



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

The following three questions all received the same answer

Weddings: Coronavirus

Jonathan Lord (Conservative) [135916] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if the Government will adjust the current restrictions on wedding ceremonies to allow them to be held in England with up to five people, including the couple, witnesses and the officiant, providing that the venue's capacity allows for 2m social distancing.

Tulip Siddiq (Labour) [137257] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what scientific evidence his Department is using to base its decision to restrict marriage ceremonies to only couples with exceptional circumstances under the January 2021 covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Alberto Costa (Conservative) [151757] To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish a timeline for the return to normal proceedings for wedding ceremonies.

Penny Mordaunt: On 4 January, the Prime Minister announced a National Lockdown for all of England, in accordance with growing evidence of virus prevalence. Under these new restrictions, weddings and civil partnership ceremonies should only take place in exceptional circumstances. Up to six people can attend (including the couple). Anyone working is not included in that limit.

We recognise the restrictions may be disappointing for those planning such events. By their nature, weddings and civil partnership ceremonies are events that bring families and friends together, including from across the country and sometimes across the world, making them particularly vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19. We do not wish to keep restrictions in place for any longer than we have to, and restrictions will be kept under review in line with the changing situation. For further information, please refer to the guidance for small weddings and civil partnerships <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships>

There is different advice for [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

The government continues to regularly make available scientific evidence supporting its COVID-19 response, including at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/scientific-evidence-supporting-the-government-response-to-coronavirus-covid-19>

On 22 February, the Prime Minister will set out the plan for reopening schools, and gradually reopening the economy and society, in a sustainable way in England.

For further information, please refer to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) page on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), which will publish further information regarding the roadmap on 22 February, <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-11/135916>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-13/137257>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-09/151757>

Welsh Government

Technical Advisory Group Current Evidence Relating to Weddings

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/technical-advisory-group-current-evidence-relating-to-weddings.pdf>

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House of Commons Written Answers

International Court of Justice

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [151690] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made for implications of his policies on the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in issuing a decision claiming jurisdiction in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

James Cleverly: We closely follow the important work of the International Criminal Court and are looking at the implications of this decision.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-09/151690>

The decision referred to above can be read at

https://www.icc-cpi.int/CourtRecords/CR2021_01165.PDF

A partly dissenting decision from Judge Péter Kovács can be read at

https://www.icc-cpi.int/RelatedRecords/CR2021_01167.PDF

A partly separate decision from Judge Perrin de Brichambaut can be read at

https://www.icc-cpi.int/RelatedRecords/CR2021_01166.PDF

Palestinians: Recognition of States

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [151691] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Palestinian Authority joining the Rome Statute in 2015, whether the Government recognises Palestine as a sovereign state.

James Cleverly: The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time of our choosing, and when it best serves the objective of peace.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-09/151691>

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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>

Domestic Abuse Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2709>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

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

Freedom of Speech (Universities) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2820>

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>

Notice of amendments

<https://beta.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/current-bills/domestic-abuse-protection-scotland-bill/stage-2/marshalled-list-of-amendments-at-stage-2.pdf>

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

**** closes tomorrow**

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill – Freedom of Expression Amendments

Very short timescale consultation between Bill stages 2 and 3

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/117116.aspx>

Human Rights Act Review (closing date 3 March 2021)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/93/human-rights-joint-committee/news/138635/call-for-evidence-the-governments-independent-human-rights-act-review/>

The future of the [Welsh Government] Equality and Inclusion Funding Programme

(closing date 30 March 2021)

<https://gov.wales/future-equality-and-inclusion-funding-programme>

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