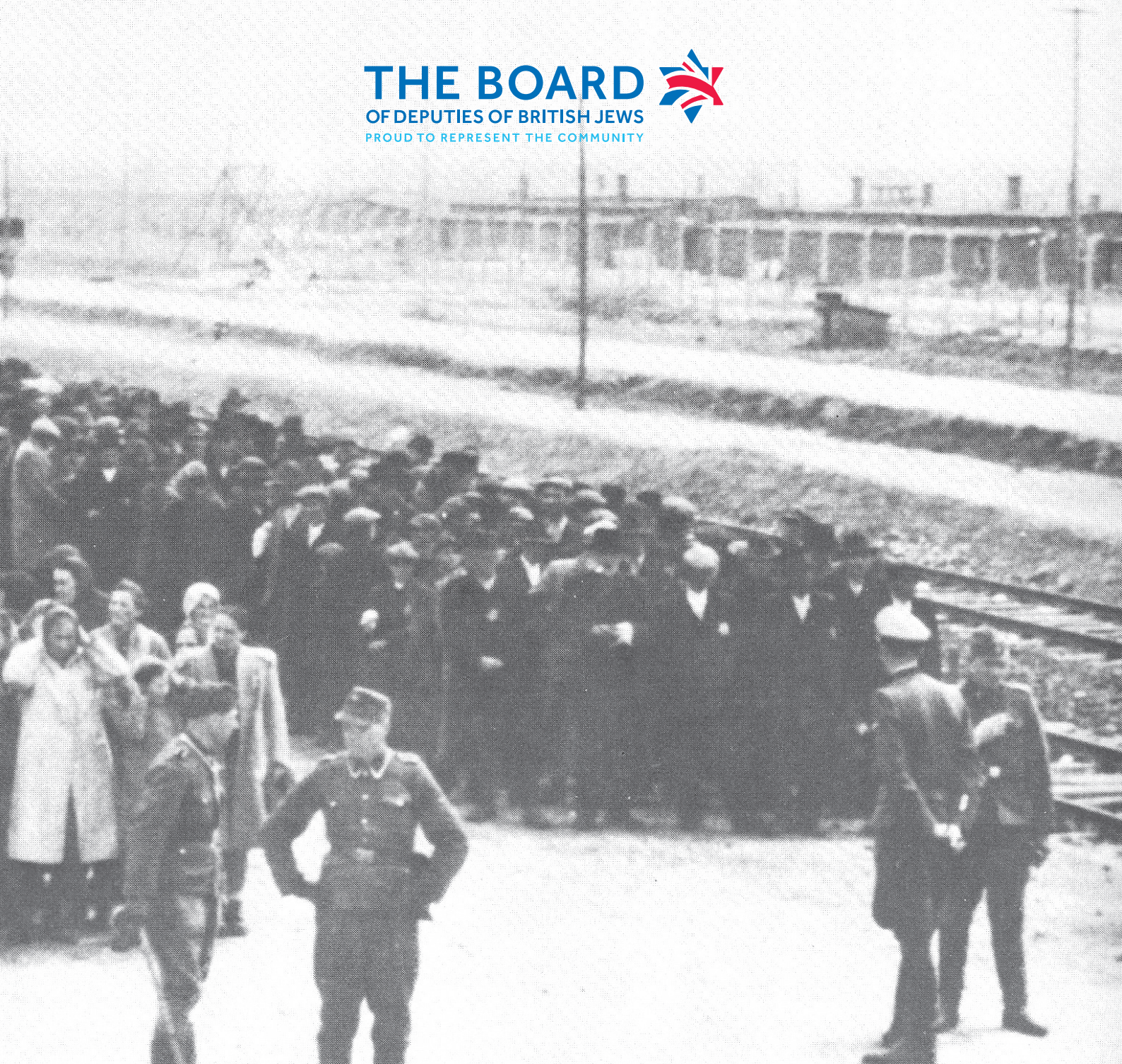


SUBMISSION TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOLOCAUST COMMISSION

BY THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES
OF BRITISH JEWS

THE BOARD
OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS
PROUD TO REPRESENT THE COMMUNITY



CONTENTS

Introduction	1
1. Our starting point	2
2. Jewish perspectives & Recommendations	3
3. Education	7
4. Commemorative events, Memorials & Museums	10
5. How to preserve survivor testimony for future generations	13
6. Other issues	14
7. In conclusion	15
Appendix 1 – Our consultation	16
Appendix 2 – Holocaust Memorial Day: Statement of Commitment	17

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Deputies of British Jews, set up in 1760, is the recognised voice of the Jewish Community in Britain. It exists to promote and defend the religious and civil liberties of British Jewry and to promote its standing. Nearly 300 Deputies represent local communities and organisations in a democratically elected body which is the first port of call for government and other faith groups on issues relating to the Jewish community.

On issues of importance, such as Holocaust remembrance and education, the Board reaches out through its Deputies and its close relationship with the other organisations to the whole community to consult and to listen, ensuring that we speak with a strong and consistent voice.

Most of the community's major communal organisations have contributed to this document and are listed in Appendix 1, along with details of our consultation process. Many are also submitting their own documents. We particularly urge the Commission to consider, alongside this document, submissions from the main synagogal bodies, the Regional Representative Councils, the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, and of course, the Charedi community, each of which bring a particular perspective.

We listened to young people and old people as well as a multitude of people running our organisations, synagogues, youth and educational organisations. All unattributed quotes in this report relate to comments made during our own consultation this spring.

The Board is honoured to produce this submission which we respectfully offer to the Prime Minister as part of his 2014 Commission on the Holocaust.

I would like to thank the staff and volunteers at the Board for their input, the organisations and individuals who gave their time and opinions, the hard working team at Number 10, and particularly Andie Newman, the Project Manager and Abi Heilbron.

LAURA MARKS

Senior Vice President, Board of Deputies of British Jews

May 2014

1. OUR STARTING POINT

We, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, offer this submission on the Holocaust, the attempted annihilation of Europe's Jewish community by the Nazis, on behalf of the British Jewish community, with a Jewish voice. We write in the full awareness that **we did not suffer Nazi persecution alone**. Roma, homosexuals, disabled people, black people, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Sinti community and political opponents of Nazism were all victims of Hitler's regime and we share their pain.

We also record with special gratitude those who did not stand by and watch – **those Righteous amongst the Nations**, including Christians, Muslims and those of no faith, who risked everything to save the men, women and children around them. Nor is the Holocaust the only or final genocide; we recognize that, even as we write this, there are atrocities – genocides - being committed in different parts of the world.

We write from a place of deep sorrow. We continue to mourn our lost family members, our lost communities and the lost potential. As Jews, we were all affected by the Holocaust, but **we share the lessons and the legacy** with our non-Jewish neighbours as these have universal resonance.

We also write from the place of survival. Jewish communities and Jewish life continue, not only to survive, but to **thrive** – both here in the UK, and also across Europe, even in those places where the permanent eradication of the Jews was most keenly pursued. We are a living legacy. We welcome then, the government's Commission as an important recognition of both the loss **and** the survival.

The Commission has already made an impact by reminding the Jewish community to reflect, once again, on the Holocaust - not only on the particular experience of the Jews, but also the experiences of other minority groups in the UK.

Finally, we wish to thank the Prime Minister for launching this Commission as it offers an invaluable opportunity to begin a conversation – an internal one for the Jewish community, as well as between ourselves and the wider British community – about how we continue to commemorate the Holocaust in the UK. The Holocaust must be reconsidered by each generation in the context of its own time.

This document is **not intended as a comprehensive survey** of Holocaust education and commemoration, others are better equipped for that task, rather we aim to mention initiatives considered effective and to have the widest impact amongst the Jewish community and, most crucially, to draw out the key issues which we, as British Jews, wish to highlight to the Commissioners.

2. JEWISH PERSPECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Jewish Perspectives

2.1.1 There is a profound sense of anxiety, particularly amongst Jewish survivors, that with the **loss of the survivors** and their personal and compelling testimonies, the memory and lessons of the Holocaust will, over time, be forgotten. We owe it to Jewish survivors and victims alike, to ensure that this does not happen.

2.1.2 There is an inherent, unresolved tension in the Jewish world between keeping the Holocaust as **the persecution of the Jews** (particularly amongst survivors), yet acknowledging the pain and suffering of other victim groups of the Nazis. We acknowledge that we have a unique bond with those who perished yet do not suffer alone.

2.1.3 We face the challenge of how to pass on **responsibility for upholding the memory** and lessons of the Holocaust to our children. We emphasise that the Jewish community does not carry this responsibility alone, nor is it only that of the Second and Third Generations, nor only that of our children and nor does this burden lie solely with the families of survivors.

2.1.4 By signing up to the Stockholm Declaration and helping to establish Holocaust Memorial Day in 2001, the British government acknowledged the **unique place of the Holocaust**, citing both the "unprecedented character of the Holocaust" and its "magnitude" as reasons for its centrality. There is concern in the Jewish world that the word "holocaust", however, is becoming synonymous, in British discourse, with "genocide". The use of the phrase "a holocaust" is unsettling. We acknowledge an anxiety that this trend undermines the specificity and uniqueness of 'The Holocaust' in mainstream British consciousness.

2.1.5 We recognise that, with **two days of commemoration** in the calendar, Yom HaShoah and Holocaust Memorial Day (as well, of course, as Tisha B'Av in the religious calendar in which Jews remember the Holocaust as well as all of the other tragedies which have befallen the Jewish people throughout history), there is some confusion for many Jews about the place they each hold in terms of commemoration and indeed, education and our challenge is to consider how we continue to honour both in a meaningful way. The Board of Deputies plays an integral role supporting both events. We are proud to have three seats on the **Holocaust Memorial Day Trust** board and also to be the administrative and coordinating body of Yom HaShoah: the **Yom HaShoah Forum**. Both events need maximum support and clarity of purpose within the Jewish community.

2.1.6 There is a view in the community that there is **insufficient educational provision** in mainstream schools, and of varying quality, regarding the Holocaust. There is also a feeling that even our own children, whilst 'primed', are insufficiently educated both in Jewish and non-Jewish schools and this presents a serious challenge to our educators.

2.1.7 The Board of Deputies and large numbers of MPs and other leaders, continue to fight for recognition of the injustice of the confiscation of Jewish property by the Nazis and their allies, and for a just and speedy conclusion to the **issue of restitution**. The significant work of the Claims Conference is applauded in this area. By endorsing the Terezin Declaration in 2009, the British government acknowledged that many Holocaust survivors now live in dire poverty, and the return of their property could give them a better quality of life in their final years, and a legacy to pass on to their descendants. The great injustice about the delays in restitution payments means that some of the Holocaust's victims will pass away without ever seeing their property returned.

2.1.8 The search for the **unmarked mass graves** of Holocaust victims is now urgent, an issue facing Jews and other victims alike. These issues are being championed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).

2.1.9 There is a strong consensus that there remains no memorial in London that is fitting to the enormity of the catastrophe. The monument in The Dell in Hyde Park is insufficient in both its impact and its location. When compared with the Animals in War monument in Park Lane, many feel its inadequacy is bordering on offensive. We recognise the **need for a new memorial**. However, it should be more than just an inert statue and must contribute to real education about the Holocaust.

2.1.10 There is a **positive Jewish legacy** of the Holocaust, particularly Jewish work on human rights and work to support other communities who have suffered - both then and now - paying tribute, in particular, to important figures such as René Cassin, whose work led to the creation of current human rights legislation and, pre-war in 1933, Raphael Lemkin who coined the word 'genocide'. We recognise the Jewish responsibility for campaigning about subsequent or current genocides and supporting those fleeing persecution on racial grounds, but we do not accept this burden alone.

2.1.11 There is deep concern in the Jewish community about the **politicisation of the Holocaust**, as a way to condemn and even delegitimise Israel: 'the Jews should know better'. This is ignorant, offensive and unacceptable. We note that these attacks on Israel are felt deeply within our community, particularly when they are so inappropriate.

2.1.12 Holocaust denial and revisionism could increase with the loss of survivors and their personal stories. Such propaganda is, again, felt deeply within our community and is felt to be becoming increasingly prevalent, with social media being used to fuel anti-Semitism and to spread hatred. The Prague Declaration in 2008 caused the community more anxiety as it seeks to conflate the Holocaust with the Soviet occupation at that time.

.....

2.1.13 The Commission has alerted the Jewish community to a **lack of collective focus** on many of these issues and we move forwards considering how to build a collective Jewish (and also a secular) forum to ensure that strong and clear memorial and educational messages are propagated.

2.2 Recommendations

2.2.1 Recommendations on Education

1. Strengthen and broaden the existing Holocaust module within the history curriculum and also build on the topic in more subjects and subsequent age groups. Consider the implications for faith and free schools and schools in the Devolved Administrations; increase funding and support for specialist training for teachers. Focus on ways to make this authentic.
2. Teach our children how to campaign and to become activists on issues of human rights, social justice and fighting prejudice – enabling them to continue the 'positive' legacy of the Holocaust.
3. Formally designate Holocaust Memorial Day as a recognised day in mainstream schools.
4. Extend Holocaust Educational Trust trips nationally and include Jewish schools. Ensure that Jewish schools have the resources and support to develop exemplary curricula and delivery on Holocaust issues.
5. In Jewish schools, dedicate the school day to Holocaust related issues on Yom HaShoah and find more ways to reach Jewish students in non-Jewish schools.
6. Reaffirm the original aims and focus of HMD, implementing the 'Statement of Commitment' for HMD in the UK (see Appendix 2) as a guiding document and educational tool and increase funding for local initiatives focusing on Holocaust.
7. Support/fund a central **Forum for Holocaust Education and Commemoration** to offer a joined-up approach with the Board of Deputies as a key member.
8. Conduct a piece of research mapping all Holocaust facing organisations - Jewish and non-Jewish – their aims and key messages.
9. Send a copy of Anne Frank's Diary to every school child in Britain.

2.2.2 Recommendations on Commemoration

1. Introduce a national period of silence on 27th January as on 11th November (Remembrance Day) with a widely adopted ritual – possibly using the Yad Vashem-UK Foundation's Guardian of the Memory candle lighting model.
 2. Emphasise the British Jewish story, and educational messages in any new memorials, using key sites across the UK in prominent public places:
 - a. A central London memorial (possibly as part of an existing building or memorial).
 - b. Plaques at the hostels where survivors or Kindertransport children lived.
 - c. A line on blue plaques of homes of survivors or refugees mentioning that they fled Nazi persecution.
 - d. A memorial to the Righteous amongst the Nations (Righteous Gentiles) in the UK.
-

3. Create a central archive (possibly connected to The Wiener Library) for the collation of Holocaust-related materials.
4. Expand the existing Imperial War Museum exhibition (possibly to include a new memorial) – taking inspiration from the success of the National Holocaust Centre and Museum in Nottingham.
5. Create a Scottish Holocaust Study Centre (the Scottish Jewish Archive Centre is conducting a feasibility study to establish such a centre at Garnethill Synagogue).
6. Fund and support new travelling exhibitions to be taken into schools, colleges, universities, museums and places of worship.

2.2.3 Recommendations on Survivor Testimony

1. Make testimonies available free online, in video and written format.
2. Explore the availability of new technology and opportunities for new ways to communicate with younger generations. Future-proof the accessibility of testimonies: for example, the use of holograms at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles and learn from other centres of excellence around the world.
3. Promote initiatives to enable young people to shadow survivors and take responsibility for telling their stories after they have passed on.

2.2.4 Recommendations on Other Issues

1. That the government uses its influence to call for a just and speedy conclusion to the issue of restitution across Europe, specifically in Poland.
 2. That the government, alongside community groups, should vigorously challenge those narratives which downplay or minimise the Holocaust.
 3. We ask that the Commissioners hold a formal meeting with the Board of Deputies to discuss the recommendations in this document during the course of 2014, with a view to an annual meeting on the issues of Holocaust education and commemoration.
-

3. EDUCATION

3.1 What is most effective of what already exists?

3.1.1 Museums and formal programmes

Over the past 70 years, several excellent organisations have led the way in educating both the Jewish and wider British society on all aspects of the Holocaust, including: **Anne Frank Trust, Association of Jewish Refugees, Holocaust Educational Trust, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, Imperial War Museum, Imperial War Museum North, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, Jewish Museum, London Jewish Cultural Centre, March of the Living, Memorial Scrolls Trust, National Holocaust Centre (Beth Shalom), Wiener Library, Yad Vashem UK, Yom HaShoah UK.**

Several **museums** offer important **outreach programmes** to schools, religion schools and youth movements. Noted in particular are the programmes run by the Holocaust Educational Trust, the Jewish Museum, and the National Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire - all reaching significant numbers both within and, crucially, beyond the Jewish community. The Scottish Jewish Archive Centre has also highlighted excellent educational work taking place in Scotland.

Throughout our consultation process, one message about education has been voiced again and again: "there is nothing more powerful than a **visit to a Holocaust-related site**". Such trips, facilitated by the Holocaust Educational Trust, March of the Living, JRoots and other organisations, embedded as they are within the context of a carefully thought through overall educational programme – with the follow-up work also crucial - are widely considered to leave a lasting, and often life-changing, impact on the participants. The government funded HET Ambassadors programme is lauded for its long term approach and its focus on non-Jewish youth. As one of the participants at the youth consultation evoked, "there is nothing quite like standing in Auschwitz in the cold".

3.1.2 Informal/Local programmes

There are also, of course, examples of highly effective **formal and informal education** programmes taking place in synagogues (including religion schools for children) as well as in Jewish and mainstream schools, Jewish youth movements and community centres such as JW3 and the LJCC. **Grass roots initiatives** take place across the Jewish and wider British community – for example, the '6 Million+' buttons project in Kirklees and the new 'Story of Survival' project from World Jewish Relief.

These programmes centre, particularly, around **Holocaust Memorial Day** and, as such, this day offers an invaluable opportunity to focus on both remembrance and

education activities. HMD reaches thousands of people, particularly children, and plays a vital role in bringing Holocaust related issues to non-Jewish children. The Board of Deputies values its close links with HMD and aims to continue to work closely with the HMD Trust.

Yom HaShoah is also a focal point for the Jewish community, centrally and locally, a day for remembering and for learning which has been supported in recent years by a cross-communal working group, the Yom HaShoah Forum, supported by the Board of Deputies .

3.2 Some key issues surrounding education

3.2.1 Jewish vs. non-Jewish children

Within the Jewish community, the process of engaging with the Commission has helped to highlight the differences between **educating Jewish and non-Jewish** young people. There is a widely held view that "educating our own children from an early age is a priority", and that many Jewish schools still provide insufficient teaching especially around the Holocaust. There is an assumption that Jewish children start with some sort of knowledge and connection to the Holocaust. This is not necessarily the case.

3.2.2 The role of trips

Not all Jewish students can or will go on an educational trip to a camp or even to a museum. Augmented reality technology, such as 3D virtual tours of camps, is a tool that can be used in order to reach more people. It is clear that, **hearing a survivor** recount his or her own personal story, first hand, is also as a potentially life-changing educational experience: "the power of the personal connection and individual testimony is irreplaceable".

3.2.3 The historical context

We believe there needs to be a **balance struck between history and memory**, between personal stories and historical facts. The use of personal stories alone is not sufficient, it must be set in context, so that students gain an understanding of the situation in Europe at the time and the mindset of the Nazis and those who followed them. Britain was a beacon of support (e.g. the Kindertransport) but her record was nonetheless blemished by failing, for example, to bomb the railway tracks and by the well-documented refusal to allow ships full of desperate refugees safe haven. The Jewish Community remains eternally grateful to Britain for her support yet recognizes that even this had its limitations and that the lessons learned for the future are profound.

"It is important that the British education system creates a British narrative in relation to the Holocaust. Through this, students will be able to relate to a greater degree to the complex issues surrounding the Holocaust."

.....
CHARLES BRAUNSTEIN, 22

“Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, that turned my life into one long night seven times sealed.

Never shall I forget that smoke.

Never shall I forget the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoke under a silent sky.

Never shall I forget those flames that consumed my faith forever.

Never shall I forget the nocturnal silence that deprived me for all eternity of the desire to live.

Never shall I forget those moments that murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to ashes.

Never shall I forget those things, even were I condemned to live as long as God Himself.

Never.”

.....
ELIE WIESEL, 'NIGHT'

“Students should come to understand that, under a totalitarian regime, no minorities are safe, not just Jews.”

.....

3.2.4 Use of literature and film

In schools, where space on the curriculum is at a premium, the use of **film** (e.g. The Pianist, Schindlers List) and **literature** (e.g. Anne Frank’s Diary), provide “short, sharp bursts” which leave a lasting impact on students.

There is a risk, however, of “substituting quality teachers and first-hand accounts with easy to source media solutions” - especially those which are fictional and poor quality.

3.2.5 The role of teachers

All Holocaust education – whether for Jewish or non-Jewish young people - is complex and must be **delivered by highly skilled, knowledgeable and experienced educators**. The materials and methodologies used must be age-appropriate, with educators managing that delicate process of “educating about the trauma and lessons of the Holocaust, without traumatising the students”.

In many schools, there will be **refugee children** and the children of refugees. The teaching must be sensitive to these personal experiences and perspectives.

Overall then, the importance of **teachers mediating the experience** is paramount: “the key to successful education is always in the training of educators. This is an expensive and time consuming process but it is the absolute key.”

The use of **artefacts by trained teachers**, as pioneered by the Jewish Museum, is also supported as a way of making the Holocaust real, accessible and placed within its historical context.

3.2.6 The National Curriculum

Whilst we recognise that the Holocaust is already taught within the English and Welsh and Scottish curricula, we urge government to constantly improve the quality of the provision across the board, including its frequency and its position in the curriculum. When Jewish young people were consulted, several commented, “Holocaust education, what Holocaust education? I don’t remember that.” Following on from the history module in year 9 there could be a place for further studies both in history and in other parts of the curriculum in year 9 and subsequently.

3.2.7 Messaging

Holocaust education “should not be framed only around victimisation of Jews, but also around resistance”, not merely survival, but the regeneration and flourishing of Jewish life, including in Eastern Europe.

“The ‘never again’ message instils fear in young Jews and this is a corrosive rather than positive message”. Clearly genocide has happened again and HMD aims to draw attention to subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. Equally, ‘always remember’ is a more positive message than ‘never forget’.

The messages of Holocaust education, including the danger of appeasement, lead logically out of the classroom and into social action and campaigning.

.....

4. COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS, MEMORIALS AND MUSEUMS

“To forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time.”

.....
ELIE WIESEL, ‘NIGHT’

“If there are still Jews left, when it is over, then Jews, instead of being doomed, will be held up as an example. Who knows, it might even be our religion from which the world and all peoples learn good.”

.....
ANNE FRANK

4.1 What is most effective of what already exists?

The following events, memorials and museums were particularly noted during our consultation process: **Holocaust Memorial Day, Imperial War Museum, Jewish Museum Korczak exhibition, Kristallnacht remembrance events, Liverpool Street memorial, Memorial Scrolls Trust exhibition at Westminster Synagogue, National Holocaust Centre (Beth Shalom), Wiener Library, Yom HaShoah, the Yad Vashem Guardian of the Memory project, 45 Aid Society (Survivors), The Holocaust: Sustaining the Legacy (Leeds).**

4.1.1 Museums

The **Jewish Museum** in London is particularly well-placed to explain the **Jewish context**, reaching a wider audience because it is not in a synagogue; as well as to focus on the **British narrative** including issues of refugees, the British story of the liberation of the camps and seeing the Holocaust in terms of the present living, thriving community.

Beth Shalom, The National Holocaust Centre and Museum is widely regarded as doing exceptional work, particularly in speaking to its mainly **non-Jewish audience**. Its location in Nottinghamshire presents a challenge, as its **geographical reach is limited**, particularly for the Jewish community.

Travelling exhibitions, such as is offered by the Anne Frank Trust do not rely on people choosing to make special trips to centrally located museums.

World Jewish Relief has an easily accessible archive of information from Kindertransport children and bringing this together with all the other data sources is a challenge for the future.

4.1.2 Memorials

Memorials have a unique role in reaching out to **‘the passer by’**, ideally communicating the trauma without generating more trauma.

The Kindertransport memorial at Liverpool Street Station is particularly commended by the Jewish community because it is **site-specific** as is, for example, the Association of Jewish Refugees' plaque scheme.

In other countries, these memorials were acknowledged as particularly effective during the course of our consultation: **Yad Vashem, Berlin Holocaust Memorial, Moscow cemetery, Ground Zero, the Somme, Treblinka, Berlin's brass-topped cobblestones.**

4.1.3 Commemorative Events

Holocaust Memorial Day resonates far beyond the Jewish community. It acts as a powerful focal point for local government commemorations and grass roots initiatives and is increasingly a part of civil and religious life. Its important central London event is the annual focus for Holocaust memorial and the leadership of the Jewish community and Holocaust survivors take prominent roles in the ceremony and at other ceremonies around the country. There is some confusion in the Jewish world regarding its focus and role vis a vis Yom HaShoah, commemorated centrally by the Jewish community at The Dell in Hyde Park and increasingly around the country in synagogues, community centres and Jewish schools.

4.2 Some key issues surrounding commemoration

4.2.1 Museums

Objects of special historical significance, held by survivors and their families, must be collected and preserved before it is too late. The Scottish Jewish Archive Centre has highlighted the lack of an accessible central resource in which to collect material relating to the experiences of Scottish refugees.

4.2.2 Memorials

The memorial at The Dell in Hyde Park is considered ineffective and too difficult to find. **Memorials require preservation** – the Jewish community does not wish to see a Holocaust memorial fall into disrepair. Memorials are insufficient in communicating the issues of the Holocaust but they act as a focal point and a mark of respect.

4.2.3 Commemorative Events

Yom HaShoah presents an opportunity every year for the Jewish community to reflect on its own history and to mourn. Synagogue Yom HaShoah commemorations locally, which often include survivor testimonies, are considered very successful, and the Hyde Park ceremony offers an opportunity for the community to gather and commemorate together. There was a feeling in the Jewish world that it was not sufficiently recognised amongst our own community, particularly in schools, and this resulted in the formation of the YH Forum.

Holocaust Memorial Day

The Jewish community recognises the commitment of government to the Holocaust via the inception and support of HMD, particularly its work in local communities. We recognize that it is crucial that the Jewish community fully supports HMD. Whilst the Holocaust should remain the focus, the Jewish community also fundamentally believes in the need to show solidarity with the victims of other genocides, both by the Nazis and subsequently.

Tribute should be paid to Camden Council for an innovative approach this year: HMD was hosted in Kings Cross station at rush hour, tannoy announcements were made and passengers passed through a special exhibition.

Communities outside London have expressed concern that, with cuts to local government budgets, there is a threat to the funding of HMD. Ensuring adequate resources are available needs to be seen as a government policy issue.

5. HOW TO PRESERVE SURVIVOR TESTIMONY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

"I tell my story so that they might tell the next generation."

SARA ATZMON, HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR, ARTIST

We recognise the work of various organisations in supporting survivors and recording their testimonies, in particular: **45 Aid Society, Second Generation Network, Jewish Care's Holocaust Survivors Centre, Association of Jewish Refugees & Association of Children of Jewish Refugees, Holocaust Survivors Friendship Association, Redbridge Jewish Community Centre, AJR Refugee Voices and the AJR Journal.**

5.1 Issues regarding survivor testimony

As Jews we are proud of the way we have cared for the survivors of the Holocaust and continue to do so, and we pay tribute to the organisations which continue to provide support seventy years on.

There are still many survivors and refugees who have not had their stories recorded. The Shoah Foundation, Jewish Museum and the British Library are continuing to interview survivors, a key piece of work.

We must support and enable the **Second and Third generations** to take on the narratives of their parents and grandparents, though not to be burdened with this responsibility alone. Similarly, Jewish young people need to be passed the baton in a way they find acceptable, manageable and as part of a burden shared with the rest of society. The Third generation, in particular, may not always know and/or may not feel connected with their own stories and background.

6. OTHER ISSUES

6.1 Restitution

During the Holocaust, the Nazis used state apparatus to confiscate Jewish property, including both private property, such as homes, art and jewellery; and communal infrastructure, like synagogue buildings and graveyards. To this day, much of it has not been returned and the property remains in the hands of modern states.

6.2 War Graves

It is estimated that 2.5million victims of the Nazis and their allies were buried in unmarked graves. It is a race against time to find missing graves, as the testimony of survivors and local people is now short lived. We acknowledge the work of Yahad-In Unum and others in this essential work.

These two issues feature in more detail in the Board of Deputies' European Manifesto 2014 <http://www.bod.org.uk/content/EUManifesto.pdf>

7. IN CONCLUSION

“We should never forget the atrocities BUT this should not be as a means to avoid and differentiate from The Other, but instead, to bring us closer in understanding and unity with other peoples.”

MIKE MENDOZA, 24

Arguably, the key message of Judaism is our start and end point: do not do to others what you do not wish to be done to you. This universal message underpins our submission.

As Jews we have a responsibility to Holocaust remembrance. However, we reiterate that this is not our responsibility alone.

The Holocaust was an atrocity of humanity, more than ‘just’ anti-Semitism and we cannot allow our young, Jewish and non-Jewish, to grow up ignorant about the Holocaust, as its legacy must be the lessons we can all learn for the future.

Education begins with the government – we call on it to set an example through the media, by challenging the anti-Semitic nuances that very often are allowed to pass. We need leadership to combat revisionism, Holocaust denial and the political use of the Holocaust as a stick to beat Israel.

Young people should have a prominent role in shaping future education provision. We submit that free schools and faith schools as well as those in Devolved Administrations should be included in any changes to curricula.

Jews made an invaluable contribution to the human rights movement, the only positive legacy of the Holocaust and any attack on this risks us all losing those protections which would put all vulnerable groups, including Jews, in jeopardy. Similarly, we are proud to be British and the relationship between the Holocaust and Britain’s past is to be both commemorated and also, to be challenged.

We recognise the way the Jewish community has supported both our survivors and refugees and those of other groups, and it can serve as a model for the way this country regards and supports other, more recent, refugees. As Jews we have learnt from the experience of survivors/refugees to help other communities. Our aim is to share this learning with British society to collectively create a more caring, supportive society.

Any further memorial or museum should be properly embedded, should tell a story, and we urge the government to ensure that the community be properly consulted in advance.

We suggest that the consultation process involved in this Commission will need to be reviewed frequently, as its effect is profound and we commend again the Prime Minister, the Chair of the Commission and the professional and volunteer team involved in this significant piece of work.

APPENDIX 1 - OUR CONSULTATION

1. Youth consultation held at JW3, London on 23rd April 2014 for 16-25 year olds attended by Mick Davis, Chair of the Commission and facilitated by Karen Pollock MBE, CEO of the Holocaust Educational Trust.
2. Holocaust Experts Advisory Meeting held at Board of Deputies on 29th April 2014.
3. Contributions sent in by communal organisations and individuals.
4. Deputies, key communal bodies and Holocaust experts consulted on draft submission.

List of organisations contributing to this submission:

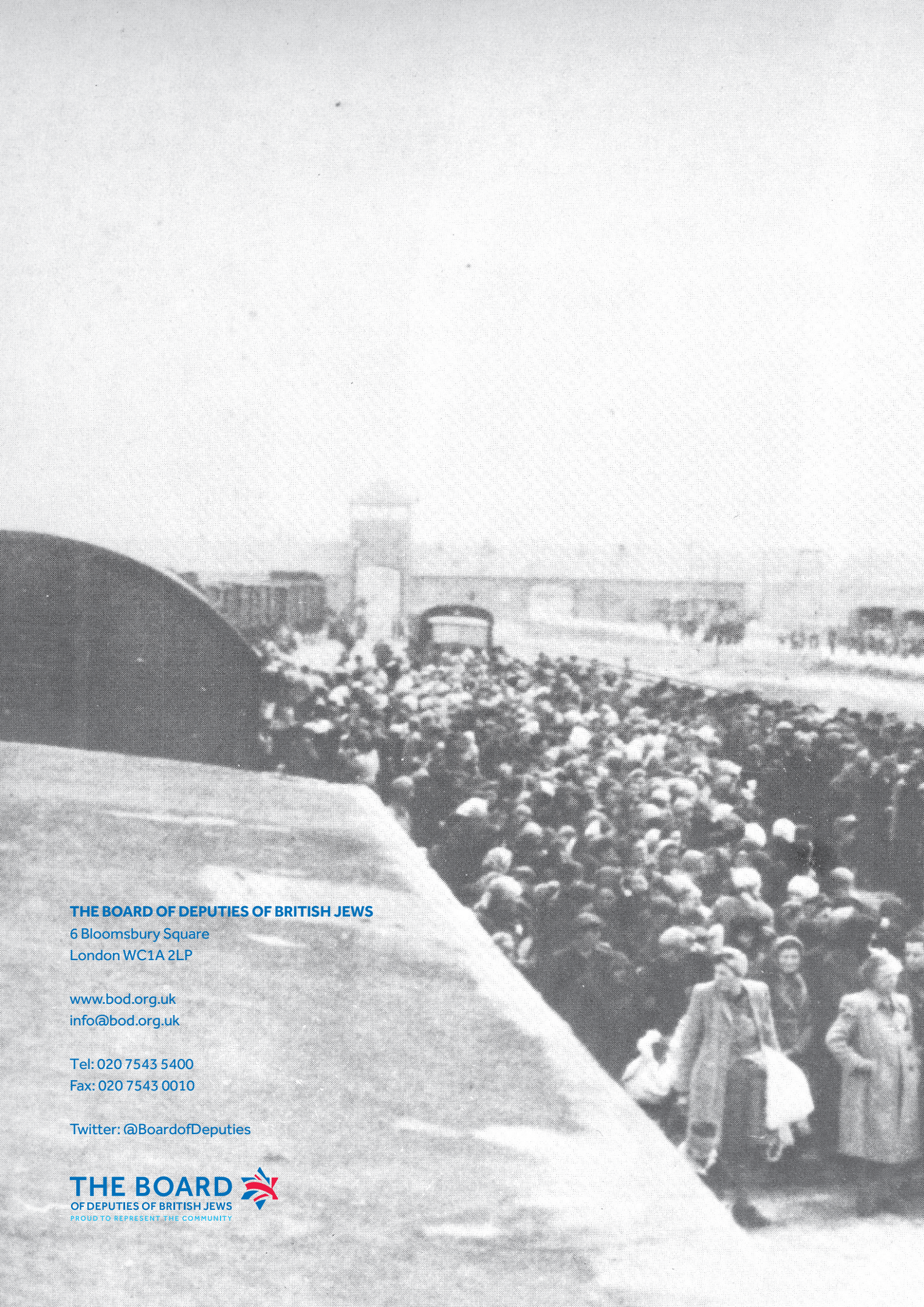
45 Aid Society	London Jewish Forum
45 Aid Second Generation Group	London School of Jewish Studies
45 Aid Society Third Generation	Maccabi GB
6 million+ button project	Manchester Jewish Representative Council
Aish UK	Masorti Judaism
AJEX	Memorial Scrolls Trust
Association of Jewish Refugees	Merseyside Jewish Representative Council
BBYO	Movement for Reform Judaism
Berkshire Representative Council	New London Synagogue
Brodetsky Primary School	Nightingale
Central Synagogue	Nightingale Hammerson
Chai Cancer Care	Norwood
Chief Rabbi's Yom HaShoah Initiative	Office of the Chief Rabbi
CST	Pinner Synagogue
Federation of Synagogues	René Cassin
Glasgow Representative Council	The Representative Council of Birmingham and West Midlands
Habonim Dror	Resource
Hasmonean High School	RSY-Netzer
Hillel	Scottish Council of Jewish Communities
Holocaust Educational Trust	Second Generation Network
Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association	Scottish Jewish Archives Centre
Jewish Blind & Disabled	Sheffield Jewish Representative Council
Jewish Care	Spanish & Portuguese Synagogues
Jewish Chaplaincy	Tribe
Jewish Lads and Girls Brigade	Tzedek
Jewish Leadership Council	UJIA
Jewish Museum	UJS Hillel
Jewish Volunteer Network	United Synagogue
JNF	Wiener Library
JW3	WIZOUk
Langdon	World Jewish Relief
League of Jewish Women	World Jewish Restitution Organization
Leeds Jewish Free School	Yad Vashem UK-Foundation
Leeds Jewish Representative Council	Yom HaShoah UK
Liberal Judaism	Zionist Youth Council
London Jewish Cultural Centre	

APPENDIX 2 - HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY: STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Holocaust Memorial Day was created on 27 January 2000, when representatives from 46 governments around the world met in Stockholm to discuss Holocaust education, remembrance and research. At the end of this meeting, all attendees signed a declaration committing to preserving the memory of those who have been murdered in the Holocaust. This declaration became the statement of commitment that is still used as a basis for HMD activities today.

Statement of Commitment

- We recognise that the Holocaust shook the foundations of modern civilisation. Its unprecedented character and horror will always hold universal meaning
 - We believe the Holocaust must have a permanent place in our nation's collective memory. We honour the survivors still with us, and reaffirm our shared goals of mutual understanding and justice
 - We must make sure that future generations understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences. We vow to remember the victims of Nazi persecution and of all genocides
 - We value the sacrifices of those who have risked their lives to protect or rescue victims, as a touchstone of the human capacity for good in the face of evil
 - We recognise that humanity is still scarred by the belief that race, religion, disability or sexuality make some people's lives worth less than others'. Genocide, anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination still continue. We have a shared responsibility to fight these evils
 - We pledge to strengthen our efforts to promote education and research about the Holocaust and other genocides. We will do our utmost to make sure that the lessons of such events are fully learnt
 - We will continue to encourage Holocaust remembrance by holding an annual UK Holocaust Memorial Day. We condemn the evils of prejudice, discrimination and racism. We value a free, respectful, and democratic society
-



THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS

6 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LP

www.bod.org.uk
info@bod.org.uk

Tel: 020 7543 5400
Fax: 020 7543 0010

Twitter: @BoardofDeputies

THE BOARD
OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS
PROUD TO REPRESENT THE COMMUNITY

