

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Lords Debate

English Football

col 1273 **Baroness Taylor of Bolton (Labour):** ... Many problems surround the governance of football and many issues cause concern, such as ... the FA's response to racism ... The Government need to be more proactive in taking a stand on these problems, which are important to so many people. ...

col 1278 **Lord Pendry (Labour):** ... as of 2018 the FA's equality, diversity and inclusion plan shows that only 5% of leadership roles are currently held by people from BAME backgrounds. It is therefore clear that we continue to need more diverse management of the FA, particularly so that it is better equipped to handle the unacceptable growth of racism we have seen in recent months in and around our stadiums ... the terrible handling of discrimination cases we have all heard of recently must not be repeated. ...

col 1288 **Lord Griffiths of Burry Port (Labour):** ... We cannot just gloss over the fact that racism and racial bigotry seem to be within the spirit and ethos of the game and express themselves in such ugly forms again and again. I remember meeting people from the Inter City Firm in the 1980s, the fascist thugs who organised at school gates to take their young protégés off to matches to disrupt them, to taunt the police and to have a go at Muslims. It was shameful and kept many Muslim people from our grounds altogether. ...

col 1289 **Viscount Younger of Leckie (Conservative):** ... the game's problems in dealing with racism and other forms of discrimination ... have blighted the sport in recent times. ... May I reassure the House that the Government are working closely with football to address this important matter? ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-05-08/debates/69F8D859-510F-48EE-82C4-9083522C679B/EnglishFootball>

House of Commons Written Answer

Religious Buildings: Security

Catherine West (Labour) [248748] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the recent shooting at the San Diego synagogue, what urgent steps he is taking to provide additional funding for security at places of worship.

Ben Wallace: The police are aware of events taking place around the world such as San Diego, Sri Lanka and Christchurch and adapt their operational policing plans, including increased high visibility patrolling, to protect and reassure all our faith communities.

On 19 March, the Home Secretary announced a boost in funding for the hate crime Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme to £1.6 million for 2019/20 (excluding synagogues). This is double the amount awarded in 2018/19. Furthermore, £5 million over three years has also been committed to providing security training to places of worship in England and Wales. This will enable staff and volunteers to develop the security understanding necessary to make security measures work more effectively.

On 27 February, the Home Secretary announced increased funding for the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant to £14 million for 2019/20. Although this fund is focussed primarily on security at Jewish Schools a proportion of funding is allocated to the security of synagogues. This Grant was introduced in 2015 following a number of terrorist attacks on Jews and Jewish sites in Europe.

More widely, the Home Secretary has committed to consulting with faith communities to understand what more could and should be done to help protect faith communities at their places of worship.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248748/>

The announcement relating to the Places of Worship Protective Security Scheme, referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-to-get-security-funding-boost>

The announcement about the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant is not available online, but information about the announcement can be read at

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-47389912>

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Holocaust

House of Commons Written Answers

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [248580] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 10 April 2019 to Question 239872, for what reason the Prime Minister's announcement on 27 January 2016 on locating the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens did not refer to the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's recommendation that the Memorial and the Learning Centre should be co-located.

Heather Wheeler: Co-location was recommended by the Prime Minister's Commission in January 2015 and reflected in the Foundation's document on the search for a site published in September 2015. The Government press release on 27 January 2016, following the PM announcement, also noted that plans for the

learning centre would be announced in the coming months.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248580/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

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

The Commission recommendation referred to above can be read at p13 of

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398645/Holocaust Commission Report Britains promise to remember.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398645/Holocaust_Commission_Report_Britains_promise_to_remember.pdf)

The Foundation document referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/holocaust-memorial-foundation-takes-forward-prime-ministers-pledge-to-survivors>

The press release referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-holocaust-memorial-will-stand-beside-parliament-as-permanent-statement-of-our-british-values>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2016-01-27/debates/1601274900025/Engagements#contribution-16012749000124>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [248581] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 10 April 2019 to Question 239870, on what dates the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation first spoke to representatives of the (a) Royal Parks, (b) Department of Culture, Media and Sport and (c) Westminster City Council about the possibility of the Holocaust Memorial being located in Victoria Tower Gardens; and whether in each case the conversation also covered the proposed Learning Centre.

Heather Wheeler: The Foundation engaged with representatives of The Royal Parks, Department of Culture, Media and Sport and Westminster City Council in the early stages of this project and continue to engage with them on a regular basis.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248581/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

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

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [248582] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answers of 7 March 2019 to Question 229626 and 10 April 2019 to Question 239872, on what date in January 2016 the Government received from the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation its recommendation that the Holocaust Memorial and the Holocaust Learning Centre should be located in Victoria Tower Gardens.

Heather Wheeler: 13 January 2016.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248582/>

The answers referred to above can be read at

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

and

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

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [248583] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 10 April 2019 to Question 239868 on the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, for what reason the answer did not indicate whether the criteria for the site were altered.

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

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248583/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

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

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [248584] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 10 April 2019 to Question 239869 on the location of the National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Centre, for what reason that Answer did not indicate which of the criteria were met.

Heather Wheeler: The answer of 10 April to Question UIN 239869 referred to an earlier answer to Question UIN 203298, answered on 21 December, which provided a clear explanation of the reasons for selecting Victoria Tower Gardens.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248584/>

The answers referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-02/239869/>

and

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

Jake Berry: Millbank Tower was considered as a possible site for the Memorial and Learning Centre. The proposal was tied to the development of the wider site: to date, there is no evidence of redevelopment coming forward and occupational office leases have now been extended to 2022. Victoria Tower Gardens was preferred by the UKHMF Board as the outstanding candidate site for the following reasons:

- its relevance as a commemorative garden of Britain's national conscience, already containing significant memorial sculptures, marking momentous historic events, with significance for the struggle for human rights, that remain relevant today and will do so in the future;
- it provides an iconic location adjoining Parliament, sitting along the riverfront immediately next to the House of Lords;
- it is visually prominent and adjacent to one of the most visited parts of London, within easy reach of a major tube station and many bus routes;
- the resonance of being next to Parliament and on the timeless banks of the Thames is exceptional; and
- under the shadow of Victoria Tower, the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre would question the impacts of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides on our own Parliament.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [248585] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether it is the Government's policy that all the existing entrances to Victoria Tower Gardens will continue to be available to the public during the same hours as they are currently after the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre have been built.

Heather Wheeler: Yes.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248585/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Edward Leigh (Conservative) [248586] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what conditions he has (a) imposed and (b) indicated an intention to impose on the planned use of part of Victoria Tower Gardens for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

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

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248586/>

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Israel

House of Commons Ministerial Statement and Q&A

Iran Nuclear Deal

col 559 **The Minister for Asia and the Pacific (Mark Field):** The UK notes with great concern the statement made by Iran today concerning its commitments under the joint comprehensive plan of action. We are analysing the detail of it and are in close contact with the other parties to the deal. ... We urge Iran not to take further escalatory steps, and to stand by its commitments. We are not at this stage talking about re-imposing sanctions, but one has to remember that they were lifted in exchange for the nuclear restrictions as part of the JCPOA. Should Iran cease meeting its nuclear commitments, there would of course be consequences, but so long as Iran keeps to its commitments then so too will the United Kingdom. ...

... it is important to remember that the UK remains very clear-eyed about Iran's destabilising activity in other parts of the middle east—including its ballistic missile programme, which must now be addressed. However, we see that that can best be done through the JCPOA remaining in place. ...

col 560 **John Baron (Conservative):** ... This morning, the Iranian Government announced that they are suspending key parts of the 2015 deal, citing the effect of US sanctions against their economy. Among other actions, Iran has stated that it will keep stocks of enriched uranium and heavy water rather than selling them on the international market, but it has threatened to resume production of enriched uranium in 60 days if the other signatories to the Iran deal—UK, France, China, Germany and Russia—do not plot a way forward to help the Iranian economy to withstand the effects of the US oil and financial sanctions.

It does not take me to remind the Minister that reaching the deal took broadly 10 years of diplomacy. At the time, it helped to avert a regional conflict; the House will remember how close the US, the UK and Israel came to military strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities in 2012. ...

I ask the Minister what else the Government can do to ensure the continuance of this important nuclear non-proliferation treaty ...

Yes, we know that Iran is up to no good with some of its other activities in the region—terrorist activities and so forth. ... If the deal is allowed to fail, it will make for conflict in the region and possibly an escalation of nuclear capabilities. That would be bad news not just for the region, but for the world. ...

Mark Field: My hon. Friend is absolutely right that the JCPOA is a cornerstone. It is critical for our security, not least because nuclear proliferation in that region of all regions would be calamitous. ...

col 561 Emily Thornberry (Labour): ... Today is a deeply sad day for all of us, on all sides, who regarded the Iran nuclear deal as one of the crowning diplomatic achievements of this century and who saw it as opening a door to potential progress on all the other issues on which we have such grave problems with Iran— not least its human rights record. We very much hope for the contrary of what we fear, which is not just that the door to progress has been closed today, but that a very different door is being opened—one that leads us back to the past and to the threat of a new and devastating conflict in an already devastated middle east. ...

col 562 Mark Field: ... It was very fair of the right hon. Lady to point out that Iran has been a destabilising influence and remains so—look at Yemen, Lebanon and Gaza, where various proxies are in place—but equally we must work together with diplomacy. ... Please be assured that those efforts will continue, not least because destabilisation in the region would have global consequences. ...

col 566 Robert Halfon (Conservative): ... when this agreement was reached, it was understood that Iran would stop supporting and funding Hezbollah and Hamas. Far from that being the case, support for Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist groups—which is also causing instability in the middle east—has increased to a major extent. May I urge my right hon. Friend the Minister to take those matters into consideration when dealing with Iran? I actually think that the sanctions for which the Americans have opted are the right way forward. ...

col 567 Mark Field: ... As my right hon. Friend knows, he and I disagree slightly on this matter. We feel that the JCPOA is the only game in town. We feel that, broadly speaking, it has worked, and we wish to see it work. ...

Paul Sweeney (Labour Co-op): Obviously the risk of an escalation in the middle east will be significant if Iran decides to resume its nuclear programme. What is the Minister doing to address the risk of a further escalation, with responses from Saudi Arabia and also Israel, and a potential arms race in the middle east?

Mark Field: ... Clearly we want to de-escalate tensions in the region, so he will also understand why it would be unwise of me to speculate further at the Dispatch Box. ...

col 568 Joan Ryan (Change UK): Iran's actions announced today are highly regrettable and are the inevitable consequence of President Trump's decision last year. However, I echo what the right hon. Member for Harlow (Robert Halfon) said and say to the Minister that if, as it says, the Iranian regime wants to negotiate new terms it must also address its support for terror groups such as Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which together fired some 700 rockets, missiles and mortars indiscriminately at Israel from Gaza last weekend, killing four people. It is not acceptable to leave out the ending of that kind of behaviour if new terms are being demanded.

Mark Field: ... The right hon. Lady makes a serious point, and we were also deeply upset by the death of those four Israeli civilians last weekend and very worried

about the potential for escalation. Thankfully, I think wise voices have ensured that that has not happened. She makes a good point, as I said, and a concern we have, shared by some in the US Administration, is that Iran being an ongoing destabilising influence in the region is not compatible with sanctions being lifted. ...

col 569 John Woodcock (Independent): But it is important to be clear about Iran's "destabilising influence", which the Minister euphemistically and diplomatically talked about. This is a regime that has been propping up the butchery of Assad, funding Hamas on an ongoing basis in killing Israelis with the intention of wiping them off the map and killing their own Palestinians, and funding the terror of the Houthis in Yemen. These are not inconvenient side issues not to be mentioned in the House; they actually show how deadly dangerous it would be if Iran were able to realise the long-held ambitions of some in the regime to hold the bomb. So I would like to hear a little more vigour from the Government about what they will do to make sure that sanctions and consequences are re-imposed, and I would like them to say that they will do whatever it takes to stop Iran getting a nuclear bomb.

Mark Field: The hon. Gentleman is right; he suggests I was being euphemistic, but I spelled out exactly where we have concerns. Those concerns have been raised by Members in all parts of the House and no doubt will continue to be raised; these are very issues whether in Gaza or Lebanon, or indeed Yemen or Syria. We clearly feel that an escalation at this stage as a result of what Iran is proposing to do is precisely the wrong way forward, and we want to find every opportunity to utilise whatever diplomatic weapons we can. That involves acting internationally at the UN, with our EU partners and elsewhere. ...

To read the statement, and question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-05-08/debates/89499CE4-E065-42D0-A652-8ABD1977EC05/IranNuclearDeal>

House of Lords Written Answers

Gaza: Demonstrations

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL15417] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 16 April (HL15124), what steps they are taking to ensure that accountability for all violations of international humanitarian and human rights law is pursued impartially, fairly, and in a balanced manner.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have called on all parties to abide by international humanitarian law and to promote peace, stability and security. We continue to discuss with our partners in the UN how best to pursue accountability in an impartial, fair and balanced manner.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-29/HL15417/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-08/HL15124/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL15418] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 16 April (HL15129), what steps they intend to take to encourage the government of Israel to ensure that any actions it takes are proportionate and adhere to international humanitarian law.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to urge the Israeli authorities to ensure that their actions are proportionate and in line with international humanitarian law.

We reiterated the importance of this in the UK statement at the UN Security Council on 29 April.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-29/HL15418/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-08/HL15129/>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/at-this-holy-time-of-year-we-urge-the-new-mandates-to-pursue-a-lasting-legacy-of-peace>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL15419] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 16 April (HL15172), what positive steps the government of Israel has taken in relation to the treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention since the last review in 2012.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We welcomed progress Israel had made on this issue, including: a reduction in the number of detainees aged between 12 and 14 years old; the increase in the age of maturity from 16 to 18 years old; the establishment of separate juvenile courts; and the enactment of a special statute of limitations for minors. Initial detention periods have also been shortened. However we continue to have strong concerns about continued reports of ill-treatment of Palestinian minors in Israeli military detention and remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to its practices.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-29/HL15419/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-09/HL15172/>

Gaza: Israel

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL15420] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations are they making to the government of Israel about that government restricting books being brought into Gaza.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities. The right to education and the supply of books for this purpose is a basic right. That is why the UK continues to support education through our funding to the Palestinian Authority and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees. Last year, UK support contributed towards the salaries of approximately 33,000 public servants under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, including teachers, helping 25,000 young Palestinians to receive an education and proper reading material. We continue to regularly urge the Israeli authorities to remove restrictions on movement and access in Gaza which can impair access to quality education.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-04-29/HL15420/>

United Nations

Hundreds of wounded Gaza protesters risk limb amputation without immediate help, warns top UN official

Millions of dollars in emergency funding is needed in Gaza to save the shattered limbs of some 1,700 people who have been seriously injured in demonstrations against Israel along the border fence, a top UN humanitarian official said ...

In an appeal for \$20 million to help victims hurt during protests dubbed the Great March of Return – weekly rallies on Fridays by Gazans that began a year ago, leaving 29,000 people injured, many by live ammunition - Jamie McGoldrick, Humanitarian Coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), said that more resources were urgently required. ...

To date, some 120 amputations have taken place since the beginning of the demonstrations, according to the UN official, with 20 children among the amputees.

“We are running against the clock for some of these cases and osteomyelitis - bone infection - will be a crisis, and the need is to treat that, prevent that, otherwise we will have amputations,” he said. “The technical abilities of doctors on the ground to carry out treatment required for the 1,700 (injured demonstrators) just doesn’t exist.”

Speaking in Geneva following a lull in deadly violence over the weekend at the Israel-Gaza border between militant groups in Gaza – which is controlled by Hamas - and Israeli security forces, Mr. McGoldrick insisted on the need for dialogue to address the dire economic and humanitarian situation there. ...

“It’s not going to get any better, it’s getting worse,” he said. “If you look at the number of shops that have closed because of debt...people are using all sorts of means, selling assets, doctors going abroad leaving the family and sending remittances back, we’re hearing that the indebted nature of some of the poorest families is quite heavy.”

During the recent military activity, hundreds of rockets were launched from Gaza by Palestinian militants into southern Israel, and hundreds of airstrikes and tank rounds were fired in return, causing 29 fatalities in Gaza and four in Israel, along with some 200 casualties on each side. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/05/1038101>

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Other Relevant Information

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Is England Fairer?

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/is-england-fairer-2018.pdf>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill

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

International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill

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

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

Online Forums Bill

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

Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill

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

Scottish Parliament

**** Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

Health and Sport Committee Stage 2 consideration of amendments

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12078&i=109272#ScotParlOR>

Bill as amended at Stage 2

[https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Bills/Human%20Tissue%20\(Authorisation\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/SPBill32AS052019.pdf](https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Bills/Human%20Tissue%20(Authorisation)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/SPBill32AS052019.pdf)

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Online Harms White Paper (closing date 1 July 2019)

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

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>

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