

# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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### House of Lords Written Answers

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **School Meals**

**Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Crossbench)** [HL14917] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that all schools provide a non-halal meal option.

**Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Crossbench)** [HL14918] To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of schools that offer only halal meals; and what assessment they have made of the impact of that policy on children in such schools.

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The government sets out required minimum standards in the attached School Food Standards to ensure that children are served healthy, nutritious meals. The standards do not specify food requirements in terms of cultural and religious needs.

Within these standards, headteachers, governors and their caterers are best placed to make decisions about their school food policies. Information on the types of food provided in schools and the number of schools that offer only halal meals is not held centrally. Schools should act reasonably in their provision of food, providing choices that take account of cultural, religious and special dietary needs, and we expect them to work with parents in making appropriate arrangements. In particular, schools should consult with parents when making changes to school food provision and ensure parents have access to information on the food provided.

Schools may consider providing both halal and non-halal food each day, or ensuring that dishes are clearly labelled to allow pupils to select the appropriate choice.

[HL14917\\_HL14918\\_School\\_Food\\_Regulations\\_2014](#)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-28/HL14917/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-28/HL14918/>

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# Holocaust

## House of Commons Written Answers

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239866] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 12 March 2019 to Question 227957 on National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, whether the estimated running costs include the full cost of security.

**Heather Wheeler:** Yes.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239866/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-04/227957/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239867] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229625 on National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, who made the assessment of the almost 50 sites against the published criteria; and what expertise external to the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation was used.

**Heather Wheeler:** The assessment was carried out by members of the Foundation assisted by property experts CBRE.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239867/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229625/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239868] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229625, whether the criteria for the site of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre were altered after the almost 50 sites were deemed not to meet the criteria.

**Heather Wheeler:** The objective throughout has been to build a striking new national memorial co-located with a world class learning centre.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239868/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229625/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239869] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229625 on National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, which of the published criteria for the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre the proposed site in Victoria Tower Gardens was deemed by the Foundation (a) to meet and (b) not to meet.

**Heather Wheeler:** The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation recommended Victoria Tower Gardens for the reasons set out in the my answer of 18 December 2018 to the Hon Member in Question UIN 203298.

*The answers referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229625/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203298/>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239870] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229626 on National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, what investigations the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation conducted into the feasibility of Victoria Tower Gardens as the site for the proposed Memorial; what aspects of the site were covered in that investigation; and if he will place in the Library the papers which the investigation generated.

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239871] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229626 on National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, what outside expertise the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation drew on in its investigation of the feasibility of Victoria Tower Gardens as the site for the proposed Memorial; and how much it spent on consultants for that purpose.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Foundation tested the feasibility of the site by speaking to a number of key stakeholders, including The Royal Parks, DCMS and Westminster City Council. No technical obstacles were uncovered that would prevent the Memorial and below ground Learning Centre being built in Victoria Tower Gardens during this process.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239870/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239871/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229626/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239872] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229629 on National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, whether the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's recommendation in January 2016 was that both the Memorial and the Learning Centre should be in Victoria Tower Gardens.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Foundation's advice has consistently been that the Memorial and Learning Centre should be co-located. Information obtained through the design competition allowed Ministers to conclude that co-location would be feasible and they announced on 24 October 2017 their decision to proceed with an integrated design.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239872/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229629/>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/adjaye-associates-and-ron-arad-architexts-win-uk-holocaust-memorial-international-design-competition>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239873] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229631, what the information requested in the design brief was which supported the assessment that the Holocaust Learning Centre should be integrated with the Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens.

**Heather Wheeler:** All the information considered is contained in the design brief published on 14 September 2016.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239873/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229631/>

*The announcement of the design brief referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/international-design-competition-opens-for-new-uk-holocaust-memorial-beside-parliament>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239874] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229630, if he will place in the Library the technical assessment that supported the conclusion that the Learning Centre could be accommodated successfully in Victoria Tower Gardens.

**Heather Wheeler:** The technical assessments are publicly available as part of the planning application submitted to Westminster City Council.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239874/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229630/>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation: Staff**

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239875] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229099, how many civil servants at each grade are providing support to the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239876] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many staff the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation has by each grade.

**Heather Wheeler:** One civil servant at Grade 6 level provides most support to the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, with other staff at a range of grades also assisting as required.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239875/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239876/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-06/229099/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239877] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies relating to potential development in the Victoria Tower Gardens of his duties under section 8 (1) of the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900.

**Michael Ellis:** The Government decided to locate the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens so that the view of Parliament from the Memorial will serve as a permanent reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences. The development of plans will take proper account of relevant legislation and regulations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239877/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [239878] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make it his policy to consult the public before allowing part of Victoria Tower Gardens to be used for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Michael Ellis:** The Government decided to locate the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens so that the view of Parliament from the Memorial will serve as a permanent reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences. A public consultation is currently being undertaken by Westminster City Council on the planning proposals put forward to build the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239878/>

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## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### **Palestinians: Public Sector**

**Lord Polak (Conservative)** [HL14971] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Palestinian Authority's ability to deliver public services within the Palestinian Territories.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is committed to the objective of a sovereign and prosperous Palestinian state, living side by side with a safe and secure Israel. That is why we are a key donor to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and why we have put such emphasis on strengthening Palestinian institutions and fostering private sector-led, sustainable economic growth in the West Bank. The UK is concerned about the effects of US and Israeli cuts to the PA's budget on both the PA's ability to deliver essential services to Palestinians and on the prospects for peace and stability in the region. We are also concerned by the PA's decision to not accept reduced clearance revenues from Israel. The PA needs to be financially sustainable to ensure stability, deliver services to Palestinians, and to fulfil its responsibilities under the Oslo Accords. UK aid helps to ensure the PA's financial stability. In 2018/19 UK aid to the PA helped to pay the salaries of 37,600 teachers, doctors,

nurses, midwives and other health and education public servants. No UK aid is used for payments to Palestinian prisoners or their families.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-01/HL14971/>

### **Israeli Settlements: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14983] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the increasing number of attacks on Palestinian farmers by illegal Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; whether they intend to take action in response to any such assessment; if so what; and if not, why not.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to raise with our Israeli counterparts our concerns about the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land that has been caused by settlement-related activity. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv most recently raised the issue of settler violence and the importance of accountability with the Israeli authorities on 5 February. The British Government condemns any violence by settlers against Palestinians. Under international law, Israel, as the occupying power, has an obligation to take all measures in its power to protect the Palestinian population from all acts of violence.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-01/HL14983/>

### **Israeli Settlements: Companies**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14984] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they intend to make to the United Nations about the postponement of the publication of a database of companies operating in illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** In March 2016 and March 2017, the UK, along with other EU member states, abstained on the resolution at the UN Human Rights Council which called for the creation of this database. The UK strongly opposed this provision and considered that it went beyond the competence of the Human Rights Council. Human rights obligations are directed at states, and not individuals or businesses, who must determine their trading relationships for themselves; as such, we have no plans to set up an equivalent database. Ultimately it is the decision of an individual or company whether to operate in settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The British Government neither encourages nor offers support to such activity.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-01/HL14984/>

### **Jerusalem: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14985] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the Israeli police cancelled a Mother's Day event at a French culture centre in East Jerusalem.

We are aware that Israeli authorities temporarily shut down the French Institute in

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Jerusalem on the grounds that it was to host an event involving an association supported by the Palestinian Authority. While we have not raised this specific issue, our long-standing position is that East Jerusalem is Occupied Palestinian Territory. We regularly raise our concerns about Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem, and about the restrictions on freedom of movement within the West Bank, including to and from East Jerusalem, with the Israeli authorities. It remains difficult for Palestinians to enter East Jerusalem for work, education, medical treatment, or religious worship.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-01/HL14985/>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14986] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about reports that Israeli forces killed an unarmed Palestinian man whilst he was assisting the wounded on 20 March.

### **Sajed Abed al-Hakim Mizher**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL15021] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Israel following the killing of Sajed Abed al-Hakim Mizher, a uniformed volunteer paramedic, by Israeli forces.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** As our Consulate General in Jerusalem made clear in a tweet on 28 March we were saddened to learn of the death of a Palestinian medic during an Israeli Defense Forces operation in Bethlehem. It is vital that those delivering medical services are protected. We have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities. While we recognise Israel's legitimate need to deploy security measures, we encourage them to deploy these in a way which minimises tension and to use appropriate force. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-01/HL14986/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-02/HL15021/>

*The tweet referred to above can be read at*

<https://twitter.com/UKinJerusalem/status/1111318428760113153>

### **Israeli Settlements: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14987] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the attempted attack on two elementary schools in Tuqu village by Israeli settlers escorted by Israeli military forces on 26 March.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of media reports about the attempted raid on two Palestinian elementary schools in Tuqu village. While we have not raised this specific issue with the Government of Israel, we regularly make clear our concerns about settler attacks to the Israeli authorities.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-01/HL14987/>

### **Gaza: Fisheries**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL15022] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about the banning of all fishing off the coast of Gaza in March; and what assessment they have made of the restrictions faced by fishermen in Gaza.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We regularly raise with the Government of Israel the urgent need to ease all access and movement restrictions on Gaza, including fishing limits. This would help to restore the fishing industry. We are aware that on 1 April Israel increased the permitted fishing zone off the coast of Gaza to 15 nautical miles. The UK would like to see a permanent increase in the size of the fishing zone off the coast of Gaza, in line with the limit of 20 nautical miles stipulated in the Oslo accords.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-02/HL15022/>

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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>

#### **International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill**

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

#### **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

#### **Online Harms White Paper** (closing date 1 July 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438