



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### UK Parliament, Home Affairs Committee

#### **Evidence session: Inquiry into the Macpherson Report: twenty years on**

**Q122 Witness G:** The relationship the police have with the young people is not good, really. I feel like the police are desensitised to emotions of young people or anyone that they are stopping because the way they treat them it is, like, their dignity is gone after the stop and search thing. They do not talk to them in a nice way as well. ...

Also it is not just about stop and search. If you go and talk to the young people and create a better relationship with them, then obviously they warm up to you. They start telling you certain things when they feel unsafe. If you do not create that environment you are going to always just catch them when they are doing something bad. If you build a better relationship with them, they will tell you when one of their friends is about to do something wrong, when they are about to do something that is going to endanger their lives and other people's lives. There is no relationship between the police and the young people. ...

**Witness C:** The only interaction that you have with police nowadays is when you are being pulled over, when you are being stopped and searched. I remember back in the day, my first ever interaction with the police was in primary school and I remember they used to come in with their police cars, and you'd get the fire trucks. People loved the police. ...

My next interaction after that was being pulled over because there were suspicions that I had a knife on me; and I was about six years old coming home from the park ...

Now you are being looked at and labelled as a criminal when you have done absolutely nothing wrong. What that is now doing, it is creating a state of mind for young people to want to hate the police. ...

**Q123 Witness N:** ... We know that the police treat black people differently. ... Being a child and observing that, the first time I witnessed that was when my dad was being arrested for something and it was something that he had not done ... I automatically just knew that there was something going on with this and that ultimately these were not people I could call if I needed protection. ...

There were points in my life when I did need to call the police but for fear of what would happen to the people because I knew that they would be treated differently and harmed.

Let me just be explicit; I knew that there was a risk they would be injured by the police. ...

**Q124 Witness K:** ... the police will just come for you at any time for absolutely no reason and just stop you and try to intimidate you. ... They will grab 13 year-old children and swing us around. They will swing us around, take us around the corner and things. ... Personally, I think it is the way that police are trained because they are not trained to deal with the way that—because they do not know what sort of background we come from. ...

**Witness E:** ... one thing that has changed, is that they are wearing their little body cameras now so that saves us in a sense that before, when they never had them little cameras, they were a lot more reckless. Now they know if they get caught doing anything they are going to get in trouble. ...

How are they preventing crime happen? There is no prevention for crime. If a crime is going to happen, it is going to happen. It is about trying to tackle the people's mental state before they get there. What is making someone wanting to commit that crime? ...

That is what I feel like the Government need to tackle: mental health. Stop looking at the police and what the police are going to do. ... They are not thinking, "Oh, when I stop this little kid, his family might not have certain things so he looks this way. He is in a trackie and his trainers look all torn up because his family are not providing for him. And now I am targeting this guy because he fits the description of another guy," who may be committing crimes because of his mental state. That is what I feel like the Government need to look at. ...

**Witness L:** ... the camera, sometimes what they do is they turn it off. That is another thing they always do is when they know—when they ask you for your name and you try to give your name and that, and they slyly cut you, "This guy knows what he's talking about," and they turn off the camera. ... They turn off the camera and then give you verbal abuse. ...

Another thing is they say your government name. That is another thing that keeps coming up where you will be walking past an undercover and you know him, he knows you, basically. So he will be cheeky or say a government name and he will come up to you and then try to talk to you. By him talking to you, he thinks he is getting information out of you or asks you about things he shouldn't be asking. ...

**Witness C:** ... There needs to be more assessment into officers that are applying for these jobs and who they are recruiting. On top of that you need to now look at your actual training programme because, to summarise it, for myself, it is a dehumanisation programme. ... There is no real human emotion when it comes to talking to police officers. It is a blank systematic stare, ridden of systematic laws, and they just preaching to you, talking absolute nonsense half the time. ...

**Witness D:** For me, one of the biggest things that has always stuck with me since I was younger is the fact that when I was stopped and searched and I was in the back of a bully van, I was just like, "You cannot do this" and their response was, "We can do what we like because we are the biggest gang ...

So if the police do approach you, you are most likely going to be hostile because in that moment you do not care about nothing. I never cared about nothing. If my parents were not there to support me, I do not care about nothing now. So you as a police officer, you are not making me scared. I do not care. ...

Because when you get to the police station and you are a young person, you are not necessarily going to know your rights. ... they are not going to tell you. It is down to you to find out. ...

**Witness C:** ... Officers rely on you as an individual not to know your rights, for them to get away with these injustices ...

**Witness N:** ... I joined every scrutiny group available ... There was a big divide between people that were chairing those groups who were black and people who were chairing those groups who were white. The people that were white said there was no

disproportionality, that there were no issues with stop and search in their boroughs, which is simply not true ...

I would just finish by saying the black men who were chairs, every single one of them was stopped and searched during the course of their duties, being a stop and search monitoring chair. ...

**Witness H:** ... I have had many negative experiences with police ... but I have also had some positive experiences. ... It is a boxing club where we have police that come in but they are not wearing their uniform and they train with the young people themselves. I have had quotes from young people specifically saying, "That guy is a police officer, but he's cool... What it does is we bring the uniform out and we put a human there. ...

I would just say that if you can give more opportunities for police not to be in a uniform and to step outside of that and be more human interactive, and every opportunity that I have had with police when it is not like that I have walked away positive. ...

**Witness I:** ... there is a balance between police stereotyping the public and the public stereotyping police. ... a young guy going to school, going to college—they will be taught from our generation that you are going to get stopped and searched because that is how we have developed a relationship with police. The next generation from us is going to see that, "They are stopping my brothers, or they are stopping my sisters," ... "They are people to be wary of." ...

If you are putting police that have stereotyped a certain group or gender or something and you put it into a different community, they are going to act different to the way they will act in black communities, and that is where it tends to clash. There is not a balance of it.

If I train someone to drink out of this cup of water and I train someone to write with this pen, but then you send the person that is trained to drink the cup of water to write with the pen there is going to be a clash. I feel that is the problem. ...

**Witness C:** ... It is like they are trying to criminally entrap you sometimes. They are asking you all these questions and asking you to try to justify yourself or why you are here, why you are there. It is almost like they already have preconceptions of why you are there. "You are standing on this corner to sell drugs, aren't you? So, go on, you tell us what you are doing here then." ...

**Witness M:** ... The first time I got arrested I was 13 years old, and ever since then police came to my house asking if I was involved with something or I was stopped and searched. Last year, sometime around July, I was nearly stabbed, basically, and two minutes later the police came and they asked me if I was involved. I could not say yes because of all the other times where they came to my house and said this, this and that. I just did not want to speak to them and tell them what happened. ...

**Witness B:** ... the lack of relationship the black community have with the police from 20 years ago up until now historically has always been that way. ...

Coming from that historically as a black person, when you look at all these things that are going on, stop and search, deaths in custody, which are still continuing, whether people hear about it as much now or not, it is still happening and it is happening at a rate that is just ridiculous. ...

The people that are working within the police who might be put up in a senior position or worked their way up to a senior position who are people of colour or black people, they are by themselves within that role. The fact that they are the only one in itself is wrong. When people look at that and they say, "Oh yeah, there is a black senior police officer coming to speak on behalf of black people" and what they are saying might be correct, but the actual system, which they work for, is totally against them; we are going nowhere. ...

**Witness C:** I know black police officers that are still being racially abused within their own department. Black police officers have spoken on issues where their own colleagues are abusing them for the colour of their skin. ... The police force is what enabled institutionally racist. ...

**Witness A:** ... Wherever I go to such meetings everyone is hating the police and I will probably get hated for this. I genuinely believe the ideology of policing is good. But there are certain individuals who I say are corrupted, who are abusing their rights, who are going out there with the intentions of stop and searching, predominantly black people, and fair enough, that is wrong. I am not condoning this sort of behaviour, but what I would say is that—I am a police cadet so I have had a phenomenal experience with the police. Police cadets, they encourage unity with black and Asian community. They are doing a lot of work to ensure the relationship between the public and the police is growing, although right now it does not seem that way. ...

**Witness N:** ... the Macpherson Report exposes that the police as an institution, it is an institutionally racist institution? So I just want to make the point that if there are some bad apples—because we like this analogy, there are a couple of bad apples—but there is really good apples as well, I am sorry, but if those good apples don't point out and say, "These are the bad apples and this is what they are doing wrong," which they don't, because there is no accountability, then the whole tree is rotten and the whole tree needs to be removed. ... It is about accountability, which is there is none. ...

The majority of people on there are green, as in pose no risk, and most of them have no criminal record, so why are they on this database that has really adverse effects in terms of education, in terms of their employment opportunities, in terms of housing? ... But just by being labelled in that way can get you killed, and there will be no pathway for accountability there. ...

This is even one man, Azelle Rodney, who was shot six times in the head and it was supposed to be unlawful. When the officers stood trial, they found them not guilty because the police are not willing to convict—sorry, because the public are not willing to convict police, because the majority of the public have an idealist view of the police and they would call them if they were in trouble. ...

Being a child and coming into this, there is no way now that I am not going to fear for my children, when I have them ... Still now we are fighting for justice. These campaigns have been going for decades and still no justice. ...

The last thing I want to make about those campaigns, it takes over your entire life. You don't get any inquest funding, you don't have any legal aid. You are thrown into this situation that nobody wants to be in. You have lost a family member. You cannot even grieve in peace because nobody really believes what is happening to you and your loved one is just rotting in there because their name has been tarnished in the press and everything like that. The weight and burden of that, the trauma that it creates, you would never want to see a police officer again. ...

**Q125 Witness G:** ... Listen, imagine this, somebody just got stabbed and obviously everyone is traumatised right there and then, but if police are coming to ask the people that just lost their friend or who were around and just witnessed that, like just seen their friend stabbed, they are in shock, they are traumatised. Even if he did not die, he is in a hospital. The CID come in there, it is like I am traumatised already. When you are coming and you are talking about, "Oh, we need your evidence," and all of that, I am traumatised. You can't just come after, you understand? ...

Police, I feel like it is just a business, isn't it, because if they do not make a certain amount of arrests or if they do not make somebody become a criminal they can't arrest them. ...

**Witness N:** ... I don't want to sound pessimistic, but I just want it to be seen in the context we have an institutionally racist police force in the context of an institutionally racist society. It is not the only institution and training isn't just required there, it has to be everywhere. It is not just about training; it is about taking on responsibility that this might not affect me or my children, but it is actually my responsibility to do something about this, because the weight cannot be on black and ethnic minority communities to move this forward when we are also dealing every single day with the actual impact of living with it. Somebody else

has to take some leadership on this and, “We are going to do something, as white people, as the white community, the dominant group in society,” to say, “We are going to make a change to acknowledge these institutions are racist and make a difference there,” because we can’t do that. We do not have the power to do it. We can come here and drain ourselves by telling you about our lived experience, which is traumatic to do and does take away energy from us, but what are you going to do with it afterwards? It is your job to push it forward, so that is the context that we have to remember. ...

**Q126 Witness D:** ... I have been to so many of these in city hall, everywhere, just sitting around talking to the same people, the same people, saying the same thing, the same thing, the same thing. It is frustrating, because, well, no, nothing is going to change. ...

But none of you lot will ever see it, because we are in the bubble of madness and you lot are out here eating in flipping Benihanas. ...

But you lot ain’t really going to—like it is all good us telling you shit and you writing on paper, but where is it going go? Who is going to read it? ...

**Q127 Witness D:** ... When you are having us here, is it like for numbers on a paper ...

**Witness K:** ... I was walking in a local town and I was with some friends of mine from college, who had previous history with those police officers. At the time, we were stop and searched. I have no problem with police. I am not rude to police when they stop me, I have no problem, but this police officer started taking a particular interest in this particular one person and started moving really erratic. Then at that point, my friend has not defended himself, but he said, “Can you please stop?” and then the police officer dragged us all to the floor—there was about three or four of us—and I said, “What are you doing?” and excuse my French, the police officers replied—what did he say? “Something, something, you black cunt”. ...

I was completely shocked. I had my face on the floor and the policeman had his knee on my neck. How are we meant to react as young people? ... because at the end of the day, it all comes down to who do we report it to? We can’t report police to police, so where do we go from there? ...

**Q129 Witness N:** ... I don’t think it is a problem of engagement. We are here because we are engaged, all the people we work with are engaged and we can’t not be engaged, because this is our daily lives. I do not like it when it is framed around disengagement, hard to reach. We are not detached; we are very attached to it. The reality is in terms of voice, we can come and have a voice and be represented. It is what is going to happen next, which is why I think the main issue is about accountability, because it is how are these things followed forward? What action is actually taken? ...

**Q131 Witness K:** ... I am not going to say police, I am going to say bullies—these bullies are more or less under you, so they listen to you. They do not listen to us and our communities, so it is for you to step up and listen to us. ... We took time out of our day, our hard-working day, to come and sit in front of you and tell you things that are going on in our community, but nothing ever happens. We can sit here for days on days on days, but what is actually going to happen? It is for you to speak to them. ...

**Q135 Witness C:** ... If a police officer commits GBH on a member of the public, what happens? Does that person go to jail? Of course not, but if me, as a member of the public, were to assault a police officer, what is going to happen to me? ...

**Q147 Witness N:** ... accountability includes firing police officers for misconduct and doing things wrong. They don’t get fired. They need to lose their jobs because we do not want them to continue in the police force when they are corrupt and they abuse their power ...

**Chair (Yvette Cooper, Labour):** ... Given our original question about how much has changed since the Stephen Lawrence inquiry and since the Macpherson Report and all of the things that were supposed to have changed, you have made pretty clear, from your

point of view, not much has changed and certainly in terms of trust in policing, not enough has changed. We have a responsibility to now go back to the police force and the Home Office and make that clear as well, so we will do that. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/the-macpherson-report-twenty-years-on/oral/103515.html>

## Crown Prosecution Service

### **Synagogue arsonist sectioned under Mental Health Act**

A 52-year-old man who wrote songs calling for violence against Jewish people has been ordered to be detained in a hospital for treatment after pleading guilty to torching Exeter synagogue whilst suffering a psychotic episode.

Tristan Morgan smashed a window of the men's toilet from the outside with a small axe, poured in petrol from a can and threw in a burning piece of paper. The resulting fireball knocked Morgan off his feet and burnt his forehead and hair.

A passer-by heard the explosion and saw Morgan walking to his van with a green petrol can before driving off. She flagged down a passing police car and gave officers the licence plate number.

Shortly afterwards when police arrived at his home in Exeter his first words were: "That didn't take long". The officers noticed that he smelt of petrol. His upper right arm was hot to the touch and Morgan said his hands were burning. They also noticed he was wet – Morgan confirmed he had thrown water over himself to cool his burns.

Morgan also told police, "Please tell me that synagogue is burning to the ground, if not, it's poor preparation". He was arrested and cautioned, to which he replied "Do you believe in race?"

Firefighters later noted that given the severity of the fire it was lucky the boiler inside had not exploded otherwise it could have been an even more serious incident. The grade two listed building dating back to 1763 is the third oldest synagogue in Britain. The cost of repairs was £23,656.

The court heard expert psychiatric evidence explaining how Morgan had been suffering from psychosis at the time of the attack. The experts also concluded that Morgan posed a high risk of further violence exacerbated by his use of alcohol and illegal drugs. In light of these conclusions the judge imposed a hospital order under the Mental Health Act along with a restriction order for the safety of the public.

Sue Hemming from the CPS said: "Tristan Morgan's violence was partly driven by his hatred of Jewish people which was clear from the library of extremist literature he had.

"The arson attack at Exeter synagogue meant it couldn't be used while repairs took place and left many of the congregation fearing for their future safety.

"He was suffering from a psychiatric disorder at the time but remains a danger so it's right that he gets the treatment he needs at a hospital and the public is kept safe."

While Morgan was being treated in hospital the police searched his home and van. In total they found 24 knives including a sword, hunting knife and the axe he used. His internet search history included the opening times for the synagogue which the CPS said showed he knew it would be closed on the night of the attack on Saturday 21 July last year.

His laptops, mobile phone and storage devices contained anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi material, as well as data showing his hatred for people who were not white. One document was a 340-page terrorist manual aimed at white supremacists to prepare them for a "race war". There were sections recommending targeting synagogues and advice about arson attacks. Other documents promoted Holocaust denial, "ethnic cleansing" and supposed Jewish global power. He pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to possessing material likely to be of use to a terrorist. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/synagogue-arsonist-sectioned-under-mental-health-act>

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## Holocaust

### Scottish Parliament Motion

**S5M-18145 Mark McDonald (Independent) Leaders in Holocaust Education** – That the Parliament congratulates Dyce Academy on being granted the Leaders in Holocaust Education Award from the Yad Vashed World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Israel; understands that this accolade recognises its outstanding work in developing a Holocaust education programme for pupils; notes that the programme helps pupils examine how the Holocaust happened and how it can be prevented from happening again; commends the efforts of the entire school in helping to ensure that the horrors of the Holocaust are never repeated, and wishes everyone involved continued success in building a strong and inclusive community.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-18145>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Trade Agreements: Israel

**Lisa Nandy (Labour)** [271554] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will seek the inclusion of a binding human rights clause in a future free trade agreement with Israel to establish that the (a) relations between the parties and (b) provisions of the agreement shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles as is provided for in article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

**George Hollingbery:** The UK and Israel signed a trade continuity agreement in February 2019. The UK-Israel Agreement incorporates human rights provisions of the EU-Israel Trade Agreements, without modification.

The UK has a history of protecting and promoting human rights and will continue to do so. We are exploring all options in the design of any future trade agreements.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-01/271554/>

### UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

#### UN Special Rapporteur on situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory to conduct visit

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, begins his annual official mission to the region on 8 July ...

The Special Rapporteur will gather first-hand information on the current human rights

situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Due to Israel's lack of response to the Special Rapporteur's request to travel to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, he will hold meetings in Amman, Jordan.

During his mission, the Special Rapporteur will meet with officials, community leaders and civil society representatives, among others. He will discuss the human rights situation across the Occupied Palestinian Territory with a focus on gathering evidence and information that will inform his upcoming report. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24797&LanglD=E>

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## Other Relevant Information

### Equality and Human Rights Commission

#### **Freedom of speech in education: the foundation of an effective society**

... Freedom of expression is one of the key foundations on which our society is built.

Our neighbourhoods are increasingly made up of people from different communities – and with different views and perspectives – living side-by-side.

For society to function as a whole we must ensure our foundations are based on the common values of tolerance, understanding and mutual respect.

To achieve this ambition, in an increasingly diverse world, we must recognise and embrace difference – in the way that we live, in the way we practice our faith or no-faith, and in how we express our ideas and opinions. ...

We must stop building walls around our own communities that create safe but isolated spaces and instead look beyond our own narrow concerns and interests – to participate as citizens in the society in which we all live.

... universities must be a safe place for students and staff to come together to debate and challenge one another and – equally importantly – for all students to practice their religions and beliefs.

Faith and belief groups are, in my view, an asset to universities and must be properly supported. They provide a haven where students can engage with people who hold similar beliefs and are a platform for students to go out and engage with others – even those who hold differing views.

Having read the excellent report on Faith and Belief published by Theos [see below], I agree with its recommendations that there should be better support for faith and belief student societies from universities and students' unions.

But it is equally important that faith and belief groups don't just turn inwards. I would encourage more collaboration with faith and other groups and for them to be in dialogue with students' unions, even if that is not always easy. ...

As a result, we are providing some leadership in this area. Working in collaboration with a range of bodies including government and the education sector we have devised a set of principles that will help address some of the issues. ...

In our guidance, we present five core ideas to ensure that freedom of speech in higher education is upheld at every opportunity.

1. The first is that everyone has the right to free speech within the law.
2. Next, higher education providers should always work to widen debate and challenge, never to narrow it.
3. Our third core principle is that decisions about speakers and events should seek to

- promote and protect the right to freedom of expression.
4. Fourthly, whilst we acknowledge that peaceful protest is a protected form of expression, protest should not be allowed to shut down debate or infringe the rights of others.
  5. And finally, freedom of expression should not be abused for the purpose of unchallenged hatred or bigotry. Balanced and respectful debate should always be the aim. ...

... we believe that promoting freedom of expression within universities should also extend to faith groups affiliated with student unions.

There have been a few incidents, thankfully quite rare, where there have been attempts to prevent Christian unions, pro-life societies or Jewish groups from affiliating with a student union. They have been preventing from hiring rooms in student union buildings and participating in fresher's fairs because the student union objects to their beliefs or takes a different position on issues such as abortion or Israel-Palestine.

This is not consistent with ensuring freedom of speech on campus, and our guidance makes clear that it should not happen. ...

Our guidance is very clear on the situations where certain forms of expression become hate crimes that incite violence, hatred or discrimination against other people and groups. Sadly, we have seen a huge increase in the incidence of hate crimes in this country – especially in relation to anti-semitism and islamophobia. ...

... we don't have to agree with what people say within the law – but we should always ensure that everyone can speak freely – even if their views or beliefs are unpopular. ...

And at a time when there appears to be less tolerance and acceptance of people of faith it is more important than ever that all parts of our society can express their views. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/freedom-speech-education-foundation-effective-society>

*The guidance referred to above for England and Wales can be read at*

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/freedom-of-expression-guide-for-higher-education-providers-and-students-unions-england-and-wales.pdf>

*The guidance referred to above for Scotland can be read at*

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/freedom-of-expression-guide-for-higher-education-providers-and-students-unions-scotland.pdf>

## Theos

**Faith and Belief on Campus: Division and Cohesion Exploring student faith and belief societies**

<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/cmsfiles/Reportfiles/Theos---Faith-and-Belief-on-Campus---Division-and-Cohesion.pdf>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

**Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill**

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

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**Opt-out organ donation: organs and tissues excluded from the new system** (closing date 22 July 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/opt-out-organ-donation-organs-and-tissues-excluded-from-the-new-system>

**Regulation of pre-paid funeral plans** (closing date 25 August 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/regulation-of-pre-paid-funeral-plans-consultation-on-a-policy-proposal>

**Islamophobia in Scotland** (closing date 26 August 2019)

<https://forms.ncl.ac.uk/view.php?id=13027>

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