

Anglo-Olim Reps Make Second Tour to Outlying Yishuvim

The explorers were at it again. Last time it was to four *yishuvim* of the north (documented in *Hamodia*), and on 20 Kislev they visited two *yishuvim* just southeast of Yerushalayim — Maale Amos and Meitzad. The participants, members of three groups of English-speaking *olim*, Avira D'Eretz Yisroel, Kedushas Tzion and Naava Kodesh, set out to get a feel for the character of these places, and their suitability for Anglo *chareidim* looking for affordable communities.

Maale Amos and Meitzad were both established about 40 years ago, Maale Amos by a group from Aish HaTorah, and Meitzad by a group from the Diaspora Yeshiva. They are near each other in the mountains of the Judean Desert, within an hour of Yerushalayim.

Both *yishuvim* remained small for decades, but have experienced a growth spurt in recent years, with new construction including private houses and small apartment buildings (four units per building). Today they number about 100 families each, with many English speakers who are part of the general communities and do not form their own sub-community.

The group met with Rav of Maale Amos Harav Zev Charlop, originally from New York, who said that the community is open to absorb serious yeshivische Anglo families. An acceptance process includes spending a Shabbos in the *yishuv* to help determine if it's a good match.

They also met with Rav Dovid Steinhaus, originally from England and a resident of the *yishuv* since its inception, who referred to it as a warm, close-knit

kehillah similar to what may commonly be found in *chutz laAretz* — something he felt he was missing when his family first started out in Yerushalayim.

“Each member of the *kehillah* really contributes to the *klal* and is appreciated, and this is a catalyst for personal growth,” said Rav Steinhaus, adding that the *kehillah's* current challenge is to keep its cohesiveness as it expands.

About 400 new units should be completed in Maale Amos within the next few years, and future plans are for 1,300 units.

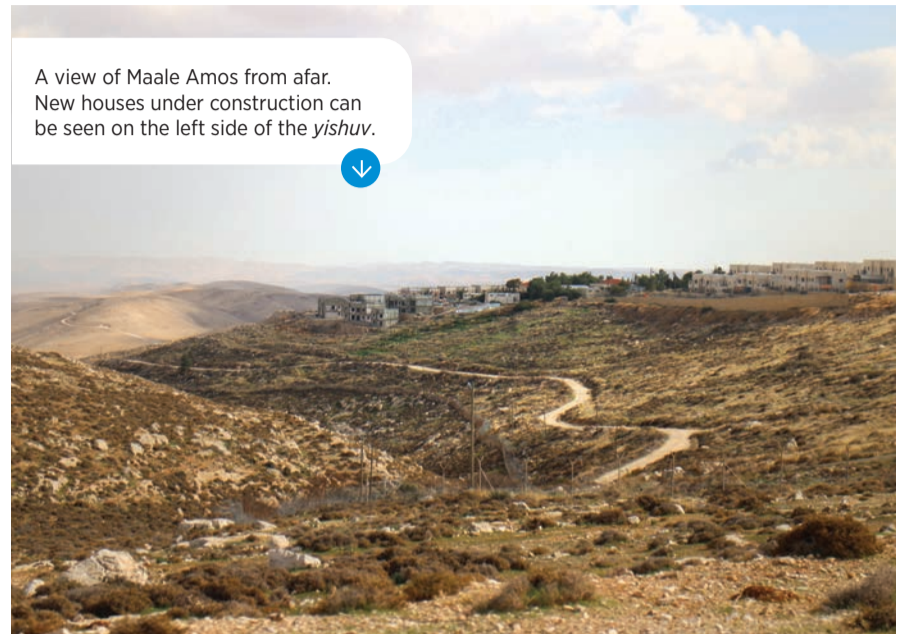
“It's going to be the next Beitar Illit,” many people in the area are saying.

Meitzad is a bit higher, with quiet and greener scenery, as compared with Maale Amos' desert surroundings and view of the Dead Sea.

“Meitzad offers a safe environment for kids to roam around freely, visit their friends, etc. because the whole town is fenced, hardly any cars are driving around and you know basically all the other parents,” commented a resident who left Beitar Illit for Meitzad, adding that “for less than the price of an apartment in Beitar, I bought a large private house here.”

In Maale Amos and Meitzad, the group visited the local *cheder*, both of which seemed comparable to *chadarim* of Yerushalayim. At the same time, the shopping is much more limited.

“Not having all of the conveniences that exist in a large city offers the children an invaluable *chinuch* opportunity in learning to make do with what is available,” commented Rav Steinhaus.



A view of Maale Amos from afar. New houses under construction can be seen on the left side of the *yishuv*.



Children walking home from *cheder* in Meitzad



Private houses in Meitzad



The Biale *beis medrash* in Maale Amos

YERUSHALAYIM

Har Hazeisim Knesset Lobby Demands Harsh Police Response to Arsonists, Rioters

After a series of firebombs, stone-throwings and other security violations at Har Hazeisim, the chairman of the Har Hazeisim Knesset lobby, Shas MK Rabbi Michael Michaeli, demanded that Yerushalayim District Police Commander Doron Yadid increase security and adopt a tough stance against those endangering the public.

In one instance, Molotov cocktails caused several fires in nearby houses

of the A-Tur neighborhood, and as firefighters tried to gain control of the fire and search for trapped victims inside the buildings, they were struck by a barrage of stones.

“For years, Har Hazeisim was neglected, and in recent years, massive efforts have been made to make it possible for people to visit there safely, but this area must have the constant supervision of the police,” Rabbi Michaeli

said. “Avraham and Menachem Lubinsky, the co-chairmen of the International Committee for Har Hazeisim, and I, as head of the Knesset Lobby for Har Hazeisim, have received countless requests from people to address this situation and ensure the safety of visitors to this holy site. I'll be very happy to hear that the police are dealing with this matter properly and using the required force when needed.”

The International Committee for Har Hazeisim was established more than a decade ago by Avraham and Menachem Lubinsky. Due to their efforts, the national and local governments restored 20,000 vandalized graves, installed 173 surveillance cameras, established a new police station, built new fences and arranged for regular sanitation services at Har Hazeisim.