

# Political Affairs Digest

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Meat: Ritual Slaughter**

**Danielle Rowley (Labour)** [198326] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to respond to representations for greater clarity from consumers of meat products on whether the animals involved have been stunned.

**Danielle Rowley (Labour)** [198330] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals requiring meat products to include labels denoting whether the animal had been stunned; and if he will make a statement.

**David Rutley:** The Government would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter but respects the right of the Jewish and Muslim communities to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs. The Government is aware that there is public interest about meat from animals slaughtered in accordance with religious beliefs being sold to consumers who do not require their meat to be prepared in this way. Where meat is labelled as halal or kosher this must be accurate and must not be misleading to the consumer.

The Government believes that consumers should have the necessary information available to them to make an informed choice about their food and this is an issue that we are considering in the context of our departure from the EU.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198326/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198330/>

#### **Ministry of Defence: Equality**

**Nia Griffith (Labour)** [199369] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 4 December 2018 to Question 197453 on Ministry of Defence: Equality, what assessment he has made of whether the means for collecting statistics on religious representation among Ministry of Defence civilian staff, as published in the Civilian Personnel Biannual Diversity Dashboard is compatible with his Department's commitments under the Equality Act 2010.

**Tobias Ellwood:** The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is compliant with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Detailed data on religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation is collected for MOD civilian staff and is used to inform policy decisions. However, statistics published by Defence are required to strike a balance between transparency and usability. I am satisfied that the MOD's statistical outputs are clear and concise and inform users of the overall patterns in the data. The inclusion of small sub-categories of non-Christian staff and Christian denominations would not add any additional benefit to the analysis provided in the Civilian Personnel Biannual Diversity Dashboard (CPBDD), and would make the document far longer and more difficult to understand as the small sub-sets would likely be represented by a series of dashes and tildes, representing zeroes and numbers less than five. In addition, the same granular approach would necessarily have to be taken with the BAME, and sexual orientation categories. The CPBDD has been designated an Official Statistic by the United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, meaning that Defence is required to publish the logic and overall methodology which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mod-civilian-personnel-quarterly-report-background-quality-report>.

The CPBDD complies with the UKSA's Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The process of determining compliance with the Code and designation as an Official Statistic is known as assessment. Details of this assessment can be found at the following link:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/statistics-on-uk-defence-personnel>.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-05/199369/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-29/197453/>

## Scottish Government Freedom of Information Release

**Correspondence regarding Israel-Palestine learning resources**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-18-03400/>

and

<https://tinyurl.com/yccndpcq> )

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## Holocaust

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [198149] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the article entitled, Why a new memorial to the Holocaust is essential, published in the Evening Standard on 3 September 2018, whether the images used in that article were created by a government agency; and for what reason the Buxton memorial was not included.

**Heather Wheeler:** The image used in the article 'Why a new memorial to the Holocaust is essential', published in the Evening Standard on 3 September 2018

and still available online here:

<https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/comment/why-a-new-memorial-to-the-holocaust-is-essential-a3926426.html>. It was created during the design competition for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre by the winning design team, Adjaye Associates, Ron Arad Architects and Gustafson Porter + Bowman. The image shows one view of their initial design concept and clearly includes the Buxton memorial.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198149/>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [198150] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the news story entitled, Public consultation marks the next stage in development of UK Holocaust memorial and learning centre, published on gov.uk on 4 September 2018, what information the Government holds on which other cities considered the Adjaye Associates design for the proposed National Holocaust memorial and learning centre.

**Heather Wheeler:** The design submitted by Adjaye Associates, Ron Arad Architects and Gustafson, Porter + Bowman was prepared specifically in response to the competition for a Memorial and Learning Centre at Victoria Tower Gardens.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198150/>

*The news story referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-consultation-marks-next-stage-in-development-of-uk-holocaust-memorial-and-learning-centre>

*The following three questions all received the same answer*

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [198151] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the document entitled, National memorial and learning centre search for a central London site, published by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation in September 2015, how the proposal for a site at (a) Victoria Tower Gardens, (b) the Imperial War Museum and (c) Harmsworth Park met the criteria to (i) draw in and to inspire the largest possible number of visitors, (ii) provide 5-10,000 square metres of built space, (iii) allocate maximum funds to educational purposes, (iv) provide cost effectiveness, (v) allow buses, coaches, pedestrians and cyclists to be able to reach the site safely with full disability access, (vi) allow for a physical campus to engage and inspire a vast number of visitors, (vii) provide facilities for lectures and seminars and to run educational courses and workshops, (viii) allow for the provision of space for Holocaust organisations to locate their offices so as to fulfil the stated responsibility to bring together a network of the UK's existing Holocaust education in the UK, (ix) provide rooms for at least 500 people and (x) provide infrastructure to fulfil all security considerations.

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [198152] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the document entitled, National memorial and learning centre search for a central London site, published by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation in September 2015, which London parks considered by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation were sufficiently central to meet the visions set out by the Holocaust Commission.

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [198153] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the document entitled, National memorial and learning centre search for a central London site, published by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation in September 2015, which potential locations for the national memorial and learning centre were noted by the Holocaust Commission; and

whether Victoria Tower Gardens was on that list.

**Heather Wheeler:** The document, *National Memorial and Learning Centre: Search for a Central London Site*, was published by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation as part of extensive efforts to identify a suitable location for the Memorial and Learning Centre, which also included a thorough search of Central London by property experts CBRE. A map included in the published document indicates the area of Central London which was the focus of the site search. More than 50 locations were considered; detailed information supporting the assessment of each site is commercially confidential.

The Foundation identified Victoria Tower Gardens as the most fitting site in terms of its historical, emotional and political significance and its ability to offer the greatest potential impact and visibility for the project.

The Government accepted the Foundation's advice and announced in January 2016 that Victoria Tower Gardens was the chosen location. An international design competition was launched in September 2016, seeking proposals for a Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198151/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198152/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198153/>

*The document referred to above can be read at*

<https://docplayer.net/13902192-National-memorial-and-learning-centre.html>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [198154] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the news story entitled, Public consultation marks the next stage in development of UK Holocaust memorial and learning centre, published on gov.uk on 4 September 2018, where in Victoria Tower Gardens that centre was proposed to be located; and how the proposed location of the centre was made clear within the consultation document.

**Heather Wheeler:** On 4 September 2018 a public exhibition was opened at Church House in Westminster, setting out proposals for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. The exhibition provided extensive information, including maps, to show the proposed design for the Memorial and Learning Centre and its location within Victoria Tower Gardens.

Over 3000 invitations to the exhibition were sent to local residents and businesses. The display boards were published on the Government's website and made available to the national press.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198154/>

*The news story referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-consultation-marks-next-stage-in-development-of-uk-holocaust-memorial-and-learning-centre>

*Updated versions of the display boards referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/761583/UK\\_Holocaust\\_Memorial\\_public\\_exhibition\\_boards\\_December\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761583/UK_Holocaust_Memorial_public_exhibition_boards_December_2018.pdf)

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Peter Bottomley (Conservative)** [198155] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the news story entitled, Public

consultation marks the next stage in development of UK Holocaust memorial and learning centre, published on gov.uk on 4 September 2018, what comparative assessment his department has made of the number of expected visitor numbers at the new centre and the average number of visitors to the Holocaust Galleries.

**Heather Wheeler:** We expect around 500,000 visitors annually to the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. The design will allow up to 1 million visitors annually to be accommodated. This will not lead to unacceptable queuing in the Gardens.

Visitors will be encouraged to explore other resources, including the Imperial War Museum London's new Holocaust Galleries which are due to open in 2021. The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation has welcomed the Imperial War Museum's support and is firmly committed to working closely with them.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-03/198155/>

*The news story referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-consultation-marks-next-stage-in-development-of-uk-holocaust-memorial-and-learning-centre>

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## Israel

**See also the Scottish Parliament Freedom of Education release included in the "Home Affairs" section above.**

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Hamas and Palestinians: Torture**

**Peter Kyle (Labour)** [199894] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the conclusions of the report entitled, Two Authorities, One Way, Zero Dissent on arbitrary arrest and torture under the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, published in October 2018 by Human Rights Watch.

**Alistair Burt:** The Human Rights Watch report has made some serious and concerning allegations about human rights violations by the Palestinian Authority (PA) and we have raised our concerns with the Palestinian Ministry of Interior. Officials from our Consulate-General in Jerusalem continue to urge the PA to respect human rights, and have stressed the need to ensure freedom of speech, association and assembly. UK Official Development Assistance does not provide financial assistance or assets to support the PA agencies implicated in the Human Rights Watch report. We continue to have a no contact policy with Hamas in its entirety. The UK delivers training courses and supports the development of training institutions across the PA security sector. These courses serve to reinforce accountability, responsible governance and a common approach to the upholding of human rights and human rights law.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-06/199894/>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/10/23/two-authorities-one-way-zero-dissent/arbitrary-arrest-and-torture-under>

## House of Lords Written Answer

### **Palestinians: Overseas Aid**

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL11840] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bates on 23 November (HL11378), whether they have made any assessment as to whether the non-publication of the audit reports relating to UK direct financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority is compatible with provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestinian National Authority and the Government signed on 7 July 2011 and extended on 22 December 2014 relating to the provision of effective public oversight of budget formulation and other key areas.

**Lord Bates:** The Memorandum of Understanding included a commitment to the UK's Partnership Principles. One of those Principles was about improving domestic accountability through oversight mechanisms for Palestinian citizens to scrutinise budget formulation and implementation. The Principle did not relate to publishing audits of UK contributions. In line with Section 27 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000), we withheld the audit reports of the Palestinian Authority (PA) from 2010 – 2015.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-11-27/HL11840/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-11-12/HL11378/>

## United Nations

### **UN working with both sides, after hidden tunnels confirmed along Lebanon-Israel 'Blue Line'**

The head of the United Nations peace mission in Lebanon has urged an end to “rumours and speculations” over tunnels which have been discovered along the UN-drawn “Blue Line” – the border demarcation between Lebanon and Israel. ...

He [said](#) he had assured the President and the Speaker of the [Lebanese] Parliament, Nabih Berri, that UNIFIL “will continue to share its findings with the appropriate authorities in Lebanon based on facts that are independently verified by UNIFIL.”

According to the UNIFIL Force Commander, technical experts from the mission have confirmed the existence of a tunnel near Metulla in northern Israel and a second one, in the same general area. ...

The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) found the tunnels south of the Blue Line last week, according to news reports, alleging that they had been dug by the Hezbollah group. Israel announced that it was mounting an operation to block them known as Northern Shield. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/12/1028231>

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## Relevant Legislation

\*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.html>

## Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

## Online Forums Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

## \*\* Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

Notice of amendments

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2017-2019/0141/18141-RL.pdf>

## Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/palestinianstatehoodrecognition.html>

## Scottish Parliament

### Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**The future of civil partnership in Scotland** (closing date 21 December 2018)

<https://consult.gov.scot/family-law/the-future-of-civil-partnership-in-scotland/>

**2021 Census: Outputs Strategy Consultation for Northern Ireland** (closing date 9 January 2019)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/dfp/2021-census-outputs-strategy-consultation-for-northern-ireland-document.pdf>

**\*\* The Macpherson Report: Twenty Years On** (closing date 16 January 2019)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/macpherson-report-twenty-years-on-inquiry-17-19/>

**Extremism in England and Wales** (closing date 31 January 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extremism-in-england-and-wales-call-for-evidence>

**Racial harassment in higher education** (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/racial-harassment-higher-education-our-inquiry>

**Draft guidance to challenge bullying in schools** [Wales only] (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/draft-guidance-challenge-bullying-schools>

**One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here** (closing date 24 February 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

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