



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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See also written answer 133643 “National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service” which has been included in the “Holocaust” section below.

House of Lords Library

Briefing: Antisemitic incidents in universities: Community Security Trust report

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/antisemitic-incidents-in-universities-community-security-trust-report/>

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

COVID-19: Naming Ceremonies

Alex Cole-Hamilton (Liberal Democrat) [S5W-34136] To ask the Scottish Government what COVID-19 guidance is in place regarding naming ceremonies.

Ash Denham: The Scottish Government has not published specific guidance for ceremonies such as baby naming ceremonies, Christenings or baptisms. We have issued specific guidance for [marriage ceremonies and civil partnership registrations](#).

Our [guidance for the safe use of places of worship](#) outlines that where ceremonies such as Christenings, baptisms and coming-of-age ceremonies form part of a wider religious service in a place of worship, the gathering should consist of no more than 50 people in total in areas at Levels 0-3 as set out in the [strategic framework](#). Outdoor acts of worship conducted in accordance with [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): events sector guidance](#) in areas at levels 0 and 1 areas may have up to 200 people in attendance.

Under the current Level 4 restrictions affecting most of Scotland set out in the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions and Requirements\) \(Local Levels\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#) as amended, places of worship must be closed to the public except for limited specified purposes. These specified purposes do not include a baby naming ceremony, Christening or baptism.

If a naming ceremony, Christening or baptism is not happening in a place of worship or as part of a permitted act of worship outdoors, the gathering should comply with the restrictions on social gatherings in the relevant protection level set out in the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions and Requirements\) \(Local Levels\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#) as amended.

Any celebrants conducting naming ceremonies permitted under the present restrictions should work with families on whether aspects of the ceremony need to be adapted in line with physical distancing and hygiene requirements in order to help ensure the safety of all present.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-34136>

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Holocaust

House of Commons Written Answers

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

John Hayes (Conservative) [133643] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of how the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in central London will help tackle anti-Semitism elsewhere in the country.

Luke Hall: In light of Holocaust denial, revisionism, the rise of antisemitism and indifference, it is more important than ever to ensure that the story of what happened during the Holocaust resonates with ordinary people and raises questions about Britain's role at the time. The Memorial and Learning Centre will act as a national hub for commemoration and education, partnering with established organisations in the sector, so that it complements, signposts and amplifies existing educational resources.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-06/133643>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

John Hayes (Conservative) [133644] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of using an alternative, larger site than Victoria Tower Gardens for the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

Luke Hall: Victoria Tower Gardens is the right site for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. The Memorial will stand as a reminder of the horrors of the past and will encourage reflection on their implications for British government and society, both at the time and subsequently. Full details of the proposed Memorial and Learning Centre, including the assessment of other sites, were provided at the recent public inquiry.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-06/133644>

Information provided to the public inquiry referred to above can be read at

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/holocaust-memorial-inquiry-documents>

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House of Commons Written Answers

Israel: Embassies

Sarah Champion (Labour) [133878] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if his Department plans to keep the British Embassy in Tel Aviv.

James Cleverly: The British Embassy to Israel is based in Tel Aviv and we have no plans to move it.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-06/133878>

Jerusalem: Planning

Sarah Champion (Labour) [133877] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that the recent announcement of potential new settlement building in east Jerusalem does not adversely effect prospects of peace between Israel and the Palestinian people.

James Cleverly: We consistently call for an immediate end to all actions that undermine the viability of the two-state solution, including settlement expansion within the West Bank. As the UK made clear on 16 October, in a joint statement alongside France, Germany, Italy and Spain, we are deeply concerned by the decision taken by the Israeli authorities to advance more than 4,900 settlement building units in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. I also expressed concern about settlement advancement in Givat Hamatos on 18 November and Har Homa on 25 November. The UK regularly raises settlement expansion with the Israeli authorities. The UK's position on settlements is clear. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution. Settlement expansion is also a counterproductive move in light of the positive developments of normalisation agreements reached between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. We urge Israel to halt settlement expansion

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-06/133877>

The statements referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/quint-statement-on-israeli-settlements>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ministerial-statement-on-settlements-in-givat-hamatos>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-response-to-settlements-in-har-homa>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2622>

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

Marriage (Authorised Belief Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2795>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

Scottish Parliament

Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/domestic-abuse-protection-scotland-bill>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Introduction of a statutory opt-out system for organ donation for Northern Ireland

(closing date 19 February 2021)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/organ-donation>

Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19

(closing date not stated)

<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

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