# Governance in the Jewish voluntary sector

Margaret Harris
Colin Rochester

**The Institute for Jewish Policy Research** (JPR) is an independent think-tank that informs and influences policy, opinion and decision-making on social, political and cultural issues affecting Jewish life.

**Margaret Harris** is Professor of Voluntary Sector Organisation and chair of the Centre for Voluntary Action Research at Aston Business School, Birmingham. She was formerly assistant director of the Centre for Voluntary Organisation at the London School of Economics. She has also worked in the voluntary sector and in local government administration and policy research. She has published articles in both practitioner and academic journals on topics including voluntary sector boards and governance, the impact of public policy on the voluntary sector, volunteering, and the work of faith-based organizations and religious congregations. She was a member of the Commission on Representation of the Interests of the British Jewish Community (report published by JPR 2000) and the author of JPR's report entitled *The Jewish Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom: Its Role and Its Future* (1997) and *Organizing God's Work: Challenges for Churches and Synagogues* (Macmillan 1998). She is co-editor with David Billis of *Voluntary Agencies: Challenges of Organisations and Social Policy in Britain* (Palgrave 2001).

**Colin Rochester** is Consultancy Leader and Principal Lecturer in Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Management at the University of Surrey, Roehampton. He has worked in the voluntary and community sector for more than thirty years as practitioner, manager, board member, consultant and researcher. He devised and co-edited (with Justin Davis Smith and Rodney Hedley) *An Introduction to the Voluntary Sector* (Routledge 1995) and is co-editor (with Margaret Harris) of *Voluntary Organisations and Social Policy in Britain* (Palgrave 2001). Other recent publications include *Juggling on a Unicycle: A Handbook for Small Voluntary Agencies* (Centre for Voluntary Organisation, London School of Economics 1999) and *Action for Effective Boards* (National Housing Federation 2001).

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**Planning for Jewish communities** includes surveys and research into the infrastructure of organized Jewish communities, helping them develop policy recommendations and strategies for change in the welfare, educational and social sectors.

# Foreword

In contemporary western societies that are grappling with notions of democracy, representation, account-ability, power relations, transparency and responsibility, the issue of how organizations are governed has become crucial. In the governmental or public sector, as new transnational structures such as the European Union evolve, questions are now being asked about other kinds of restructuring, such as devolution or the reformulation of the role of local government. In the corporate world, too, there is a renewed interest in the obligations of boards to shareholders, the work force and the local community, as well as in the make-up, roles and responsibilities of those boards. So much so that a headline in a recent (10 February) issue of *The Economist* declared: THE FADING APPEAL OF THE BOARDROOM. DEMAND FOR OUTSIDE NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS IS RISING EVEN AS THE SUPPLY IS SHRINKING.

This report is thus both timely and relevant. It shifts the spotlight from governments and markets to another sector of society in which self-governing organizations predominate: charities, non-profit organizations, voluntary associations, clubs, self-help groups and co-operatives. This sector is variously known as the 'third sector', the 'voluntary sector', 'non-profit organizations', non-governmental organiza-tions (NGOs), 'civil society' or the 'social economy'. Its principal element, however, is 'voluntarism', the giving of time or money to a cause freely and without expectation of personal financial benefit. The organizations in this sector are not confined to self-help, advocacy, community development or 'top-up' groups; they are also engaged in the direct provision of essential services, such as welfare, health care, education and housing.

The UK Jewish voluntary sector is an interlocking network of organizations run largely for and by Jews. Yet it mirrors the national picture. It shares the same political, economic, legal and social environment. The Jewish voluntary sector developed over the past three centuries independently but in tandem with equivalent Christian and secular organizations. It is today a dense and sometimes overlapping structure of agencies of varying size and range of activities: social welfare agencies which provide care services; mem-bership associations and clubs; self-help and mutual aid groups; synagogues and confederations of synagogues; fundraising charities; grant-making trusts; educational institutions, including schools and museums; housing associations; pressure groups or 'advocacy groups'; *ad hoc* consultative or event-organizing groups; and umbrella, intermediary and representative bodies.

Philanthropy, or *tzedakah*, has traditionally been emphasized as an important responsibility in Jewish religious life. Historically, the biblical obligations attendant on social justice that underpin it largely created the momentum for the self-governing Jewish organizations dedicated to these ends. However, the nature of contemporary British Jews as a religio-ethnic group poses particular, additional and different challenges. The schismatic nature of the contempo-rary community raises the question of whether a single Jewish voluntary sector is either analytically or practically valid. What today is Jewish about it? Does it have a distinctive ethos? On a more tangible level, the specific features of contemporary British Jewry—brought about by demographic factors such as ageing, family breakdown, female employment, residential migration and *embourgeoisement*—also pose particular challenges for the voluntary sector.

Governance engages people in a form of public involvement that requires time and highly developed skills. An analogous activity is charitable giving, and it is the statistical data on the Jewish population's attitudes to giving that set the scene for this report. Thirty-two per cent of respondents to the 1995 JPR survey of *Social and political attitudes of British Jews* agreed that Jews have a special responsibility to engage in charitable giving. The findings of this and other research point to the important normative role that religious ideology plays for some Jews in under-pinning their motivation to give to charity. We also found that individuals do not give to charities indis-criminately but that a number of factors, such as religious outlook, group identification, income or age, are involved in the choosing of particular causes. Though 42 per cent of British Jews stated that their first choice was UK Jewish charitable causes, we also found that 80 per cent of the money was donated by only 9 per cent of donors. Therefore a special feature of the Jewish voluntary sector is an over-reliance on a small proportion of the relatively affluent Jewish population. The implications of this for governance require investigation.

This report by Margaret Harris and Colin Rochester is part of a large, long-lasting project entitled Long-term Planning for British Jewry. Long-term Planning is made up of a number of projects that slot together to form a comprehensive picture of British Jewry's communal organizations and services. The project addresses financial inputs, service delivery systems in education and welfare for older people, associational activities and human resources as well as governance. In

addition a market survey will be carried out to put together an up-to-date snapshot of the social and demographic profile of the Jewish population as well as an indication of the future demands Jewish households will make for the services provided by the Jewish voluntary sector. The information from all these pieces of research will feed into a strategic planning document that will assist the community in building its future.

For social planning purposes it was necessary at the outset of the project to map the parameters of the organized Jewish community. It emerged that the Jewish voluntary sector comprises just under 2,000 financially independent organizations. All of these require governance structures, as well as people to run them. Moreover, in order for the community to maintain this number of organizations, the income of the Jewish voluntary sector from all its funding streams has to be substantial. However, these financial resources had never been systematically addressed until JPR commissioned and published the recent report by Peter Halfpenny and Margaret Reid, *The financial resources of the UK Jewish voluntary sector.* This report estimated the income of the sector from all sources in 1997 at just over £500 million. This is several times the expected proportion of the UK national voluntary sector income. It is not surprising to find that the bulk of the total income of the Jewish sector was heavily concentrated in a few large and complex organizations, with the top 4 per cent generating 70 per cent of the total income. The mean average in the sector was £250,000 per annum but the median income was much lower at around £10,000. Nevertheless, there are nearly 2,000 organizations with around £500 million in income that need to be governed within a statutory legal and fiscal framework.

The existence of all these organizations requires that several thousand members of the Jewish community fill volunteer, unpaid posts on boards of trustees, take on the burdens of office and accept final legal and moral responsibility for the running of each organization. The Jewish voluntary sector is probably unique in the proportion of the population that is involved as trustees, as well as in the high level of contact between the trustee and client groups. All of which justify close attention to this report by Margaret Harris and Colin Rochester and to the intriguing issues regarding governance that it reveals.

Barry Kosmin
*Executive Director*

Jacqueline Goldberg
*Director of Research*

# 1 Introduction

## Aims of the study

This study of the governance of the Jewish voluntary sector was commissioned by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) and forms part of a four-year research programme—Long-term Planning for British Jewry—that aims to inform the development of policies and priorities for Jewish charities and other voluntary organizations. The broad aims of the governance study were:

- to facilitate the development of policies to in-crease the involvement of Jews in the governance of Jewish voluntary agencies; and

- to ensure that the best use is made of the com-munity's scarce human capital.

Specifically, the objective of this study was to ex-plore the issues and challenges faced by those who currently serve on the boards of Jewish voluntary agencies in the United Kingdom. We also hoped to contribute to debates prior to the drafting of the final strategic document for the Long-term Planning project.

## Research design

Our working definition of 'the voluntary sector' followed common usage in the United Kingdom and referred broadly to non-governmental, non-profit-seeking institutions. It included, but was not confined to, those organizations recognized as charities. The 'Jewish' voluntary sector was taken to include volun-tary organizations run by and/or for Jews (Harris 1997). For the purposes of the study, we also defined 'gov-erning bodies' and 'boards' broadly, to include group-ings often referred to in the Jewish community as 'lay leaders', such as 'management committees', 'coun-cils', 'executives' and 'trustees'. These are the group-ings that, ultimately, are legally and morally account-able for the work of voluntary organizations (Harris 2001). In this report, we refer interchangeably to the 'chairs' and 'chairpersons' of such governing bodies in the Jewish voluntary sector.

We used qualitative research methods. As the principal method of data collection we conducted semi-structured interviews with the chairpersons of thirty-six organizations. This was not a random sample; the organizations were selected to reflect the range and diversity of the Jewish voluntary sector from the database created by JPR at an earlier stage of the Long-term Planning project. In selecting the organizations to be approached for the study, the main variables taken into account were geographical

location, size, income, staffing, structure and field of operation. The interviews, which lasted between ninety minutes and two hours, focused on:

- their personal backgrounds;

- how chairpersons had been recruited and what had motivated them to undertake the role;

- their views on the rewards and the disadvantages of acting as chairperson;

- the composition of the governing body;

- the role of the governing body in the organization;

- the work of the governing body;

- decision-making;

- the perspectives of the chairpersons on issues facing their boards; and

- their perspectives on Jewish voluntary agencies generally.

We also collected complementary data from senior paid staff (drawn from the same or similar organiza-tions as the chairpersons we interviewed) by organiz-ing two focus groups, one in Manchester and one in London. By these means we aimed to obtain a range of perspectives on the work of boards in the Jewish voluntary sector and the issues facing their members. The findings are set out in sections 2–4 of this report.

We piloted our interview schedule in July and August 1999 and the fieldwork was undertaken during the period August 1999 to May 2000. The thirty-six people we interviewed were generous in giving time to talk to us and, once confidentiality and anonymity were assured, they were also very open with us in sharing their experiences and viewpoints. As re-searchers, we wish to acknowledge their invaluable help and also the important contributions of the paid staff who attended the two focus groups.

We did, however, experience some problems in identifying and contacting many of our respondents and we experienced a number of refusals to co-operate with the study from both chairpersons and paid staff. To some extent, this is understandable in a community that is security-conscious, and amongst people who are already giving many volunteer hours

to the Jewish community. At the same time, the inaccessibility of some Jewish communal leaders does raise broader issues about the transparency and accountability of the contemporary UK Jewish community that might merit further discussion.

## The respondents, their boards and their organizations
### Respondents
Two-thirds of the 36 participants interviewed for the study were male and one-third female. They tended to be middle-aged or older: 55 per cent of them were between 40 and 59 years old, and 37 per cent were aged 60 or over (for further details, see Table 1 in the Appendix). Three-quarters of them were in paid employment and most of these either ran their own businesses (28 per cent of the sample) or worked in a professional capacity, including as solicitors, chartered surveyors and an accountant (another 28 per cent of the total). They were generally well educated: more than 60 per cent had completed their full-time education at the age of 20 or above, while only 12 per cent had left school at 16 years or younger. And more than half had continued their studies on a part-time basis, usually in order to obtain a professional qualification.

All the interviewees were members of a synagogue while just over a third of them had been educated in Jewish schools. Between them they also had considerable experience of Jewish organizations other than the one selected for our study. Just under 80 per cent of the sample had past or present experience of governance in other Jewish bodies while half of the interviewees had been or were involved with other Jewish organizations in a different capacity.

The length of time participants had been members of the board of their organization varied considerably—from 2 to 53 years—with a median figure of 11 years. There was a similar variation in their length of service as chairs. While more than a third had been chair for two years or less, 22 per cent had held the position for more than ten years. Two very long-serving individuals (at 26 and 48 years respectively) help to produce an arithmetical mean of 6.5 years compared to the median figure of 3 (further details are given in Table 2 in the Appendix).

We also asked about interviewees' experience outside the Jewish voluntary sector. Just over a third were or had been board members in non-Jewish voluntary agencies; 22 per cent had experience of governance in the public sector and just under half were or had been board members of a private sector company.

### Their boards
The majority (78 per cent) of boards did not report to any other body but most of the organizations concerned (61 per cent) had smaller groupings that met between the meetings of the board itself (e.g. honorary officers or executives). The latter tended to be frequent events; more than half the boards in the sample met eight or more times a year, and a third met monthly or more frequently (fuller details are provided in Table 3 in the Appendix). Meetings were usually conducted in the evenings (72 per cent) rather than during the day (22 per cent), while 6 per cent met both in the evening *and* the daytime. They lasted for an average (mean) of two hours with a median figure of two-and-a-half hours. Details of the composition of the board were obtained for 21 of the 36 organizations included in the study. The estimated average age was between 40 and 59 for 71 per cent of these organizations. Men predominated on 45 per cent of the boards and women on 40 per cent, with the remainder being equally balanced on gender lines.

Nearly 60 per cent of the boards had no formal or systematic processes for the induction of new members, and only 30 per cent of them made training available to board members.

### Their organizations
There was considerable diversity in the scale of the resources available to the organizations studied. Judged by total annual income the sample was weighted towards those with more substantial budgets: 45 per cent had annual incomes of between £100,000 and a million pounds, a third received more than a million pounds a year while 21 per cent had less than £100,000 (details are given in Table 4 in the Appendix). Using another measure—the number of full-time equivalent staff—produced a rather different picture. Nearly one-third of the organizations studied had a staff of 4 or fewer, and only 17 per cent had 50 employees or more. Two agencies accounted for 2,000 of the total of 2,684 full-time equivalent staff employed by the organizations studied (see Table 5 in the Appendix). Similarly two organizations (not the same two) provided 6,500 of the total of 8,700 volunteers deployed by the participating organizations, and nearly half of those that involved volunteers in their work were dealing with fewer than 50 (Table 6 shows the details).

Other variations included the age of the organizations selected for study. Eighteen per cent of them were founded before 1900, 36 per cent in the first fifty years of the twentieth century and 36 per cent since 1950

(Table 7 in the Appendix). There was also diversity in field of activity, geographical scope and location. The biggest single field of activity was social welfare: a third of the organizations studied were active in this area. Organizations concerned with religion and education each contributed 19 per cent of the sample, with causes connected with Israel, youth, housing and cultural activities also featuring (Table 8). There was a fairly even split between national and UK-wide bodies (36 per cent), local organizations (33 per cent) and those serving a city or region (30 per cent). Like the Jewish community in general, organizations in the London area figured most heavily with 72 per cent of the sample based there, half of them in North-west London postcode districts. Outside of London we visited organizations in Birmingham, Brighton, Glasgow, Leeds and Manchester.

## This report

In the following pages of this report (Section 2) we describe the characteristics of the members of the boards we studied. We look specifically at their chairpersons and the issues they face in their board work. In Section 3 we look at the work done by boards: the functions they perform and how they make decisions. In Section 4 we look at the variety of problems and issues faced by contemporary Jewish governing bodies in the United Kingdom. We conclude in Section 5 with broader comments on the study findings and emerging practical implications.

Throughout the report we include direct quotations from interviews to convey the flavour of what was said to us and to reflect the range of perspectives shared with us. Quotations are inserted in the text *in italics*.

# 2 Board chairs and board members

## The motivation of chairpersons

In this section we look at why the chairpersons in the study first became involved with their organization or in some related form of voluntary work, their motivation to commit what was often substantial time and energy to the role of chairperson, and their perceptions of the rewards they received from their involvement.

### Initial involvement

A clear pattern emerged when we looked at why those we interviewed first became involved with their organization or in some related form of voluntary work. By far the most frequently cited route to involvement was having been asked to join by a member of their family, a friend or a Jewish colleague. This echoes studies of volunteering in the UK generally that indicate that people volunteer not in response to appeals but in response to specific invitations from people they know well (Davis Smith 1997). It also reflects studies of volunteering in the United States (Clary, Snyder and Ridge 1992) that suggest people are disposed to volunteer if volunteering is seen as a normal activity among the members of their circle of friends and colleagues.

Two of the study participants had been encouraged by friends to join local branches of their organization after the birth of their first children. Others had become involved through their parents, siblings or spouses. A third group had been approached by work colleagues or business associates. All of them had become involved with their organizations, essentially, as one said, *because I was asked and it seemed a useful thing to do that would help the community.*

A few interviewees mentioned other routes to involvement, mostly connected with a dawning or growing sense of their own Jewish identity. One had become involved as the result of time spent in an Israeli kibbutz at the time of the Six Day War. Another, the child of concentration camp survivors, had come into contact with the organization she had gone on to chair when she attended an exhibition of children's paintings found in Auschwitz. Another interviewee described how he had *felt naked* when he moved to a new area where *there was no community*, and was motivated to join a group that had come together to establish a synagogue.

Another initial motivation was an interest in a particular issue or field that also had a Jewish dimension. One person described his *passionate interest in education and in Jewish education in particular.* Another described *a combination of business, learning and the law [as] the sort of things that interested me.* One participant in the study had set up a new organization because nothing existed to meet the needs of Jewish people suffering from a particular disability, and she knew from her own experience that there was an unmet need.

### General motivations

While the reasons for their initial involvement were relatively simple to describe, the reasons why study participants had remained involved, often for long periods of time, and had taken on the onerous responsibilities of being chair, emerged in the interviews as being more complex and multiple in nature. For at least three-quarters of the study participants, however, many of their motivations were related in some way to the Jewish aspects of the work undertaken by the organization, to their own commitment to the Jewish community or to both.

Almost half of the interviewees mentioned as a key motivator the cause or work focus of the organization, where it was clear that the mission or activities were in some way Jewish. The activity might, for example, be religious—*we [wife and himself] do love our shul—we do really—we think it is very important for continuity and we want to keep it as healthy as possible*—or educational—*I think it is very difficult to overestimate the value of a successful Jewish school to the community.* If we add to this group the study participants who expressed a specific commitment to or interest in Israel, then this kind of motivation was mentioned by a majority of the interviewees.

Again, nearly half of the participants mentioned motivations that involved a general commitment to the Jewish community. For some this commitment was to doing charitable work in the community: *it's for the community and it really needs to be done.* For others it involved a wish to identify with the Jewish community: *we are a close community and I am a member of it.* And a third group expressed it as a sense of responsibility towards the community: *it's like being part of the family and doing the washing up. You are part of the Jewish community and there are various things that need to be done and you have an obligation to do your bit.*

More specifically, several of the interviewees were concerned about the future of the community and

about being *confident that my grandchildren will be Jewish*. One of them, for example, said that he gained satisfaction from *knowing that what the community provided for my son is being provided for other families and will be provided for future generations.*

In addition to the two main incentives—interest in a specific cause or activity that was Jewish and a more general commitment to the Jewish community—a variety of other motivations were mentioned by two or more of the participants in the study. For some it was the attraction of working for a pluralist organization that crossed the various religious divisions in the community: *all our members are Jewish, women who are Orthodox or unaffiliated and everything else in between, so we cover the whole spectrum.* Others referred to the tradition of 'Jewish kindness' or of helping somebody without any thought of reward. Some talked of loyalty to their parents or to the memory of a parent.

There were also some less 'worthy' motivations mentioned. For example, participants talked of the power that came with the post—*you sit at the head of [a major charity] and, if you want, you could be very influential in the community*—the joy of making things happen—*I run things. I treat it as a business. I enjoy doing it*—and, not least, the enjoyment of mixing socially with other Jews—*as well as educating, leading, working with young people you know you are going to meet some of your old friends.*

### Family influences

We noted at the beginning of this section the fact that people's initial involvement with an organization was often the result of a connection with a member of their family. The importance of family connections in motivating the participants in the study came through very clearly in the data. This went beyond drawing them in initially, to motivating them to 'do something' for the community, to remain involved—often for long periods—and to take on the position of chair, which was frequently an onerous and time-consuming commitment. Family influences often reinforced other motivations such as the commitment to a particular cause or the pleasure of mixing socially with other Jews.

Many of the interviewees referred to the way they had been brought up—by example or teaching or both—to give something to others in the Jewish community. One chair had been inspired by the example of his mother who had given her time to many causes until her death at the age of 97. Another, who had been *pointed . . . in the right direction*

by his father, explained: *why do I do it? I have had it instilled in me. My brother has a similar record of public service. We had instilled in us a sense of public duty, a desire to help other people. We are doing what we were told.* Another interviewee, whose parents had not themselves been active in communal affairs, nonetheless had got from them *a general philosophy that you should contribute to society. I was brought up to believe that if you saw somebody being robbed, you did something about it, you didn't pass by on the other side.*

A number referred to a family tradition of Jewish communal work in charities and other organizations. One participant had followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather and had begun work for his father's favourite charity at the age of 11. Another had acquired a family of this kind through marriage: *I married a lady whose father was always deeply involved and he saw to it that I became involved.*

Other influences mentioned by several interviewees included spouses and other close members of the family. Several chairs mentioned the importance of the support they received from their spouses in undertaking their communal work, or the fact that their partners were also actively involved in voluntary work in the Jewish community. Other participants referred to the involvement of other close family members in their organization and other communal activities. Another influence was the desire to 'put back' something into an organization from which other members of the family had benefitted—as pupils in Jewish schools, users of social welfare services or as a participant in a youth movement. And some were influenced by their commitment to the memory of a family member who was now dead. One interviewee, for example, was chair of the governors of a Jewish school whose current premises were built because of his father's vision and determination, even though he himself was not much interested in educational matters.

### Involvement in and through other Jewish organizations

A common view within the Jewish community is that the lay leadership is characterized by people who have multiple commitments and occupy senior roles and honorary offices in a number of Jewish voluntary organizations: the 'machers'. Our study data have enabled us to reassess this anecdotal assumption and provided us with some interesting new perspectives.

Among the participants in our study there was indeed a significant minority of people who appeared to have active commitments and even senior voluntary

roles in more than one Jewish organization. In some cases involvement with other organizations had been a consequence of people becoming chairs: as a result of becoming chair of one agency an interviewee had been *asked to join a sub-board of [its parent body] and then they said 'you are on the sub-board why not join the main board?' and I did. I feel a little over extended now.*

On the other hand there was a good deal of evidence from our study that acting as chair of a Jewish voluntary organization is for many a very time-consuming and onerous commitment and one that prevents active participation in any other voluntary organizations at the same time. Our interviewees estimated that the average amount of time per week that they committed to the role was between seven and nine hours, and a quarter of them were devoting more than two days per week to the organization they chaired. As a result many of those interviewed pointed out that they simply did not have the time for any other form of voluntary activity. Indeed some of them had turned down requests to join other organizations and others had shed commitments as the result of becoming chair: *I have always taken the view that you never have enough to give to something. If you can't honestly give adequate time to make a decent job of it, to make a real contribution to it, then you shouldn't do it. This is why I gave up one or two things when I became Chair . . . I really just couldn't see how they could all be done.*

Some of the participants in the study, moreover, were strongly of the opinion that it was wrong in principle for people to be involved in the governance of more than one organization. This was partly because of the time factor: *I don't think I would actually have anyone on the board who was a member of another governing body. I think you have to devote yourself to one. You can't spread your weight. We are asking people to play a very active role.* It was also a question of possible conflicts of interest. One chair had introduced an explicit policy to address the issue: *the previous honorary officers had too many commitments and too many conflicts of interest. I've asked my colleagues not to have any conflicts of interests. As far as I know none are involved in any other activity.*

We did find, however, that, while some of the interviewees had made a lifelong commitment to a single agency—*in my adult life I have concentrated on this one organization*—others had a history of 'serial commitment' to Jewish voluntary organizations. Although they felt it was not possible or wise to be actively involved in more than one organization at a time they had made an active contribution to a number of bodies during their life-time, moving from one to another after a period of service.

### Rewards

There are, of course, no *financial* rewards from acting as the chair of a Jewish voluntary organization. Indeed, some of those interviewed pointed out that *it costs me money—I never put in expenses*. However, most interviewees identified a number of different kinds of reward that had come from their experience as chair. This reflects the generic literature that confirms that volunteers are rarely solely altruistic in their motivations, that volunteering usually involves an implicit or explicit exchange of benefits between the volunteer and the organization (Van Til 1988).

Some of them stressed the benefits they had received in terms of personal learning and development. One chair had not only *learned a great deal about the Jewish community and the care provided in the voluntary and statutory sectors* but also *learned how to do accounts and deal with the Inland Revenue* as well as gaining skills in information technology. This interviewee also mentioned the friendship and camaraderie she had enjoyed in an experience that had *never a dull moment*, and others emphasized the social aspect and the enjoyment derived from being chair. As well as a sense of fun— *we have some good laughs*—this could include intellectual stimulus and *a great deal of activity and stimulation*. Some chairs felt there was a degree of prestige or status attached to the position: *if they wanted to reference me in* Who's Who *or something I can't say I'd throw that in the dustbin. Or when you see your picture in the* Jewish Chronicle *or some other paper—let's face it, we're human and we enjoy it.*

The two most commonly cited rewards, however, were the feeling that the interviewees had made a contribution to a cause with which they strongly identified and a sense of satisfaction that they were *doing a good job, a good job properly done*. The causes that moved participants included supporting projects in Israel, social welfare—*nothing is more fulfilling than . . . knowing that people with learning disabilities who would have been leading a sub-human life in hospital were living in a wonderful home*—and education—*I think education is a very noble thing to be involved in . . . I think there are a lot worse things to do with twenty hours of your time a week.* More generally chairs felt they were making a contribution to the future well-being of the Jewish community. The chair of one board of governors felt that the school would *create community spirit that,*

*provided they stay here, will sustain the community for the future.*

Some participants who were not in paid employment found the experience of being chair an alternative means of *having a proper job* that brought the opportunity *of doing something meaningful, making a difference somewhere along the way, even in a small way.* Others described *the satisfaction of doing something successfully—helping to build or improve something. That really gives me the kick.* And, for some, the degree of satisfaction was increased when they felt they had revived a failing organization: *I had much more pleasure in the first three years bringing this organization back to life. I felt I'd achieved something.*

### Motivation in a Jewish voluntary sector context

In general, our study suggested that the initial motivation of our interviewees to volunteer was not dissimilar from that which motivates volunteers generally; an invitation is received from somebody known and, where volunteering is a norm in one's social circle, the invitation is accepted. However, our findings suggest that in Jewish organizations there may be an additional and reinforcing factor. People are 'invited' to volunteer as in secular organizations but when they respond positively it is because the invitation taps into their predisposition to make a contribution of some kind to the Jewish community. Moreover, we found that the factors that maintained people's interest once they were recruited and that fuelled their commitment to an onerous and time-consuming role as chair also had a 'Jewish dimension'. People were attracted to the Jewish work focus of an organization or they had a general commitment to the Jewish community. Although they often had more instrumental motives as well, this group of volunteers was predisposed to making a contribution to the Jewish community. And this was associated with the importance in many cases of family connections and influences.

### Board members

In this subsection we turn our attention to the other members of the board. We look at how they are recruited and their backgrounds, the degree of continuity and rate of turnover among board members, the kinds of skills and other qualities they bring to the board, and the extent of their commitment.

### Recruitment

We identified three different ways in which the organizations in the study approached the recruitment of board members. The first—and most com-

mon—method was for the chair, with or without the help of other officers or the members of the board, to identify potential candidates and invite them to join the governing body. One chair reported that she had *started with a clean sheet* and had *hand-selected people I thought would have an idea of how to run this kind of agency.* Another had reconstituted his committee and *picked the people we wanted and dropped those we didn't.*

The second approach to recruitment was found in the minority of the study organizations that were federal in structure. In these cases, board members tended to be drawn from people who had been active in their local branches or affiliates. *There are lots of local committees out there and that's how the board and the president are elected. It's from all the different committees, from the grassroots.*

The third route to board membership was nomination by another organization or group of people. This was commonly seen in the schools in which a majority of the governors were appointed by the body that had founded the school while others were elected by staff and parents from among their peers.

On closer examination the differences between these three approaches were less marked. While there had been contested elections in some federal organizations—*at the last election there were a number of candidates and one got in by only one vote*—in other cases the democratic process was not left to produce results without some help or interference from the chair and other national honorary officers. One chair had got people involved in her board partly *through the grassroots* and partly *because I head-hunted them* from elsewhere. Another described how she and other national officers visited local affiliates from time to time in order to 'talent-spot' potential board members.

Similarly the bodies that appointed Foundation Governors to schools tended to be guided in their choice by the chair and headteacher. *It's usually a case of the headteacher and me discussing people we know or people who have been brought to our attention. We might then try to get to know people and we then make a proposal to the foundation body . . . they largely leave it to us to put forward people's names. I have tried to make it more open by asking the other governors to think of people they know and have asked people like the school secretary. The school secretary sees a lot of parents and gets a good idea about who might be a good choice. I have tried to make it more open. But it is the governors who*

*decide who the governors are going to be.* Other governors were elected by their fellow parents and even here the chair and headteacher might 'talent-spot' possible candidates and encourage them to stand for election.

In general, then, the people running many of the organizations in the study were *self-perpetuating and that is one of their strengths as well as a weakness.* This approach to recruitment had been adopted for two reasons. In the first place it was an effective way of getting people to join the board; there was wide agreement that people would rarely *put themselves forward* but needed to be approached. Second, it was seen as a means of ensuring that board members would be likely to make a useful contribution: the alternative was to rely on a process of election *where you tend to get people you don't know personally who may be charismatic but are not necessarily the best people to have on a committee.* In any case, it was rare for there to be a contested election: *it is just the people who are prepared to do the job.*

Many of our interviewees felt that this self-perpetuating or self-renewing approach of hand-picking board members had served them well. But recruitment to boards was not without its problems and issues. Rather than selecting from a strong field, some organizations found it hard to find anyone willing to become a member: one chair said that it was *hard to get nominations so we don't want to turn down anyone who is willing to stand—especially nowadays.* Another organization did *have discussions about the composition of the board but it is mostly desperation about who is around. People don't have the time.* It was especially difficult to find people who were willing to take on the responsibilities of honorary office. One organization had been unable to recruit a deputy chair and had been left leaderless when the chair was in hospital. Another had lost its treasurer to illness and had not been able to find a replacement.

These difficulties surrounding recruitment to boards reflects recent studies of UK voluntary organizations generally, especially smaller and local ones (Harris 2001, Rochester 1999). But the extent to which Jewish agencies experience difficulty recruiting new board members varies from organization to organization. Successful recruitment in our study was associated with the nature of the cause, the profile or prestige of the organization itself, and the extent to which it had a natural constituency, such as parents or relatives of people with health or social care needs, from which board members might be drawn. It was also suggested that dynamic agencies encourage

involvement: *people are happy to join when things are going well but nobody wants a bundle of trouble.*

The great majority of those interviewed had shared the experience of finding it extremely difficult to recruit younger people as board members. A small number of very high-profile agencies were optimistic about their ability to recruit younger board members, and the representatives of youth organizations we interviewed could point to high levels of participation in their governance structures. Most organizations, however, had made little headway in reducing the average age of their board members. While interviewees were concerned to prevent their organizations becoming *a club for retired old men* or to rid themselves of an historical image of being run by middle-aged rich men, they had little success in recruiting younger people. Although it is known that governing bodies of UK voluntary agencies in general are dominated by older people and by men (Sargant and Kirkland 1995), and that younger adults are less likely to take part in volunteering of any kind (Davis Smith 1997), many in our study saw this as a special problem for Jewish organizations and one due to the changing demographic profile of the community and its changing values.

Thus, one view expressed was that younger people had to work long hours as they made their way in their professions and they needed to spend what little leisure time they had with their young children. *It's easier to get them to do tasks, set-pieces, rather than end-to-end governing. Younger people in the main (thirties and forties) are in business and have growing families and they don't have the amount of time you need today to spend in organizations like this one.* Another was that a general shift in societal values had produced a selfish generation who did not have the commitment to the Jewish community that their parents had: *serving on a voluntary body was something that nice people used to do but they don't seem to do it anymore. I think introspection's the word.* And those who *were* prepared to make an active contribution wanted to be associated, it was thought, with fashionable causes and lively activities. Some interviewees pointed to the shrinking size of the community and the rise in average age as other important contributory factors.

Some of the organizations in the study were experiencing specific difficulties in recruiting younger members because their key target group or membership base was dying out or disappearing for demographic or other reasons (for example, those serving German refugees or ex-servicemen or women). The

chair of one of these was looking to lower the age profile of his board by recruiting people in their fifties and sixties.

Other possible reasons put forward for the lack of interest in lay leadership roles included the dominance of older men, the dominance of wealthy people, a prejudice against women, the fact that more women were in paid work, and the reluctance of older people to serve the community. The fact that the Jewish community is internally divided along religious lines was also identified as a problem for governance. It often made recruitment to governing bodies more difficult as there were restrictions on who was religiously acceptable in many organizations.

### Board members' backgrounds

Questions about the kinds of people who formed the membership of their boards brought some very different answers from the chairpersons we interviewed. Some of them stressed the diversity of the backgrounds from which they came: for example, *a tremendously varied group—some are more educated than others but we all have the same basic love of the organization and all it stands for* and *very different—their age range and backgrounds vary widely . . . they are not all from the same interests and the same way of life.* By contrast, other interviewees described their boards as *a fairly homogeneous group* or people *of similar backgrounds and age.*

This difference of perception was in part explained by differences between the various kinds of organization included in the study. The governing bodies of national federations that drew all or most of their membership from people who were active in their local groups or branches were on the whole rather more diverse than unitary agencies at both national and local level. Chairpersons of the latter, however, had different ideas as to what 'diversity' entailed. Those who emphasized the lack of variety in their board members' backgrounds pointed to the similarity of their socio-economic status, describing them, for example, as *mainly . . . professionals or retired professionals and entrepreneurs—business and professional people.*

Some interviewees were explicit about the narrowness of the socio-economic band from which their board members were drawn. As one chair put it, *if you have a taxi driver at one end and the Lord Mayor of London at the other we are grouped fairly closely together along that scale.* Another, commenting on the perception that her board was *largely middle-class*, explained this by suggesting that *most*

*of the Jewish community is middle-class.* A third interviewee whose board was drawn mostly from a professional background was concerned that this *sounded snooty* but he felt that the organization was *not elitist. It is simply that the work of the board is about decision-making and policy work and the people who are prepared to take this on are those kind of people.* For some organizations and their chairs there was also an expectation that board members would be able to make some kind of financial contribution to the agency if only by taking responsibility for their own expenses: *members from Glasgow, from Liverpool and Manchester . . . come down from the provinces every six weeks at their own expense. I suppose it is the people who can afford the airfares who can participate.*

Within the comparatively narrow band of socio-economic backgrounds of the members of most of the boards in the study, however, there were varying degrees of diversity. Some boards were wholly or mainly composed of people from professional backgrounds but the range of professions involved could be more or less extensive. One included a doctor, a psychiatrist and a computer expert as well as the more common surveyor, accountant and solicitor. The members of other governing bodies were drawn from the world of business: *captains of industry or something like that* or *entrepreneurs,* some of whom ran *quite big businesses.* A third model involved a combination of professional and business backgrounds to produce what could be *a very mixed bag of people—we have businessmen, solicitors, accountants and social workers.* Another element of diversity mentioned by our interviewees was the difference in religious belief and observance among board members. A number of chairs were proud that their boards represented the full range of Jewish affiliations. There were also considerable differences in the extent to which board members had experience of other Jewish organizations as volunteers, supporters or board members.

Some of our interviewees suggested that the backgrounds of board members had changed in recent years. Fewer of them now were *successful businessmen—people who ran their own companies or who had senior positions.* They had been replaced by solicitors and accountants. And professionals from the fields of health, social care and education were beginning to take their place alongside those who were more business- or commerce-oriented. Another perceived change was the extent to which women were involved in the governance of Jewish organizations. While some were recognized as bringing their

own professional training and experience to the board, others were still seen as playing stereotyped gender-specific roles. Alongside the businessmen on one board were women described by their chair as *not obviously from the business world but [they] are very dedicated to volunteering for social work, helping welfare organizations and so on.* Another chair referred to *three or four who are very loyal and sweet and helpful but they are older ladies who do not have a [specialist] background. They do admin work. They don't contribute ideas but they love it.*

### Continuity and turnover

Many of the chairpersons interviewed reported a high degree of continuity of board membership. While they may have experienced some difficulty in recruiting board members, retaining their services was, with few exceptions, not a major problem. One chair told us that *three of us have been trustees from day one. Once we get people they tend to stay—we don't let them go.* Another reported that *nobody ever leaves . . . I couldn't possibly ask people to leave. It's something people love.*

The continuity provided by long-serving members was valued by many of our informants. In some cases this was underwritten by the continuing involvement of past chairs or presidents as members of the governing body. In one organization the contribution of this group of people, now in their seventies and eighties, was *to keep us in line . . . but it is also very important to know what has happened historically in the organization. They can advise us on the principles of tackling a situation.* Another chair felt that his organization's efforts to ensure that they kept members involved were amply justified: *we spend a lot of time massaging people because if they don't feel important they won't stay on board. So we have to make sure that people understand the problem, that they have time, that they can bring something to the party. But then it is up to us as the governing body to make sure they feel that they have a role. You're investing for the future.*

Many interviewees felt the need to balance the benefits of continuity with the advantages of a turnover in board membership. Some had managed to achieve a blend of experience and fresh blood. One had a few members of very long service—two of them had been involved for twenty years *but equally there are people who have just joined. You always try to maintain a balance between people with experience and people coming in.* The chair of another agency aimed to have a board made up of equal

numbers of new and continuing members for each three-year term of office. This was partly because *new blood means new ideas and different ways of doing things* and partly in the interests of securing the participation over time of a wider cross-section of the agency's various constituent parts.

For others a balance of this kind had proved elusive and the length of service of their board members reflected the difficulty of attracting new people. One chair had joined a board whose other members had set up the organization in the 1960s and had aged together. *They were keen to find young blood and I arrived all fresh-faced, et cetera. I've never been backward in coming forward and spoke up from the beginning . . . and eventually they asked me to become chairman. I had seen it coming and was quite happy. But I don't know what I am going to do now because we haven't found any other new blood since then.*

While, in that case, the need for new members had been recognized there were other instances in which the problem was seen as a failure to address the issue of achieving a turnover in membership. One interviewee reported that the small minority who played an active part in the governance of the organization had not got any smaller but had also not grown in numbers. She felt that this was due to the failure of the trustees of the foundation body who appointed the board to take action. In her view they should have *dispensed with the services of some of us earlier in favour of new appointments and fresh blood* and should have *retired me after five years—nobody should serve for longer than five years.* Similarly the chair of a national federal body told a cautionary tale of a local group whose officers had been reluctant to let younger members take over from them. When, eventually, their advancing years meant they had to stand down they found that the younger members had voted with their feet and were simply not there to take on the work. As a result the group was in a critical condition. Another interviewee had witnessed in another Jewish agency an object lesson in how not to develop a board: *People staying on well past their sell-by date, being dictatorial, driving out the good people because of frustration and anger and you are left with those who are mediocre at best.*

Issues of continuity and renewal were also raised in connection with the length of tenure of the chairpersons themselves. Many of those we interviewed were either restricted by the constitution of the organization to a limited term of office or had made a clear decision about how long they were willing to serve.

In some cases the length of service was limited by personal circumstances: *I have a very busy life outside and it's not fair to my husband.* More commonly it was a matter of the chairperson's judgement about the best time to hand over to a successor. One was intending to stay until a new chief executive found his or her feet, while another felt he could leave now that a new management structure and policies had been put in place. A third was determined to make way for a younger candidate. On the other hand some of the chairpersons who participated in the study were unconstrained by their organization's constitution and were content to carry on: *I am an old man but I will continue as long as I feel I have something to offer.*

The majority of our interviewees wanted to continue to play a role in the organization after retiring from the chair. This was partly a matter of personal commitment to a specific organization or cause. One expressed *a distaste for butterflies* who flitted from one agency to the next: *this is my organization.* Others felt that it was important for continuity: *I don't think you should let people who've had a lot of experience just go on their way.* Several organizations in the study had developed institutional arrangements—such as a 'past chairpersons and presidents committee'—to ensure that accumulated knowledge was retained. By contrast, several chairpersons said that they would prefer to make a clean break and leave the field clear for their successor while they committed their time to another organization.

Some of the participants in the study could set no limit on their term of office because they felt that there was no one willing and able to replace them. One of them said that he was not, as some people thought, a martyr who could hand over to someone else but did not really want to let go. *There just isn't anyone in sight to take over.* Another reported that he had been *threatening to move away for the past three years* but had not managed it.

On the other hand several chairpersons had identified a potential successor: *there is one chap I brought on and might be seen as grooming as my successor. I watched him as a young man and put him forward for office and made sure my friends were for him.* In other cases interviewees had not felt it appropriate or necessary for them to find a successor; they were confident that there was at least one member of the board capable of picking up the reins: *there is a good bunch of members and the chair will emerge from among them and be freely chosen by them.*

## Board members' skills and qualities

The great majority of the chairs we interviewed were generally satisfied that the members of their board possessed between them all or most of the knowledge and skills they needed to carry out their functions. This was not accidental. As we reported above, the principal approach to recruiting board members was to 'hand-pick' or 'head-hunt' suitable individuals. And for a number of the organizations in the study this process of selection was guided by one of two considerations. On the one hand they based it on an assessment of the skills and qualities needed overall: *the temptation in building your team is to choose people like you but what you need are complementary skills . . . we have worked very hard to fill the gaps.* This chair had taken fifteen months to find the remaining piece of the board's jigsaw puzzle of skills. The other approach was to find people to take on a specific 'portfolio' or bundle of tasks: *every person is there to do a job, for example, there is a property portfolio and the person has property experience, similarly with marketing, education and finance. We will go out and look for people who have the ability, background and knowledge base.*

Chairs drew our attention to a number of examples of the specific skills and experience that individual board members had brought with them to the benefit of the organization. These included professional advice: *if we have a contract the lawyers will have a look at it. A property problem? The surveyor will have a look at it. An accountancy problem? I will have a look at it.* But they also extended to other kinds of expertise: from the businessman who make things happen by *setting up the money and making good use of it,* to planning and budgeting know-how, to experience of running a committee.

Our interviewees also highlighted the more general qualities that chairs were seeking in board members. For some of them the most important quality needed—*as in any business*—was common sense: *we need people who know where to ask, where to turn to . . . we need people with a bit of experience of the world.* Another related view was that *you cannot make good decisions without knowing what is going on in the world around you* and this was gained by *people who are in business of one kind or another . . . I think it is essential because all these activities require a much wider view than a specialized one.* Other qualities sought included diplomacy and calm—*being a solicitor or accountant in a good firm doesn't mean you are a good team player or level-headed*—and the *ability to make a contribution at a strategic level, to see beyond their local communities.*

There were, however, a number of examples of organizations that had identified specific skills and experience they felt that their boards needed but that had not been able to recruit members who could provide them. These gaps included fundraising and financial management skills and experience or knowledge of the workings of the NHS and local authorities. One organization had given up the search for a committee member with public relations skills and had appointed a member of staff to meet this need. Another chairperson was anxious to recruit younger board members not so much because they would bring new energy to the board (although he felt they would) but because they would be able to use their knowledge of modern applications like information technology to increase the efficiency of the organization.

Some of the interviewees felt that the changing backgrounds of board members had reduced the effectiveness of some governing bodies. These chairpersons, who tended to have been entrepreneurial businessmen themselves, suggested that a business background was the key to effective decision-making and exercising control over voluntary agencies. While the people from a professional background who were increasingly replacing them brought important skills to the task they lacked the practical approach of the pragmatic realist from a business background: *idealists are very nice but we need realists.*

### Commitment

Many board members made a major contribution of time and effort to their organizations, which involved a great deal more than attending meetings of the governing body. It was common for individuals to have responsibility for specific areas of concern although their duties did not end there: *They join in the discussion of all aspects . . . We have fifteen people who have information about the organization as a whole and who are responsible for it but they are involved in a particular area—a dual responsibility.* This kind of arrangement was said by several interviewees to be *very much like the Cabinet. No one just sits there to get their name on the bottom of the notepaper.*

In the case of agencies with professional staff, taking responsibility for a 'portfolio' of tasks could involve regular contact with staff with similar responsibilities, and acting as a link between the agency and particular stakeholders such as parents or local authority funders. In organizations with few or no staff it could mean carrying out an operational activity: running as

well as planning activities like seminars and organizing the work of volunteers. And, in the case of some of the smaller or newer organizations in the study, the commitment was to a very *hands-on* role: *in the beginning if anything was going to get done you just had to get on and do it and we are still doing it.*

For most of the organizations in the study the work was not distributed equally. Board members tended to form *a more active minority* and *a relatively passive majority.* The amount of time committed to the work of the organization could vary enormously: some gave *many many hours each week* while others might only contribute *a few hours once every other month.* And the hardworking minority could be very small indeed: *the work . . . is done by just two or three people.* Some organizations, however, had managed to share the workload more or less equally among all the members of the board. For one chair there were *no passengers—each of them must spend eight hours a week on the affairs of the organization.* Another interviewee reported that most of her board were hardworking and that she could think of only one who was not making a contribution.

### Challenges for the chairpersons

In this subsection we return to look specifically at chairpersons. We look at the amount of time committed to the role, their perceptions of the 'downside' or difficulties of playing the role, and the skills and qualities they felt were needed to be an effective chairperson.

### Time commitment

With very few exceptions the chairs interviewed for this study committed a very substantial amount of time to the role. Half a day a week was regarded as a minimum, the average was between seven and nine hours and a quarter of the study participants were regularly devoting more than two days a week to the organization they chaired. Many of the chairs found it difficult to put a figure to their time commitment. This was partly because it could be irregular; one interviewee's estimate that his commitment averaged three to four hours a week concealed the fact that in some weeks the demand on his time could be as much as two to three days. And the calculation was further complicated by the kinds of demands on their time. As well as meetings and regular visits to the agency—*you need to visit the office once, twice, three times a week and ask questions*—chairs could be on the receiving end of *countless phone calls* on a daily basis. Some of the estimates did not include *adding up the few minutes here and there on the phone or at the computer.*

A number of chairs made the point that the actual amount of time involved was not the only or main issue. One suggested that *it's not just a question of the amount of time you put in but when you are able to make yourself available.* Another felt that it was *not just the actual time spent but the pressure of thinking you are going to have to make time for it—the pressure of having to get that done, you must read this report, you must phone somebody.* And a third spoke of the need for *worrying time. I am sitting here doing my work, which is quite complicated and there's a lot of it, and my mind is constantly wandering to the problems of the organization.*

Many of our interviewees had been able not only to make a substantial time commitment but also to make themselves available as and when required because of their personal circumstances. They were not in paid employment, or had part-time jobs, or were running their own companies or were fortunate enough to have jobs with very flexible hours or working conditions. But this was not the case for all of them. One chair said that he had been able to make some phone calls from work but was not able to slip away for daytime meetings. He kept up with the demands of being chair by attending to the organization's affairs for a couple of hours at home before going to work and by using his holiday entitlement to enable him to catch up. Another described vividly a scene on a Monday evening, when paid work was demanding and, *with everybody screaming at me to get something done, I have to go off to a committee meeting and then get home late and tired.*

### The 'downside' of being a chairperson

For some of the study participants the heavy time commitment was the single biggest drawback to being a chairperson. Others identified two broad areas where they found the role arduous or problematic: the weight of responsibility involved and a variety of 'people problems'.

In the first place there was for some chairpersons a constant worry about resources, usually about balancing the budget but also about human resources: *I get upset when we lose experienced professional staff.* For others the responsibility for taking difficult decisions and living with the consequences could be painful. Cutting services because of a shortfall in income and making hard decisions about redundancies were two examples of particularly stressful decisions that had to be made.

Some interviewees reported difficulties in dealing with paid staff. This tended to be a problem in smaller agencies that lacked professional management structures. The problems mentioned there included dealing with staff who lacked some of the skills needed by the organization and monitoring their performance when the board members were only on the premises at certain times of the week. One organization had been taken to an industrial tribunal by a member of staff. Other chairpersons found themselves providing their chief executive and other senior staff with advice and support, a role that could be time-consuming and demanding.

A larger number of participants had experienced problems in dealing with the work of board members and other volunteers. Chairpersons were exasperated by board members who did not make a full contribution to the work of the board, and complained about the difficulties of sharing or delegating responsibility. One interviewee felt that he had had to learn to *tread on eggshells. If you are employing someone to do something and they are not doing it correctly you can tell them and make them get it right but dealing with volunteers is very different.* It was very difficult when people came forward and proved *willing but not able.*

The most commonly heard 'downside' of playing the role of chair was the more or less constant problem—described variously as a *ridiculous kind of personal politics, office politics, politics and personalities*—caused by too many people who were *interested in their egos and massaging them,* and by *conflicts and clashes of personality.* As a result the chairperson had an *enormous responsibility to keep the peace* in many organizations and to stand up against the threats of board members and others who are pursuing personal agendas. Some interviewees felt that disagreements and political manoeuvring of this kind could be exacerbated by differences of religious belief and observance.

Many of these issues and disputes took place within the organizations studied but there was also an external dimension in which the smallness and closeness of the Jewish community appeared to be an important factor. Parents of school pupils and the users of welfare services could also be extremely vociferous and demanding, and chairpersons felt accountable to the community in a very direct way: *When we had the redundancies it was extremely stressful dealing with negative feelings in a small Jewish community. I felt challenged by people. I felt that what we were doing was right and it wasn't just me but it was still difficult. People like gossiping in a small community.* Some chairpersons had also had

unhappy experiences with a Jewish press that was seen as being quick to criticize and slow to praise the activities of communal organizations.

### Qualities needed by effective chairpersons

When asked about the qualities and skills they felt were needed by chairpersons, several interviewees made the point that these would vary from agency to agency according to the nature of the organization and its field of activity. Others suggested that generalization was made more difficult by the need for chairpersons to create their own role. There was, however, a considerable measure of agreement about the principal skills and competencies required.

The first of these was identified as *general leadership skills—to be a good listener, be able to give feedback to individuals, provide strategic direction, to set standards of behaviour, to be practical in day-to-day decision-making and to be assertive.* Leadership was seen as having two dimensions. On the one hand it involved the *ability to exercise control over people and to manage meetings.* On the other hand it involved persuading others. *If there are differences of direction in a view of the problem a person says 'oh well, I've had enough of this, I'm gone'. So, if you are not emollient you can turn round and find you've no members left. You have to carry the people with you.*

Second, chairpersons were perceived to need the qualities of patience, tact and diplomacy together with the interpersonal skills needed to pursue this model of leadership. They needed the ability to encourage and empower board members who lacked confidence, to confront those whose performance was unsatisfactory or whose behaviour was inappropriate, to calm people down, to prevent rows and to settle disputes. And, above all, they needed the political sensitivity that brought awareness of emerging problems and helped them to select an appropriate response.

Third, they needed the ability to take a strategic view. One chair felt that she needed to delegate the day-to-day work of the organization to others so she could *look forward five, ten and fifteen years and plan for then.* A fourth requirement, it was felt, was the ability to maintain an overview of the activities of the organization. It was *essential to have someone at board level who knows everything that's going on. Other people have special duties but I have to listen to everything everybody tells me.* Fifth, the chairperson needed to be able to play a major role in the organization's public relations. In the view of a number of the interviewees this might mean having a recognizable profile in the Jewish community and it required a knowledge of communal institutions. It might also involve the ability to speak well in public. Finally, it was suggested that chairpersons needed a thick skin—otherwise *you get upset about every little thing and all these people* and *you have to recognize that you are not going to please all the people all the time.*

# 3 The work of the board

In this section we discuss the perceptions of the chairpersons we interviewed of the role or functions of the board, the kinds of decisions it made and the way in which these were taken, the board's performance, and relations between the governing body and the paid staff of Jewish voluntary agencies.

## Functions

Earlier studies of UK and US voluntary agencies have suggested five key functions generally performed by volunteer boards (Harris 1996): being the point of final accountability; being the employer of staff; making policy; securing and safeguarding resources; and providing a link between the organization and its environment ('boundary-spanning'). All or some of these functions were spontaneously mentioned by most of our interviewees but there were variations in the emphasis placed on each function and in the extent to which they were seen as actual rather than theoretical board functions.

### Being the point of final accountability

There was considerable agreement among those interviewed that the board had *the ultimate responsibility for everything the organization does . . . for everything that goes on in the organization.* The overall role was seen as *to organize, supervise all that we do . . . that's the essence, that's what they're all about. We have to rule and guide.* Carrying out this function was seen to involve meeting the legal requirements placed on the organization, keeping a clear focus on *what the trust and the charity is all about,* setting and maintaining standards and principles, and maintaining the ethos of the organization.

One interviewee spoke of different levels and kinds of board responsibility: *we have a responsibility to the* beneficiaries *first of all. We have a responsibility to the* parents *. . . although the* beneficiaries *come before the parents. And then we have the wider Jewish community. I believe passionately that we do the work of the Jewish community. Therefore they are the owners.* For some, accountability had an internal as well as an external dimension; boards ensured that the views of the membership or constituents were heard. Or, in one chair's half-joking words, the task was *to keep me and the honorary officers in check.*

### Being the employer

Many of our interviewees talked without prompting about the role of their board in the management and support of the organization's *civil servants,* the paid staff. The nature of the board's relationship with the

staff varied. In some organizations employment matters were left in the hands of the senior staff member or the senior management team, while the chairs of others saw the recruitment of paid staff as an important board function.

There were similar differences in approaches to staff management. In a number of agencies this was delegated to the senior staff: *provided the trustees know that the* activities *are run properly and they have confidence in the person who is doing that they don't interfere at all.* This was especially the case with the larger organizations and the school governors. One of the latter thought that *it's terribly important for a governing body to understand the practical limits of their ability to influence what takes place in school. The moment the headteacher and the professional staff of the school cease to run it is the time you ought to take your children out to another school.* The chairs of other schools described the board's role in terms of providing support to the staff rather than managing them. This was echoed by interviewees from other kinds of organizations who coupled support with management or described the relationship as a *partnership between the lay and the professional.*

While paid staff were given considerable responsibility and freedom to run the activities of many of the organizations in our study this did not mean that the board did not monitor and oversee the work. For one chair the key role of the governing body was *to be aware of every activity of the organization and to ensure that it is running well and to resolve any problems that arise out of it.* Other chairs referred to the need to identify and correct weaknesses in the way that the activities were being managed.

In the case of organizations that had few paid staff and were wholly or very largely dependent on the voluntary work of their board members, an important function of board meetings was to exchange information and compare notes on the activities for which they were responsible: *basically it's just keeping their hand in knowing what's happening here and being informed . . . That enables them to get on with their own piece of work but knowing what everyone else is doing.*

### Making policy

Many interviewees identified making decisions about policy and strategy as a key task for boards. *The board is no different from the board of a company . . . it*

*makes policy* and *we steer a course, we set policy.* One chair pointed to a tension between the need for the board to *work out and guide policy* on the one hand, and to act as a *support group and manager for the staff* on the other. He characterized this as a conflict between *bubbling up with new ideas* and getting down to the *nuts and bolts.*

The board was also seen as providing a strategic direction to the organization's work. This was described in various ways, including *trying to look at the whole picture,* making decisions about the reduction or expansion of specific services, identifying priorities, and sanctioning change.

### Securing and safeguarding resources

Another function that was mentioned by many of those interviewed was the responsibility of securing the financial resources needed by the organization and ensuring that they were used to good effect. The task of raising money might be delegated to a subcommittee: *in the end you can't function without money* but *I don't see that as the role of the [board] as a whole.* While the treasurer had a key role to play in ensuring that the administration of the finances was *100 per cent correct,* the board as a whole was seen as the body that was responsible for the financial health of the organization. One chair felt that *there are an awful lot of financial decisions . . . there are very few things that can be accomplished without spending money.* Another emphasized the importance of setting the budget: *we try to present a balanced budget: that means every year we have to make cuts [in what people think is needed] and that's the responsibility of the main board.*

### Boundary-spanning

As well as forming a channel through which the views of an organization's members or constituents can flow, board members were also seen as a bridge between the agency and its external environment. They played their part in public relations activities for their agency—representing it at public events and at meetings of similar kinds of organization—and brought to the organization the views of the Jewish community at large on a range of issues. One chair commented wryly that *the feedback's coming all the time and we [the board members] are at the sharp end of it.*

### Decision-making
### Kinds of decisions

In line with the way they had identified the key functions or responsibilities of their governing bodies, the chairs we interviewed described the kinds of

decisions taken by boards as policy-related, strategic or concerned with the acquisition or allocation of resources. One chair suggested that an underlying principle that determined the kinds of decisions that the board made was that it needed to meet when there were choices to be made: the board had the responsibility of choosing the course of action to be taken. Another key principle was the scale of the financial implications of any decision; in one organization, for example, a decision to move to new premises was for the board to make but the president and treasurer had the authority to buy new computers. For many of the organizations in the study the board also ratified or 'rubber-stamped' decisions taken elsewhere, by staff, honorary officers or subcommittees.

Some of the major decisions reserved to the board were about the scale and nature of the organizations' operational activities. These included deciding on work priorities: which issues were central to its purposes and which were peripheral; whether to expand the area in which it was operating; and whether additional staff or larger premises were required.

Other significant decisions related to the deployment of resources. One board had wrestled with the tough decision to make some long-serving members of staff redundant in order to free resources needed elsewhere in the organization. Another had decided, on the basis of a fundamental review of the organization's strengths and weaknesses, to make a radical break with the past and create a paid staff position to take responsibility for the organization's communications and public relations activities.

While in a number of the agencies studied many of the issues arising from the employment of paid staff were delegated to paid managers, there were occasions when the board was called upon to make decisions. Typically this would involve the appointment of the most senior member of staff and sometimes other important positions. Occasionally it took other forms. One board was dealing with the consequences of dismissing an employee: it had to decide *whether we go all the way to the [industrial] tribunal or try to settle with him, which solicitors are we going to use, are we going to take advice from counsel?*

For some organizations decisions about the budget were in practice taken by a specialist subcommittee or were seen as *not very momentous; expenditure is predictable, based on the previous year so we might pick at it but it doesn't make a lot of difference.* For others, however, important issues about the alloca-

tion of resources were decided at board level. These included approving major capital projects like the refurbishment or upgrading of premises, deciding how to reduce expenditure and attract extra income in order to overcome a substantial predicted deficit, setting staffing levels for the various activities, and the basis on which resources were to be allocated to other organizations seeking financial support. Some boards also made important decisions about fundraising. This might involve agreeing the arrangements for major fundraising events, deciding on the causes or activities for which funds were to be sought, or approving an application to the National Lottery Charities Board.

### How decisions were made

It was common for items for decision by the board to be discussed in other forums before being presented to the governing body. Many of the organizations studied had well-developed systems of specialist subcommittees that were seen as a means of giving more detailed attention to decisions that had *a number of facets—and implications. There is no way the board could do all its work without subcommittees.* A less flattering view of the need for subcommittees was that they could prevent the board from being *diverted from its main business. A committee can spend a couple of hours deciding what pattern of cutlery you are going to have.* In a number of agencies the subcommittees brought together board members and paid staff in what was seen as a productive collaboration. The system of subcommittees might (or might not) reflect the use of a 'cabinet' model of governance in which each board member was responsible for a 'portfolio', such as responsibility for a particular area of service provision, fundraising or attention to premises.

In other cases the preparatory work was carried out by the honorary officers or a similar 'inner circle' of key individuals who might meet formally or informally. One interviewee saw this approach as carrying a risk that the honorary officers might disempower the board. He had heard the officers of other organizations complain that nobody else on the governing body would assist them with the work of the organization: *But have they unleashed their boards? Do they give them anything to do? Do they let them decide anything? Do they actually tell them what is going on?* Other chairs took a different view: *the officers may propose but you know, like in all well-run organizations, the board of directors gives the final approval.*

In a number of the organizations studied, a key role in decision-making was played by the chair. One

interviewee told us: *I own the big issues. I take a view as to what are the big issues.* Others described how, having decided on the need for a certain line of action, they went about securing the agreement of their boards through a *political* process of persuading the officers, executive committee or other inner circle of important leaders and canvassing the support of other board members. *Prior to the meetings . . . I will canvass. I will talk to individual members. I will explain what's going on.* The extent of this influence varied. One chair who succeeded in gaining his board's agreement to radical organizational change remembered: *it took a lot of persuading, a lot of canvassing on my part behind the scenes to get Council to agree* and *it's not easy. You are dealing with some very strong-minded Jewish people who all have opinions and are not frightened to let you know what they think.*

The influence of the chair and his or her willingness to use it varied considerably from organization to organization. One chair who described herself as *not much of a democrat* went on to say: *I'm there to be the boss and to sort out problems. I have to respect people's views but I make the decisions.* Another pointed out that the chair had the power to keep items off the agenda. Towards the other end of the spectrum was a chair who saw himself as *just an ordinary member of the board . . . if the president proposes something and the vote goes against him, it doesn't happen.*

The role of the paid staff in decision-making at board level varied considerably. The opinions of the headteachers of the schools we studied carried great weight and their boards would *listen to what the professional managers had to say and then make a decision.* The chief executives and senior management teams of other agencies exercised a similar influence, while each member of staff of one small agency reported individually to the board. By contrast staff were excluded from the board's decision-making process in another agency where their roles were restricted to presenting a report on the organization's activities and taking the minutes.

The use of subcommittees was accompanied in some agencies by other measures aimed at making the board's decision-making more effective. Some had located their decision-making in smaller bodies that could meet more frequently. Others had tried to focus the attention of each meeting on one main topic or *two or three major issues.* More generally chairs felt the need to be *business-like*, to maintain tight control and to keep meetings to a reasonable

length: *Council meetings used to go from 8 to 11 but I stop them at 10.*

Many—but not all—of the chairs we interviewed believed that the appropriate way in which to reach decisions was by consensus. One chair reported that *we don't have a vote on anything* while another called voting *a last resort*. Others stressed the value of this approach to decision-making: it took longer but helped to create a feeling that the members were *a team with a shared purpose rather than a group of individuals with their separate agendas or hobby horses*. Agreement by consensus was not, however, always possible; when that happened one chair would *go round the table, not asking people to put their hands up but asking, what's your view?, of each member*. He said *sometimes we have had someone who asked that it be minuted that he disagreed with the decision. We still get on*. The support for consensual decision-making was not, moreover, universal. One chair opposed it on the grounds that it *tends to be the lowest common denominator*. He argued instead for 'ownership'. He said *people may not be in agreement but they can see how we got there and will be able to accept the decision*.

There was widespread agreement about the conduct of meetings. The chair's job was to get the business done but also to ensure that the views of all the members were heard. This could involve stopping inappropriate behaviour: *In the bad old days when there was a big rift between governors I thought the meetings were appalling. People whispered and passed notes. We felt that the real decisions were being taken elsewhere. When I became chair I actually stated that the meetings were where the business would take place and there would be no whispering. If you had anything to say you should say it openly.* Discussion and scrutiny of proposals could be rigorous. According to one chair there would be *a real discussion because I am the sort of chairman who says 'Fred in the corner, you haven't said anything, what do you think?' rather than 'I think X' or 'Michael, you speak on this subject and that's the end of the subject'*. Discussion and debate were often lively. One chair referred to *long meetings and shouting*. The debates were, however, usually described as *cordial* and taking the form of *arguments but not rows*. The chair of one organization commented that the fact that the members of her board were like-minded people had its advantages; life was easier and meetings were shorter. But she felt they might be missing the spark that came from debating different points of view. At the other extreme, another of our interviewees described a board that was split by

disagreement between members of different religious views: there had been *an outbreak of severe politicking in relation to the appointment of a new [senior member of staff] . . . This has brought into play the tension in the* organization *between proponents of the left and right wings respectively and the issue of who is in charge . . . has broken out*.

## Board performance

The chairs we interviewed were for the most part satisfied with the way their boards went about their work. Board members showed high levels of commitment, worked hard and were effective. One interviewee reported that the members of his board *take their responsibilities seriously, they are available, they are serious, they give of their time . . . we are reasonably strong in most areas*. Another was more enthusiastic: *it is one of the most effective committees I've ever worked with—dedicated and concerned . . . they are concerned to do a good job and what they don't know they will find out*. Others commented on their board's ability to work well as a group and a feeling of unity and mutual support: *I'm very delighted in a sense of unity. We trust one another. We have had some occasions when one of the officers—and I'll include myself—have made some slip and the others have rallied round*. Boards were also valued for their ability at making decisions. For some *the proof of the pudding* of board effectiveness was the high quality of the services delivered by the agency. Others pointed to the detailed *hands-on* knowledge that board members brought to the task. In one organization *they are involved in a great variety of our activities*. In another the board had an *in-depth knowledge of what was going on at the sharp end* and this was probably *as good as you can get*.

Other, more specific, aspects of board performance mentioned favourably included: the ability to raise money; the value of their *brainstorming and envisioning what could be*; their contribution to attracting users; the ability to come up with strategic responses to problems (where the paid staff lacked that quality); the forging of links between the community and the local authority; being able to replace themselves as board members; and having the ability to *spot anything that might go wrong*.

On the other hand the interviewees were far from complacent about the performance of their boards. Many of them felt the need for additional resources in the shape of greater activity on the part of existing members or the recruitment of other people to the board: *I could do with more of the time of each of the trustees including myself. We should be bringing in*

*more people.* The amount of time that board members could be expected to commit to the organization was limited: *these are busy people.* Inevitably some worked harder than others and chairs found it difficult when members took on responsibilities that they proved unable to carry out: *everyone has a task to do and it is very frustrating if they do not do it. For example,* one member *has responsibility for the newsletter . . . but we have only had one newsletter in a year. He is a great person, a good guy but he doesn't have a lot of time and it is really frustrating.* One agency had failed to recruit board members who had the time to take on responsibility for specific aspects of the work with the result that the chair felt heavily overloaded. As well as needing extra pairs of hands, interviewees also felt that they wanted new members with ideas and the ability to work on their own initiative and younger people with up-to-date knowledge of information technology.

Chairs reported a number of other problems of a general nature with the work of their board. One was the *political* aspect of the board: *within my board there are people who have ambitions to further their role in the community* and members who were *digging behind the scenes, causing little problems the whole time. I don't like it and I think it's disruptive . . . I don't like people having big egos but that's part and parcel of society.* Another problem for some was the failure of their boards to be proactive rather than reactive: one chair reported that priorities tended to be set by *prods from outside* and the board spent much of its time responding to events—*fire-fighting.* Other negative comments included the observation that the board had failed to replace itself and the members were ageing together, and the complaint that board members failed to think strategically: *why do people with skills drop them at the door in the non-profit sector? They think they get accountability by micro-analysis. There is no sense of proportion about tasks, for example, they want to wash the tablecloths but I think we should send them out. These tasks give people a common denominator—something everybody can talk about.*

More specific failings mentioned by interviewees included the need to improve performance in various areas of work such as fundraising, marketing and public relations, communication with members, and carrying out their responsibilities as employers. Other observations were that the board lacked the ability to *see as quickly as we should some of the budgetary issues,* that board members failed to take enough interest in the activities of the agency and their impact on service users, and that they were unable to

combine responsibility for a *portfolio* with the need to contribute to decisions about wider issues of policy.

## Board–staff relationships
The relationship of the senior member of staff and other paid employees to the board varied quite markedly from organization to organization. At one end of the spectrum were the membership associations in which the role of the staff was both clear and limited: their function was to enable the members of the board to carry out the main operational activities of the organization. One of the organizations in the study had recently acquired an office administrator who had relieved the board members of a great deal of routine work, such as answering the telephone and dealing with correspondence. At the other end of the spectrum were the schools in which the headteachers and, in some cases, their senior management teams had a great deal of authority and influence: *I can't think of a single decision we have made over the last six years that the head has opposed . . . There may have been decisions where the head may have preferred a different approach but never one that has been done in the teeth of the head's opposition. I think it would have to take something very significant for us to oppose the headteacher's view.*

In between these two extremes were a variety of arrangements and relationships. For some the relationship between the staff and the board was seen as a very successful form of partnership. One agency had *made partnerships between key members of staff and the member of the board designated to deal with that area. Each key member of staff has a board shadow. they talk with each other and share problems. If there is a problem professionally that is identified by the lay people it will go back to the director, the professionals. If the professionals have a problem it will go back to the board . . . We call them to account and they call us to account.* Similarly, another chair, describing a system of subcommittees made up of board members and senior staff, suggested that it was *the partnership between lay and professional that makes it so successful.* There were *checks and balances everywhere.*

In other organizations the relationship was more problematic. Some interviewees felt that their chief executives had failed to provide the kind of leadership they expected: *the longer term vision is left to the board. It would be refreshing if the chief executive was driving all this. It would be easier for board members and it would be more successful if the chief executive had ideas and did the research before it*

*came to the board.* Another problem was seen as defining *where the chief executive's responsibility begins and ends* and the related issue of *how much the chief executive should tell the chair and what kind of role the chair should have.* Some boards were reluctant to give staff authority and placed limits on their role. The chief executive of one organization attended all the committees except the main board because it *might be discussing his wages or whether we need to dismiss him.* In another the attendance of the administrator at board meetings was regarded as controversial. And one chair was adamant that the organization's senior member of staff should not be given the title of chief executive: *it's not just a question of words. My objection is that I do not want him to make any but the most routine decisions without consulting the honorary officers . . . decisions about salaries and all that. Dismissing someone.*

In some of the organizations studied there had been significant changes in the position of staff. One organization had created its first senior professional post because *we were asking volunteers like myself to do too much—and if volunteers are seen to be doing too much it is hard to replace them.* Another had, for the first time, appointed a paid chief executive. At the same the chairs of others were becoming more aware of the difficulties and responsibilities of managing increasing numbers of staff; one suggested that it had become more difficult *getting the same commitment in the community . . . so what you do, you employ someone to go and organize it.* This posed a different set of problems for boards but *there must be a way of coping, there's no human nature you can't cope with.* And the chair of a comparatively new agency spoke of *passing the ethos [of the volunteers who had founded it] to the paid staff. The success we have built is because of the warmth and the TLC [tender loving care]. We are trying to get this over to the chief executive.*

### The general picture on the work of boards

The governance study revealed the wide variety of approaches that may be taken to the work of boards

and the wide variety of assumptions that can exist about how best to perform the work of voluntary boards. This reflects earlier research in the United States and Britain about the work of boards but also reflects an ongoing debate about whether there is one best way to run all voluntary sector boards (Carver 1997, Harris 1993). At the same time, a number of themes did emerge from the study about the work of boards in the Jewish voluntary sector.

First, the study revealed constant attempts by boards to adapt to the multiple internal and external demands made on their organizations; for example, by staff, clients, relatives of clients, service-providing volunteers, funders and the Jewish community at large. This constant attempt to adapt can be seen as a positive characteristic; a reflection of the kind of responsiveness and flexibility for which the voluntary sector has been traditionally valued.

A second emergent finding is that the different approaches taken by boards to their work was not necessarily related directly to obvious factors such as the size of an organization, the number of employees, or the degree of formality in its structure. Rather, variations seemed to be attributable to the field of activity (for example schools are more bound by external regulations than other kinds of voluntary organizations); the extent to which business models and assumptions prevailed; and the chairperson's own idea about what his or her role should be.

Finally, the findings seem to reflect a small but discernible shift in board behaviour attributable to the increasing presence of women on Jewish voluntary boards and the growing problems of recruiting board members. As will be discussed in the following sections of this report, the problems of recruitment seemed to be particularly severe in communities outside of the London and Manchester areas and where organizations were not seen to be dealing with causes popular within the Jewish community.

# 4 Challenges for boards

## Change

The great majority of the chairpersons interviewed felt that the past five or ten years had brought significant changes to the way Jewish organizations went about their work and the context in which they operated.

The most important recent change in the Jewish voluntary sector identified by our interviewees was increasing professionalization. This was seen to take several forms. In some cases volunteers had been replaced by paid staff. In others the paid staff were better educated or were seen to be of a higher calibre than before. More widely, participants in the study reported that discussions were conducted and decisions made within agencies in a more formal and business-like way. One chair summed up the change: *we tend to run these organizations as businesses these days whereas five to ten years ago they were run as charities and there's a big difference.*

Generally this move towards greater professionalism was welcomed; it had improved the image both of individual agencies and of the sector as a whole and helped to increase income from Jewish and governmental sources. It was also recognized that this change had meant in many cases a decrease in the relative power of lay members of boards. This was not generally seen as a disadvantage and in some cases it was seen as a means by which the calibre of board members had been raised. Many of those interviewed felt that there was a need to reinforce the trend by recruiting more paid staff, developing their skills and expertise still further and generally increasing the respect given to the 'civil servants' of the Jewish community.

In some cases staff had been employed in an explicit attempt to reduce the workload of board members. More generally, however, it was felt that the responsibilities of the chairperson and other board members had become more onerous. In the case of schools this was a direct consequence of public policy changes that had devolved responsibility and decision-making from local education authorities to the schools themselves. As a result board members had *more rights, more powers, more duties, more responsibilities, particularly as it relates to financial and curriculum matters and admissions.* They could no longer *just go to meetings, they have to work a good deal more than that.*

The perception that the board's responsibilities and the commitment demanded of the chairperson had increased was not, however, restricted to schools. There were a number of dimensions to this. In the first place heavier responsibility was seen as part of the process of becoming more professional and more 'business-like', which demanded *strong and focused* lay leadership as well as more and better qualified paid staff. This was associated with a number of external pressures. In the field of social welfare the government and local authorities were perceived to have *thrown back more and more* responsibility for meeting need on to the Jewish community and its institutions. More generally both statutory and charitable funders were demanding greater accountability, and changes in charity law had tightened the regulatory regime (Harris 1998).

Another set of changes associated with greater professionalism, which was mentioned by fewer people but thought by them to provide grounds for optimism about the future of the sector, involved a gradual shift to a less parochial approach on the part of those running Jewish organizations. This had led to a greater willingness to co-operate with secular voluntary organizations. It had also led to growing co-operation between the chairs of Jewish agencies. Speaking of another organization working in the same field, one interviewee said: *my predecessor did not speak to his predecessor . . . I mean nobody ever got together. So that's changed. We're more open, more friendly.* This change had made possible the development of a significant joint purchasing arrangement.

## Problems and issues in governance

The increasing demands on the organizations we studied and the changes to the environment in which they worked raised a number of issues and problems for their chairpersons and boards. These can be seen as reflected in five central themes.

### Problems of recruiting volunteers and leaders

Organizations were finding it increasingly difficult to recruit active members, volunteer workers and people prepared to take on lay leadership roles. Interviewees felt that this was due, in large part, to changes in the way people generally conducted their lives. More women were working; young retired women were increasingly providing childcare for their sons and daughters; people were working longer hours; and couples wanted to spend more time together, or with their children, in their leisure time. Organizations that served key target groups or

memberships that were dying out or disappearing for demographic or other reasons (such as German refugees or ex-servicemen and women) faced particularly acute difficulties.

The result for a number of organizations was an ageing membership: *the organization was founded in 1943 and we have a lot of members in their eighties and nineties who are unfortunately dying off but they are not being replaced by younger people*. In a membership organization this was a double-edged problem: not only of *having people in the field to do the . . . work* but also of finding those who would stand for election and take on leadership roles. More generally and most acutely the problem of recruiting active supporters was felt in the composition of the governing body.

Interviewees from relatively 'high-profile' organizations were generally optimistic about their ability to recruit younger people to their governing bodies and the participants from youth organizations pointed to healthy levels of participation in their governance structures. However, many of the interviewees confirmed the stereotype of Jewish lay leadership being dominated by older people and of problems in engaging younger people in governance. Many saw this as a special problem for Jewish organizations and one due to the changing demographic profile of the community and its changing values.

The problem was seen by some to be a result of the changes in lifestyle mentioned above; younger people were having to work long hours as they made their way in their professions and they needed to spend what little leisure time they had with their young children. Another view, however, was that a general shift in societal values had produced a selfish generation who did not have the commitment to the Jewish community that their parents had: *serving on a voluntary body was something that nice people used to do but they don't seem to do it anymore. I think introspection's the word*. And those who *were* prepared to make an active contribution wanted to be associated, it was thought, with fashionable causes and lively activities. Some interviewees pointed to the shrinking size of the community and the rise in its average age as another important contributory factor.

Another common perception was of an increasingly competitive struggle for volunteers (both in governance and service-delivery roles). One participant referred to *the attitude of other voluntary organizations to us—Jewish voluntary organizations. Compe-*

*tition for money and more than that. Other people think that their cause is the only one.* For some this was exacerbated by the fact that the number of Jews overall was falling at the same time as the competition was becoming more intense and the expectations on Jewish voluntary agencies were rising. When it came to recruiting board members, too many organizations were thought to be chasing after the same people.

## Pressure on board members

The difficulty of recruiting board members in general and young people in particular was seen to be exacerbated by the weight of responsibility and the amount of time associated with the role. The volume of work undertaken by the chairpersons in particular but also by other active members of the governing body was felt to be a major obstacle to recruitment. Some possible recruits would not want to devote so much of their time to this kind of activity, and those who did not have adequate free time or sufficient autonomy or flexibility in their paid employment would not be able to do so.

Several organizations were addressing this problem by creating new positions for paid staff aimed at reducing the burden on lay leaders: *so that the volunteer jobs are not so huge and time-consuming and you can get someone to come in and take over a job without the fear that it is going to take over their lives*. Without that kind of support it can become *harder and harder to get people to serve. As soon as you lose a succession it snowballs* and the pressure mounts for the smaller number of board members who remain.

## Funding

The problems of recruiting volunteers of all kinds were matched by a shared concern about raising the funds needed to support the organizations' activities. While this appeared to be a problem in all areas of work it took an especially acute form in the field of social welfare. Interviewees repeatedly made the point that the government was expecting volunteers and voluntary organizations to play an increasing role in meeting social need but not providing them with the means to undertake it: *the lack of funds to do what is expected and to meet the responsibilities which government has placed on us*. Local authorities were *squeezing organizations in the voluntary sector which have to maintain quality services without more money*. This was a problem that was seen as *boiling up within the charity sector as a whole* but there were suggestions that it was especially acute for Jewish organizations.

In the first place the Jewish community was seen as critical and demanding: *we are not funded by local authorities to give a high level of service but that is what Jewish people want. They are extremely critical if you don't provide it.* The intensity of the competition for funds was seen as the second distinctive feature of fundraising for Jewish organizations. Some thought that the total funding available within the community had decreased, either because there were fewer major donors or because people were choosing to use their money for consumer goods or for secular causes: *It's the big money that's the problem. There are people in the community who could be big philanthropists. But society has changed; the culture moves on. The old Jewish money is not there any more. It was from people who came from a traditional background who gave within the community. Now people with money give to the community but they are also out there moving and shaking. They've got things to do with their money, a big agenda—holiday homes, non-Jewish charities. Everyone wants to be anglicized; get into the House of Lords.*

Other problems included the difficulty of accessing the funds that did exist—*the constant running around seeking money from other organizations that have their own agenda that is never transparent but always opaque*—and the short-term and capricious nature of some funding that was *doled out once a year.*

### Divisions within the Jewish community
The fact that the Jewish community is internally divided along religious lines was also identified as a problem for governance. It often made recruitment to governing bodies more difficult as there were restrictions on who was religiously acceptable in many organizations. Divisions could also make discussion and decision-making difficult.

In these circumstances, chairing meetings and organizations called for exceptional skills in interpersonal relations: *You move from petty squabbles to an intolerant mind-set and if people bring this to leadership roles it is terribly dangerous. I find this very frustrating. I have to watch this as chairman.* Some participants referred to these divisions in a more indirect fashion when they discussed the highly 'political' nature of the Jewish community.

### More and less popular causes
Boards also faced problems in recruitment, attracting volunteers and securing organizational funding, it seemed, because there are fashions within the

Jewish community about what are attractive causes with which to be associated. Those causes particularly mentioned as relatively unpopular included mental and physical disabilities, youth, serious illness and cultural matters. On the other hand, and perhaps in contrast with the secular community, care of the elderly was generally regarded as a cause with which people were keen to be associated. In fact, one interviewee felt that the community had *put all its eggs in the elderly basket* and failed to engage with issues such as *child abuse and drug misuse as well as domestic violence.*

However, the relative appeal of different organizations appeared to be more complicated than the popularity of the cause. Irrespective of their cause some organizations appear to be more popular than others. In the words of one interviewee, some charities are seen to have involved the 'movers and shakers' of the community and have comparatively little problem in attracting the support of other people. As a result of these fashions, provision can be patchy and the limitations of charity as a means to meeting human needs are exposed. As one interviewee suggested, *the community's resources are not where the community's needs are.*

## Challenges for the Jewish voluntary sector generally
Five key challenges for the Jewish voluntary sector emerged from our interviews.

### The need for co-operation
The need to think about a variety of co-operative ways of working was frequently expressed. This was not primarily or necessarily about further mergers between Jewish voluntary agencies—although some saw these as necessary and others saw them as an inevitable consequence of competition within a shrinking community. More generally there was seen to be a need to reduce the levels of rivalry between organizations and to consider the benefits of a co-operative approach to fundraising and service-provision.

### The challenge of internal divisions
Increased co-operation was seen to depend on the ability of the community to overcome the problems presented by its internal divisions, especially those based in religious differences. These were seen as creating problems for inter-organizational relationships by fostering unnecessary competition between smaller agencies dealing with similar issues and inhibiting inter-agency co-operation that would be of mutual benefit.

Within organizations, too, they were seen as making communication and discussion problematic. Those chairs who presided over boards with cross-community representation made a particular point of how proud they were of this and how helpful it was both in making effective use of resources and in responding to interests and needs.

### The need for a sense of collective responsibility

Overcoming the problems created by internal divisions involved encouraging a sense of collective responsibility within the Jewish community. This was seen as having two dimensions. In the first place there was a need to reinforce a basic Jewish principle and encourage all Jews to see themselves as responsible for one another. The other need was to encourage individuals to see themselves as having an obligation or responsibility to make a contribution to the Jewish community.

### The challenge of demography

There was a clear need expressed to respond to the changing demography of the Jewish community. Key issues included the shrinking of the community, the ageing of its profile and the need to sustain smaller communities outside London and Manchester.

### The problem of resources

Many of the participants mentioned specific resource issues. Funding was mentioned, for example, in the context of the need to avoid duplication and competition; for one chair the absence of some degree of rationalization meant that there was a danger that the financial resources of the community would be spread too thinly. Other issues included the disproportionate power wielded by individual Jewish philanthropists and the unresolved issue of the balance between funding causes in Israel and the United Kingdom.

# 5 Discussion and implications

In the previous three sections we presented the findings of our study. In this final section we take a broader view of those findings. We discuss the models of governance that emerge from the study and then consider the extent to which governance in the Jewish voluntary sector is different from governance in the broader UK voluntary sector. Finally we look at some of the ideas about good practice in governance that we found in talking to study participants.

## Models of governance

The study was designed to explore the experience of governance and the issues and challenges faced by governing bodies in a range of Jewish voluntary organizations. While much of the experience and many of the issues raised were common to the diverse organizations we studied, we also found some important differences in approach to the governance function. In this part of the report, we distinguish different models of governance in Jewish voluntary agencies.

### Models of board–staff relationships

In our study we found a range of approaches to the board–staff relationship.

Some of the organizations studied were aiming to operate as voluntary membership 'associations'. The work of the organization was undertaken by its members rather than by paid staff, and where there were paid employees their role was to enable the members to carry out the operational activities of the organization, rather than to carry them out themselves (Billis 1993). This kind of organization was found at local level (synagogues were a prime example) but also on a national level. Board members not only undertook the governance function but also played the roles that were given to staff in other kinds of organizations. However, the study suggested that sustaining this kind of 'pure' associational form was becoming increasingly difficult. In fact, a number of the bodies we studied had begun to employ staff to take some of the burden from the shoulders of hard-pressed board members.

This finding is in line with that of Bubis and Cohen (1998) in North America. They describe a 'volunteer management model' in which the role of staff is limited to the implementation of policies arrived at by the board with little or no staff input. But they go on to say that this model 'is rarely seen in today's North American Jewish communal scene'. It is possible that, in this respect at least, the UK Jewish community is following a similar trend.

A second approach to board–staff relations identified by Bubis and Cohen is the 'staff management model'. Here the governing body recruits a chief executive officer and, perhaps, other senior managerial staff who play a leading role in formulating policy as well as implementing it. Typically the board expects the staff to bring to it their vision, goals and objectives for modification and approval and then gives them a high degree of freedom to pursue the agreed strategy. The schools in our study came closest to this model although a few other organizations also demonstrated some characteristics of the 'staff management model'.

Most of the organizations we studied, however, could be seen as examples of the third model identified by Bubis and Cohen, the 'collaborative model'. The central feature of this model is that both board members and staff have a role to play in carrying out governance functions. There is no clear distinction in principle between what the board should do and what the staff should do; this is discussed and negotiated until a 'mutually arrived at understanding of the expectations' of both parties is reached. Interviewees who talked about a 'partnership' were usually referring to this kind of approach.

It needs to be emphasized that these are models, guidelines for developing structures rather than descriptions of any particular organization. And there is no implication that any one model is better or more effective than any other. In some of the schools in our study, for example, the 'staff management model' applied to some areas of activity (such as the curriculum) while a 'collaborative model' could be seen at work in other aspects of the board's work (like admissions). The research literature also suggests very strongly that the relationship between board and staff is not only one of interdependence (Kramer 1965) and interaction (Heimovics and Herman 1990) but is also dynamic (Harris 1993): the distribution of functions and delineation of roles can, and should, change over time in response to changing needs and environmental pressures.

### Models of decision-making

We also found differing approaches to decision-making at board level. These seemed to be associated with differences in the personality or personal leadership style of individual chairpersons. Some chairpersons seemed to have adopted a 'command model' of decision-making in which they took a strong and proactive role. Other members of the

board were consulted but the major responsibility for making decisions was assumed by the chairperson, possibly, but not necessarily, with the assistance of the senior member of the paid staff.

By contrast many of the chairpersons interviewed seemed to have adopted a 'consensual model' of decision-making. They saw their role as promoting or creating agreement among board members about the most appropriate way forward and a shared ownership of the decisions that were taken.

A third approach to decision-making was a 'dispersed model'. Here much of the decision-making was effectively delegated or devolved to a number of subcommittees that took responsibility for functional areas—like setting the budget or personnel matters—or specific fields of operation. The board's role in this kind of arrangement was, in essence, to ratify decisions taken by the subcommittees. Those boards in which members were expected to carry specific 'portfolios' often reflected the 'dispersed decision model' as well. Carriers of a specific portfolio took a lead role in decision-making within their own area, with or without the help and support of a subcommittee or working group.

### Steering boards and rowing boards
A third way of modelling different approaches to governance is provided by the distinction made by Osborne and Gaebler (1992) between 'steering' and 'rowing' activities. Although their book is a prescription for conduct by national and local governments, a similar distinction is commonly made in voluntary sector literature (see, for example, Carver 1997 and Adirondack 2000 who prescribe a clear distinction between policy-making activities and policy implementation, with boards taking the former role and staff the latter).

Some of the people we interviewed and some members of the focus groups did seem to subscribe to this kind of clear distinction between 'steering' boards and 'rowing' staff. They saw the board's role essentially as one of setting the agency's course and 'keeping a hand on the tiller', leaving paid staff to do all the operational activities and to implement their policies.

Most study participants, however, did not seem to subscribe to this kind of distinction. Even in the large and more formalized organizations, board chairpersons generally expected to have a detailed knowledge about operational activities and to be kept in touch by senior staff. Moreover, the division of respon-

sibilities between staff and board members varied over time and according to different areas of work within the organization. Most boards were involved in both steering and rowing in some ways, and expected to be. They also expected staff to have some input into steering activity. This reflects the findings of earlier research on the UK and US voluntary sectors that suggests that 'there are few, if any, functions which in practice belong unequivocally or, on a long term basis, to either board or staff' (Harris 1999:106).

## Is governance different in the Jewish voluntary sector?
### Motivations of chairpersons
Some of the stated motivations of our interviewees reflected findings in the generic literature on volunteering and voluntary board membership, for example, the response to personal invitations as the route into volunteering and the commitment to furthering a particular cause or field of service provision. However, our findings revealed additional motivating factors for those who chair Jewish voluntary organizations. They appear to have a generalized commitment to serving the needs of individual Jews and the collectivity of Jews (the 'Jewish community'), and thus personal invitations often jibe with a general preparedness to contribute as a volunteer. And although many are committed to a particular cause or field (for example, education or care of the elderly) this seems to be less of a motivating factor than a broader desire to identify with other Jews and their needs, to contribute to Jewish continuity and to keep faith with the charitable traditions of their families.

The fact that motivations are multiple and strong may explain what appears to be a remarkable degree of commitment in terms of voluntary time by Jewish voluntary sector chairpersons. Many interviewees described working on board business for many hours each week, frequent meetings requiring their attendance, and serving on boards, and even as chair, for many years. But in contrast with findings about the boards of local voluntary agencies in the United Kingdom (Harris 1998) few of our respondents seemed resentful about the time they spent on board business; most seemed to regard what they did as nothing out of the ordinary.

### Issues and problems of governance
As with the motivations of voluntary chairpersons, some of our findings on issues and problems of governance in the Jewish voluntary sector echo findings in the generic literature, for example, the difficulties of attracting volunteers to governance, especially younger people, and the difficulties of

maintaining organizations whose original members and supporters are literally dying away. Competition for resources and the problems created for voluntary organizations as the welfare state retreats are also common concerns for voluntary agencies outside the Jewish community (Halfpenny and Scott 1996, Harris, Rochester and Halfpenny 2001).

Yet, as with the motivations of chairpersons, our data suggested additional factors that were wholly or partly attributable to the fact that the organizations concerned are Jewish. Thus the competition for both money and volunteers, which is a common issue and an increasingly acute problem for most voluntary organizations, is intensified where the pool of people on which to draw is itself very small and shrinking rapidly and where internal religious differences further reduces those on whom any particular voluntary agency can draw.

Again, the external expectations and pressures on Jewish voluntary organizations are not only the commonly experienced ones created by governmental agencies looking for 'partners'. The pressures are intensified because, for example, members of the Jewish community look exclusively to Jewish organizations to meet their needs and expect those needs to be met to a high standard. They are further exacerbated by the fact that religious differences have historically made for competition rather than collaboration within the Jewish voluntary sector, and thus some of the collaborative mechanisms used by secular voluntary organizations to protect themselves from external pressures are closed to many Jewish voluntary organizations.

There are, of course, divisions in British society as a whole that have an impact on the governance of non-Jewish voluntary agencies: children's charities and organizations concerned with international aid and development, for example, tend to be organized on denominational lines. And there can be a multiplicity of charities competing for financial and volunteer support in the same field: cancer research is often cited in this respect. However, the size of the population overall means that there is, on the whole, scope and space for this number of organizations. And, perhaps more significantly, the organizations have generally learned to co-operate and collaborate in order to influence government, to share experiences and learn from one another and to press for an increase in the size of the financial cake they have to share. There may be lessons here for the Jewish voluntary sector about the benefits to be gained from a collaborative approach, a point that was also made

strongly in the recent report on the representation of British Jews (Commission on Representation of the Interests of the British Jewish Community 2000).

## The nature of the Jewish voluntary sector

Many of the trends identified in the Jewish voluntary sector by the chairpersons we interviewed have been noted as occurring in the broader voluntary sector as well, such as increasing professionalism and the influence of business management principles (Deakin 2001). However, our study participants also identified a number of other trends that may be more distinctive to the Jewish voluntary sector. These include the apparent decrease in the number of individual philanthropists willing to support charitable causes, and the growing need for Jewish causes to compete for funding and volunteer time with secular causes and secular pastimes.

These trends are in part related to changing Jewish demography that has resulted in a shrinking population base and an increasing proportion of the total population in need of welfare and other services. But the explanation may be also sociological. As Jews assimilate into the lifestyles of broader British society—acquiring university education and living and working closely with non-Jews, for example—they are taking on the aspirations and norms of 'mainstream' British society. And the more they do this, the less time and interest many feel they have for specifically Jewish causes and leisure time activities that involve mixing solely with other Jews. The lifestyle assimilation trends may not be universal within the Jewish community but they are clearly sufficiently strong to be a matter of general notice and concern to Jewish lay leaders.

## A Jewish dimension?

Our study, then, found that there are important ways in which the governance of Jewish voluntary organizations may be distinguished from the governance of non-Jewish organizations in the UK voluntary sector. In the motivations of senior lay leaders, in the problems surrounding governance, and in the issues perceived to be facing the Jewish voluntary sector as a whole, it is not so much that the situation in Jewish voluntary organizations is totally different; rather it seems that there are factors, pressures and problems that are additional to those found in UK voluntary organizations generally. In some cases this means that governance of Jewish voluntary organizations is more complex and onerous than in other organizations. But the additionality is not just on the negative side. There are features of the UK Jewish community that can be seen as advantageous in comparison with

other UK voluntary agencies, such as the general disposition of at least some members of the community to 'do their share of the washing up', that is, to contribute to the common good of the community in whatever way they can.

The common feature of these additional factors and problems is that they seem to be driven by strong norms of mutual responsibility and that these norms have been internalized in many people during their childhood upbringing and are reinforced in adulthood by interaction with friends and family who share a similar background. They are 'Jewish' in two different but related senses. In the first place, they clearly reflect biblical injunctions that the people of Israel should 'act justly' and contribute to the common welfare of the community. As it has been put for an audience of Christian fundraisers:

> What we call charity or philanthropy is in the Old Testament a matter of righteousness and justice. These practices of giving are about maintaining the right order of the community's life in accordance with God's law. Thus, in this view, giving for functions like worship and the care of the poor is simply what one ought to do. Moreover, there is a strong element of reciprocity in this view, in that one can expect to be cared for in such a community and so one has a responsibility to contribute to the support of that community (Jeavons and Basinger 2000:44).

In addition to the fact that the motivations of the people we interviewed were clearly 'Jewish' in this traditional religious sense, they were also 'Jewish' in the sociological sense that they reflected the norms of a particular cultural and ethnic grouping. These norms include the strong influence of family and voluntary associations on individual behaviour, attitudes and self-perception in adult life (Horowitz 2000).

## Good practice in Jewish voluntary sector governance: emerging ideas

We close this report by pointing to some ideas about good practice in governance that emerged from our study and that might provide guidance and lessons for other Jewish voluntary organizations.

### Recruitment and retention of board members

There were a number of ways in which some of the organizations in the study were responding to the problems of recruiting board members. One key to recruitment appeared to be balancing the need for continuity with the value of a healthy and regular renewal of board membership. There were clear

benefits for organizations whose rules and practices limited the length of time anyone could serve as a board member. It meant that the need to recruit new members had to be actively considered on a regular basis rather than ignored until a critical situation had been reached. It was a means for ensuring that no member served for longer than was in his or her interests or in the interests of the organization and its board. And it provided opportunities for newer and younger people to join the board and exercise responsibility at an early stage of their involvement with the organization rather than be kept waiting in the wings while their interest cooled.

A regular process of recruiting new board members might require the development of a more systematic and planned approach than asking people already known to the existing board members. Some chairpersons had used the wider networks available to them to identify potential new recruits and there was evidence of organizations widening the professional backgrounds—if not the socio-economic stratum— from which they drew their boards; with social workers and specialists in information technology joining the lawyers and accountants as board members. Another important way in which the pool from which board members were recruited had been enlarged was by drawing in women, or more women. It was also suggested that those involved in the governance of youth organizations could be 'head-hunted' and 'fast-tracked' into leadership roles in other agencies as they reached the upper age-limit for participation in youth movements.

A number of ways of retaining the interest and support of board members were also identified by the study. One key problem was the level of time commitment and responsibility expected of board members and there were two main ways of tackling this. The first was to increase the size of the active minority on whose shoulders the work fell. The second was to deploy staff in ways that reduced the pressure on board members by taking on the day-to-day routine chores and thus giving them a more rewarding role to play. More generally the successful retention of active board members was associated with ensuring that they had a specific brief or role to play in the organization, ensuring that meetings were business-like and pleasant occasions, and demonstrating the worth of the agency and its activities to them.

It should perhaps be noted here that 'user' or 'client' involvement in governance was barely mentioned in any way in our study, neither as an issue nor as a matter of good practice. Since user involvement is

increasingly considered to be both problematic and a matter of good practice in the wider voluntary sector (Locke, Robson and Howlett 2001), it is likely to emerge as a matter that Jewish voluntary organizations and their boards will have to tackle in the near future, in addition to the matters of recruitment and retention raised here.

### Recruitment and retention of chairpersons

Many of the factors contributing to the successful recruitment and retention of board members also apply to the position of chairperson. There are, however, some other issues that arose that are specific to this position. There appear to be two approaches to recruiting chairpersons. The first relies on the existing chairperson identifying a potential successor and 'grooming' him or her for the job. The second approach is based on the chairperson's confidence that the agency has created a board more than one of whose members is equipped and interested enough to take on the role of chair in due course. The implication is that, whichever method is selected, the recruitment of the next chairperson is planned rather than left to chance.

A number of organizations also smoothed the way for the succession while, at the same time, maximizing the benefits of the chairperson's involvement with the organization by ensuring that there is a role in the organization for the immediate past chairperson (and possibly his or her predecessors).

As we have noted earlier, the role of chairperson can be very demanding and stressful. Many of the reasons for this are beyond the control of the organization concerned but one key to enabling the chairperson to cope with the demands of the post has been both the quality of the senior member of the paid staff and his or her ability to form a good working relationship with the chairperson.

### Perceptions of board effectiveness

It is clear from the study findings that 'one size does not fit all' and that there are a variety of routes to the creation and maintenance of an effective board in the Jewish voluntary sector. The study has, however, highlighted two approaches that appear to be particularly helpful in this respect.

The first is the composition of the board. One of the widely recognized dilemmas involved in creating an effective board is getting the membership right. It is suggested that boards need members with a range of skills and experience if they are to be able to tackle the many issues and problems they will face: this is

an argument for diversity. At the same time they need a shared understanding of the purposes and values of the organization that will enable them to work successfully together: this requires homogeneity. How can a board have both? This is a challenge that many of the organizations in the study appear to have met with some success. While board members were drawn from a narrow socio-economic stratum they came from a range of professional or business backgrounds and, in some cases, brought a variety of religious perspectives. But this diversity could be united in a shared commitment to the specific cause of the organization or to the Jewish community more generally.

The second major strand in the study has been the importance of establishing an appropriate basis for collaboration between board members and staff. We have already referred to the importance of the relationship between the chairperson and the senior member of the paid staff. The need for the board and staff to work together constructively is equally important. A number of our interviewees reported on ways in which this 'partnership' had been developed and maintained. What is also clear from both the study and the literature is that the nature of that relationship cannot be set in stone; it needs to be kept fluid and changeable (Harris 1993). Successful boards need to find space to examine regularly the tasks and functions of their organizations and to adjust from time to time the way in which they are shared within boards and between boards and staff.

### In conclusion

We hope that the extraordinarily rich and copious information about governance in the Jewish voluntary sector that we have assembled here will be of use to the Jewish community as a whole in the future. In addition to presenting and analysing what was said to us in interviews and focus groups, we have also tried to draw out some of the practical implications. We have offered some different models for understanding the organizational choices open to Jewish governing bodies and Jewish voluntary agencies, and we have sketched out some emerging ideas for good practice. We have also taken a tentative step into a debate about the extent to which our findings reflect specifically Jewish characteristics, norms and issues.

At the same time, the reader should be aware, as we are ourselves, that our findings are meant to be considered alongside the other studies that are taking place as part of the project of Long-term Planning for British Jewry. Taken together, these individual studies will provide a more rounded picture of the Jewish voluntary sector in Britain and its possible futures.

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# Appendix: Tables

*Please note that percentages have been rounded up and may therefore not add up to 100 per cent in all cases.*

**Table 1: Age of study participants (N=36)**

| Age | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 29 or under | 1 | 3 |
| 30-39 | 2 | 6 |
| 40-49 | 8 | 22 |
| 50-59 | 12 | 33 |
| 60-69 | 5 | 14 |
| 70 or over | 8 | 22 |

**Table 2a: Length of service as board members in study organizations (N=36)**

| Length of service in years | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 0-4 | 5 | 14 |
| 5-9 | 10 | 28 |
| 10-14 | 7 | 19 |
| 15-19 | 6 | 16 |
| 20-29 | 5 | 14 |
| 30 or over | 3 | 8 |

**Table 2b: Length of service as chairs of study organizations (N=36)**

| Length of service in years | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 0-2 | 13 | 36 |
| 3-4 | 10 | 28 |
| 5-9 | 5 | 14 |
| 10 and over | 8 | 22 |

**Table 3: Frequency of board meetings (N=36)**

| Number of times a year | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 4 or less | 6 | 16 |
| 5-7 | 11 | 30 |
| 8-11 | 7 | 19 |
| 12 or more | 12 | 33 |

**Table 4: Total annual income of organizations in the study (N=33)**

| Income band | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| £10k-£49k | 2 | 6 |
| £50k-£99k | 5 | 15 |
| £100k-£999k | 15 | 45 |
| £1 million and over | 11 | 33 |

**Table 5: Numbers of full-time equivalent paid staff (N=34)**

| Numbers of staff | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1-4 | 11 | 33 |
| 5-9 | 8 | 24 |
| 10-49 | 9 | 27 |
| 50-99 | 1 | 3 |
| 100 or more | 5 | 15 |

**Table 6: Numbers of volunteers (N=31)**

| Numbers of volunteers | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| None | 4 | 13 |
| 1-19 | 6 | 19 |
| 20-49 | 5 | 16 |
| 50-99 | 5 | 16 |
| 100-199 | 6 | 19 |
| 200-499 | 3 | 10 |
| 500-999 | 0 | 0 |
| 1,000 or more | 2 | 7 |

**Table 7: Age of organization (N=34)**

| Date founded | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Pre-1900 | 6 | 18 |
| 1900-1949 | 12 | 36 |
| 1950-1969 | 4 | 12 |
| 1970-1979 | 5 | 15 |
| 1980-1989 | 5 | 15 |
| 1990- | 2 | 6 |

**Table 8: Main field of activity (N=36)**

| Field | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Religion | 7 | 19 |
| Education | 7 | 19 |
| Social welfare | 12 | 33 |
| Israel | 2 | 6 |
| Culture | 2 | 6 |
| Youth | 2 | 6 |
| Other | 4 | 12 |

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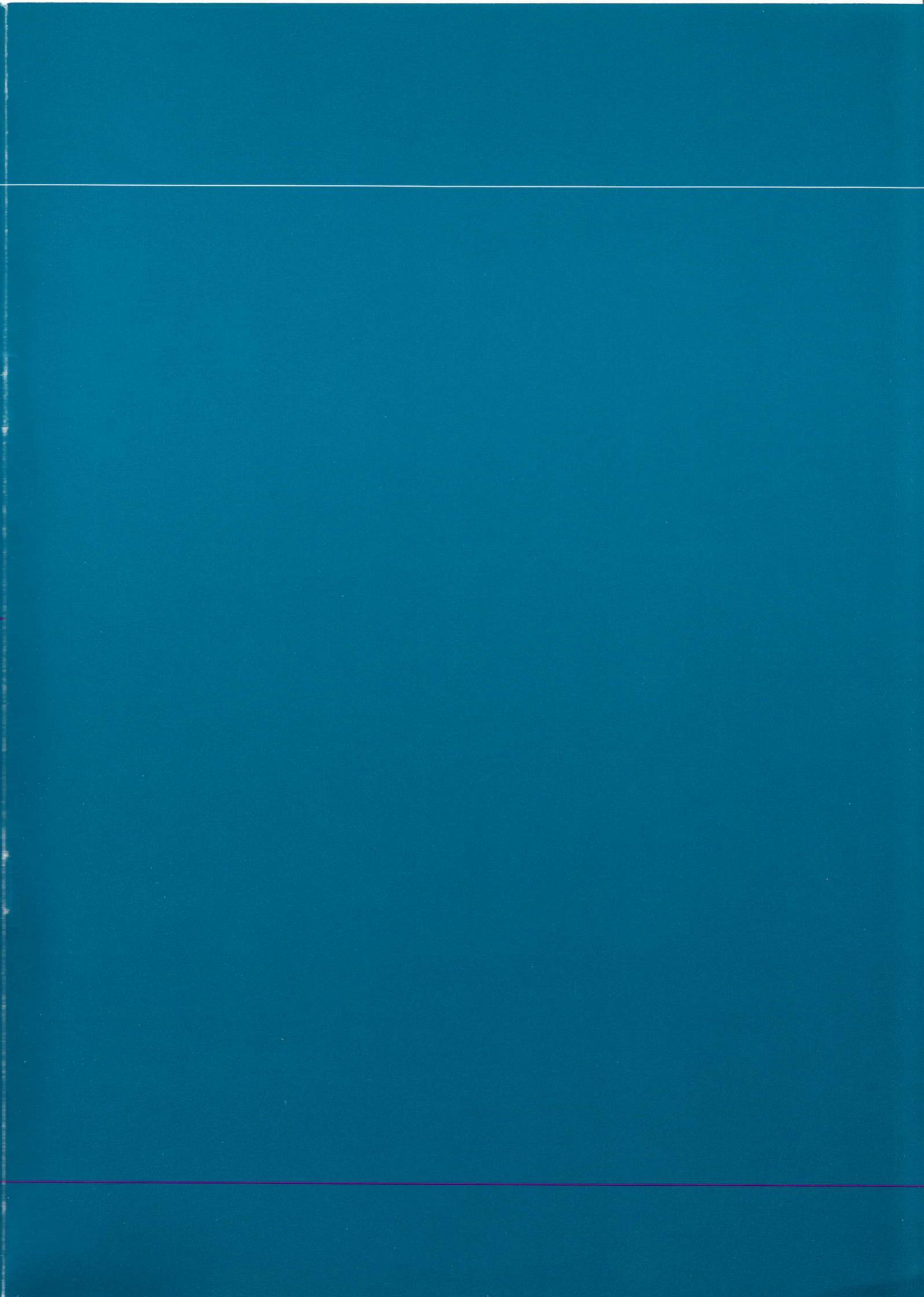JPR Report no. 5, November 1997

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