour since 1997, but her majority has declined in each election since, from 14,657 in 1997 to just 2,126 in 2010.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
116,771	4,375	3.7%	41.7%	Muslim (22.6%)	Muslim (22.6%)	Jewish (3.7%)

14. Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner (Conservative)

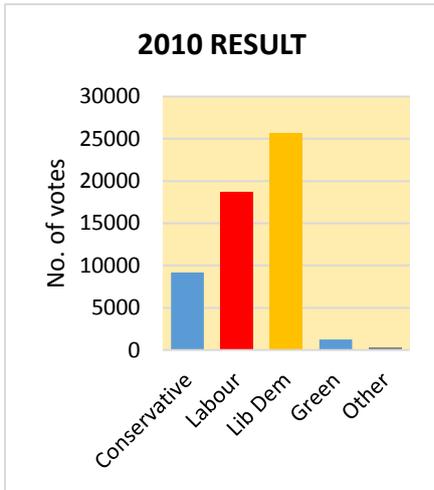


Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner constituency straddles the Hillingdon/Harrow border in north-west London. There are sizeable Jewish populations in Northwood, Pinner and Hatch End, and the constituency as a whole is home to 3,475 Jews, who, together, make up 3.7% of the area’s population. Jews are the third largest religious minority locally – they are outnumbered by both Hindus (11.2%) and Muslims (5.6%).

The constituency has been held by the Conservatives since it was established in 1950, and Nick Hurd, who first won the seat in 2005, currently holds a majority of 19,060.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
93,716	3,475	3.7%	52.2%	No religion (16.6%)	Hindu (11.2%)	Muslim (5.6%)

15. Hornsey and Wood Green (Liberal Democrat)

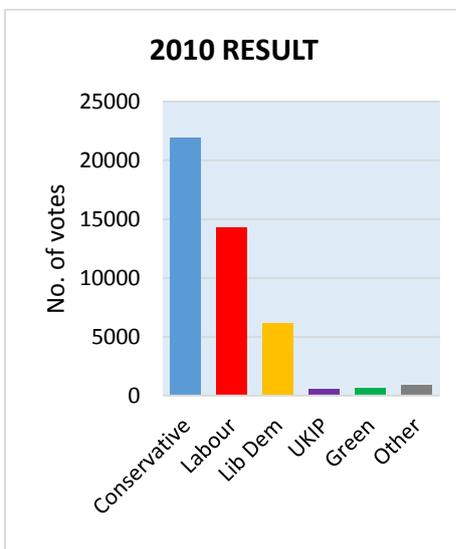


Hornsey and Wood Green in north London is the only constituency with a sizeable Jewish population that is held by the Liberal Democrats. Situated between Finchley and Golders Green to its west, and Tottenham and Hackney North and Stoke Newington to its east, it includes Muswell Hill and Crouch End, and is home to 4,218 Jews who make up 3.4% of the constituency’s population.

The Labour party held large majorities here in 1992, 1997 and 2001, but Lynne Featherstone won it for the Liberal Democrats at her third attempt in 2005, and held it again in 2010 with a majority of 6,875.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
125,689	4,218	3.4%	42.5%	No religion (32.2%)	Muslim (9.1%)	Jewish (3.4%)

16. Enfield, Southgate (Conservative)

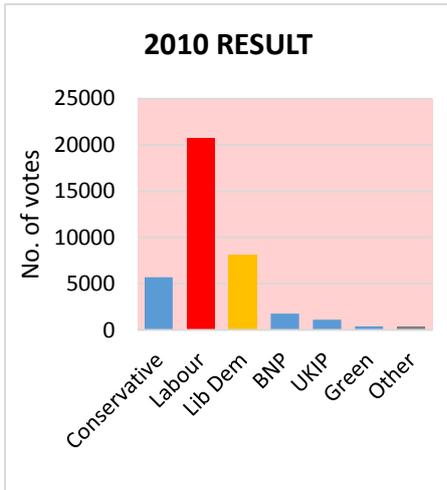


Enfield Southgate in north London has been won by the Conservatives in the past two elections, but it is still remembered for Stephen Twigg’s famous victory for Labour over Conservative Michael Portillo in 1997. It stretches from part of Bowes Park in the south to the prosperous area of Hadley Wood in the north, and is home to 3,243 Jews, comprising 3.3% of the constituency’s population. Yet Jews are one of several significant religious minorities in the area, and are outnumbered both by Muslims and Hindus.

Former Enfield councillor David Burrowes has been MP since his victory for the Conservatives in 2005. He holds a majority of 7,626.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
93,716	3,243	3.3%	53.0%	No religion (16.6%)	Muslim (11.2%)	Hindu (4.6%)

17. Gateshead (Labour)

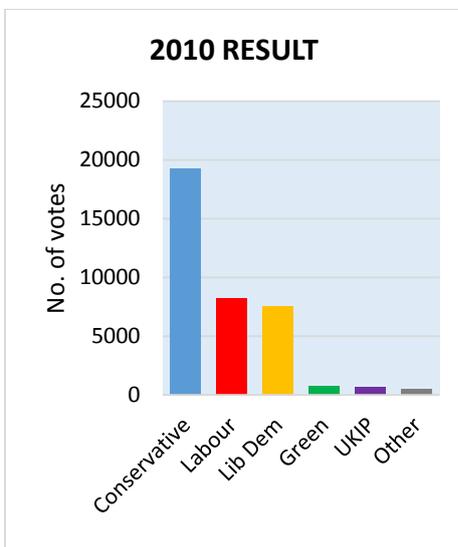


A safe Labour seat, Gateshead is in the North East of the country, on the south side of the River Tyne opposite Newcastle. In recent times, it has become an increasingly important centre of strictly Orthodox Judaism, and 2,892 Jews live in the parliamentary constituency, comprising 3.1% of the population. A predominantly white, working class area, Gateshead is one of just six constituencies in which Jews constitute the largest religious minority in the area.

The seat is held by Ian Mearns, who won it for the first time in 2010, after serving for many years as a local councillor. He holds a majority of 12,549.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
94,506	2,892	3.1%	62.8%	No religion (25.3%)	Jewish (3.1%)	Muslim (1.8%)

18. Cities of London and Westminster (Conservative)

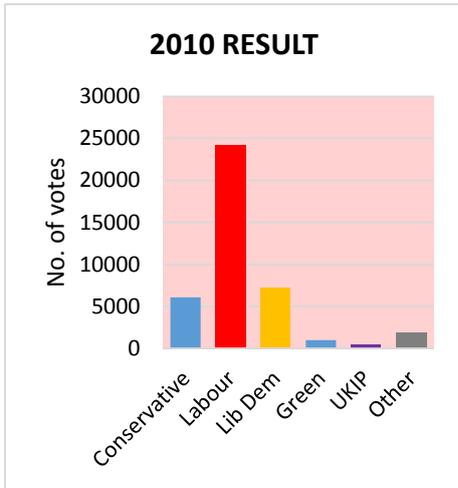


Stretching from Hyde Park in the west to the City of London in the east, Cities of London and Westminster constituency includes some of the most expensive real estate in the country, notably in areas such as Knightsbridge, Belgravia and Mayfair. A very safe Conservative seat, it has a Jewish population of 3,028, which represents 2.8% of the population in the area. The largest religious minority in the constituency, by some distance, is Muslim.

Mark Field was a Conservative councillor in Kensington and Chelsea for several years before becoming MP for the constituency in 2001. He currently holds a majority of 11,076.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
110,000	3,028	2.8%	47.7%	No religion (23.0%)	Muslim (12.8%)	Jewish (2.8%)

19. Tottenham (Labour)

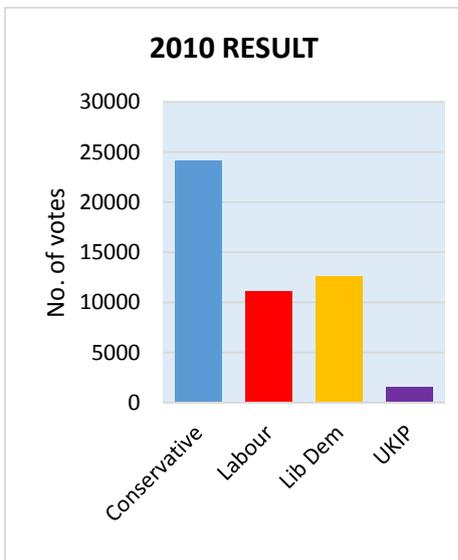


A very safe Labour seat, Tottenham constituency includes the eastern part of the Borough of Haringey, which, from a Jewish perspective, is predominantly home to the *haredi* community. While most *haredim* live in adjoining Hackney North and Stoke Newington, there are 3,425 Jews in Tottenham, comprising 2.7% of the constituency's population. The largest religious minority is Muslim, who comprise about one in five of the constituency's population.

The seat has been occupied by David Lammy since 2000, and he currently holds a comfortable majority of 16,931.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
129,237	3,425	2.7%	47.4%	Muslim (19.1%)	Muslim (19.1%)	Jewish (2.7%)

20. Altrincham and Sale West (Conservative)



Something of an anomaly in Greater Manchester, Altrincham and Sale West constituency was the only Conservative-held seat in the city from 2001 and 2010. Lying to the south-west of the city centre, it includes the areas of Bowden and Hale. It is home to a Jewish population of 2,215, which is 2.3% of the total population in the constituency.

The local MP is Graham Brady, who grew up in the area and has held the seat since 1997. He holds a strong majority of 11,595.

Only about 7.5% of the constituency's population is identified with a non-Christian religion, mostly small numbers of Muslims, Jews and Hindus.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
96,591	2,215	2.3%	65.3%	No religion (20.8%)	Muslim (3.1%)	Jewish (2.3%)

An overview of the top twenty constituencies

Rank	Constituency	Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious
1.	Finchley and Golders Green	120,608	25,400	21.1%	34.8%	JEWISH (21.1%)	JEWISH (21.1%)	Muslim (9.4%)
2.	Hendon	123,805	21,061	17.0%	38.8%	JEWISH (17.0%)	JEWISH (17.0%)	Muslim (13.9%)
3.	Hertsmere	100,031	14,293	14.3%	51.7%	No religion (19.2%)	JEWISH (14.3%)	Hindu (3.2%)
4.	Hackney North and Stoke Newington	128,036	14,433	11.3%	33.9%	Religion not stated (27.7%)	Muslim (13.9%)	JEWISH (11.3%)
5.	Bury South	97,842	9,970	10.2%	59.4%	No religion (18.7%)	JEWISH (10.2%)	Muslim (4.2%)
6.	Harrow East	103,761	7,553	7.3%	33.7%	Hindu (28.2%)	Hindu (28.2%)	Muslim (13.0%)
7.	Blackley and Broughton	110,754	7,991	7.2%	50.4%	Muslim (16.7%)	Muslim (16.7%)	JEWISH (7.2%)
8.	Chipping Barnet	111,973	7,623	6.8%	50.8%	No religion (19.2%)	Muslim (7.3%)	JEWISH (6.8%)
9.	Hampstead and Kilburn	129,989	8,482	6.5%	38.5%	No religion (23.4%)	Muslim (10.7%)	JEWISH (6.5%)
10.	Ilford North	102,589	6,627	6.5%	41.5%	Muslim (15.3%)	Muslim (15.3%)	Hindu (11.9%)
11.	Leeds North East	91,640	4,882	5.3%	47.4%	No religion (23.4%)	Muslim (9.7%)	JEWISH (5.3%)
12.	Epping Forest	95,084	3,606	3.8%	60.1%	No religion (22.6%)	JEWISH (3.8%)	Muslim (2.3%)
13.	Westminster North	116,771	4,375	3.7%	41.7%	Muslim (22.6%)	Muslim (22.6%)	JEWISH (3.7%)
14.	Ruslip, Northwood and Pinner	93,716	3,475	3.7%	52.2%	No religion (16.6%)	Hindu (11.2%)	Muslim (5.6%)
15.	Hornsey and Wood Green	125,689	4,218	3.4%	42.5%	No religion (32.2%)	Muslim (9.1%)	JEWISH (3.4%)
16.	Enfield Southgate	97,354	3,243	3.3%	53.0%	No religion (17.6%)	Muslim (11.1%)	Hindu (4.6%)
17.	Gateshead	94,506	2,892	3.1%	62.8%	No religion (25.3%)	JEWISH (3.1%)	Muslim (1.8%)
18.	Cities of London and Westminster	110,000	3,028	2.8%	47.7%	No religion (23.0%)	Muslim (12.8%)	JEWISH (2.8%)
19.	Tottenham	129,237	3,425	2.7%	47.4%	Muslim (19.1%)	Muslim (19.1%)	JEWISH (2.7%)
20.	Altrincham and Sale West	96,591	2,215	2.3%	65.3%	No religion (20.8%)	Muslim (3.1%)	JEWISH (2.3%)

Note: Highlighted colours refer to the political party that currently (before the 2015 election) holds the seat.

Other noteworthy constituencies in 2015

Two constituencies might have been included in this list given that they are home to more Jews than Altrincham and Sale West (in twentieth place on our list) – Kensington (currently Conservative), and Holborn and St Pancras (currently Labour), both in central London. However, they were excluded because even though more Jews live there, proportionately, the Jewish populations make up less of the total vote than in Altrincham and Sale West. Whereas Jews comprise 2.3% of the population of Altrincham and Sale West, they make up just 2.0% of the population of Kensington, and 1.9% of the population of Holborn and St Pancras. Jews in Chingford and Woodford Green (currently Conservative) also constitute 2.0% of the population in that constituency, but, in that case, there are 1,764 of them, rather fewer than the 2,215 in Altrincham and Sale West. Brent North (Labour) also has a fairly large Jewish population – 1,919 – but they make up about 1.5% of the electorate there. The only other constituencies with Jewish populations of more than 1,500 are Hove (currently Conservative) and Ilford South (currently Labour).

Beyond the twenty constituencies investigated so far, there are a small number of others around the country where the majorities held by the winning party in 2010 are smaller than the number of Jews living there. Perhaps the best example of this is Oxford West and Abingdon. Currently held by the Conservatives, the sitting Member of Parliament, Nicola Blackwood, holds a very slim majority of just 176, and the Jewish population living in the constituency numbers 589.

Another example is Thurrock to the east of Greater London on the Thames estuary. It is also held by the Conservatives (Jackie Doyle-Price), but she won with a majority of just 92 in 2010, and the Jewish population living in the constituency numbers 185.

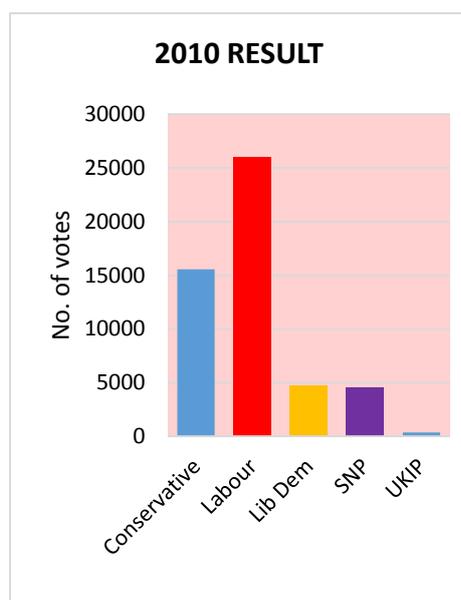
There are a few other cases where the total number of Jews living in a constituency is larger than the majority held, although once the numbers have been adjusted to remove the under-18s, this is no longer the case. Nevertheless, they are worth noting: Watford, where the Conservatives hold a majority of 1,425, and the Jewish population is 1,438; Sheffield Central, where Labour has a majority of 165 and the Jewish population numbers 198; and Solihull, where the Liberal Democrats have a majority of 175, and the Jewish population is 199.

Scotland

All of the data on the size of the Jewish populations in each constituency come from the 2011 Census. Whilst the census covers the whole of the United Kingdom, it is actually administered by three separate bodies: the Office for National Statistics (which covers England and Wales); National Records of Scotland, and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. As a result, the data gathered differ to some degree, and are managed and published on different timelines and in different formats.

Thus, whilst not always directly comparable, it is possible to develop a picture of the situation in these places. In almost all cases, the Jewish populations in both Scotland and Northern Ireland are too small to feature on the top twenty list. However, there is one exception. Scottish census data indicate that the largest Jewish population is based in East Renfrewshire, the constituency that is currently held by Jim Murphy (Labour). 2,399 Jews live in this council area (2.6% of the total), which would actually situate it in twentieth place on our list, behind Tottenham, but in front of Altrincham and Sale West. We have separated it out here because of the differences in how the data are collected and published, but there is no question that, from a Jewish perspective, East Renfrewshire is one of the constituencies that matters most.

East Renfrewshire (Labour)



East Renfrewshire (formerly known as Eastwood) has been held by Labour since 1997. It is situated to the south west of Glasgow, and includes the areas of Newton Mearns and Giffnock, both important centres of Scottish Jewish life. 2,399 Jews live here, representing 2.6% of the total population in the constituency.

The local MP is Jim Murphy, who has held the seat since 1997. He holds a strong majority of 10,420, but is facing a very strong challenge in 2015 from the SNP.

Religiously, the population in the area is predominantly Christian or atheist – only 7.3% is identified with a minority religion. Muslims comprise the largest group within these, slightly outnumbering Jews.

Total population	Total Jewish population	Percentage Jewish	Percentage Christian	Second largest religious grouping	Largest religious minority	Second largest religious minority
90,5741	2,399	2.6%	59.8%	No religion (26.5%)	Muslim (3.3%)	Jewish (2.6%)

Where Jewish votes could count most in 2015

Constituency	Winning party in 2010	MP in last parliament	Majority	Estimated size of Jewish population	Estimated no. of Jewish voters‡
Finchley and Golders Green	Conservative	Mike Freer	5,809	25,400	20,574
Hendon	Conservative	Matthew Offord	106	21,061	17,059
Hackney North and Stoke Newington	Labour	Diane Abbott	14,461	14,433	7,361
Hertsmere	Conservative	James Clappison	17,605	14,293	11,577
Bury South	Labour	Ivan Lewis	3,292	9,970	7,777
Hampstead and Kilburn	Labour	Glenda Jackson	42	8,482	6,870
Blackley and Broughton	Labour	Graham Stringer	12,303	7,991	4,075
Chipping Barnet	Conservative	Theresa Villiers	11,927	7,623	6,175
Harrow East	Conservative	Bob Blackman	3,403	7,553	6,118
Ilford North	Conservative	Lee Scott	5,404	6,627	5,368
Leeds North East	Labour	Fabian Hamilton	4,545	4,882	3,954
Westminster North	Labour	Karen Buck	2,126	4,375	3,544
Hornsey and Wood Green	Lib Dem	Lynne Featherstone	6,875	4,218	3,417
Epping Forest	Conservative	Eleanor Laing	15,131	3,606	2,921
Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner	Conservative	Nick Hurd	19,060	3,475	2,815

Constituency	Winning party in 2010	MP in last parliament	Majority	Estimated size of Jewish population	Estimated no. of Jewish voters
Tottenham	Labour	David Lammy	16,391	3,425	2,671
Enfield, Southgate	Conservative	David Burrowes	7,626	3,243	2,627
Cities of London and Westminster	Conservative	Mark Field	11,076	3,028	2,453
Gateshead	Labour	Ian Mearns	12,549	2,892	1,475
Holborn and St Pancras	Labour	Frank Dobson	9,942	2,588	2,096
East Renfrewshire	Labour	Jim Murphy	10,420	2,399	2,087
Kensington	Conservative	Sir Malcolm Rifkind	8,616	2,389	1,935
Altrincham and Sale West	Conservative	Graham Brady	11,595	2,215	1,794
Brent North	Labour	Barry Gardiner	8,028	1,919	2,364
Chingford and Woodford Green	Conservative	Iain Duncan Smith	12,963	1,764	1,426
Ilford South	Labour	Mike Gapes	11,287	1,643	1,331
Hove	Conservative	Mike Weatherley	1,868	1,578	1,278
Watford	Conservative	Richard Harrington	1,425	1,438	1,165
St Albans	Conservative	Anne Main	2,305	1,433	1,161
Chelsea and Fulham	Conservative	Greg Hands	16,722	1,421	1,151
South West Hertfordshire	Conservative	David Gauke	14,920	1,407	1,140
Richmond Park	Conservative	Zac Goldsmith	4,091	1,160	940
Cheadle	Lib Dem	Mark Hunter	3,272	1,131	916
Rochford and Southend East	Conservative	James Duddridge	11,050	1,129	914
Islington North	Labour	Jeremy Corbyn	12,401	1,105	895
Southend West	Conservative	David Amess	7,270	1,093	885
Oxford West and Abingdon	Conservative	Nicola Blackwood	176	589	477
Solihull	Labour	Lorely Burt	175	199	161
Sheffield Central	Labour	Paul Blomfield	165	198	160
Thurrock	Conservative	Jackie Doyle-Price	92	185	150

‡ These counts have been calculated using a formula that takes into consideration the age profile of the Jewish population in each constituency.

Summary

Overall, due to their small numbers, Jews have little collective capacity to influence the results of the election. Not only do they constitute just 0.5% of the total population, they also do not vote in any way as a bloc. There is evidence to indicate an overall leaning towards the Conservatives, but there is also evidence to suggest that Jews are more likely to vote Labour than those in similar socio-economic brackets to them. Jews comprise more than 10% of the electorate in just five constituencies – Finchley and Golders Green, Hendon, Hertsmere, Hackney North and Stoke Newington and Bury South – and they are the largest religious minority in just six – Finchley and Golders Green, Hendon, Hertsmere, Bury South, Epping Forest and Gateshead. The two constituencies in which Jews are most likely to play a key role in 2015 are Hendon and Hampstead and Kilburn – here a combination of the size of the Jewish population and the tiny majorities held in both places create a situation where how Jews decide to vote could well be critical. The particularly large Jewish populations in Finchley and Golders Green, Bury South and Harrow East will also be influential, not least because in all three cases they are substantially larger than the size of the majority held. By contrast, whilst politicians will certainly be eager to win Jewish votes in Hackney North and Stoke Newington and in Hertsmere, both are such

safe seats (the former for Labour, the latter for the Conservatives), that the results in both instances seem more or less certain. Beyond these places, smaller Jewish populations can be found in several parts of the country, particularly in a number of Greater London constituencies as well as several that border it. Particularly in some of the more marginal seats, every vote is critical, and whilst collectively, Jews will not swing the results in any specific direction, individually, they could play an important role.

Dr Jonathan Boyd is Executive Director of JPR. A specialist in the study of contemporary Jewry, he is a former Jerusalem Fellow at the Mandel Institute in Israel, and has held professional positions in research and policy at the JDC International Centre for Community Development, the Jewish Agency, UJIA and the Holocaust Educational Trust. He holds a doctorate in education from the University of Nottingham, a BA and MA in modern Jewish history from University College London, and has published widely on issues concerning Jews in the UK and across Europe.

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