

THE JEWISH MANIFESTO FOR LONDON



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Preface

The London Jewish Forum (LJF), founded in 2006, is an advocate for the capital's Jewish community, campaigning and influencing change in Parliament, City Hall and London borough councils; institutions that make decisions affecting the lives of Jewish Londoners. Rooted in Jewish values, we work across the community regardless of religious, cultural or political affiliations or beliefs, to ensure that Jewish Londoners have a voice in the great city in which they lead their lives.

Led by its steering group of Jewish leaders from across the community, since its inception the LJF has worked closely with politicians and stakeholders to improve the lives of Jewish communities across London. This manifesto is a contribution to that conversation by the Jewish community. Working with the relevant communal agencies, we have identified many, but not all of the issues and concerns of Jewish Londoners.

Through projects such as the establishment of improved links between communities and their local politicians, community roundtables and local hustings, for eighteen years the LJF has ensured that Jewish Londoners are represented across the capital and their voices are heard. This manifesto is a joint project of the LJF, the Board of Deputies of British Jews - the democratic and representative body for the UK's Jewish community - and the Jewish Leadership Council - a Jewish charity which brings together the major British Jewish organisations to work for the good of the British Jewish community.

With security concerns, pressures on housing, community cohesion and the social care sector, to name a few, this manifesto seeks to build upon the crucial relationship between decision-makers in London and their Jewish constituents, ensuring our elected officials and public servants are understanding and responsive to those challenges. Some of these issues and concerns are shared with residents from all backgrounds and so, working with communities across the capital, we strive to deliver a safe, cohesive, inclusive and shared city that all Londoners can enjoy. We look forward to working closely with politicians and community leaders to accomplish this.

The issues raised in this manifesto will require work in partnership with politicians and community leaders in the years ahead. We hope it serves as a foundation for future engagement. The Mayor and Greater London Assembly (GLA) must work with communities such as the Jewish community in building consensus around difficult issues: from policing to transport. A mayor for all Londoners must see the process of governing the capital as leading a London-wide conversation to ensure we can move forward together as one city. We ask that the GLA is a clearly anti-racist organisation where all people regardless of faith can flourish.



Key Asks

1. Oppose antisemitism wherever it is found. Uphold the IHRA definition of antisemitism and seek to implement it in practice. Encourage boroughs likewise to do so.
2. Antisemitism training should be delivered to all City Hall, London Councils, Transport for London, British Transport Police, Metropolitan Police Service and London Fire Brigade staff. Organisations such as LJJ and CST can provide this training.
3. The GLA to actively engage and facilitate interfaith conversations to increase community cohesion within the Capital.
4. Support Jewish students at London universities who have been targeted by antisemitism. Speak out against the use of inflammatory rhetoric by Student Unions and Societies.
5. The GLA should urge all London boroughs to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day in schools, and meaningfully implement the Holocaust element of the National Curriculum.
6. The GLA should continue to be supportive of faith schools including Jewish schools, paying due regard to their specific needs such as security.
7. Ensure that buildings of significant religious or cultural value are not adversely affected by new development, particularly the Grade-1 Listed Bevis Marks Synagogue.
8. The Mayor of London should highlight how the provision of culturally and religiously competent care and welfare services, is an important factor in ensuring the well-being and mental health of people who require support.
9. Local authorities, local plans and housing developments should align with the demographic needs of the communities in which it is being built, often requiring more family-sized housing.
10. Extend the 210-bus route past Finsbury Park to Stamford Hill to link together two of London's major Jewish communities.

JEWISH LIFE IN LONDON

It is accurate to say that although there are Jewish communities around the UK, the epicentre of Jewish life in this country is in London, where more than 50% of British Jews live - 145,466, as per the 2021 census. There are also large Jewish communities located in Hertfordshire and Essex with many who travel into London for work and education.

Key issues for Jewish Londoners in the next GLA term, as for all Londoners, include tackling crime, appropriate housing and the rising cost of living.

There are significant concerns regarding the safety and security of Londoners being targeted by both violent and non-violent crime. For the Jewish community, these worries have been exacerbated by a major rise in antisemitic incidents since Hamas attacked Israel on October 7th, 2023. The aftermath of October 7 and this has had significant issues on community cohesion. Additionally, the ongoing series of pro- Palestinian rallies and marches in the heart of the city have witnessed numerous instances of signs and slogans that many British Jews perceive as antisemitic and potentially threatening to their safety. There is a vital need for local, regional and national governments to work closely together to address these concerns better.

In times of safety concerns for the Jewish community, it is crucial that the Jewish community feels assured that both the Mayor and GLA members comprehend the challenges they are encountering. Sustaining a constructive and transparent dialogue with the community would offer reassurance to Jewish Londoners, now more than ever.

It is of great concern that incidents of antisemitism are rising in our city. The figures from the Community Security Trust (CST) - the charity monitoring antisemitism within the Jewish community, show that in 2023, there were 4,103 antisemitic incidents logged in the UK - the highest since records began. Of those, 2,410 took place in Greater London. Despite the growing antisemitism, the Jewish community is thriving, strong and proud.

Policymakers must take action to ensure the safety of the Jewish community and pursue policies to reverse this rise. Advocating for the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism and ensuring it is implemented, opposing divisive boycott campaigns and publicly standing with Jewish Londoners against unacceptable intimidation: these are a few examples of how both the Mayor and GLA representatives can support our community.

Leaders must exercise caution when addressing topics beyond their jurisdiction, considering the potential ramifications and being accountable for their words. Elected officials must prioritise maintaining cultural and religious sensitivity and competence to effectively serve diverse communities, including the Jewish community.

Lastly, concerning the cost of living, whether that be the increasing price of food, high transport costs, mortgage repayments for large families or energy bills, the Jewish community in London is facing the same financial pressures as the rest of the capital. Not only this, but the Jewish charity sector is experiencing significant financial pressures, which has affected some key services. We ask that the GLA introduce measures to help protect minority community during times of economic hardship.



ANTISEMITISM, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND COHESION

The Jewish community has a centuries-old presence in London. The capital is the epicentre of Jewish life in this country. While a century ago Jewish life was focused primarily in the East End of the City, the postwar years saw significant moves, first to Stamford Hill and Redbridge, followed by further moves into Barnet and further afield.

The Jewish community is one of the many minority groups in the capital which makes London the vibrant centre of national life. It is vital that London - and its elected representatives - firmly reject prejudice and hatred against different groups. This is essential for nurturing resilient communities in London.

As discussed above, there has been a major rise in antisemitic incidents in the capital since the Hamas terror attacks in Israel on October 7th 2023. Since that date, there have also been weekly anti-Israel marches taking place nationwide, most prominently in London. While many people on these marches may be present out of genuine concern at the situation in Gaza, there have been a significant number of cases where marchers have been found to be carrying antisemitic placards or have chanted slogans which are viewed as antisemitic by many within the Jewish community. While assembly and protest are an integral part of democracy, this does not extend to intimidation. Similarly, in the UK, free speech does not include various forms of hate speech.

While the Jewish community understands that the Metropolitan Police have operational independence, it has seemed at times since October 7th that there is a lack of clarity from the police concerning their ability within the law to arrest those who are engaging in hate speech. The Jewish community looks to both the Mayor of London and the Home Secretary to work together to ensure that such clarity is provided.

The Metropolitan Police must have adequate training on antisemitism to know what is and isn't acceptable on the streets of London - LJF and other Jewish communal organisations can help in this regard. The police must act swiftly to arrest anyone who can reasonably be seen as inciting racial hatred.

In previous years, City Hall has worked well with Transport for London and local authorities to swiftly remove graffiti and flyposting viewed as hostile to the Jewish community. Given the rise of such incidents in the wake of October 7th, it is more important than ever that such examples are rapidly dealt with. There have been notable incidents of antisemitism directed towards visibly Jewish individuals on public transport in London. We encourage the Mayor to look at what further steps can be taken to support the security of minority groups on public transport, working with the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police, and community groups such as the CST. Additionally, we would stress the importance of ensuring that all remaining London Underground lines that do not have CCTV coverage receive this as soon as funding becomes available.

Since October 7th, LJF has facilitated a series of roundtables with London councils, police and local Jewish Communities. These have primarily been as a response to the rise in antisemitism. Roundtables involving other local institutions and stakeholders must persist. The GLA has actively participated in various roundtable discussions with the Jewish Community. It's imperative that such dialogues continue, to keep GLA members informed about the evolving concerns of the Jewish community.

LJF has also facilitated and organised antisemitism awareness training for the GLA and Assembly Members, as well as London Councillors. This has been done in conjunction with our partners at the CST and Antisemitism Policy Trust (APT). A quarterly series of online antisemitism awareness courses began in 2024. The GLA must ensure that all staff, Assembly Members, Deputy Mayors and the Mayor receive adequate training and understanding of antisemitism. As representatives of the city which contains the majority of Jews in the country, all those working for the GLA need to have a deep understanding of the nuances of antisemitism.

ANTISEMITISM, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND COHESION

CST has been the recipient of a £15 million annual government grant that funds commercial security guards at Jewish communal premises throughout Britain, for many years. On October 12th 2023, extra funding of £3 million was announced, which allowed CST to properly respond to additional challenges in the aftermath of October 7th. Furthermore, the Government has increased this grant even more by a remarkable £54 million, making CST the recipient of £72 million over the next four years until 2028. CST allocates the funding to premises requiring security guards.

Elected officials have a responsibility to forcefully reject extremist rhetoric, including the use of antisemitic tropes, and call out those who indulge in such hate speech. The IHRA's working definition of antisemitism with all its examples, as adopted by the GLA, is the internationally respected guidance on considering whether rhetoric is antisemitic. It must be implemented in practice, such as through its continued use by the College of Policing as a practical guide to help recognise when antisemitism might be present.

We are delighted that all 32 boroughs have adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism, and the Mayor should take the lead on encouraging all local authorities to incorporate the definition into their policies and practices.

Opposition to antisemitism should be fully integrated into equalities training for City Hall, Transport for London, the Metropolitan Police Service and London Fire Brigade staff, and should be developed in partnership with the relevant Jewish communal organisations, such as the CST or the APT.

Support for the Jewish community in combating antisemitism has been critical. The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) used to provide a grant towards the CST's work in supporting victims of antisemitic hate crime in London and was an especially important contribution towards the community's wellbeing. Post-October 7th, the GLA did provide a £20k uplift - which was channelled through the Campaign, through the Community Alliance to Combat Hate (CATCH) programme. The Jewish community is very appreciative of the uplift for CST's victims' support work, allowing an increased capacity for CST's London incidents team post-October 7th. Since October 7th, the Jewish community has engaged very closely with the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, as well as the Victims' Commissioner in London. Both have worked hard to understand the Jewish communities.

There is a significant concern that the situation post-October 7th has exacerbated significant pre-existing inter-community tensions. In specific areas of the capital, such as Redbridge and Tower Hamlets, the persistent raising of Palestinian flags on council-owned street furniture has led to local Jewish residents feeling isolated and intimidated. The GLA needs to promote interfaith projects and work with specific London councils to improve community cohesion. There should be more funds and policy centred around community cohesion and interfaith initiatives, to help make London an inclusive city. In particular, local councils have a responsibility not to stoke tensions by passing inflammatory foreign policy statements. There is also an important role for local councils to play in bringing together representatives from different ethnic and religious minorities in private sessions where individuals can speak frankly without the fear of pushback from within their own communities.

We believe that the key to reducing prejudice and bigotry of all forms is building better relations across communities. While the Jewish community has long felt the need to protect its religious and educational institutions, we are saddened that our fellow faith communities are increasingly feeling the need to do likewise. For this reason, CST uses its expertise to make practical contributions to society. This includes giving security advice to Hindu Temples, Sikh Gurdwaras, Churches and Mosques around the UK through the SAFE programme - Security Advice For Everyone - through which CST shares its security knowledge with groups outside the Jewish community that are vulnerable to violence, extremism or hate crime. SAFE has a very strong relationship with MOPAC and they have delivered many security talks and webinars in partnership over the last five years.

ANTISEMITISM, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND COHESION

Meanwhile, the prejudice facing different communities, including Muslim, Black, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) and LGBT+ Londoners, is something which the Jewish community stands in solidarity against. We welcome and are keen to be involved in initiatives to tackle racism where appropriate. This should include looking at policing and policy responses to these issues, as well as supporting education and commemoration of the wrongs of the past and about how to forge a better future.

Interfaith activity and dialogue make a vital contribution to community cohesion and the Mayor of London should support the work of groups such as the Council of Christians and Jews, Mitzvah Day, Nisa-Nashim, Faiths Forum for London, the London Boroughs Faith Network, and the Faiths and Beliefs Forum, . The GLA has been particularly active in the field of women and interfaith, and this should continue.

Interfaith activity and dialogue in London have been challenged by the conflict in Israel/ Gaza, but they continue to make a significant contribution to community cohesion and help to create an inclusive society for all.

POLICY ASK: Oppose antisemitism wherever it is found. Uphold the IHRA definition of antisemitism and seek to implement it in practice. Encourage boroughs likewise to do so.

POLICY ASK: Antisemitism training should be delivered to all City Hall, London Councils, Transport for London, British Transport Police, Metropolitan Police Service and London Fire Brigade staff. Organisations such as LJJ and CST can provide this training.

POLICY ASK: In the wake of October 7th and the significant rise in antisemitism in London, maintain close connections to the Jewish community to be up to date with regard to concerning incidents and trends.

POLICY ASK: The GLA to actively engage and facilitate interfaith conversations to increase community cohesion within the Capital.

POLICY ASK: Call out offensive language and behaviour concerning escalations of tensions when involving Israel, by people in positions of responsibility. Such language can often cause distress to London's Jewish community and impact social cohesion.

POLICY ASK: Considering the security threat level to the Jewish community, ensure that combating antisemitism and hate crime in London remains a priority for City Hall. There should be a continued focus on terrorism prevention and community resilience, and MOPAC should continue to support the work of CST in providing services to support victims of antisemitic hate crimes. Other organisations working on communal security such as Shomrim should also be engaged.

POLICY ASK: Actively engage and work with the Jewish community to reduce anxieties that are caused by the hostile atmospheres on campuses, through graffiti/posters, or demonstrations that support antisemitic terrorist groups.

POLICY ASK: Support CST's SAFE programme to ensure other communities get the security advice they need.

POLICY ASK: Challenge prejudice against different communities, including Muslim, Black, GRT and LGBT+ communities, incorporating the Jewish community in projects where appropriate, with organisations such as HIAS JCORE.

POLICY ASK: Support and encourage Jewish and multi faith charities engaged in promoting inter-community, interfaith relations and social action within the city.



HOUSING AND PLANNING

At the heart of Jewish life is the idea of community. The ability of Jewish residents to live in close proximity to community infrastructure such as synagogues, Jewish schools, care homes and kosher shops, and other facilities is central to communal life. This is particularly true of Orthodox Jews who are Sabbath-observant and who must live within walking distance of their place of worship.

The London Plan and National Planning Framework, as well as Local Plans across London, should support the development of infrastructure safeguarded for faith communities, including places of worship, faith schools and other facilities, whether that be through the construction of new infrastructure or the expansion of existing premises, using existing planning processes.

Extended families and communities act as support networks helping to build intergenerational communal resilience, support mental health, ensure childcare availability, and contribute to public safety. When market forces break up these communities through overpriced housing, society loses out. It is essential that new homes are built for people of all ages and in a sensitive manner; affordable housing is key to maintaining successful and resilient Jewish communities. It is further critical, in areas of growing Jewish populations, that housing is developed to suit the religious and cultural needs of the local community.

The Jewish community requires active policymaking and placemaking by the development sector, working in lockstep with local authorities and local Jewish communities alike. They should aim to provide high-quality housing for first-time buyers, older people, and families, which ensures such community structures continue to thrive. Jewish communities across the capital are struggling to nurture the next generation of young families, as first-time buyers are priced out of the capital and into the home counties. It is also becoming difficult for those who rent to afford to live in an area with extensive Jewish infrastructure. In addition, larger Jewish families – more typical of, but not exclusive to, the Strictly Orthodox section of the community – are increasingly struggling to find accommodation. There is a sense that communities are being priced out of London as there is a tendency for prioritising one and two-bedroom apartments, over family-sized homes. This is an issue which affects other communities as well as the Jewish community.

While the active policy of increasing social and affordable housing in recent years is welcome, there must be a mixed supply of housing. New housing for London's communities needs to be developed with the needs of those communities in mind, be that in terms of design or tenure. As such, community-focused housing associations, including housing associations that provide for high proportions of the Jewish community, like JLiving, the Industrial Dwelling Society, and the Agudas Israel Housing Association, must continue to be partners in housing policy, as they have the expertise to deliver for their communities.

Furthermore, planning policy in general must support housing supply and housing delivery for larger families, which are not just found in the Jewish community but minority communities throughout the capital.

Development can be controversial, with existing residents often concerned by the potential for the loss of green spaces, the increased need for infrastructure and services, and an increase in traffic. It is important to secure consensus for change. For many residents, their faith community plays a larger part in their identity than their geographical community, and so local religious communities, and their regional or national representative bodies, should be engaged where appropriate to help create a positive dialogue.

HOUSING AND PLANNING

It is extremely important that buildings of significant cultural importance can be properly maintained in the face of prospective development. For example, there has been significant concern relating to the future of Bevis Marks Synagogue, the oldest synagogue in the country. This is due to encroachment by developers and their impact on synagogues' lighting and religious worship. The synagogue's wider setting and sky-view backdrop must be protected. Any developments mustn't be permitted to encroach on such sites.

One positive development for many Orthodox Jews in recent years has been the construction of eruvim (singular: eruv), boundaries that allow the observant to carry within them during the Sabbath, an activity which is usually not permitted. These eruvim are particularly liberating for those with responsibility for childcare or who live with disabilities, especially as Jewish law considers pushing wheelchairs and buggies to be forms of carrying. Eruvim make a negligible impact on the lives of the wider community, but, when proposed, can cause concern for residents not aware of the inconspicuousness of eruvim. Several communities in London are currently considering eruvim and Mayoral leadership and support from their local and national representatives would be appreciated in settling local concerns, where appropriate.

POLICY ASK: Through the planning regime, support the development of built faith infrastructure, including places of worship, schools and cultural centres.

POLICY ASK: Ensure that buildings of significant religious or cultural value are not adversely affected by new development, particularly Grade-1 Listed Bevis Marks Synagogue.

POLICY ASK: Work with community-specific housing associations, including Jewish housing associations, to ensure that efforts to increase affordable housing in London are delivered in a community-sensitive way.

POLICY ASK: Work with communal representative bodies where appropriate to secure a positive conversation around development proposals.

POLICY ASK: Support the construction of eruvim where there is demand and help allay wider public concerns.

POLICY ASK: Local authorities, local plans and housing developments should align with the demographic needs of the communities in which it is being built, often requiring more family-sized housing.



SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTHCARE



The Mayor of London can play a key role in offering leadership to national and local government, setting the tone and priorities for London as a whole.

A key challenge for UK society is how to support an ageing population. Faith-based and culturally specific providers are vital for this, creating a familiar atmosphere for users that can combat loneliness and social isolation.

The Mayor can champion faith social care providers including Jewish social care providers, by encouraging boroughs to work across boundaries to ensure that such provision is available for service users, whether they reside close to Jewish care facilities or not.

The GLA's online presence does a great job of signposting to support services. This signposting role should extend to Jewish organisations involved in social care, mental health, and family support services. We commend the GLA's support for a London Living Wage as a welcome boost for the lowest-paid. At the same time, there must be a recognition that this has an impact on social care providers. Any commitment to raising wages must be matched by advocacy for increased governmental funding for social care in recognition of the increasing costs of provision. Some Jewish care providers are already committed to paying the London Living Wage and are raising funds from the community to achieve this.

At the end of life, Jewish communities, like Muslim communities, require burial to be as swift as possible. While most coroners show sensitivity to this, there have been instances in London where coroners have imposed unnecessary delays. The Mayor of London speaking out on such matters is much appreciated by communities.

The inception of faith-based health groups, such as the London Jewish Health Partnership has exemplified how different communities have different health needs and must be consulted where appropriate.

Coordination between the various providers in providing the health service is needed. Religiously aware world- culture and religious competence. What the faith does for free- different religions have structures already existing to provide health care needs to the community. Chai Cancer, Jews and BRCA, Jewish Care, Kisharon Langdon, Norwood are some best practices.

POLICY ASK: The Mayor of London should lead by highlighting how the provision of culturally and religiously competent care and welfare services, is an important factor in ensuring the well-being and mental health of people who require support.

POLICY ASK: City Hall should advocate for a recognition that increased costs associated with specialist Jewish social care provision represent value for money in delivering outcomes regarding wellbeing and combatting social isolation.

POLICY ASK: Ensure the GLA's online signposting includes reference to culturally and faith-specific Jewish services in social care, mental health and family support services.

POLICY ASK: Advocate for increased spending on social care, to enable service providers to pay a living wage without forcing cuts to provision.

POLICY ASK: Speak up for faith-sensitive provision by coroners' services.

EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Formal education is another area where the Mayor can show leadership. Jewish schools are an important part of Jewish communal life, around two-thirds of Jewish children attend Jewish schools, and this number is consistently growing. This means that support for faith schools is a key priority for the Jewish community.

Since October 7, there has been a particular focus on Jewish children who do not attend a Jewish faith school, have been experiencing waves of antisemitism and intimidation. We encourage non-faith schools to ensure both students and staff receive adequate antisemitism training.

There is a concern that Jewish children in strictly orthodox private or independent schools, rather than mainstream schools are judged differently by the Department of Education. We encourage these schools to have the same benefits as public and mainstream schools.

We welcome the free school meals initiative introduced by the GLA and the added funding for kosher school meals, introduced under the protected characteristic of faith. This has allowed a significant number of schools have confirm that the extra funding has made a significant contribution to providing Jewish children with a hot kosher meal. As this is a temporary initiative, we welcome a long-term commitment to be implemented.

There is also a thriving Jewish nursery and childminder sector, whose premises are often located in communal institutions such as synagogues. Childcare affordability is a critical issue for the Jewish community as it is for the wider population.

Informal education is a cornerstone of the Jewish community. Jewish youth organisations build the self-confidence and interpersonal skills of young people, while transmitting Jewish identity to the next generation. Informal education is not just a young people's policy: It is an anti-crime policy, a community cohesion policy, and a mental health policy.

One challenge to the sector is that, while the rising expectations of child safeguarding are of critical importance, training can often be expensive and of variable quality and there is inadequate independent monitoring of whether that training is up to a good standard. The GLA could take a role in assessing local authority child safeguarding training and advocating for decreased costs. A kitemarking scheme could, in time, be extended to non-local authority providers.

Holocaust education is important to the Jewish community. The GLA should urge all London boroughs to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day in schools, and meaningfully implement the Holocaust element of the National Curriculum. Working with the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, City Hall can make a positive contribution to this effort by bringing together local authorities to share best practices.

A significant opportunity for London exists in the form of the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre beside Parliament. We would want any future Mayor to give this important initiative their full backing.

Anti-discrimination training in schools is another vital tool to combat racism. Funded by MOPAC, Stand Up! Education Against Discrimination does important work to educate young people in schools right across the capital, and we ask that MOPAC continue to support this work, which has only become more urgent and important since October 7th.

EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Within the first 5 months since October 7th, Stand Up! has responded to hundreds of antisemitic incidents in Mainstream London schools; the project has visited over 65 schools and delivered anti-discrimination workshops to over 15,000 young people.

Meanwhile, Jewish students at universities in the capital should be supported and defended from the antisemitism they sometimes face, as well as the intimidation they encounter in relation to extreme anti-Israel activity. Jewish students and their elected Jewish societies must also be supported in creating fulfilling and meaningful Jewish student life on campus. Jewish students who study in London are often likely to be more religiously observant, meaning they are often more visibly Jewish, making them more identifiable targets for antisemitism. Since October 7th, antisemitism on campuses has risen by 500%. We have seen various student unions and societies glamorising and supporting language such as “intifada until victory”, “globalise the intifada” and “we will honour all our martyrs”. This kind of language should not be tolerated on university campuses. The intifadas in Israel saw the deliberate murder of hundreds of innocent civilians, in restaurants and hotels as well as on public transport. This language has significant meaning and context, using it or endorsing it breeds an unsafe and uncomfortable environment for Jewish students.

POLICY ASK: The GLA should continue to be supportive of faith schools including Jewish schools, paying due regard to their specific needs such as security.

POLICY ASK: Support Jewish students at London universities who have been targeted by antisemitism. Speak out against the use of inflammatory rhetoric by student unions and societies.

POLICY ASK: Work with local authorities in providing child safeguarding training in London so that informal education providers can be assured of the quality of provision.

POLICY ASK: Support the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre beside Parliament. Bring together local authorities to share best practices on commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day, engage with organisations such as Holocaust Memorial Day and Holocaust Educational Trust.

POLICY ASK: MOPAC should continue to fund Stand Up! Education Against Discrimination, empowering young people to tackle hate crime and intolerance through anti-discrimination education in schools across London.

POLICY ASK: Encourage and facilitate interfaith and inter-community dialogue between Jewish schools and other London schools.



TRANSPORT

As London transitions away from cars towards more public transport in order to combat the climate crisis, we will also look to the Mayor for reassurance that public transport routes of import to the Jewish community are safe and accessible for our diverse community. Additionally, it is important to Jewish communities across the capital that there be effective links to connect areas of outer London more directly.

Transport choices continue to be important in linking Jewish residents to their communal infrastructure. In particular, vital school bus services should not be axed to avoid making life harder for young people. Meanwhile, the equalities impact of transport initiatives should be considered for new schemes. For instance, Jewish students often travel further than most to attend a suitable faith school.

While comprehensive investment in transport choices is critical, such as the Superloop, particular routes are of interest to the Jewish community. For example, the extension of the 210-bus route from Finsbury Park to Stamford Hill would be of great benefit to the community. Such an extension would link the two main Strictly Orthodox communities in North London - Golders Green and Stamford Hill. The Jewish community has requested this since the start of the Greater London Authority and its realisation is long overdue. There is a real need to strengthen orbital public transport in outer London by providing public transport options without going into central London and out again.

There has been massive growth in the strictly orthodox community and therefore their reliance on transport has also increased. Since October 7 there has been an increased concern about safety for the community and their usage on public transport.

Periodically, cross-border bus routes that extend outside of London. the 107, 142 and 292 bus routes that link the Jewish communities in Hertfordshire to those of north-west London come under threat. These should be preserved as they often link Jewish families together. Bus routes such as the 167, 667 and 677 that link Jewish communities in Redbridge and Epping Forest should also be retained. In Southwest London, the K3 bus is the only bus that takes people to Kingston Liberal Synagogue, therefore should be maintained. The 371 bus so is also vital as it's the only mode of public transport that serves Richmond Synagogue.

Parts of the Jewish community, particularly the Ultra-Orthodox often have larger families, which may require them to rely more heavily on their private vehicles and may have fewer transport options. Investment in public transport routes is even more important. Better public transport links around the outer zones will also be necessary if people are to be persuaded to drive less in these areas. Any proposal for future driving levies or transport initiatives based on arbitrary boundaries must take into account the effect this will have in dividing communities.

TRANSPORT

The introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods has been controversial in some areas. However, timely community conversations can help avoid or de-escalate tensions. It is worth investigating whether engaging residents through their faith communities would be a productive complement to, for example, ward-based structures.

Investment in sustainable forms of transport should not only include public transport, but also, car-sharing and non-car private options, active travel such as walking and cycling and investment in charging points across the capital, including in areas with higher Jewish populations. Looking at the local demographics may indicate certain accommodations needed for ageing communities.

POLICY ASK: Free school bus services should be preserved.

POLICY ASK: Extend the 210-bus route past Finsbury Park to Stamford Hill to link together two of London's major Jewish communities.

POLICY ASK: Promote more options and increase infrastructure for active travel, recognising the interplay between travel and better health.

POLICY ASK: Maintain the 107, 142, 167, 292, 253, 667, and 677 bus routes.

POLICY ASK: Any extension of the Congestion Charge or other proposed driving levies must be sensitive to the potential danger of splitting up communities.

POLICY ASK: Where appropriate, engage with faith communities to shape proposals such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, particularly where there is a Synagogue or Jewish school located in the proposed LTN.

POLICY ASK: Extend investment in sustainable forms of transport into the outer areas of London including the areas with high Jewish populations.



CULTURE AND HERITAGE

London's Jewish culture and heritage is of profound importance both to the capital itself and to the international Jewish community. London is home to architectural gems like the New West End Synagogue and Bevis Marks Synagogue, while Jewish culture thrives in the capital with institutions such as the JW3 Jewish Community Centre, the UK Jewish Film Festival, Seret Israeli Film Festival, the Jewish Literary Foundation's Book Week and Chanukah in the Square.

That history and culture tells a story about the Jewish community and also London as a whole – a world city, whose diversity and pluralism have been deeply embedded in its evolution. London has benefited enormously from the diverse groups that have made it their home. The history and culture of the capital's Jewish community is a clear testament to that. The Jewish Community would welcome the implementation of a British Jewish History Month. This would provide a platform to showcase the vast contribution of the Jewish community to British civil life. It would also help support the very important work in promoting Jewish arts and culture that is key to ensuring a vibrant, engaged community, and is also vital in strengthening the image of the Jewish community to wider London society. This receives little/no support currently.

We are pleased that a Heritage Strategy has been produced as part of the London Plan, and its explicit statement that London's heritage is a testament to its diversity, and should be preserved, among other things, to bring the history of the capital to its residents. Given how the centre of Jewish population has relocated to different parts of the capital over the last century, the day-to-day implementation of such a principle should reflect that stakeholders in heritage are not just local residents, but all those for whom that heritage tells an important story. We look forward to support for planning-related issues regarding religious, cultural and historical sites such as Bevis Marks Synagogue.

It is also important that the Culture at Risk team look at the heritage and culture of faith communities. Our shared heritage needs to be preserved through sympathetic redevelopment and commemoration.

The Board of Deputies is planning a Jewish Heritage Plaque Scheme which celebrates Jewish contributions throughout the Capital. The Board of Deputies looks forward to working with Local Councils on this initiative and would welcome support from the GLA and the Mayor.

POLICY ASK: Support London's flourishing Jewish cultural sector.

POLICY ASK: Ensure that the upcoming Heritage Strategy from the Mayor of London takes into account the heritage of all who have a stake in it, including from communities that no longer live in close proximity to a given area, most notably the East End and the City.

POLICY ASK: Support the creation of a Jewish History Month that promotes awareness of the Jewish contribution to London.

POLICY ASK: Ensure that the Culture at Risk team has an awareness of, and active interest in, preserving faith culture at risk.



SOCIAL ACTION

Integral to Judaism, as with all faith communities, is the requirement to give back. The Jewish community has a vibrant social action and social justice sector and is proud of organisations as diverse as World Jewish Relief, René Cassin, the Jewish Council for Racial Equality (HIAS-JCORE); and volunteering charities such as the Jewish Volunteering Network (JVN). Many synagogues and charities have dedicated themselves to supporting refugees, alleviating poverty and giving shelter to the homeless.

The Jewish community engages in an annual day of focused communal social action Mitzvah Day, working with faith communities, schools, workplaces and local authorities across the capital to support local charities. Mayoral backing for these initiatives has elevated their profile, helped volunteer recruitment and increased impact.

Volunteer initiatives require investment in training, management and being properly resourced. Funding volunteering has a clear ‘multiplier effect’ both in terms of what is achieved and how participants respond. We urge the GLA to build upon previous support given to charities to help them fully utilise their volunteer bases.

The treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum is something close to the hearts of London’s Jewish residents. Given the Kindertransport scheme that saved Jewish children from the Holocaust, the plight of refugee children is particularly poignant. Local authorities can help by pledging resources and accommodation for refugees, and particularly for child refugees. City Hall can lead by rallying London’s boroughs to this cause. Since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, World Jewish Relief has supported over 273,874 Ukrainians inside Ukraine, across 381 towns and cities, through a network of 27 local partner organisations built over 30 years of working in Ukraine.

Through the Eco Synagogue project, set up by the Board of Deputies and the Jewish religious denominations, the community is encouraging synagogues to adopt best environmental practices and carry out eco-friendly renovations, as the community wrestles with the challenge of climate change. We would welcome the support of the GLA in providing resources to local communities taking part in this initiative.

There is currently a desperate need to address and support interfaith relations, which have been severely affected by Oct 7. Some of this work can be addressed through social justice action projects which build community cohesion, such as Mitzvah Day which brings people together through local volunteering. In a time marked by significant division, community cohesion is more crucial than ever, and we look to the GLA for support.

POLICY ASK: Support faith-based social action projects by supporting food banks and homeless shelters, and the annual Mitzvah Day.

POLICY ASK: Through the GLA’s Simply Volunteer London scheme, we ask the GLA to support and link with the Jewish Volunteer Network, to improve and develop volunteering, which actively engages with the Jewish community.

POLICY ASK: Encourage London Boroughs to support the campaign to admit refugees and asylum seekers via official safe routes, by pledging resources and accommodation.

POLICY ASK: Engage London’s faith communities, including the Eco Judaism project, in initiatives to tackle climate change.



ISRAEL

In the 21st century, Israel is a focal point for Jewish life worldwide. A plurality of Jews globally – more than 40 per cent – live in Israel. It is a key engine of Jewish life, the wellspring of Hebrew literature, culture and cuisine, as well as being of profound religious importance. Recent polling suggests British Jews almost unanimously feel “personally connected” to events in Israel.

Not only does Israel play a leading role in the identity of Jewish Londoners, but it should be borne in mind that most will have close family and friends in Israel. Among Jews in the UK, 71% have family living in Israel and almost 90% have visited the country at least once, making the October 7 attacks feel deeply personal. The atrocities of October 7th were not just a trauma for Israel but were a trauma for all Jewish people.

Zionism, the belief in the Jewish people’s right to self-determination in their ancestral homeland, became popular as a response to antisemitism. Today Israel represents a place of safety for Jews as well as a spiritual/ cultural focus. Threats to its wellbeing impact on London’s Jews. Israel’s security can feel very imminent or personal to many of the capital’s Jews, as they may have family members who must spend their night in a bomb shelter during escalations of tension; or undertaking national service in the army. Therefore, while the London Jewish community has a wide range of views regarding the policies of the Israeli government, the Jewish community is, in a social sense, intertwined with Israel. Engagement with Israeli culture plays a critical part in maintaining Jewish identity and passing it on to their children.

Efforts to target communal organisations from university Jewish societies or the Jewish Film Festival for engaging with Israel or having Israeli content have threatened Jewish communal life in the capital. The Mayor of London must stand against all attempts to shut down Jewish communal life, even when they are coated in the thin veneer of anti-Israel activity. As well as pushing back against divisive boycotts, City Hall should promote projects that unite communities, like the Invest in Peace project supported by the Board of Deputies. London’s politicians must also take care not to use inflammatory language, particularly at times of conflict.

A more positive approach can be taken by organising trade and cultural missions to Israel. There is much to gain from an exchange in hi-tech innovation, financial services and culture. We also call on City Hall to engage with the municipalities of major Israeli cities, as there are many opportunities to exchange best practices and learn from each other.

POLICY ASK: Ensure that the tone and language of statements on foreign affairs do not cause divisions between communities in your area.

POLICY ASK: Oppose divisive boycotts, protect Jewish and Israeli cultural events from intimidation and instead promote projects that unite communities in your area, including interfaith and inter-communal initiatives and coexistence projects.

POLICY ASK: Lead London trade and cultural missions to Israel.





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The London Jewish Forum is an advocate for the capital's Jewish community, campaigning and influencing the public institutions affecting the lives of Jewish Londoners. Rooted within Jewish values, The LJF works across the community regardless of religious, cultural or political affiliations or beliefs and with our neighbours to advance the community's agenda.

The London Jewish Forum is a registered charity in England and Wales (Charity No. 1119590) and a private company limited by guarantee without share capital (No. 05720881).

The Board of Deputies of British Jews is the democratic and representative body for the UK's Jewish community. The Board of Deputies is the first port of call for the Government, the media and others seeking to understand the Jewish community's interests and concerns.

Charitable activities with which the Board of Deputies is identified are funded by The Board of Deputies Charitable Foundation (Registered Charity No. 1058107), a company limited by guarantee and registered in England (No. 3239086).

The Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) connects and coordinates the Jewish charitable sector; strengthens and supports leadership across its community; and magnifies and amplifies the individual voices and collective voice of our member organisations.

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