



## Institute for Jewish Policy Research

# 2011 CENSUS RESULTS (ENGLAND AND WALES): A TALE OF TWO JEWISH POPULATIONS

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### Introduction

The 2011 Census was held on 27th March 2011 and included a question on religion for only the second time. The latest release of census data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) covers age and sex by religion. This affords a unique opportunity to chart detailed demographic change in the Jewish community over the decade since 2001.

### Background

In 2001, religion was included as a question in the national census for the first time. This produced by far and away the largest dataset ever compiled on Jews in Britain. In 2011, it produced an even larger dataset, rendered all the more valuable because of the comparisons that can now be drawn with the 2001 data. The potential value of these data to the Jewish community should not be underestimated. They can inform planning at all levels—national, regional and local—and in a host of different sectors. Given that such data have only recently become available to us, and equivalent data are still unavailable to the majority of large Jewish communities around the world, it is essential that community leaders exploit this opportunity to pursue evidence-based policy-making to its fullest extent.

The complete set of Census data will continue to be released in stages throughout 2013 and into 2014. JPR is spearheading the data analysis and dissemination process and publishing a number of focused reports for various sectors in the community. JPR's research team is able to produce bespoke census reports for charities and organisations working in the community that wish to use these data to aid their policy development and planning capacity.

In addition, JPR's 2013 National Jewish Community Study (NJCS), which has been sponsored and supported by many of the Jewish community's major organisations, will provide additional data on a range of communal issues not addressed by the Census. Together, the Census and NJCS will place the community in an extraordinarily strong, data-rich position with huge potential to contribute towards planning and policy decision-making at all communal levels over the coming years. Indeed, the analytical possibilities offered by these new datasets in furthering Jewish organisations' understanding of the Jewish market are so broad, that to carry out bespoke research *without* prior consultation of these remarkable resources inevitably risks wasting valuable and scarce communal resources.

This report, which draws on the age and sex data from the 2011 Census, focuses on one particular aspect of the findings – i.e. evidence of two distinct Jewish populations. There are, of course, many other important stories hidden in the vast dataset. These relate both to the whole Jewish community as well as sub-groups within it. Notably, this includes the likely changes to the size of the elderly Jewish population moving forward; the likely number of children in the community moving forward; and the changing age and sex makeup of Jewish communities at very localised levels such as the neighbourhoods surrounding synagogues, schools and care homes.

## **2011 Census results on age and sex**

### **Preliminary notes**

Age and sex data by religion allow us to explore the demographic makeup of the Jewish population in 2011 in great detail. However, before proceeding with the analysis, the following points should be noted about the data:

- National data relate to England and Wales only; data for Scotland are currently unavailable;
- Data are broken down by sex and geography and are currently available down to the level of Local Authority. Data on age and sex by religion for lower level geographies, such as wards, are not currently available;
- The data have been released by ONS in five-year cohorts with the oldest cohort amalgamating all people aged 85 years and above;
- Data for single years of age are currently unavailable, although ONS has released a single national level table with single-year percentage totals by religion;
- Where relevant, **enumerated** data have been adjusted in this report to account for non-response to the religion question.<sup>1</sup> Where this occurs they are referred to as **estimated** data;
- All census data are produced by ONS and are Crown Copyright. All analysis in this report is carried out by JPR.

### **Age of the Jewish population in context**

The 2011 Census revealed the median age of the general population in England and Wales to be 39 years (Table 1). The median is the age at which exactly half the population is older and half is younger. By comparison, the Jewish population is slightly older, with a median age of 41 years. Muslims have the youngest median age (25 years) and Christians have the oldest median age (45 years).

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<sup>1</sup> As the census question on religion is voluntary, an adjustment has been made, where appropriate, to account for the likelihood of Jewish people choosing not to respond to it.

**Table 1. Median age of religious sub-groups in England and Wales – enumerated data \***

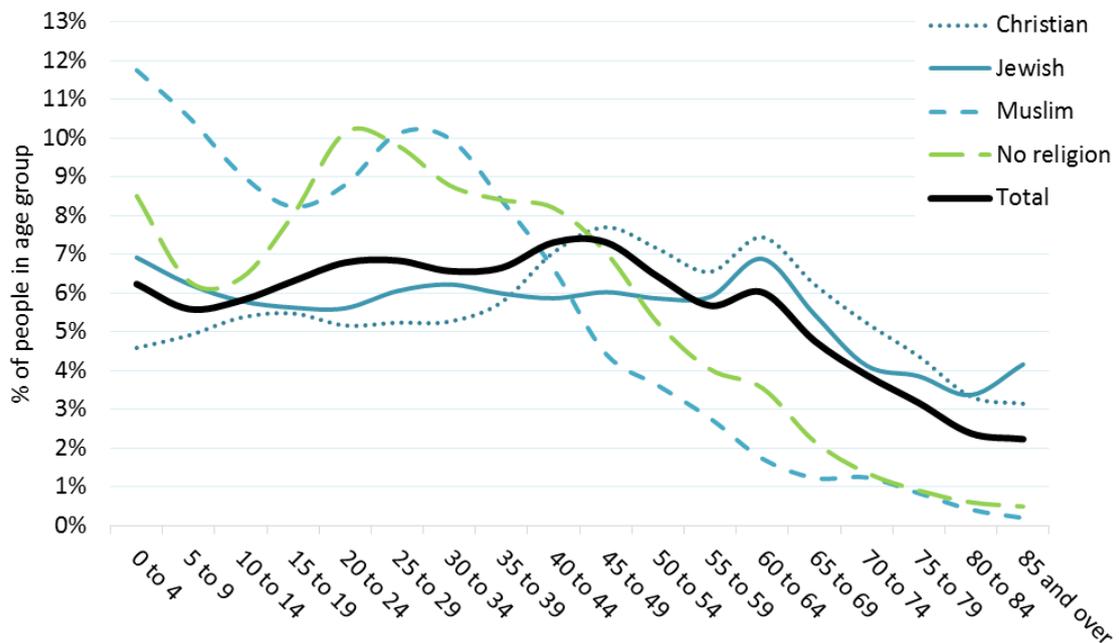
Group	Age in years
Muslim	25
No Religion	30
Hindu	32
Sikh	32
Buddhist	37
Jewish	41
Other	42
Christian	45
Total	39

Source: [http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/censusreligion/religion\\_age.csv](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/censusreligion/religion_age.csv)

\* Data have been extrapolated from percentage total for individual years where ‘85 and above’ is the oldest age group. We are grateful to Daniel Vulkan of the Board of Deputies for bringing this single year dataset to our attention.

However, median age disguises a more complex underlying population structure. For example, Figure 1 shows that the Jewish population age structure resembles the general (Total) population structure fairly closely, though Jews do have the highest proportion of people aged 85 and above. It is also apparent that people responding No Religion<sup>2</sup> to the census are more likely to be in their 20s and 30s than in older age groups, and the Muslim population has a notably high proportion of children under 10 years.

**Figure 1. Jewish age structure compared with other groups – enumerated data**



Source: [http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/censusreligion/religion\\_age.csv](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/censusreligion/religion_age.csv)

<sup>2</sup> ‘No Religion’ was the first option offered by the religion question, which asked ‘What is your religion?’ The other categories were Christian; Buddhist; Hindu; Jewish; Muslim; Sikh; Other.

### Change in the Jewish age/sex structure

Between 2001 and 2011, the Jewish population became younger overall: estimated average age declined by two years from 43 to 41. This is because the proportion of the population aged under 18 in 2011 increased (from 19.7% to 22.5%), while the proportion aged 65 and above decreased (from 22.4% to 21.1%) (Table 2).

**Table 2. Estimated Jewish age structure: 2001 compared with 2011**

Age group	2001	2011
Under 18	19.7%	22.5%
18-64	57.9%	56.4%
65 and above	22.4%	21.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

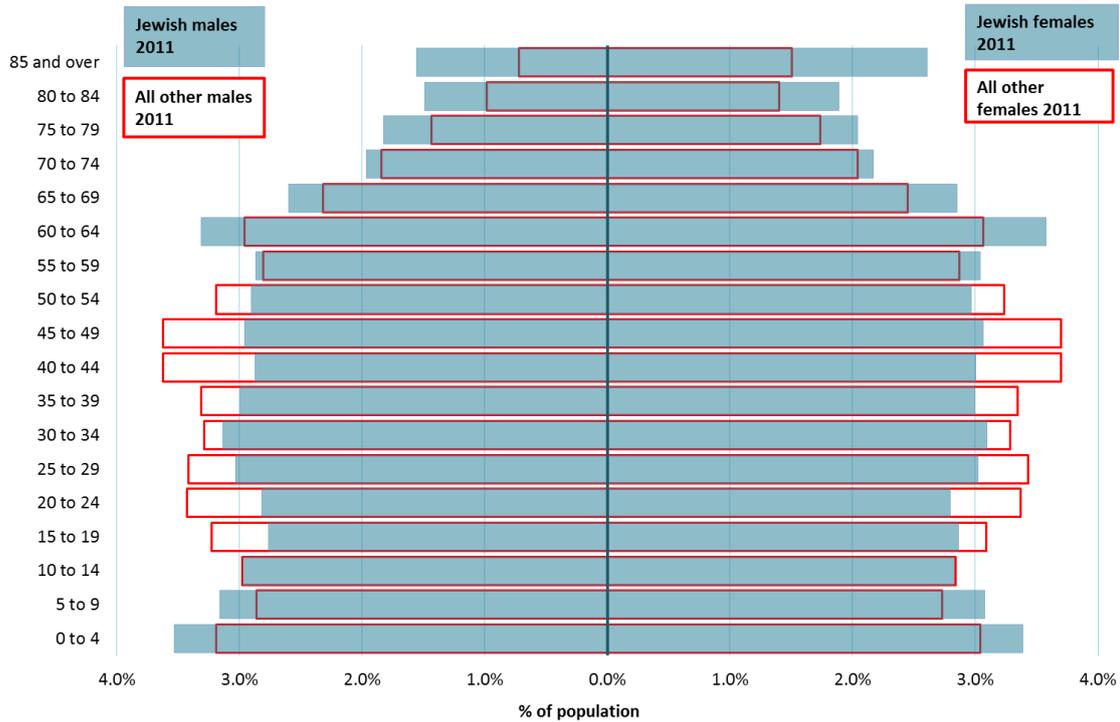
There were an estimated 138,806 Jewish men and 145,315 Jewish women in the 2011 Census. Overall, there are 105 females for every 100 males, with relatively fewer females at younger ages (96 females for every 100 males aged under 5 years) and relatively more females at older ages (169 females for every 100 males aged 85 and above). With an estimated average age of 43 years, Jewish women are older than Jewish men, whose average age is 40 years.

A convenient tool for examining the age/sex structure of any population is the population pyramid. The overall shape of a pyramid indicates whether there are relatively high or low numbers of people in certain age groups by sex. This is particularly useful when two pyramids are compared with each other. For example, in Figure 2, the blue shaded bars represent the Jewish population in 2011 with males on the left and females on the right; the general population is represented by the clear, red-edged bars. The horizontal length of each bar indicates the relative size of each age group.

It is apparent that the blue and red-edged bars do not overlap precisely, with areas of 'misalignment' highlighting three key differences between the Jewish and general populations. First, relatively more Jews are aged under 10 years old; second, there are relatively more Jews aged 55 years and above, and especially aged 80 and above<sup>3</sup>; and third, there are relatively fewer Jews aged 15-54 years.

<sup>3</sup> The significant protrusion of the '85 and over' bars for both Jews and the general population is due to the way the data have been aggregated by ONS for reasons of confidentiality. In fact, this group consists of smaller and smaller numbers of people as the age approaches, and exceeds, 100 years. Age data are not currently available showing age broken down beyond 84 years.

Figure 2. Jewish population pyramid compared with the general population, 2011 – enumerated data\*



\* The general population excludes Jews

The next pyramid shows how the age/sex structure of the Jewish population has changed since 2001 (Figure 3). This is the first time it has been possible to show Jewish population change by age in England and Wales in anything like this level of detail. The 2011 data are represented by the blue shaded bars and the 2001 data are represented by the clear red-edged bars.

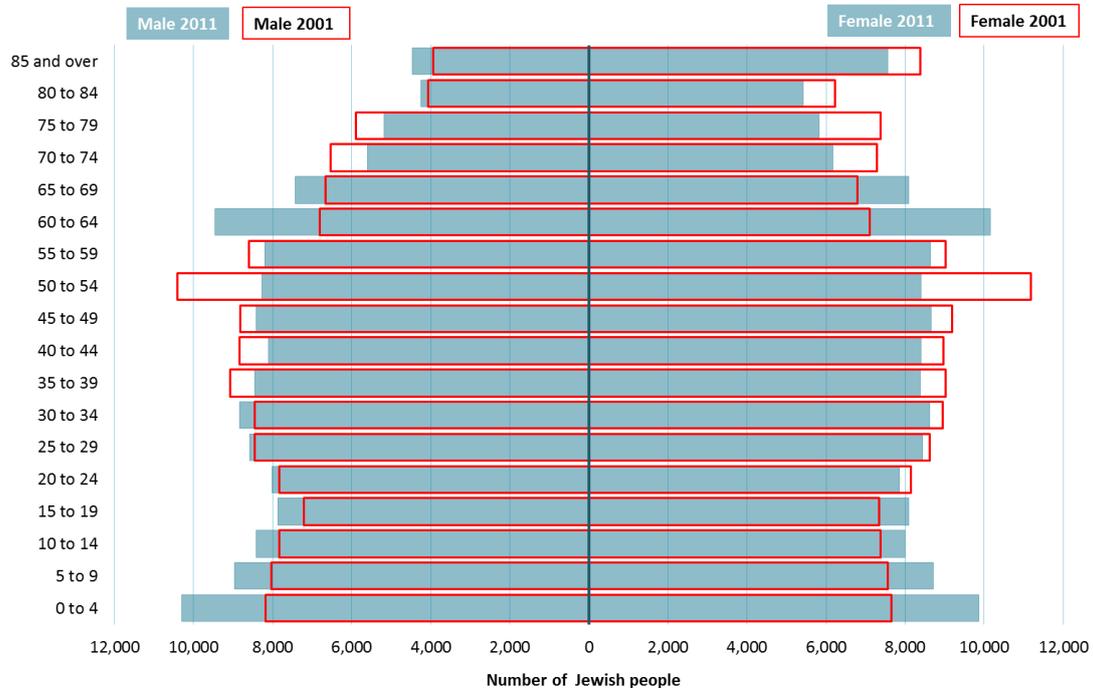
The first aspect of Jewish population change evident in Figure 3 is shown by the effective upward shift of the red-edged bars by two age cohorts to become blue bars. For example, the protrusion of the 50-54 year red-edged bars (male and female) for 2001 corresponds to the protruding 60-64 year blue bars (male and female) 10 years later in 2011. This group is seen not only to have aged by 10 years, but it also contracted in size (by 1,968 people) over the period, presumably as a result of deaths. This is the baby-boomer generation—i.e. those born shortly after the Second World War—and they are now beginning to enter retirement.

However, as with Figure 2, the areas of misalignment are the most revealing. With the notable exception of Jews aged in their 60s in 2011, it is apparent that, for most male and female age groups, there has been a relative *decrease* in the size of each age group aged 20 years and above, whereas there has been a relative *increase* in the size of each group aged 20 years and below. Indeed, compared with the 2001 position, there are *fewer* Jews aged 20 and above (an estimated 6,813 fewer people), but there are *more* Jews aged under 20 (an estimated 9,049 more people in this age group<sup>4</sup>). This increase is particularly prominent in the very youngest cohort (age 0-4) which is 27.4% larger in 2011 than it was in 2001. Given that the overall size of the Jewish population has increased only marginally—by less than

<sup>4</sup> However, it is important to note that the majority (83.9%) of this growth originated in areas with predominantly haredi population (see below).

1%<sup>5</sup>—this represents a significant and rapid structural change in the Jewish population. Indeed, since the 1950s, the Jewish population has been contracting,<sup>6</sup> primarily as a result of ageing, but also as a result of assimilation, yet here is clear evidence of demographic rejuvenation in the community, which may lead to further population increases in the future.

**Figure 3. Estimated Jewish population change by sex: 2001 compared with 2011**



**Two Jewish populations**

Two interesting aspects of the data described so far (that there are relatively more Jews in the older *and* younger age groups compared with the general population (Figure 2), and that there was a substantial increase in the number of young Jewish people between 2001 and 2011 despite a long history of Jewish population ageing (Figure 3)), can be explained by the fact that the Jewish population pyramid disguises two demographically distinct groups. As has been recorded elsewhere<sup>7</sup>, considerable population growth has been occurring among haredi (strictly Orthodox) Jews in Britain since the early 1990s, mainly as a result of very high birth rates.

Although there is no clearly defined cut-off between a haredi Jew and a ‘non-haredi’ Jew (for example, there are many Orthodox Jews who follow traditions and practices that are similar

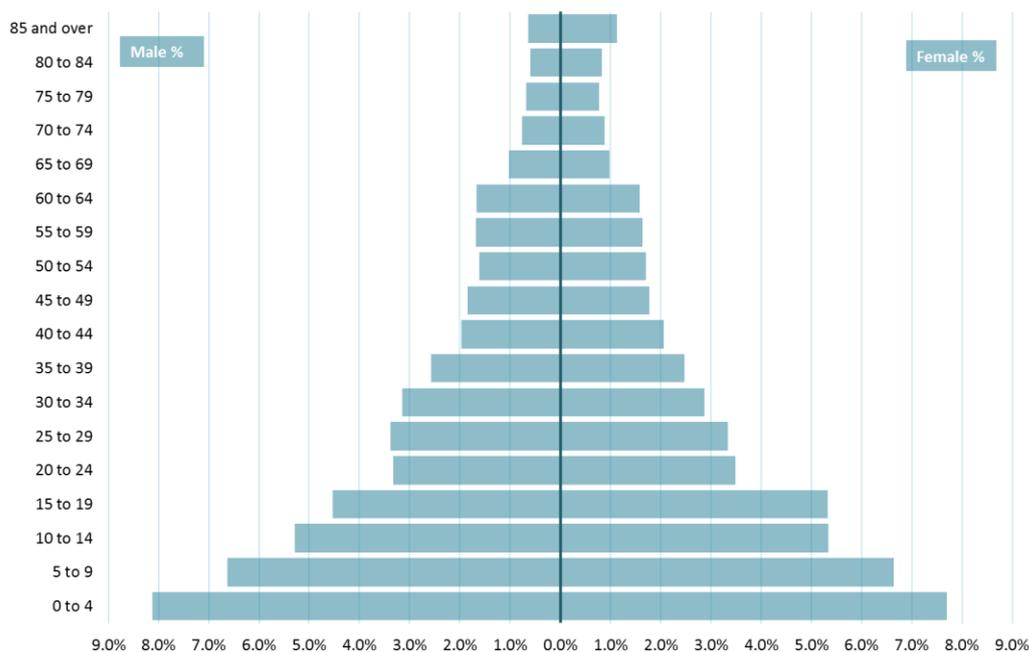
<sup>5</sup> See also: Graham D., Boyd J., and Vulkan D. (2012). “2011 Census Results (England and Wales): Initial insights about the UK Jewish population.” London: JPR & Board of Deputies. <http://www.jpr.org.uk/downloads/2011%20Census%20Initial%20findings%20report%20Final%20Dec%202012.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Schmol M., and Cohen F. (1998). “A Profile of British Jewry.” London: Board of Deputies of British Jews, pp.7-9.

<sup>7</sup> Vulkan D., and Graham D. (2008). “Population Trends among Britain’s Strictly Orthodox Jews.” London: Board of Deputies, p.2. <http://www.bod.org.uk/content/StrictlyOrthodox.pdf>. See also: Graham et. al. (2012), op. cit.

to haredim), and the Census does not provide data on different Jewish denominations, it is possible, nevertheless, to gain some insight into these two groups by means of a geographical breakdown. This is because there are five main haredi population concentrations in Britain, and in four of these, haredim are by far the majority Jewish group. These are the Local Authorities (LA) of Hackney, Haringey, Salford, and Gateshead. The one place where haredim do not form a significant and geographically isolated majority, and therefore cannot currently be meaningfully separated out from the Census data, is Barnet, especially around the Golders Green area, which, in 2008, was estimated to account for about 18% of all haredim in England and Wales.<sup>8</sup> Even so, by combining the data of the four LAs where haredim do form clear majorities, the shape of the population pyramid this produces (Figure 4) is completely different to the one for the Jewish population as a whole (Figure 3, blue bars). Figure 4 truly looks like a pyramid (hence the name) because of the large number of younger people relative to older people.

**Figure 4. Population pyramid for ‘haredi LAs’, 2011, N=37,129 (estimated data)\***



\* “Haredi” is defined as any Jewish people in the LAs of Hackney, Haringey, Salford and Gateshead. It excludes any haredi Jews living in NW London

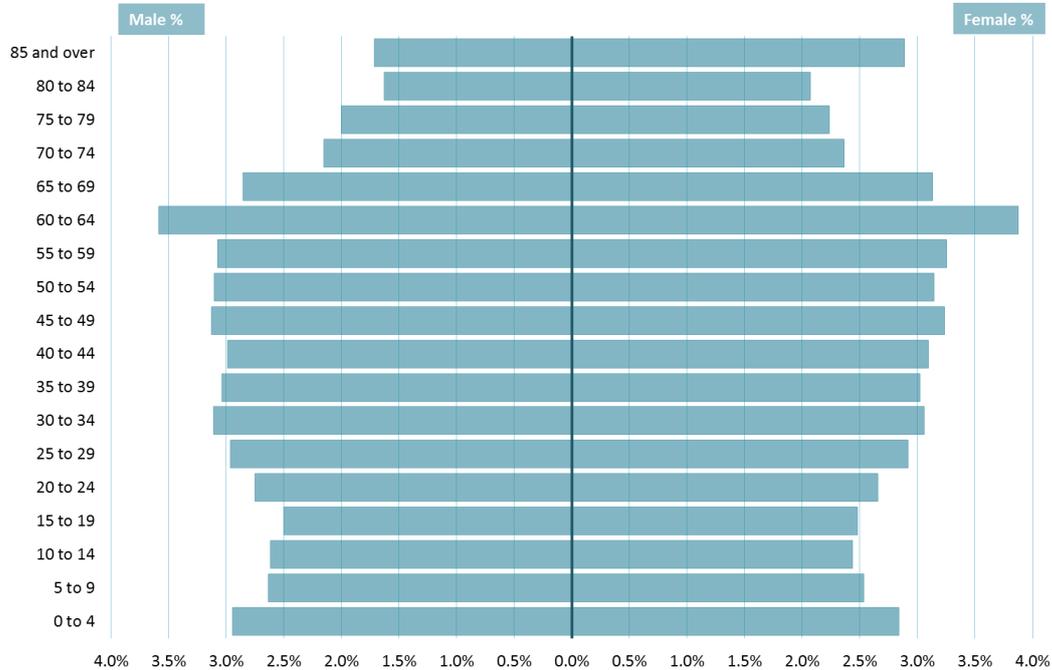
By subtracting the ‘haredi pyramid’ from the total, an indication of the demographic profile of the far larger non-haredi Jewish population can be obtained. This is shown in Figure 5 which, it should be remembered, includes approximately 6,000 haredim in north-west London who cannot be separated out from these data.<sup>9</sup> Even so, the shape of the non-haredi pyramid is distinctly rectangular rather than pyramidal—i.e. its structural age profile is older. In the non-haredi group, 21.0% is under 20 years-old, compared with almost half (49.6%) in

<sup>8</sup> Vulkan and Graham (2008), op. cit. p.15. Future 2011 Census releases will provide data at ward level and below, and these will be used to gain a more accurate picture of the two populations. At this stage, data at the LA level provide an approximation.

<sup>9</sup> In 2008, it was estimated that there were between 4,000 and 6,800 haredim in north-west London. Assuming an annual growth rate of 4% per year between 2008 and 2011, there may be between 4,500 and 7,600 haredim in north-west London in 2011 (Vulkan and Graham (2008), op. cit., pp.15-16).

the haredi group. Conversely, 22.8% of the non-haredi group is aged 65 years and older, compared with 8.3% of the haredi group.

**Figure 5. Population pyramid for Jews in ‘non-haredi’ Local Authorities, 2011, N=249,001 - estimated data\***



\* This pyramid shows the remainder Jewish population after subtracting the data shown in Figure 4 from the total Jewish population. It includes haredim in north-west London.

It is also noticeable in Figure 5 that the 0-4 age cohort exhibits a distinct protrusion suggestive of a mini baby boom in this group too. Whilst there may be some validity in this conclusion, there are at least two reasons for caution. First, the increase may simply be an ‘echo of an echo’: in other words, a result of the baby boomer’s (aged 60-64) babies coming of age (30-34 year cohort in Figure 5) and having babies themselves (i.e. it’s a relative rather than an absolute increase). Second, and as noted, these data unavoidably include around 6,000 haredim in north-west London, and their young population profile may exaggerate this echo further still.

The average age of haredi and non-haredi Jews can also be estimated, and the difference is substantial: 27 years<sup>10</sup> for haredim and 44 years for non-haredim. Further, using this geographical approach, it can be seen that haredim account for an estimated 13.1% of the Jewish population overall, but 26.2% of the population aged under 20 years in England and Wales. However, given the present limitations of the data, this is likely to be a conservative estimate. Indeed, the actual proportion of babies being born to haredi parents will be well above 30%; a “conservative estimate” by the Board of Deputies suggests that haredim accounted for about 40% of all Jewish births in 2010.<sup>11</sup> Finally, an estimate of the change in the proportion of each age group that is haredi shows that, in 2001, haredim accounted for

<sup>10</sup> Although it is not currently possible to calculate the precise median age, it lies within the 20 to 24 year age group.

<sup>11</sup> See: Vulkan, D. (2012). “Britain’s Jewish Community Statistics 2010.” London: Board of Deputies of British Jews, p.8. <http://www.bod.org.uk/content/CommunityStatistics2010.pdf>.

21.5% of all Jewish children aged under 5 years; by 2011 this proportion had increased to 29.1%.

### **Summary and policy considerations**

- Compared with other religious groups, Jews are relatively old on average (41 years old for Jews versus 39 years in general).
- Between 2001 and 2011, the Jewish population became younger overall. There were an estimated 9,049 more Jews under the age of 20 in 2011 than 2001. Given that Jews have been steadily ageing since the 1950s, this is a highly significant turnaround. The key driver of this change is the very high growth in haredi (strictly-Orthodox) births: indeed, it constitutes at least 83.9% of this increase.
- Haredi Jews account for less than 15% of the total Jewish population, but at least 29% of Jewish children under 5 years old are born to haredi parents.
- Thus, two demographically distinct Jewish populations are clearly identifiable in England and Wales: haredi Jews with an average age of 27 years, and non-haredi Jews with an average age of 44 years.
- These two groups are following very different demographic trajectories and will have very different needs going forward. In the future, this demographic reality is likely to have profound implications for issues such as the provision of communal services, representation and inter-denominational dialogue.