

An open teal door is shown on the left side of the frame, leading to a bright, orange-hued sunset sky filled with soft, white clouds. The door is slightly ajar, revealing the view outside. The overall background is a gradient of warm colors from orange to red.

Our door is always open.

IMPACT REPORT 2023

paperweight

Guide. Advocate. Resolve.

– WINNER –

In addition to our Barnet Award, Paperweight received a London Faith & Belief Community Award 2022 for services to and for faith and belief communities in Greater London.



There were a large number of nominations received and judges, made up Faith & Belief Forum staff and members of HM Lord Lieutenant of Greater London's Council on Faith, met to review them all, selecting 36 projects across the capital which they deemed exceptional – and The Paperweight Trust was one of them.

Our Charity Extra fundraiser sand art film was a winner in the Charity Film Awards 2022.



Our Paperweight Weightlifters received Volunteer Team of the Year 2022 in the JVN Awards.





We were here before, we'll be here after.

Benjamin Conway, Chair and Bayla Perrin, CEO

The sounds of the shofar are a distant memory, and the new year resolutions are already wearing thin. We are headed towards who knows where, but if even the mildest of predictions come true, we are in for a rough time.

No one wants to read another doom and gloom article and with the goal posts being moved on a daily basis, anything in print is liable to change before the ink is dry. However, we do need to pause and take a moment to understand the likely impact of the economic climate on our community.

The Jewish community makes up less than 0.5% of the UK population. There may be a tendency, even a complacency, that makes some believe that issues such as unemployment, homelessness, a reliance on welfare benefits, food shortages and lack of heating are issues that only affect those beyond our community and that we are isolated and immune from these problems.

Sadly, it's time to wake up and face reality. It's time to accept the harsh truth that whatever happens in the wider world is also happening under our very noses. It's time to step up and live up to the maxim, "a community is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable".

The impact of price rises, interest rate hikes and fuel and utility costs are rapid and overwhelming, with those in the middle bracket hit hardest. Using the analogy of a Snakes and Ladders board, you can climb the ladder one rung at a time, but one slip and you are dumped ruthlessly at the bottom. A family of four who has always paid its way and never contemplated needing help in any form cannot easily, if at all, overcome the sudden impact of the mortgage repayment doubling. Throw an even more serious occurrence of illness or redundancy, loss of a partner or divorce into the mix and the family is in disarray which may take years to recover from.

At a time when the headline talk is all about change, upheaval, incompetence and drama, here at Paperweight we are a model of calm, reassurance, stability, and confidentiality. We listen to our clients' problems, we advocate on their behalf, we put together a package of measures to resolve the issues, we provide guidance and advice, and we don't expect anybody to face a crisis on their own.

Our professional experts rise to the challenges, address the endless bureaucracy head on and time and time again find solutions where previously there were only tears and despair.

The cost-of-living crisis presents us with many difficult challenges. As a community we must come together like never before, to share and utilise resources meaningfully, to look strategically both at the short term needs and at a 10- and 20-year plan, to truly serve our community as it so richly deserves.

As part of our response to the current extreme crisis we have launched a Cost Savings Audit. A specially trained team of caseworkers which will check, assess and compare core living costs and then implement a cost reduction plan. Small savings can make all the difference. Our government might be in disarray, but as we begin the cycle anew, let us step up and act now.



True impact.

It has been over two years since our last, very successful, fundraising campaign and we are now getting ready to launch our new manifesto prior to our Charity Extra fundraiser on May 21st and 22nd, 2023.

Sadly, but not surprisingly, the increased demand for our help has not decreased since the end of the pandemic. In fact, partly due to the cost-of-living crisis, demand has continued to rise and our upcoming campaign will enable us to continue our vital and much needed work. Whatever is happening in the world and the challenges we face, Paperweight was here for our community before and we'll be here for it afterwards.

25% of the Jewish community is now considered financially vulnerable, compared to 22% during the pandemic. That equates to over 70,000 people who need our help. In the year Feb 2022 to Feb 2023, Paperweight is helping more than 160 new clients every month, each one of them often presenting with several complex asks for help. They are in need of practical guidance and advice with a multitude of issues including: debt and finance, post-bereavement matters, correspondence, council administering, utilities, advocacy, housing, employment, LPA and Deputyship, welfare and benefits, wills and probate, general bureaucracy & procedures, family breakdown and the practical fall-out from physical and mental health, abuse and old age.

We are now receiving an average of 6 – 7 calls a day and along with the higher demand, we have seen an increase in multifaced cases, meaning that there are often more than one caseworker or team on the case.

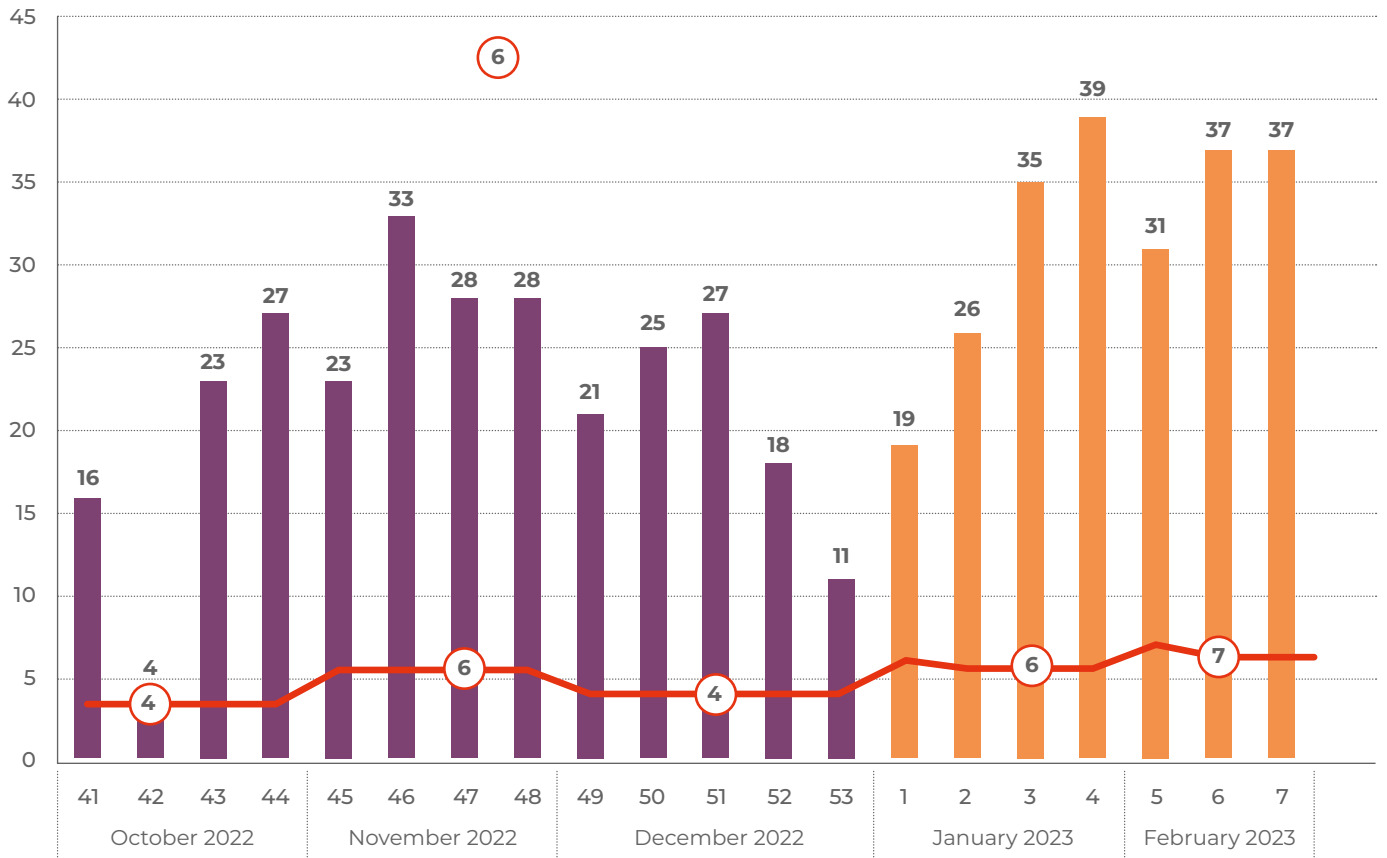
In the first 11 years of Paperweight, we have had 11 clients where we have had to invoke Safeguarding Protocols because the situation, whatever it was, was becoming physically dangerous either to the client or their family. In the past year alone, that number has doubled and we've had 22 safeguarding cases. In the main, these have been related to mental health and ensuing threats of suicide due to pressure and stress of a financial situation.

Benefits cases continue to rise and remain our highest percentage of clients, however, with the increase in multi-faceted and more complicated cases, other linked issues including bereavement, LPA's and debt have risen considerably.

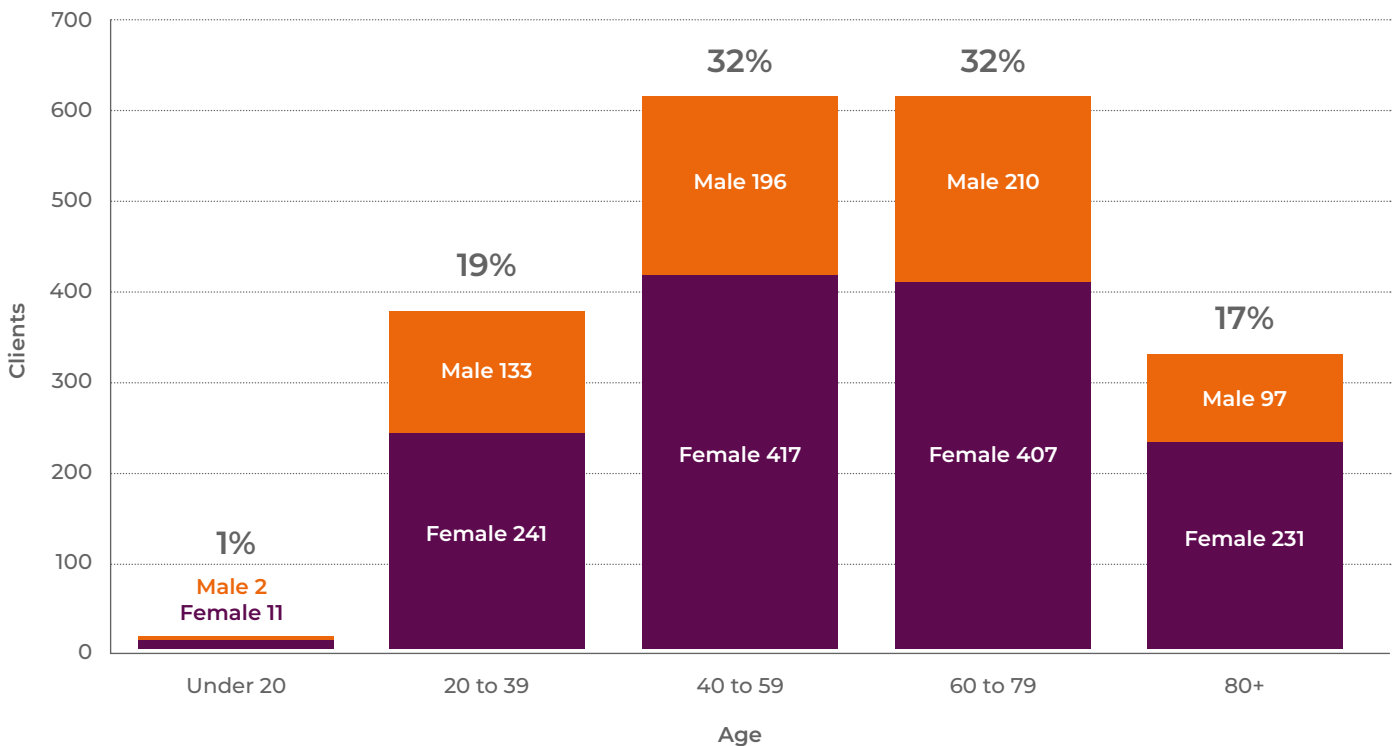
Our Paperlite service is for those who, due to neuro-typical conditions, anxiety, disability for example, want some light-touch help on a regular basis. Also appropriate for those who are not in a crisis situation, but could do with a friendly, helping hand with paperwork once in a while. A £25 a month contribution covers a two-hour monthly maintenance visit where a Paperlite caseworker will check up on paperwork and talk through any issues with domestic admin; ensure health and welfare appointments with other service providers are up to date; provide a listening ear; confirm all regular payments have been made on time; check through post; ensure all income and benefits have been received. We currently have over 70 clients using the Paperlite service.

FACTS & FIGURES

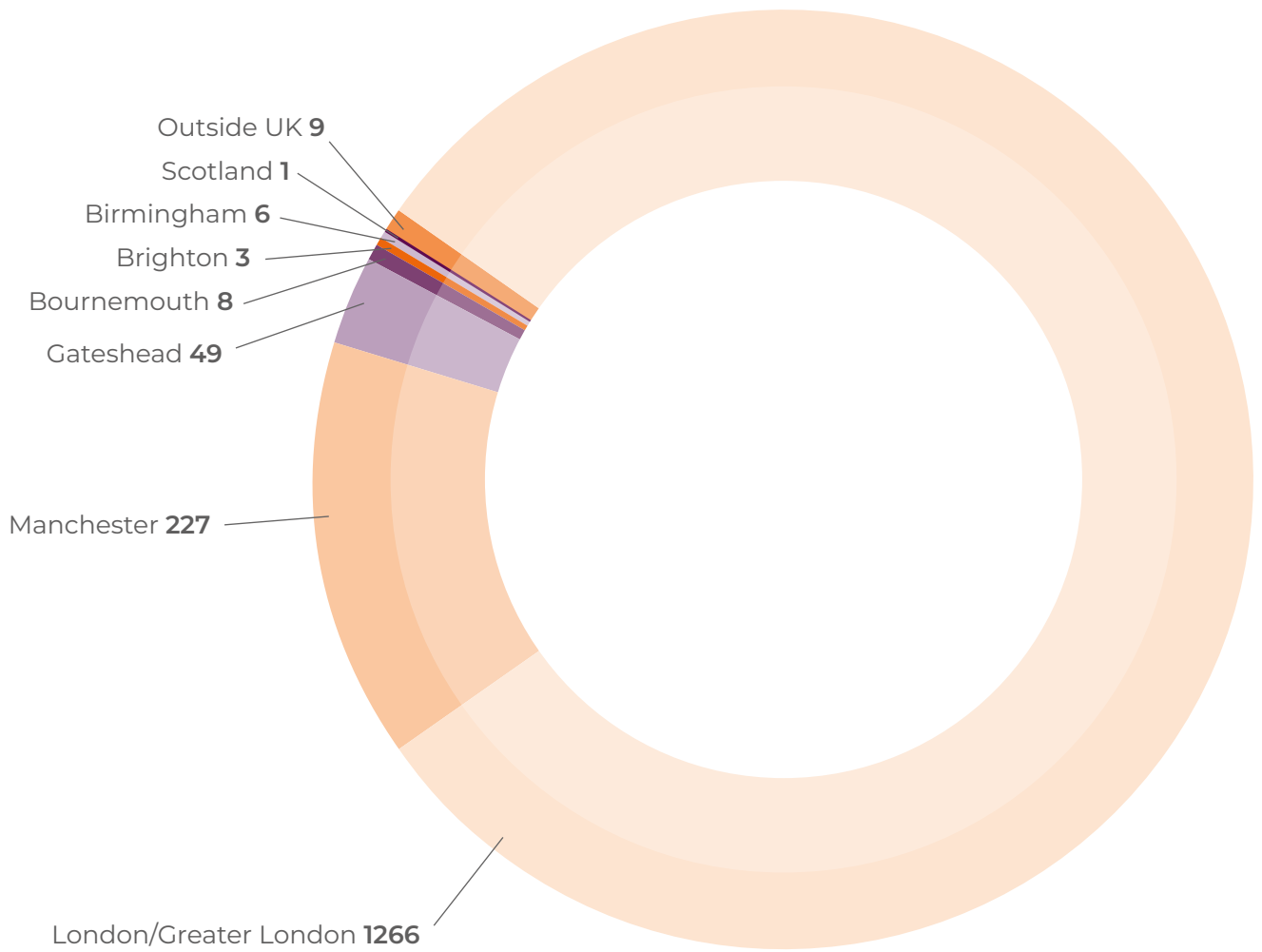
Total number of new cases per week

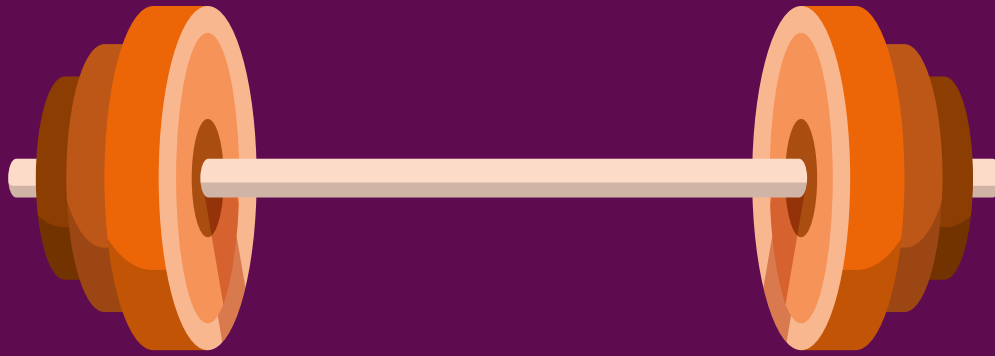


Total clients age and gender



Total number of clients by location





Financial & legal heavyweights.

After an exhaustive 15-month application process, The Paperweight Trust is now officially accredited by The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the first Jewish community organisation to do so. This will make have a huge impact for many of our clients overwhelmed by their finances and with the addition of specialist Financial Advice Team within Paperweight, we are fortifying our armoury of services. The coveted wording detailing our FCA Accreditation will be added to all our communications, further enhancing Paperweight's reputation as a solution-focused enterprise, with the wellbeing of our clients at its centre.

Paperweight is now a fully-fledged member of the national Fundraising Regulator, a recognised self-governing trade body. We have joined over 5,400 charities who are already members.



As we continue to grow, we are constantly looking for new and different ways we can help our clients and ensure the best possible outcome for them. We've spent time building relationships with other organisations and service providers and have done our research to ensure the right fit. We are entering into a law clinic partnership with Irwin Mitchell, one of the country's largest legal practices which will provide free, high-quality advice, initially for family law, further strengthening our existing, successful law clinic and adding another support bow to our arsenal.



Jonah's story.

Jonah is a 64-year-old self-employed odd job man who was on the verge of homelessness when he first came to Paperweight.

Jonah was living in social housing, taking on household jobs to make ends meet. He was managing ok, until the pandemic hit and then all his work dried up. He had bought a small van for £4k on HP (which would eventually cost £9k including interest), but it was the only credit he could get. During lockdown, Jonah received Universal Credit which covered his rent, but as he was unable to work, he was unable to pay bills, including the payments on his van and was not able to buy much food. Jonah then stopped receiving his Universal Credit due to lack of contact with his work coach (a possible side effect of the depression Jonah was now suffering from) and a reluctance to communicate with DWP. Jonah was now unable to pay his rent or bills and he received an eviction notice from the council. Due to two family bereavements in quick succession and estrangement from his siblings, Jonah had nowhere to go, until a girlfriend said he could stay with her and her teenage child. A very bad situation became even worse for Jonah as the girlfriend, an alcoholic, quickly became abusive when drunk, eventually throwing him out.

With no choice, Jonah began sleeping in his van which was uninsured, untaxed and in arrears to the HP company. He became increasingly scared the police or bailiffs would find him and take the van so at the age of 64 and suffering from both diabetes and cancer, Jonah began sleeping in shop doorways, often in temperatures well below freezing.

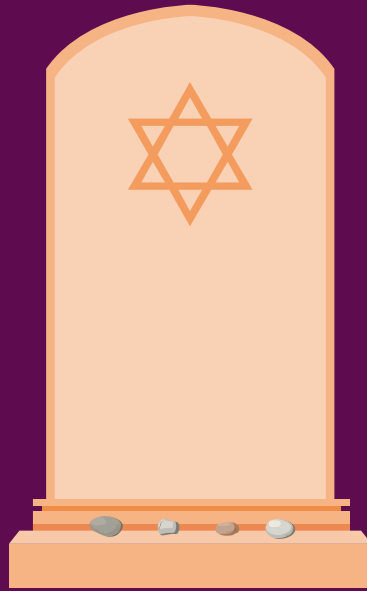
Although his sister was unable to accommodate Jonah in her own home, she encouraged him to contact Paperweight as she had received help from us in the past.

Once Jonah made contact, our first priority was to find temporary accommodation for Jonah to get him off the freezing streets. Our caseworker, Sidney, was able to secure Jonah five night's accommodation in a hotel and then his brother and sister both offered accommodation for a further five nights. Sidney and Jonah were in contact daily and began working on long term housing. Currently, Jonah is staying with his girlfriend, having patched things up, until more permanent housing is available.

Jonah has met with Sidney to start a new claim for Universal Credit which has been challenging, but Sidney persevered and Jonah is now registered and after attending a job centre, will start to receive payments soon.

Jonah has also been working with the Paperweight Financial Advice Team to consolidate his accrued debts including HP on the van and household bills from his previous address. All debtors have been approached and the situation explained to them, requesting writing off part of the debt and proposing a repayment plan.

Although there are some serious issues remaining, Jonah is no longer on the streets and is on the way to living a normal, more stable life.



It's time to have the conversation.

Paperweight has accumulated a wealth of experience in helping clients cope with the practical and financial consequences of a sudden change in their circumstances.

We have found that the likelihood of you, your partner or dependents on facing the death of a loved one is, for a multitude of reasons – personal, psychological, cultural, religious, superstitious – frequently left unattended and unprepared for.

Our latest guide, entitled *It's Time To Have The Conversation*, provides Paperweight's pre and post-bereavement practical and financial priorities for everyone of all ages. It was created to enable our caseworkers to go through with any client who approaches us for bereavement-related help and will take a huge weight off the client's shoulders when trying to navigate the mountain of bureaucracy at this very sensitive time.



Across the regions.

We now have a dedicated National Services Co-ordinator, whose remit is to rollout Paperweight's huge range of free services to all Jewish people from one corner of the country to the other. This national endeavour is aided by a three-year National Lottery Community seed grant.

We already have established Paperweight satellites in Gateshead and Manchester, where we now have caseworkers on the ground and we are working on doing the same in Birmingham, Leeds, Brighton, Glasgow, Liverpool, Bournemouth, Southend and Cardiff. Regional volunteer helpers, who deeply understand the nuances, mores and culture of their community, can offer so much more to their local clients with their intimate knowledge of their city, its welfare resources and its unique infrastructure, enabling Paperweight to provide tailor-made help to each and every individual.

Liaising with other communal organisations and charities has expanded Paperweight's profile regionally, as many of these organisations have regional branches which will consequently become aware of the vital work we do, opening up access to our services and inspiring new caseworkers.

Paperweight is proud to be growing reciprocal collaborations with a number of complementary charities across the UK and is always looking for ways to use its knowledge and experience to help our community.

Paperweight is now part of the Ukraine community support task force, spearheaded by the Jewish Leadership Council and World Jewish Relief offering our practical support when needed, primarily for the Jewish Community.

Paperweight has supported Ukrainian refugees as they arrive in the UK, often with nothing but what they can carry. For example, we guided Anna's cousin Maryia, who arrived in the UK from the Ukraine via Poland on a six-month visa. Maryia had a letter stating that she can access public funds. The Paperweight caseworker conducted a benefit entitlement check and confirmed that Maryia was entitled to Universal Credit, applied for via a Job Centre. A National Insurance number was also required for the online application. Maryia had six months to complete her biometrics and Paperweight was able to supply her with the link and all the information she needed to proceed and then apply for employment.



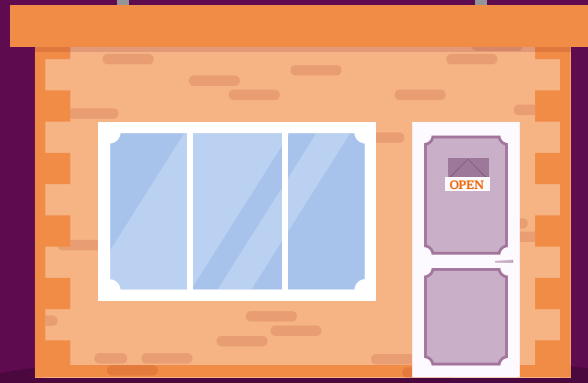
Debate team.

Paperweight recently held The Annual Racker International Community Debate, the first online Project of the Zeev & Paula Racker Social Welfare Initiative.

Key figures in Jewish welfare provision across the world met virtually to have an important conversation: “Why is welfare support still needed in 21st century Jewish communities?”, ask the difficult questions, explore best practice and learn from each other for the mutual benefit of our communities.

paperweight

Guide. Advocate. Resolve.



New premises.

Paperweight has grown so much that we needed more space and were lucky enough to secure premises at 89, Bell Lane in London, a few doors down from our head office. The walk-in offices have been adapted to our needs and offer a warm, welcoming, confidential space for clients to personally meet volunteer assessors who will take details and refer them to a caseworker for immediate action.

After opening, the MP for Golders Green, Mr Mike Freer visited and commented: "It was a pleasure to visit Paperweight to learn about their free services which are available across the whole Jewish community. They undertake fantastic work providing free guidance and support on a wide range of issues, including financial, legal and welfare matters. I congratulate all those involved in this project and look forward to working with them in the future."

Answering the call.

The Paperweight Trust is a charity set up to provide practical support and tailored guidance on a range of issues. We do not receive government subsidy and are funded entirely by donations.

Any gifts enable Paperweight to meet increasing demand for our services in difficult times and help us to keep answering the call.

Contact us.

The Paperweight Trust Head Office
85a Bell Lane, London NW4 2AS

0330 174 4300

info@paperweight.org.uk

www.paperweight.org.uk

[Facebook](#) [LinkedIn](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)

paperweight

Guide. Advocate. Resolve.