

A photograph of a man and a woman from behind. The man on the left is wearing a blue kippah and a white tallit with blue stripes. The woman on the right is wearing a Scottish flag (Saltire) as a shawl. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# A JEWISH MANIFESTO FOR THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

# INTRODUCTION

The 2016 Scottish Election will take place on 5 May. This Manifesto has been prepared by the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC), the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, in order to inform existing and prospective members of the Scottish Parliament about the interests and concerns of the Jewish community of Scotland.

SCoJeC is the democratic representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland, and speaks on behalf of the Jewish community of Scotland on matters devolved to the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government. The Board of Deputies of British Jews is the cross-communal and democratic representative body of the wider UK Jewish community. The Board of Deputies represents the Jewish community of Scotland on matters reserved to Westminster. The Glasgow Jewish Representative Council is the democratic umbrella body of the largest Jewish community in Scotland, located in Glasgow and East Renfrewshire. SCoJeC also provides a support network to smaller communities and isolated Jewish individuals and families.

The Jewish community in Scotland has a two hundred year history, and from its earliest days has played an important part in Scottish public life. It is a diverse community in terms of religious and cultural affiliation, as well as in socioeconomic terms. There are Jewish people in every local authority area in Scotland, with substantial communities in the Glasgow area, and in Edinburgh and the Lothians. There are also small but growing clusters in Tayside and Fife, and around Aberdeen. Meanwhile, there are significant numbers of Jewish individuals throughout the whole of Scotland.

This document has been informed by SCoJeC's two recent community-wide consultations, which were funded by the Scottish Government. A total of some 500 people contributed to *Being Jewish in Scotland*<sup>1</sup> (2012) and *What's Changed about Being Jewish in Scotland*<sup>2</sup> (2015). The findings show that Jewish people in Scotland, including those who are not religiously observant, value and rely on the infrastructure provided from within the community. Social, educational, welfare, and religious organisations, mostly relying on the good will and hard work of very many volunteers, serve the needs of Jewish people of all ages and all backgrounds in an environment that is culturally sensitive and faith specific, and in which they can feel confident to express their identity in safety. This enables people to fulfil their potential and continue to contribute to Scottish civil society.

The Jewish community in Scotland is keen to promote Scotland as an attractive place for Jewish people to live, but for this to be successful, Scottish society, and in particular political leaders, must ensure that Scotland continues to be a safe and welcoming place for Jewish people to practise their religion and culture, and, very importantly, that it is seen as such by people elsewhere in the UK and worldwide.

The Jewish community prides itself on its representative and democratic structures, and SCoJeC always consults widely among members of the Scottish Jewish community before responding to consultations<sup>3</sup>. Although there is no single 'Jewish view' on many political issues, there is a great deal of unanimity on issues that directly affect the community, and throughout this document, we have sought to represent as much of that consensus as possible.

We hope that you find this Manifesto useful and informative.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scojec.org/resources/files/bjis.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> *Four Corners* special issue: [http://www.scojec.org/4cs/4cs/15v\\_4c46\\_bjis2.pdf](http://www.scojec.org/4cs/4cs/15v_4c46_bjis2.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See here for a list of SCoJeC's consultation responses: <http://www.scojec.org/consultations/consultations.html>

# THE TEN COMMITMENTS

PLEASE SHARE YOUR SUPPORT FOR  
THESE TEN COMMITMENTS ON SOCIAL  
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**@SCOJEC**  
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**THIS MANIFESTO SUMMARISES THE MAJOR CONCERNS OF THE SCOTTISH JEWISH COMMUNITY, AND WE WOULD ASK POLITICIANS OF ALL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO:**

**1**

**Promoting respect for religious observance.**

**2**

**Promoting good relations, understanding, and cooperation between all of Scotland's communities, and actively supporting projects that bring them together.**

**3**

**Opposing all forms of hate crime, and in particular racism and religious hatred, including antisemitism, sectarianism, and anti-Muslim hatred.**

**4**

**Promoting and enhancing community safety, both by supporting initiatives that foster resilience, and by funding appropriate security measures.**

**5**

**Recognising that not all "communities" are geographical neighbourhoods, that census statistics can be misleading, and that minority communities can, therefore, be invisible at the local level, so that adequate support for communities requires a combination of national and local networks and initiatives.**

**6**

**Ensuring that health, welfare, education, and other services are fully equipped to provide appropriate support for people of all religious, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds.**

**7**

**Supporting the provision of religiously and culturally specific community support services for those who would like to live and be cared for in such an environment.**

**8**

**Recognising that "Getting it Right for Every Child" requires respect for young people's identities as developing members of their own faith or cultural community.**

**9**

**Supporting education about the Holocaust, and refuting and confronting those who seek to deny, minimise, or downplay the Holocaust.**

**10**

**Acting responsibly when making statements concerning the Middle East, including about the Arab-Israeli conflict.**

**WE HAVE PROVIDED MORE INFORMATION BELOW ABOUT EACH OF THE TEN COMMITMENTS.**



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## 1. PROMOTE RESPECT FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE.

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Judaism is not merely a belief system, but a set of rules for how to live one's life, including both ritual and ethical obligations, both of which are regarded as being equally important. Some Jewish people regard these rules as absolute – there is no concept of a "dispensation", the only exception being that all other rules must (not "may") be set aside to save life.

There is, however, a considerable variety of traditions and levels of observance in the Jewish community. Public services should never, therefore, presume that the individual they are dealing with has the same requirements as other members of the community; people's needs vary, even within a family. The rule is: *Never presume; always ask!*

A key element of the Jewish faith is the observance of the Sabbath (*Shabbat*) and religious festivals. These begin at dusk (which can be as early as 3.30pm in winter in the central belt, and even earlier further north) and end at sunset the following day (as late as midnight in summer), and during this time many Jews refrain from work, and do not use money, electricity, or transport. Employers, schools, and higher education bodies should be aware of the needs of Jewish people who require time off for religious observance, and seek to be as flexible as possible, for example permitting Jewish people to make up this time by working on Sundays or public holidays.

Traditional clothing includes a skullcap (*kippah* or *yarmulke*), or hat for men, who may also wear a garment with fringes (*tzitzit*) under their shirt. Women may wear modest clothing, and some married women may cover their hair with a hat, scarf, or wig. Some Jewish people wear a Star of David as a pendant or other jewellery, but this is not a religious obligation.

Male circumcision (*brit milah*) is an almost universally observed religious obligation. This is performed at eight days (unless there are health reasons for postponement) by a trained and regulated practitioner. Female genital mutilation is completely forbidden by Jewish law.

Food permitted by Jewish Law is known as "*kosher*". Kosher meat is prepared by *shechitah*, a humane method of slaughter carried out by a highly trained and regulated slaughterer. Although *shechitah* is not currently carried out in Scotland, so that all kosher meat has to be imported, any attempt to ban it would have major implications for the Jewish community. It is important that all kosher food is labelled as having been certified by a reputable religious authority, but some current legislative proposals for food origin labelling appear to be discriminatory and deliberately target Jewish (and Muslim) practices.

### WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:

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- 1.1 **promoting a culture of respect for diversity that encourages a better understanding of religious observance, and reasonable accommodation of individuals' rights to manifest their religion in public;**
  - 1.2 **supporting more effective enforcement of existing legislation that enables employees, students, school pupils, and everyone else who wishes to do so, to observe religious holy days, including the Jewish Sabbath and festivals;**
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**1.3 defending the right of Jews and others to practise the tradition of male circumcision;**

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**1.4 defending the right of Jews to practice shechitah, and opposing the stigmatisation of religious minorities through pejorative food labelling.**

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## **2. PROMOTE GOOD RELATIONS, UNDERSTANDING, AND COOPERATION BETWEEN ALL OF SCOTLAND'S COMMUNITIES, AND SUPPORT PROJECTS THAT BRING THEM TOGETHER.**

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Promoting good relations between communities proactively prevents tensions, racism, and violence, and the Jewish community is committed to positive engagement with people of all faiths and none, through its participation in bodies such as BEMIS, the national umbrella body for minority ethnic groups, and Interfaith Scotland, which are strategic partners with the Scottish Government in developing their Equality and Community Safety strategies. The Glasgow Jewish Representative Council also engages with a wide range of other communities and community relations organisations in the West of Scotland. SCoJeC has also benefited from Scottish Government support in relation to several partnership projects, and its engagement with the wider community, particularly to promote accurate and authoritative teaching about Judaism in schools.

Whilst much of this work is driven by faith groups themselves at a local and national level, the Scottish Government has the resources to focus the direction of this work and facilitate its strategic growth. The use made of this funding shows that relatively small amounts of money can achieve a very great deal. The support of the Scottish Government is crucial to ensuring the future of intermediary, umbrella, and community organisations, which promote good community relations and a spirit of cooperation and mutual support.

### **WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

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**2.1 supporting initiatives at both local and national level that promote dialogue and understanding between different groups in society, in order to prevent tensions and promote cooperation;**

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**2.2 promoting a strategy to enhance community relations in Scotland, supported by a clear, designated budget;**

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**2.3 maintaining financial support for inter-communal intermediary bodies, and communal umbrella organisations, to support the development of equality, inclusiveness, and community cohesion, in line with the principle of *One Scotland – Many Cultures*.**

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### 3. OPPOSE ALL FORMS OF HATE CRIME, AND IN PARTICULAR RACISM AND RELIGIOUS HATRED, INCLUDING ANTISEMITISM, SECTARIANISM, AND ANTI-MUSLIM HATRED.

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As can be seen from the findings of SCoJeC's recent *Being Jewish in Scotland* inquiries, antisemitism remains a major problem for the Scottish Jewish community. Although the absolute numbers of charges for antisemitic incidents is small – Scottish Government figures show that there were 26 charges laid for hate crime offences against Judaism in 2014–15, compared with 12 the previous year – this is very disproportionate to the size of the community<sup>4</sup>.

Last year's *Antisemitic Incidents Report*<sup>5</sup> from the Community Security Trust (CST), which works closely with police to monitor antisemitism and protect Jewish communities against it, reports 31 incidents in Scotland (21 of them in Glasgow), compared with 14 in 2013 and 7 in 2012, and presents evidence that this type of crime is under-reported.

This dramatic increase was associated with the conflict in Gaza during the summer of 2014, when criticism of the Israeli government spilled over into violence, intimidation, and hatred directed against the Jewish community. This has included support for organisations that have carried out terrorist attacks on Jewish targets, denial, minimisation, and sympathy for the Nazi Holocaust, antisemitic theology, the 'blood libel' and other antisemitic conspiracy theories, and targeted vandalism of kosher products in supermarkets. This is completely unacceptable, and we welcome the acknowledgement by senior politicians that nothing that happens in the Middle East can be justification for antisemitism or any racial or religious hatred.

A significant source of antisemitic hate crime is social media, since this makes it easy to target minority groups with apparent impunity. This applies equally to antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, and other types of hate crime. Hate crime perpetrated through social media must be identified, reported, investigated, and prosecuted, and we welcome the commitment of Police Scotland, the Law Officers, and Procurators Fiscal, to achieving this. As social interactions increasingly take place online, it is essential that there is a common understanding of what is and is not acceptable.

Although the Jewish community has been gratified and, to some extent reassured, by the high level of detection and successful conviction of those accused of antisemitic and related hate crime in Scotland<sup>6</sup>, the 2014 surge in antisemitic incidents caused a palpable wave of apprehension throughout the community. Even though the incidence has since fallen, the level of anxiety has not, and indeed was reinforced by subsequent attacks on targets that members of the community identify with – a kosher supermarket in Paris and a family celebration in Copenhagen. This unique threat to the Jewish community has been recognised by the raising of the security threat level to the second highest, along with only the police and the army. The effect is cumulative, and many Jewish people still report feeling apprehensive and vulnerable.

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<sup>4</sup>Per 10,000 members of the respective communities, there was less than one charge relating to anti-Protestant hate crime, 4 charges relating to anti-Roman Catholic hate crime, 9 charges relating to anti-Muslim hatred, but 44 charges relating to antisemitism. (Antisemitism Rises as Hate Crime Falls: [http://www.scojec.org/news/2015/15vi\\_hate\\_crime.html](http://www.scojec.org/news/2015/15vi_hate_crime.html))

<sup>5</sup>Antisemitic Incidents Report: <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/5/5/Incidents-Report-2014.1425053165.pdf> Police Scotland have also advised us of more than 50 reports of hate incidents relating to the Jewish community in three months in mid-2014. These figures are not directly comparable because they use different definitions, but both demonstrate the scale of the increase.

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.scojec.org/news/2015/15xii\\_hate\\_crime/prosecutions.html](http://www.scojec.org/news/2015/15xii_hate_crime/prosecutions.html)

**WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

- 3.1 being alert to extremism, racism, and antisemitism in Scotland, publicly and unreservedly condemning it in all its forms;**

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- 3.2 acting on the findings of SCoJeC's *Being Jewish in Scotland* reports, and unreservedly condemning antisemitism in all its forms;**

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- 3.3 being particularly aware of the risk of increased antisemitism at times of heightened conflict in the Middle East;**

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- 3.4 taking strong and unequivocal action against hate crime in social media.**

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## **4. PROMOTE AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY SAFETY, BOTH BY SUPPORTING INITIATIVES THAT FOSTER RESILIENCE, AND BY FUNDING APPROPRIATE SECURITY MEASURES.**

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Like other places of worship, synagogues in Scotland are recognisable, and their location is, of necessity, well known to the public. Those who attend for prayer and social activities are easily recognised and targeted. In recent years it has become necessary to surround Jewish religious buildings and other venues not only with CCTV, but also with visible security personnel.

In addition, during sporting and cultural events, or when a noted speaker is due to address a communal organisation, it has become essential to ensure a major security and police presence even at non-communal venues in order to ensure public safety and protect participants from harassment by demonstrators. Sadly this has not always succeeded – for example, threats and disruptions resulted in a Jewish Student Society Charity Ball having to be moved to a secret venue, and public meetings of the Jewish Society at a number of universities having had to be cancelled. The Jewish community is naturally concerned about any repeat of such incidents, which also damage Scotland's reputation as a safe and welcoming place for all its citizens, and visitors.

**WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

- 4.1 ensuring that assistance is provided to third-party reporting bodies and security agencies such as the CST and SCoJeC that monitor and protect vulnerable groups, including the Jewish community;**

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- 4.2 ensuring adequate funding and resources for the security of Jewish Communal buildings and events.**

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## **5. RECOGNISE THAT NOT ALL “COMMUNITIES” ARE GEOGRAPHICAL NEIGHBOURHOODS, THAT CENSUS STATISTICS CAN BE MISLEADING, AND THEREFORE THAT MINORITY COMMUNITIES CAN BE INVISIBLE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, SO THAT ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES REQUIRES A COMBINATION OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL NETWORKS AND INITIATIVES.**

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In many parts of the country, principally rural areas, the total minority population is a fraction of one per cent, and diverse distinct minorities are barely detectable. In fact because “disclosure of information in Census output is prevented by ... record swapping before tabulation”<sup>7</sup>, very small individual minorities may become literally invisible to their own local authority.

In addition, some census questions and categories inhibit correct identification. In particular, the fact that the Scottish census asked “What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?” (emphasis added), rather than simply “What is your religion?” as in England, meant that even people who strongly identify as Jewish but have no local community to “belong” to could not truthfully tick “Jewish”. This is particularly true in rural areas, but research by the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council<sup>8</sup> has shown that even in a city with a substantial community, some people may be socially and psychologically isolated, alienated, and vulnerable.

In addition, there is ample evidence from two formal academic studies as well as from SCoJeC’s own informal survey that around 1 in 3 Jewish people in Scotland did not identify themselves as Jewish in the census<sup>9</sup>. Whatever the reason for this – the most worrying being a fear that being identified as Jewish could result in discrimination or worse – it is clear that there are significant numbers of Jewish people who are not correctly identified and therefore whose needs cannot be properly addressed.

In some cases, local authorities speak of having made provision for “the minority community”, in the singular, which masks the diversity of minority communities, not only between different “equality strands” or “protected characteristics”, but also within each strand, particularly those relating to ethnicity, faith, and culture.

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<sup>7</sup> National Records of Scotland, <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/guide-v15.pdf>, Appendix A.

<sup>8</sup> Glasgow Jewish Community Futures report (Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, 2013) <http://www.jewishglasgow.org/reports-3/>

<sup>9</sup> “Amongst Jews, about a third say they have no religion”, Westminster Faith Debates (Linda Woodhead, *Jewish Chronicle*, October 2013): <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/112220/new-surveys-shed-light-who-we-are> “Jews should exhibit the same propensity to report ‘No Religion’ or to refuse to answer the question, as the whole population. ... in Scotland the figure was 33%.” (Jewish Policy Research Institute, JPR News, Spring 2003)

Many statements, particularly in the UK context, identify “communities” with neighbourhoods. However when members of minority communities are thinly dispersed, they are invisible to local institutions, and in any event it is unreasonable and not cost-effective for 32 independent local authorities to contract with each relevant culturally-specific service provider. Consequently devolving budgetary decision-making to a local level may contribute to, rather than address, negative social outcomes, and impact disproportionately on members of minority communities, especially in rural areas. National networks do not segregate; they connect and empower.

#### **WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

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**5.1 recognising the threat that policies of “localism” disproportionately affect small minorities, and promoting effective support for minority communities through the creation and funding of appropriate regional and national networks;**

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**5.2 recognising the diversity of diversity – that diversity can be multi-faceted and that different groups may have different needs;**

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**5.3 actively promoting community cohesion through the model of one society of many strands;**

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**5.4 ensuring that future censuses use appropriate questions and categories to enable the characteristics and needs of distinct minority communities to be accurately and meaningfully identified.**

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## **6. ENSURE THAT HEALTH AND OTHER SERVICES ARE FULLY EQUIPPED TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS.**

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The Scottish NHS has been at the forefront of recent progress in educating employees about diversity, and the Jewish community welcomes the provision of resources and specific training on diversity, as well as attempts by the NHS to collect statistics on the diversity of users. However, we are concerned that the census-derived categories currently used for monitoring are limited and misleading, and may not, therefore, result in accurate and intelligible information.

The availability of kosher meals in hospital is very important for the recovery and wellbeing of Jewish patients, but we are aware of occasions when only non-kosher food was provided, or food inappropriate to the patient’s condition, so that some patients went hungry, sometimes to the serious detriment of their health.

Access to a Jewish chaplain is also important to many, particularly for those Jewish patients approaching the end of life, and the community is therefore concerned that many hospitals regard releasing information about the declared faith of patients to chaplains as a breach of data protection. However, we welcome the General Medical Council guidelines for end of life care that emphasise the importance of caring not only for the patient but also for the bereaved family, and support the implementation of these guidelines in Scotland.

As has already been stated, some Jewish people are hesitant to identify themselves as such, and this may hinder diagnosis of some genetic diseases, such as Tay Sachs, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer, that are more common among Jewish people. Staff should, therefore, be trained in how to question patients sensitively in drawing up a genetic history, including why the information is important, and there should be adequate support for care of affected patients, including services such as counselling and gene replacement therapy.

The Jewish community is strongly supportive of organ donation, provided that this is carried out in accordance with each individual's religious or other beliefs. Jewish medical ethics is a complex area, and we therefore appreciate the sensitivity that has been shown in Scotland, enabling individuals to express their wishes and guide their families in this regard. We continue to have serious concerns around the potential introduction of an "opt-out" system, not least because even the evidence provided by its supporters does not show that it would necessarily increase the availability of organs, and it would, of necessity, result in publicity campaigns being targeted at how to opt out of the system, rather than towards the life saving benefits of donation<sup>10</sup>.

Jewish burials are held as soon as possible after death has occurred. Invasive post mortems are to be avoided unless essential for legal reasons, and all organs should be returned to the body for burial. Unfortunately the Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011 has led to delays to the issue of death certificates (and consequently burials), and although we welcome the efforts made so far to minimise these, there is evidence that the new out-of-hours arrangements are not well understood and are not being properly implemented. This has resulted in delays and unnecessary additional distress to bereaved families who cannot begin the formal mourning period, nor begin to move on through the grieving process until after the burial has taken place.

We welcome the inclusion of information about religious requirements in NHS guidance on how to treat bodies after death, and the sensitivity of staff to these situations, but note that pertinent guidance, staff training, and contact details for relevant organisations need to be kept up to date

#### **WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

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**6.1 ensuring that NHS hospital and community provision is culturally and religiously sensitive, including appropriate out-of-hours services;**

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**6.2 supporting the principle that religious, cultural, and personal beliefs should be taken into account when making decisions in all aspects of healthcare, including towards the final stages of life and in decisions about organ transplantation;**

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**6.3 ensuring that NHS staff are trained to ask questions sensitively, and are aware that some people may not wish to disclose their background because they do not understand that this may be relevant to their diagnosis and treatment;**

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<sup>10</sup> SCoJcC consultation responses on the subject of an opt-out system of organ donation are available at [http://www.scojec.org/consultations/2014/14ix\\_organ\\_donation.pdf](http://www.scojec.org/consultations/2014/14ix_organ_donation.pdf) and [http://www.scojec.org/consultations/2015/15x\\_organ\\_transplantation.pdf](http://www.scojec.org/consultations/2015/15x_organ_transplantation.pdf)

**6.4 ensuring that all NHS staff, even those in areas without significant minority populations, are trained to understand and provide for the needs of Scotland's diverse communities in order to be able to provide appropriate care for tourists and others who may fall ill while visiting their area;**

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**6.5 supporting the availability and recognition of minimally invasive autopsies (radiological as well as "view and grant") as an alternative to more invasive forms of post-mortems;**

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**6.6 supporting the provision of out-of-hours facilities for the issue of all required documentation to ensure that burials can take place without delay, and where necessary, the amendment of death certification and registration regulations.**

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## **7. SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF RELIGIOUSLY AND CULTURALLY SPECIFIC COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE CARED FOR IN SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT.**

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The Jewish community in Scotland has a proud record of providing voluntary social care and welfare support for its own elderly, chronically ill, and disabled people in a Jewish environment. However we are concerned that cuts in Government grants to local authorities have resulted in a reduction in funding to care providers, which has had a detrimental effect on Jewish welfare provision at a time when there is a growing need – an increasingly elderly population, and more complex concerns around poverty, homelessness, addiction, and family issues, which all give rise to increasing demand for services; these require more diverse staffing, appropriate training, and adequate funding.

The costs of care provision are inevitably higher than in non-faith-based care organisations because of the need to provide for Jewish observance such as kosher food. A few local authorities in areas with significant numbers of Jewish people support the cost of these culturally specific services, but this is not the case in most areas of Scotland. Although individuals can use direct payments to purchase services, and local authorities can choose to spot-purchase services, a lack of core funding, and uncertainty regarding uptake, mean that communal welfare organisations struggle to maintain a suitably trained and available workforce to meet the demand.

We have evidence<sup>11</sup> that the first priority of Jewish service users is being with other Jewish people because they want to be in an environment in which their needs are seen as the norm, not as an exception that requires special provision. We are therefore concerned that the current funding model requires welfare organisations to fill vacancies as soon as possible after they arise. This

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<sup>11</sup> Glasgow Jewish Community Futures report (Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, 2013) <http://www.jewishglasgow.org/reports-3/>

results in communal organisations being required to accept non-Jewish residents, with the consequence that there are then no vacancies when required by Jewish people. Conversely, Jewish people who want to be within a Jewish environment may be discharged from hospital to non-Jewish care homes because there are no vacancies, and once they settle it is often difficult for them to move again. Consequently they are doubly disadvantaged by the current system.

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**WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

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**7.1 supporting financial assistance to charities that provide essential services for minority communities, and reach individuals that public bodies and secular charities cannot reach;**

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**7.2 ensuring that central government or local authority funds are made available to small culturally and faith specific welfare organisations based in East Renfrewshire and Glasgow that also provide services to Jewish people from outwith that area.**

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## **8. RECOGNISE THAT “GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD” REQUIRES RESPECT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE’S IDENTITIES AS DEVELOPING MEMBERS OF THEIR OWN FAITH OR CULTURAL COMMUNITY.**

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Calderwood Lodge Jewish Primary School in East Renfrewshire is the only Jewish school in Scotland, and is a denominational school in terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980<sup>12</sup>.

Jewish pupils also attend a wide variety of other primary schools, and there is no Jewish secondary. In the Glasgow and Edinburgh areas, additional Jewish informal education content is provided by voluntary organisations within the community that organise alternative assemblies and extra-curricular classes and activities, but the community does not have the resources to provide this in other areas.

Educational provision about diverse faiths and cultures is also uneven. Schools that wish to visit different places of worship find it difficult to include the Jewish community unless they have adequate budgets for education about diversity and are in easy travelling distance of one of the four cities that have synagogues. As a result, pupils’ education about Judaism will depend on the knowledge (or, sadly, often ignorance) of individual teachers. We still regularly hear of children being taunted – sometimes with the connivance of teachers – because “you killed Christ”, and of young children being told to explain their faith to their class.

For children with special educational needs, specialised services may be required in order to enable them to achieve their potential and participate fully in their community. When these cannot be provided within Calderwood Lodge Jewish Primary, families have to fight for local authority funding to access services in England, or use local educational provision supplemented with out-of-school special Jewish educational services provided by Jewish communal organisations.

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<sup>12</sup> Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Sections 16, 21, 22C, 22D, in terms of which the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, acts as the denominational body.



It is very important for young people to develop skills of civic participation and leadership through formal and informal education, and the Jewish community in Scotland has a long tradition supporting youth groups including Jewish Guide, Brownie, and Rainbow packs in Glasgow, as well as groups linked to national and international Jewish youth movements.

The community is concerned by aggressive secularism that would seek to exclude religion or a faith-based ethos from all public space. In a society that recognises the equivalence of “all faiths or none”, this is no different from religious totalitarianism that seeks to exclude all other points of view. In particular, organisations that are inspired by a faith ethos to provide a public benefit should not be excluded from public funding unless they actively seek to evangelise their service users.

#### **WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

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**8.1 revising legislation, regulations, and other documentation to ensure that references to denominational schools are inclusive and applicable to all faith communities;**

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**8.2 rejecting the aggressive secularism that seeks to exclude faith-based communities and organisations from public space, and recognising that education about religion and religions is part of young people's understanding of their society;**

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**8.3 recognising that organisations whose values are derived from faith, or that provide services to members of a particular faith community, provide a public benefit, and should be equally supported with organisations that support other cultural and ethnic communities;**

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**8.4 supporting the provision of religiously and culturally sensitive youth and informal education services.**

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## **9. SUPPORT EDUCATION ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST, AND REFUTE AND CONFRONT THOSE WHO SEEK TO DENY, MINIMISE, OR DOWNPLAY THE HOLOCAUST**

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Research has shown that teaching about the Holocaust contributes to pupils' understanding of human rights, genocide, stereotyping, and discrimination. However, with each passing year there are fewer Holocaust survivors able to tell their stories, and there is an urgent need to record their first-hand testimonies. It is also important to preserve artefacts that illustrate the horrors perpetrated against the victims of Nazi persecution, including Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, disabled people, and political opponents of Nazism, in order to educate current and future generations against hate.

The uniqueness of the state-sponsored industrial scale of the Holocaust should be recognised, and not only Holocaust denial, but also the use of language that belittles the Holocaust should be recognised as a form of antisemitism.

The Jewish community welcomes continued Scottish Government funding for the Holocaust Educational Trust to enable senior pupils from every school to visit Auschwitz; high-profile public recognition such as leading Time for Reflection in Scottish Parliament; and the increasing number of local events, including in individual schools, universities, and even prisons, to mark Holocaust Memorial Day on the 27th January.

However we are concerned that such lessons are still only reaching a minority of pupils. We are also concerned that, while it is absolutely right that other genocides should also be commemorated, and pupils educated about these, there has been some loss of focus on the racial dimension of the persecution of which the Jews were the main victims, and on the uniqueness of its state-sponsored industrial scale. It is, however, important that the Jewish community should not be defined entirely in terms of the Holocaust.

We have welcomed explicit statements from the Scottish Government that it supports the right of Holocaust survivors and their descendants to restitution of art and cultural objects stolen during the Holocaust era, but are concerned that proposed legislation may prevent this in future.

### **WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

- 9.1 recognising that Holocaust denial and revisionism are themselves forms of antisemitism; and refuting and confronting individuals and political movements who seek to deny, minimise, or downplay the Holocaust;**
- 9.2 supporting continued Scottish Government funding for Holocaust education and in particular visits to Auschwitz, and public memorial events in local authorities, schools, and other venues;**
- 9.3 supporting the expansion of Holocaust remembrance and research, in order to prevent ignorance that can lead to revisionism, denial, or repetition;**
- 9.4 supporting legislation to facilitate the restitution of property that was stolen or transferred under duress, particularly during the Holocaust era.**

## 10. COMMIT TO ACTING RESPONSIBLY IN MAKING STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT.

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Recent research reports<sup>13</sup> have shown that the vast majority of the Jewish community identify in some way with Israel or see Israel as part of their Jewish identity. They have family there or visit regularly, and therefore, whatever their views on the tragic conflict with the Palestinians, they are personally affected by what happens there. They celebrate its triumphs in medicine, science, and technology, and they mourn its tragedies. They are therefore personally unsettled by comments from politicians and others in the public eye, that subject Israel to exaggerated, discriminatory, or disproportionate criticism that is not directed at other countries<sup>14</sup>. Criticism of the policies and actions of any country is entirely legitimate, but support for Iran, which promotes Holocaust denial, or terrorist organisations such as Hamas, whose constitution contains a call to “kill the Jews wherever you find them”, does nothing to promote peace and reconciliation, and gives succour to antisemites and extremists.

There is empirical evidence, including from SCoJeC’s *What’s Changed About Being Jewish in Scotland* report<sup>15</sup> and the Community Security Trust’s *Antisemitic Incidents Report*<sup>16</sup>, that there was a very substantial increase in antisemitic incidents during the 2014 war in Gaza. Much of this activity directly targets the Jewish community, such as when Jewish communal buildings are attacked, Jewish student society meetings are disrupted, and kosher food in supermarkets is damaged or destroyed. As a result the community feels anxious, worried, and vulnerable.

Some of these activities also undermine artistic freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of association, and community relations generally. The intimidation of people merely wishing to attend a production at the Edinburgh Festival, or to purchase items at particular shops is extremely worrying, but it is even more disturbing that there is evidence of academics making remarks that lead their to students to believe that they have been awarded reduced grades because they have chosen to write about Israel in their academic work, or indeed merely because of their presumed support for Israel<sup>17</sup>. Students must be free to develop and argue for unpopular points of view. Freedom of speech, however, does not encompass the freedom to intimidate or discriminate.

We have evidence that this unacceptable situation is damaging the reputation of Scotland as a country that is open and welcomes all visitors, is driving able students away from Scottish universities, and is damaging the international reputation of our institutions, and indeed the image of Scotland as the home of the Enlightenment.

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<sup>13</sup> “For 82% of respondents, Israel plays a ‘central’ or ‘important’ role in their Jewish identities. 95% have visited Israel at some point in the past. ... 72% categorize themselves as Zionists.” (Graham and Boyd, *The Attitudes of Jews in Britain towards Israel*, London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, July 2010): <http://www.jpr.org.uk/publication?id=94>

<sup>14</sup> For example, at the time of writing, 63 parliamentary motions relating to Israel have been tabled during the current parliament; by comparison there were only 21 motions relating to Malawi (second highest), and only 15 relating to Syria.

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.scojec.org/4cs/4cs/15v\\_4c46\\_bjis2.pdf](http://www.scojec.org/4cs/4cs/15v_4c46_bjis2.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> *Four Corners* special issue, [http://www.scojec.org/4cs/4cs/15v\\_4c46\\_bjis2.pdf](http://www.scojec.org/4cs/4cs/15v_4c46_bjis2.pdf); *Antisemitic Incidents Report 2014* <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/5/5/Incidents-Report-2014.1425053165.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.scojec.org/consultations/2015/15ix\\_higher\\_education\\_governance.pdf](http://www.scojec.org/consultations/2015/15ix_higher_education_governance.pdf)

One recent case<sup>18</sup> has shown how easy it is for the uncritical acceptance of anti-Zionist rhetoric to result in the dissemination of unambiguously antisemitic material. Activities and attitudes such as this, that leave Jewish people too frightened to express their opinions, or even admit to their identity, affects the wellbeing and safety of the Jewish community, and it is the duty of politicians to consider not only their words, but the unintended consequences of their words.

**WE ASK THAT CANDIDATES COMMIT TO:**

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**10.1 ensuring that the tone and language of their statements do not unwittingly cause divisions between communities in Scotland;**

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**10.2 promoting projects that unite communities in Scotland, including interfaith and inter communal initiatives and coexistence projects, rather than importing and reinforcing international divisions eg; by promoting boycotts;**

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**10.3 supporting Israel's right to live in peace and security and recognising the unique and difficult challenges of the region;**

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**10.4 ensuring that Jewish people are not victimised, harassed, or made to feel unwelcome in Scotland because of their support – presumed or actual – for Israel;**

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**10.5 reminding universities and colleges of their duty to promote freedom of academic debate while avoiding hate speech and personal invective, and the right of everyone, including students, to express legitimate points of view without penalty or intimidation.**

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<sup>18</sup>[http://www.scojec.org/news/2015/15xi\\_antisemitism/msp.html](http://www.scojec.org/news/2015/15xi_antisemitism/msp.html)

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## CONTACT

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### Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)

The democratic representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland, SCoJeC speaks on behalf of the Jewish community of Scotland to Government, national agencies, and others, provides information and assistance about the Jewish religion, culture, and community, and promotes dialogue, good relations, and understanding among community groups, as well as providing a support network for Jewish individuals and families, and assisting communal organisations with various regulatory requirements.

T 0141 638 6411	222 Fenwick Road
E <a href="mailto:scojec@scojec.org">scojec@scojec.org</a>	Glasgow
W <a href="http://www.scojec.org">www.scojec.org</a>	G46 6UE

### Glasgow Jewish Representative Council

Formed in 1914, the Rep Council is the democratic umbrella body of the Jewish community in and around Glasgow. It promotes cordial relations between the Jewish community and other civic and religious groups, and provides a forum for religious, welfare, cultural, social, educational, and youth organisations to ensure the wellbeing of the community.

T 0141 577 8200	222 Fenwick Road
E <a href="mailto:office@glasgowjewishrepCouncil.org">office@glasgowjewishrepCouncil.org</a>	Glasgow
W <a href="http://www.jewishglasgow.org">www.jewishglasgow.org</a>	G46 6UE

### Other Scottish Jewish Communities

Contact information for other local Jewish Communities and communal organisations is available from the *Guide to Jewish Facilities in Scotland*:  
<http://www.scojec.org/resources/files/guidebook.pdf>

### The Board of Deputies of British Jews

The cross-communal and democratic representative body of the UK Jewish community. It is the voice of the community to the UK Government and others seeking to understand the UK Jewish community's interests and concerns. Thus the Jewish community of Scotland is therefore represented by SCoJeC with regard to all devolved matters, and by the Board of Deputies on matters reserved to Westminster.

T 020 7543 5400	1 Torriano Mews
E <a href="mailto:info@bod.org.uk">info@bod.org.uk</a>	London
🐦 <a href="https://twitter.com/BoardofDeputies">@BoardofDeputies</a>	NW5 2RZ
W <a href="http://www.bod.org.uk">www.bod.org.uk</a>	

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, no. SC029438.

The Charitable arm of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council is Scottish Charity no. SC016626

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



# THE TEN COMMITMENTS

THIS MANIFESTO SUMMARISES THE MAJOR CONCERNS OF THE SCOTTISH JEWISH COMMUNITY, AND WE WOULD ASK POLITICIANS OF ALL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO:

1

Promoting respect for religious observance.

2

Promoting good relations, understanding, and cooperation between all of Scotland's communities, and actively supporting projects that bring them together.

3

Opposing all forms of hate crime, and in particular racism and religious hatred, including antisemitism, sectarianism, and anti-Muslim hatred.

4

Promoting and enhancing community safety, both by supporting initiatives that foster resilience, and by funding appropriate security measures.

5

Recognising that not all "communities" are geographical neighbourhoods, that census statistics can be misleading, and that minority communities can, therefore, be invisible at the local level, so that adequate support for communities requires a combination of national and local networks and initiatives.

6

Ensuring that health, welfare, education, and other services are fully equipped to provide appropriate support for people of all religious, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds.

7

Supporting the provision of religiously and culturally specific community support services for those who would like to live and be cared for in such an environment.

8

Recognising that "Getting it Right for Every Child" requires respect for young people's identities as developing members of their own faith or cultural community.

9

Supporting education about the Holocaust, and refuting and confronting those who seek to deny, minimise, or downplay the Holocaust.

10

Acting responsibly when making statements concerning the Middle East, including about the Arab-Israeli conflict.