



Member Case Study – Green Kiddush, 2018 New North London Synagogue (NNLS)

When 25 aspiring Eco Synagogues met in May 2018, we alighted on the idea of each holding a Green Kiddush on the Shabbat of Parshat Noach as a way of raising awareness about environmental matters within our communities.

NNLS's approach:

NNLS had already bought non-disposable drinkware and were piloting a triage system to reduce the amount of recyclable or compostable waste being sent to landfill. For the Green Kiddush, we had a further set of potential objectives:

- Being wholly vegetarian or, possibly, vegan.
- Including as many locally grown, organic and animal-friendly (e.g., organic, free-range dairy) ingredients as we could.
- Producing educational material – with the shul's younger members – to promote our ecological vision and activities.
- Using glassware to serve our food rather than disposables.

The influencing factors in setting our objectives were the:

- Willingness of the two families that had B'nei Mitzvot to have a green(er) kiddush.
- Capacity of the shul to buy more non-disposable bowls for our dips.
- Ability to find people who would be willing to source ingredients, prepare dishes (dips, cakes and challot) and deliver them to the shul; and to find people to make posters.

Results:

Positives:

- The shul proactively bought glass bowls for the Kiddush and produced leaflets about how to reduce waste at home.
- One of the families agreed to serve a vegetarian Kiddush.
- A volunteer from the NNLS Green Team provided additional support to the Kiddush Team to ensure service and clearing went well.
- A volunteer from the NNLS Green Team and a member of the community – fortunately a professional chef – worked together in one of their kitchens to produce dips.
- Young people were encouraged through the youth programmes to produce posters for the Kiddush – sadly, these were mislaid so could not be used.

Negatives:

- One of the families wanted to serve fish dishes, and because we – as a community – did not 'mandate' the Green Kiddush, we had to agree.
- The volume of ingredients needed to make the various dishes meant that a car (electric!) was used to travel to the shops; it was also used to pick up crates from the shul, which were then loaded with 30 bowls of dips and then returned to the shul

- We did not have the capacity to produced baked goods (biscuits, pastries and challot) using organic and free range produce.

The following table outlines more specific positives and negatives.

ITEM	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Home-made hummus	Used only organic chickpeas organic tahini, organic lemons and olive oil. No plastic pots.	Gas to cook chickpeas. Cling-film to keep fresh.
Home-made egg mayo	Used only organic, free-range eggs and mayonnaise containing organic, free-range eggs; used organic spring onions. No plastic pots.	Gas to cook eggs. Cling-film to keep fresh.
Home-made avo smash	Used only organic avocados and organic lemons and free-range eggs.	Avocados have high air-miles and their over-consumption is bad for the environment. Cling-film to keep fresh.
Crudités	Used only organic vegetables. Only plastic packaging was the reused plastic bag for storage at shul. More vegetables were used to replace herring and fish-balls in one of the two kiddushim.	

Reflections:

This is obviously a very labour-intensive way of preparing kiddush, and required volunteers who had time, energy and commitment to get as far as we did.

We have not evaluated the extent to which our Kiddush reduced our overall environmental impact, but it would be interesting to keep exploring ways of doing so.

Options to reduce the burden on individuals include:

1. Generating a rota for production within the community;
2. Working with other communities to promote eco-friendly product lines within the kosher supply chain – e.g., Challot/cakes/pastries/dips.