



Bevis Marks Synagogue Heritage Foundation

‘Bevis Marks: Britain’s Most Significant Synagogue’ Project

Information to Tender For Evaluation Consultant

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Bevis Marks Synagogue – Evaluation Consultant Tender

Summary: Bevis Marks Synagogue is the oldest synagogue still in use in the United Kingdom. Built in 1701, it is Grade I listed and of exceptional architectural and cultural interest. Following a successful NLHF-funded project the synagogue has been restored and in spring 2026 The Dangoor Heritage Centre will open to enable wider public access to this unique cultural gem in the heart of the City of London. As we near the end of the construction phase, and are about to embark on exhibition fit out, we are seeking an Evaluation Consultant to support our small team in the delivery phase, and to deliver the final project evaluation by the end of November 2027.

Historical Background

In 1290, under Edward I, the Jewish population was formally expelled from England and settled largely in Northern France. In the late fifteenth century, the Jews of Spain and Portugal were persecuted and forcibly converted to Catholicism, although many continued to practice Judaism in secret. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many of these Jews left Iberia to settle in north European port cities – Amsterdam, above all – where it became increasingly possible for them to practice Judaism. They also formed significant links with London trade. In 1656, Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel came to London from Amsterdam to petition Oliver Cromwell to allow Jews to settle in England, known as the Resettlement. Although the 1290 edict was never formally repealed, acceptance gradually grew, and continued under Charles II and James II following the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660. This community established its first synagogue in 1656 in a house in Creechurch Lane, in the City and as the building became too small for its growing congregation, they established a new purpose-built synagogue on nearby Bevis Marks, which opened in 1701. Its intact Wren-style interior makes it a significant part of the historic landscape of London today.

Bevis Marks Synagogue is of exceptional historic interest as its fittings are remarkably complete and little altered from their original arrangement. Members of the community today sit on seats their ancestors will have sat on.

The Spanish & Portuguese (S&P) Sephardi Community also has a rich intangible heritage passed down from generation to generation since its establishment in 1656. These melodies, dress and



customs are a unique blend of Jewish traditions and English fashions and are completely distinct, having little in common with either the Ashkenazi or the North African/Eastern Sephardi communities. They only existed in other Spanish & Portuguese communities that were offshoots from the cathedral synagogue of Bevis Marks (in London, Manchester, the Caribbean and the United States) all of which have sadly closed or have lost their tradition through discontinuity of community.

The Community's collection of objects and its rich archive also provide a uniquely uninterrupted record of Jewish life in Britain.

The Project

In 2019 the S&P Sephardi Community set up the Bevis Marks Synagogue Heritage Foundation to run the National Lottery Heritage Fund project and the future visitor operation of the site.

The purpose of this National Lottery Heritage Fund project is to improve access, interpretation, collection displays and functionality to ensure that Bevis Marks synagogue is fit for purpose as a historic attraction and cultural centre. New staff and a dynamic activity programme will see a step change in operation and heritage management, with an ambition to increase the number of heritage users from around 7,000 to around 25,000/year including an estimated 6,000 school visits. Crucially, the project will make the site more financially sustainable, building income -generating activities sympathetic to an active place of worship, safeguarding the heritage for future generations.

The project is currently nearing the end of the construction phase. The exhibition fit out will be in autumn/winter 2025 and will open in early spring 2026.

The objectives of the **'Bevis Marks: Britain's Most Significant Synagogue'** project are to:

- Create equal access for all – physical, sensory, cognitive - to the site, its story and its collection
- Ensure the functionality and operation is fit for purpose as a resilient heritage visitor attraction with a museum-standard catalogued collection and sympathetic commercial enterprise (namely weddings, events, heritage ticketing, café and retail)
- Increase the number and diversity of people who visit/use Bevis Marks
- Improve the quality of care, management and access to the collections and archive.



Audience at Bevis Marks

The original proposed audiences at Bevis Marks Synagogue were:

- Bevis Marks and wider S&P Sephardi community
- Wider Anglo-Jewish community working, studying and living in London
- Local residents and workers
- Independent heritage visitors including day trippers, domestic and international tourists
- Schools and Universities within a 60 minute catchment
- Young people seeking a career in the heritage sector
- Special interest groups including inter-faith groups, informal learning groups, societies and friends' groups
- Researchers

Priority audiences who are unlikely to engage as independent visitors include:

- Older people from the S&P, Anglo Jewish and local communities
- Families in the local area

Within these segments there will be visitors with limited mobility, visual and hearing impairments, dementia, autism, learning difficulties and English as a second language.

Scope of work

We are now seeking an Evaluation Consultant to work closely with our small team of paid staff and volunteers to advise and support the team through the delivery phase of their project. The team comprises the newly appointed Heritage Operations Manager and Learning Programmes Manager and soon to start the Community Engagement & Volunteer Coordinator and Learning Officer who will be responsible for delivering the National Lottery Heritage Fund Activity Plan. We are currently reviewing our Business and Activity plans as our project has been significantly delayed due to COVID-19 and our main contractor going into administration in autumn 2024.



We are expecting the Evaluation Consultant to:

- With support from the Heritage Operations Manager, develop a logic model or equivalent evaluation framework which sets out the project's inputs, outputs, available resources, measurement methods, etc. through which the project will be evaluated.
- Pilot and refine evaluation tools which will capture quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the visitor, volunteer and participant profiles and heritage outcomes of the project
- Develop a sampling framework for undertaking a regular visitor survey
- Run a maximum of 2 evaluation training sessions for staff and evaluation volunteers
- Work with the staff at Bevis Marks to co-ordinate any inputting of questionnaires into Survey Monkey or any other comparable package
- Liaise with the Volunteer & Community Engagement Coordinator to ensure the volunteering experience is evaluated at the beginning, during and end of the National Lottery Heritage Fund project
- Co-ordinate quarterly collection of key information on volunteering, training, formal and informal learning and activities which can be submitted as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund reporting cycle working in partnership with staff and the Project Manager
- Meet with the key staff and volunteers to monitor the delivery of the Activity Plan and provide mentoring/ guidance to the team
- Prepare a final summative evaluation report of the project working in collaboration with the Heritage Operations Manager, Learning Manager and Volunteer & Community Engagement Coordinator and the Foundation according to National Lottery Heritage Fund guidelines.

This role will start as soon as possible and be on-going throughout the delivery of the Activity Plan and will culminate with the final project Evaluation Report which is due by November 2026.

Experience/knowledge

We are seeking an individual or small consultancy to act as our Evaluation Consultant who can demonstrate the following:



- Experience of evaluating National Lottery Heritage Funded Activity projects during the last 3 years
- Knowledge of National Lottery Heritage Fund processes and evaluation requirements
- Ability to be flexible and work collaboratively with a small team of staff and volunteers.
- Experience of using a range of evaluation tools that collect qualitative and quantitative data
- Practical experience of using Survey Monkey or another recommended package to design, administer and analyse quantitative data
- Commitment to evaluation that encourages a reflective approach
- Experience of training staff and volunteers in evaluation/data gathering methodologies
- Value for money

Fee

The maximum budget for the Evaluation Consultant in the delivery phase is £9,000, inclusive of expenses and exclusive of VAT.

Submission

If you would be interested in submitting a tender, site visits will be available. Those shortlisted will be invited to interview – date to be confirmed. Please submit your tender electronically by **5pm on 13th October 2025 to Amanda Newman – amanda@belvedereprojectsolutions.com**. This should include:

- Outline who is submitting the tender
- Demonstrate your experience and knowledge
- Clearly explain how you would approach the evaluation
- Include a copy of a recent comparable Evaluation Report that the person you are proposing to complete the evaluation has written
- Include CVs of staff that would undertake the work and the main contact
- Your fee indicating the number of days allocated to each activity



- A reference of a past client for whom you have undertaken evaluation during the delivery of a National Lottery Heritage Fund funded project and a second reference for whom you have prepared a final summative evaluation report, both within the last 3 years.
- Evidence of public liability and professional indemnity insurance