

Rabbi Lieberman, Rabonim, Friends,

Thank you so much for joining us this morning.

It's certainly odd to be standing here. Over the last year, you leave home or shul, day after day, week after week and you see this building standing here. And you say to yourself - that is where we are moving to. And yet, you see that nothing is happening. All these different people keep mentioning the move and the change and the progress we are making. And you are getting bombarded with emails and Drashas and yet nothing is happening. And you wonder to yourself – does anyone actually know what they are doing.

And then all of a sudden the fences go up and some serious demolition and reconstruction starts in front of your eyes. And suddenly you think to yourself maybe there are people in the community who know what they are doing after all. Maybe there is somebody with the weight and burden of the community on their shoulders and all of a sudden the project seems real.

Well, as you can see, real it is.

We as a community have much to be grateful for. The Eruv, Our fantastic new school, Our long running Nursery, our expanding roll call of new young members and finally this building.

After 65 memorable and special years at 261 Hale Lane we will soon be vacating 261 and handing it over to the school to build a state-of-the-art, modern primary school and nursery for our children and we will be moving here to 265 Hale Lane. Our own freehold building.

It has been a long journey. Peppered along the way with false starts, seemingly unreachable horizons and a good few late night meetings and energetic phone calls. Without going in to the full history of the move let me offer thanks on behalf of the community to a few people.

To start with, thank you to the initial group of young members who believed that a school could be set up at 261. Many of these pioneers are now governors of the School. Then of course JSSM (Jewish Secondary Schools Movement) must be thanked for re-investing in Edgware and providing the capital for the Edgware Jewish Primary School to get going and for the school to purchase full ownership of 261 Hale Lane in exchange for this freehold site.

In addition, in the early days, we were fortunate to have established members who shared the vision of a school and shul and who pushed and encouraged the project in its early difficult days, keeping all sides on board. People like Michael Steel, Colin Richman, Alan Tapnack, Eli Abeles, Stuart Stern and of course our own Rav - Rabbi Lieberman. Each of these gentlemen were instrumental in bring sanity and reason to the difficult negotiations and we are very grateful for their input and dedication.

Jumping forward and looking at what is happening around us now. None of this that you see would be possible without the hard work of the site committee. The site committee are Simon Dryer, Rocky Sander, Tania Marcus, Eli Abeles, David Stern, Jeremy March, Robert Zysblat and previously Anneke Raber.

Likewise our thanks go to the fundraising committee who have the un-envi-ous task of meeting members and soliciting pledges for this building. The fundraising committee are: Robert Zysblat, Alan Rubin, Daniel Marcus, Michael Steel, Eli Abeles, Jonny Feinmesser, Max Braunold, Martin Moser, Neil Cohen, Robert Curtis and Simon Dryer.

Both the Site Committee and the Fundraising committee deserve our whole hearted appreciation for the time they have put in to this project to make things happen.

We are fortunate to have committed and dedicated professional advisors on this project and I wish to thank each of them. They are:

Our Architect, Tim Counter and his team

Our Quantity Surveyor, Stuart Trogal and his team

Our Structural Engineer Clive James

Our Building Services Engineer Ian Frazer and his team

Our Health and Safety Co-ordinator Mark Snelling

And then of course we have found very impressive and very conscientious builders in T & B Contractors who are responsible for all the holes in the walls you see around you. I understand from David Stern who has been monitoring this project daily, that they have been superb and we see no reason why the project shouldn't come in on time and on budget.

From the list above I want to single out three people for special thanks. Firstly Simon Dryer for organising this event at short notice.

There are of course, two people who both the Rav and I have mentioned previously - but who are always deserving of praise. Without the determination and endless hours put in by David Stern and Eli Abeles, none of this would be taking place. We as a community owe them special thanks indeed.

Finally I want to thank the community.

All of you. For having the vision to go forward with this project and especially for digging deep and pledging considerable sums to help us reach our target.

We are not there yet however. So for all those who have pledged please keep up your commitment and for all those who have not yet. You can see this is not a small project and we really need your wholehearted support.

We will now be proceeding with the signing of bricks by our kids (and Adults if they wish) which will be used to build our new Aron, this will be followed by a few words from our Rav and then food and hot drinks over in 261 Hale Lane which Marissa and her team have been lovingly preparing.

So let me hand you over to Simon Dryer for the rest of the proceedings. Thank you for your time