INTRODUCTION FROM LONDON JEWISH FORUM
CO-CHAIRS AND DIRECTOR

The London Jewish Forum has built and managed our community’s relationship with three Mayors, with Ken Livingstone, Boris Johnson and Sadiq Khan. Over the years we have built relationships with London’s MPs, and worked closely with the London Assembly and London’s boroughs. Then our world changed with the outbreak of the pandemic...

Our community engagement over the last year has been wider and deeper than ever, with hundreds of meetings facilitated by Zoom, allowing more of the community to engage in the key issues of the emergency and the recovery with Deputy Mayors, Council Leaders, MPs and those active across London’s governance.

Today the work of the London Jewish Forum takes community engagement to a different level, but it also has built the work of cohesion in London, where we work closely with CST, Metropolitan Police and The Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). Our response to the growth of antisemitism in London working with the Crime, Prevention, Inclusion and Engagement team at the Metropolitan Police has enabled the community to have new channels of direct contact as we look to rebuild cohesion in London.

When the pandemic started it became clear that health, mental health and our jobs would become of increasing concern to all Jewish Londoners. We focused on care homes, on PPE, on track and trace, on vaccination rollout. We have built new work channels and partnerships with divisions of the NHS in the pioneering work that now challenges us as we focus on mental health, bereavement signposting, getting Londoners back into good work, a new deal for young people, healthy food, healthy weight, Age Friendly London and building stronger communities. This is the challenge of the recovery for London, this is the work of responding to Covid. We are proud of what we have done together with our partners in the Jewish community’s care and welfare sector who we continue to admire. As we look forward, we also know the work has only just begun and we need to continue to step up to yet another level as we continue to respond to Covid and give our community the tools to shape a strong recovery.

As Rabbi Tarfon said in Pirkai Avot...

‘Lo alecha hamlacha ligmor, v’lo atah ben chorin l’hivatel mimena’
‘You are not expected to complete the task, but neither are you free to avoid it’
AT A GLANCE

ENGAGED 88 JEWISH ORGANISATIONS AND SYNAGOGUES WHICH ARE MEMBERS OF THE JEWISH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OR BOARD OF DEPUTIES

114 MEETINGS WITH MPs, COUNCIL LEADERS, COUNCILLORS, DEPUTY MAYORS AND SENIOR OFFICIALS

HOSTED OVER 200 LONDON COUNCILLORS AT SEMINAR TO LEARN ABOUT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY
Like all communities, the Jewish community in London were hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic. With our community being on average third older than the wider population, the Jewish community sadly had a high number of deaths in the first wave of the pandemic. Over the last year we have engaged with key stakeholders to respond to the challenges of the pandemic and look towards recovery.

**GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY (CITY HALL)**

We have worked closely with the GLA since the outbreak of Covid-19 to respond to the pandemic and support London’s Jewish community. Our partnership with the Mayor of London’s Office has been strong and productive, ensuring the Jewish community’s voice is heard as we faced the challenges of the pandemic and look towards recovery.

Our engagement with the GLA in 2020 primarily focused on responding to the immediate impact of the pandemic, and learning the lessons of the first wave so that as a community we were prepared for a second wave. To that end, we hosted various roundtables with the GLA, covering different areas that Covid-19 impacted our community.

The key communal organisations in the Jewish community were present at each roundtable, and the GLA were represented by the relevant Deputy Mayor or senior staff member. All roundtables uncovered challenges from the first wave, whether that be the lack of faith-based bereavement support signposting, the turnover of volunteers, a mental health crisis in our young people, travelling to school safely, or an inconsistent supply in PPE and testing capacity in our care homes. Our roundtables aimed to both inform decision makers, but also our community, in how best to prepare for a second emergency and and learn the lessons of the first. Since hosting our roundtables, the GLA attempted to replicate them with other faith groups.
I WANT TO THANK THE LONDON JEWISH FORUM FOR THE VITAL ROLE THEY HAVE PLAYED IN OUR CAPITAL’S RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC. FROM SUPPORTING OUR RECOVERY PROGRAMME TO INFORMING OUR RESPONSE TO A DISTURBING RISE IN ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS, THE TEAM AT LONDON JEWISH FORUM REFLECT THE VERY BEST OF LONDON’S CIVIC LIFE AND I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THEM IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

- Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan
ENGAGEMENT WITH COUNCILS DURING THE PANDEMIC

The impact of councils on the everyday lives of Londoners has grown significantly during the pandemic. A key difference in how London prepared for a second wave of coronavirus in the autumn of 2020 was the shift from a London-wide focus to a local focus. As such, we have worked hard on our engagement with councils, raising any issues facing the Jewish community and giving local communities and communal organisations an opportunity to engage with their local council leadership.

Through supporting local communities in the run-up to the High Holy Days, we also began building relationships with local public health directors. Not only did they have the authority to approve events or services that were Covid-compliant, but they were also best placed to update on how local boroughs were coping in the fight to keep Covid-19 infection rates down.

We hosted a series of roundtables between councils and their local Jewish communities, ensuring that the Leader of the Council and Public Health Directors were on the call.

- **Barnet** - Council Leader Cllr Dan Thomas and Public Health Director Tamara Djuretic
- **Enfield** - Council Leader Cllr Nesil Caliskan and Public Health Director Stuart Lines
- **Haringey** - Council Chief Executive Nina Etheridge and Public Health Director Will Maimaris
- **Redbridge** - Council Leader Cllr Jas Athwal and Public Health Director Gladys Xavier
- **Camden** - Council Leader Cllr Georgia Gould and Public Health Director Julie Billett

_The London Jewish Forum has been an incredible source of support as we work to ensure that Redbridge Council does all that it can to support our Jewish residents. We have worked alongside the Forum to meet with Redbridge’s Jewish community during the pandemic, and I continue to work closely with the Forum, which voices the concerns and feelings of the Jewish community._

- CLLR JAS ATHWAL, LEADER, REDBRIDGE COUNCIL

We were proud to have been asked to join some of London’s largest organisations to commit to London’s Recovery. There are nine recovery missions in the London Recovery Plan, and we have sought to focus our engagement on the missions most closely linked to the Jewish community. We have explored how the Jewish community can get involved in each mission, and highlights of our work in response to each mission can be found below.

**A. BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES**

“By 2025 all Londoners will have access to a community hub ensuring they can volunteer, get support and build strong networks.”

- London recovery mission

For the Jewish community, we already have many of these hubs in our synagogues, schools and community centres. As such, we are working with denominations on how we can strengthen and transform our communities. This included welcoming Dr Ron Wolfson of American Jewish University to deliver a session on ‘The Post Pandemic Synagogue.’ Since the session was so well received, a next step session backed and funded by the GLA took place at the London Festival of Ideas on ‘The Post Pandemic Synagogue and Relational Judaism’.

**B. MENTAL HEALTH & HEALTH**

“Our goal is that by 2025 London will have a quarter of a million wellbeing ambassadors, supporting Londoners where they live, work and play.”

- London recovery mission

i. Five Ways to Wellbeing - NHS Good thinking & Healthy London Partnership:

Together with JAMI, Maccabi and Barnet Council, we contributed to NHS Good Thinking’s Judaism resource for their ‘Five Ways to Wellbeing’ series. We connected NHS Good Thinking to the key communal agencies working in the area of mental health and wellbeing, in addition to rabbinical advisors Rabbi Daniel Epstein and Rabbi Miriam Berger.

ii. Bereavement Signposting and Services:

We are working with NHS Good Thinking and Healthy London Partnership on a resource for Bereavement support and signposting in the Jewish community in partnership with the Jewish Bereavement Counselling Service and Jewish Care.

iii. Vaccine Rollout In December 2020:

Just after the approval of the Pfizer vaccine, we coordinated a meeting for synagogue leaders from across London and communal organisations with Martin Machray, NHS Chief Nurse for London and Covid-19 Incident Director to discuss vaccine rollout. It was an excellent opportunity to ask the Chief Nurse about the vaccines just before they began to be rolled out.
Finally, whilst not a mission, we have also been supporting the ‘Age Friendly London’ campaign, which is being promoted by Ruth Dombey, Leader of Sutton Council and Vice-Chair of London Councils. The campaign seeks to build an Age Friendly boroughs coalition. Jewish Care have agreed to work alongside us on this where we are focused on the work of PAI London.

“By 2025 every Londoner lives in a healthy food neighbourhood.”
- London recovery mission

We have started to scope out our engagement with the Healthy Food, Healthy Weight mission. Unlike other missions, there is no specialist organisation working on this issue within the Jewish community. We have been asked by the mission team to represent the Jewish community in responding to their current consultation. We will meet with relevant communal bodies to inform our submission, including Maccabi, PajE5 and Reshet.

“Our goal is that by 2025 every Londoner lives in a healthy food neighbourhood.”
- London recovery mission

We have had meetings with Work Avenue and Resource, key communal organisations in this area to discuss how the Jewish community can play its part in this mission. We facilitated a meeting with the aforementioned organisations and the GLA Mission Team to discuss cooperation.

“Our goal is to support Londoners into good jobs with a focus on areas which are key to London’s recovery, like creative, green and digital jobs…”
- London recovery mission

Young Jewish Londoners were severely impacted by the pandemic. We have started work with Reshet and other communal organisations to focus on a Jewish response to this mission. This has already included having a session as part of Public Heath England’s Big Conversation focused on young people taking up the vaccine and importance of mental health with Rabbi Zarum, Dr Leonora Weil, Dr Charlotte Benjamin and Dr Ellie Cannon. This event was supported by PHE with a grant. We are also focusing on what future youth provision in London should be. In addition, we are comparing our work with the Partnership for Young London.

“By 2024 all young people in need are entitled to a personal mentor and all young Londoners have access to quality local youth activities.”
- London recovery mission
Over the last year together with CST, LJF has worked hard to build relationships and improve the coordination between the Metropolitan Police and the Jewish community. Whilst CST focus on security, LJF’s engagement with the Metropolitan Police is focused on community engagement. We are working to promote better understanding of the Jewish community in the workings of the Metropolitan Police, provide greater reassurance for the Jewish community, improve the accessibility of policing services, and reduce barriers.

Our primary engagement with the Metropolitan Police is through the Met’s Crime Prevention, Inclusion and Engagement unit. We have briefed the Met’s Faith Engagement Officers twice, first in the run-up to the 2020 High Holy Days and second following the outbreak of violence in Israel and Gaza in May 2021.

May 2021, when the conflict in the Middle East intensified, saw a monthly record of 639 antisemitic incidents according to CST, which accounted for almost half of all the incidents recorded in the first six months of this year. We worked hard to reassure the Jewish community during this period.

Following a discussion with the Mayor’s Office, LJF hosted an emergency meeting with the Deputy Mayor for Policing Sophie Linden and the Deputy Mayor for Communities and Cohesion Debbie Weekes Bernard, attended by the key communal leadership.

The importance of Police acting in response to antisemitism at rallies was stressed at the meeting, as was the need for a strategy to tackle the breakdown in community cohesion. LJF were also invited to the Met’s Special Operations Room at Lambeth to oversee the policing of an anti-Israel protest and offer independent advice to the Met.
EMERGENCY RESPONSE GROUPS

To provide an avenue for communication during the tense month, we used our contacts to set up emergency WhatsApp groups to connect Police, MPs, Council Leaders, lead Jewish Councillors, Assembly Members, CST and the Board of Deputies to local Jewish community leadership. These groups gave the leadership of local communities, normally the chairs of synagogues and headteachers of Jewish schools, the opportunity to quickly access senior political, communal and Police leadership should an emergency or concern arise. These groups were established in Camden, Westminster, Hendon, Finchley & Golders Green, Chipping Barnet, Brent, Harrow, Enfield, Haringey, Redbridge, Havering, Waltham Forest, Essex and Hertfordshire.

COUNCILS WE ENGAGED

The importance of engaging with councils was also high following the rise of antisemitism in the wake of the Israel-Gaza conflict. We hosted a series of roundtables with council leaders, giving local communities the chance to raise any concerns.

- **Harrow** - Council Leader Cllr Graham Henson and Cabinet Member for Community Safety Cllr Peymana Assad.
- **Hillingdon** - Council Leader Cllr Ian Edwards.
- **Westminster** – Council Leader Cllr Rachael Robathan.
- **Haringey** – Councilor Peray Ahmet and Police North Area BCU Commander Treena Fleming.
- **Tower Hamlets** – Mayor John Biggs and Deputy Leader Cllr Sirajul Islam.

MET POLICE JEWISH FORUM

The London Jewish Forum, together with the CST, have been assisting the Metropolitan Police with the establishment of the Met Police Jewish Forum. The Forum, which will have around 30 members, will act as an advisory body to the Police on Jewish community issues. The Forum will be made up of communal leadership from across London’s synagogues and Jewish institutions.

Support your community
Support your Jewish News
Help us here
THE LATEST JEWISH NEWS
Read this week’s digital edition
CLICK HERE

8/18/2021
200 councillors tune into antisemitism seminar addressed by Robert Jenrick | Jewish News


More than 200 councillors from across London heard a message of zero tolerance to antisemitism from politicians, alongside a number of Jewish organisations this week. In the biggest seminar that the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the London Jewish Forum and the Jewish Leadership Council have organised, councillors attended sessions on antisemitism, Israel and education.

200 councillors tune into antisemitism seminar addressed by Robert Jenrick

Communities secretary said faiths groups have been at the ‘forefront of the national response to the pandemic’

By TALI FRASER
December 9, 2020, 5:05 pm

Robert Jenrick addressing the meeting

MET POLICE JEWISH FORUM EMERGENCY RESPONSE GROUPS

LONDON JEWISH FORUM YEAR IN REVIEW

MEETING WITH WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL LEADER CLLR RACHAEL ROBATHAN AND LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS
Over the past year we have worked hard to engage MPs across London, briefing them on issues facing the Jewish community, and introducing them to their local Jewish communities and communal organisations. We have targeted MPs which have Jewish communities in their constituency, but don’t necessarily regularly engage or ever have engaged their local community.

At each roundtable, we invited the representatives of the various local communities.

**PARLIAMENT**

**MPs WE HAVE ENGAGED INCLUDE:**

**STEVE REED**
*MP FOR CROYDON NORTH AND SHADOW COMMUNITIES SECRETARY*
Roundtable with Croydon Federation Synagogue, Sutton Synagogue, Board of Deputies, CST, and Jewish Labour Movement.

**SARAH JONES**
*MP FOR CROYDON CENTRAL AND SHADOW POLICING MINISTER*
Roundtable with Croydon Federation Synagogue, Board of Deputies, CST, Antisemitism Policy Trust.

**DAVID SIMMONDS**
*MP FOR RUISLIP, NORTHWOOD AND PINNER*

**JANET DABY**
*MP FOR LEWISHAM EAST AND SHADOW FAITH MINISTER*
Roundtable with Catford and Bromley United Synagogue, Bromley Reform Synagogue, Greenwich and Docklands Chabad, and the Board of Deputies.

**BAMBOS CHARALAMBOUS**
*MP FOR ENFIELD SOUTHGATE*
Roundtable with Cockfosters and N Southgate, Southgate Progressive, Hadley Wood and Sha’arei Tzedek synagogues, Wolfson Hillel Jewish Primary School, and Board of Deputies.

**PAUL SCULLY**
*MP FOR SUTTON AND MINISTER FOR LONDON*
Roundtable with Sutton, Croydon, Richmond and Wimbledon synagogues, Board of Deputies, Jewish Care, Antisemitism Policy Trust and Mitzvah Day.

**FELICITY BUCHAN**
*MP FOR KENSINGTON*
Visit to Holland Park Synagogue.

**SARAH OLNEY**
*MP FOR RICHMOND*
Roundtable with Richmond Synagogue.

**LJF DIRECTOR DANIEL KOSKY**
Facilitates a visit for Felicity Buchan MP to Holland Park Synagogue.

**FLORENCE ESHALOMI**
*MP FOR VAUXHALL*
Roundtable with South London Liberal Synagogue and Board of Deputies.

**STEPHEN HAMMOND**
*MP FOR WIMBLEDON*
Roundtable with Wimbledon Synagogue and Board of Deputies.
A key part of the GLA family is the London Assembly. The Assembly holds the Mayor and Mayoral advisers to account by publicly examining policies and programmes through committee meetings, plenary sessions, site visits and investigations. The Assembly is made up of 25 elected members, some of which represent constituencies, others which are London-wide.

We have built relationships with Assembly Members of all parties, informing them of the issues facing Jewish Londoners. London Jewish Forum has been mentioned a number of times during London Assembly sessions, including during a discussion on antisemitism. In June 2021, the London Assembly unanimously passed a motion condemning recent antisemitic attacks in London. LJF worked with all parties to stress the importance of not allowing antisemitism to become political football.

**Engagement with Jewish Councillors**

It is vitally important that our communal organisations maintain strong relationships and links with Jewish councillors. Not only do they often have vital roles in local councils, they also give us an insight into political parties and their current way of thinking.

As such, we have been continuing our work in engaging Jewish councillors from across London. Most recently, we have been hosting roundtables with key Jewish councillors from each major political party to discuss the issues facing Jewish Londoners and our city as a whole. This has solidified our relationships and established a core group of friends in each political party and in various London boroughs who understand the Jewish community.

---

**Roundtable with Minister for London Paul Scully MP**

**London Assembly**

It is vitally important that our communal organisations maintain strong relationships and links with Jewish councillors. Not only do they often have vital roles in local councils, they also give us an insight into political parties and their current way of thinking.

As such, we have been continuing our work in engaging Jewish councillors from across London. Most recently, we have been hosting roundtables with key Jewish councillors from each major political party to discuss the issues facing Jewish Londoners and our city as a whole. This has solidified our relationships and established a core group of friends in each political party and in various London boroughs who understand the Jewish community.

**Engagement with Jewish Councillors**

Perhaps the highlight of our engagement with councils over the last year was our seminar for London’s councillors. In December 2020, in partnership with the Board of Deputies and Jewish Leadership Council, we hosted a seminar for London’s councillors to learn about the Jewish community. Over 200 councillors attended the seminar from 30 different councils, hearing sessions on education, social care, Israel and antisemitism. Guest speakers included leaders from various local Jewish communities, alongside communal organisations such as Jewish Care, Union of Jewish Students, and JAMI. We were also pleased to receive opening addresses from Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick MP, and Shadow Communities Secretary Steve Reed MP.

---

**Even before I entered City Hall, the London Jewish Forum gave me an excellent understanding of the needs and issues facing the Jewish community in London, helping me to support my constituents and the wider community**

- Neil Garrett, London Assembly Member for Croydon and Sutton
May 2021 saw local elections take place across the country, including elections for the Mayor of London, London Assembly, and County Council in Hertfordshire. Together with the Board of Deputies and Jewish Leadership Council, we produced the Jewish Manifesto for London, outlining the main priorities for Jewish Londoners in the next mayoral term. We were pleased to receive manifesto endorsements from Labour candidate and winner Sadiq Khan, Conservative candidate Shaun Bailey and Liberal Democrat candidate Luisa Porritt.

**London Assembly Candidate Engagement**

Before the election we had several meetings with candidates for the London Assembly, familiarising them with the Jewish community. Candidates met included Anne Clarke, Susan Hall, Keith Prince, Sem Moema, Krupesh Harani, Neil Garratt, Nicholas Rogers and Judith Garfield, almost all of which went on to be elected to the Assembly.

**Mayoral Hustings**

We were delighted to host hustings for the Jewish community for the Mayor of London election. Our hustings were one of very few which took place during the election with all four main candidates. Labour's Sadiq Khan, Conservative Shaun Bailey, Green Sian Berry and the Lib Dems’ Luisa Porritt battled it out, answering questions on a range of topics relevant to the Jewish community, including Israel, antisemitism, housing and more. The hustings took place virtually and over 5,000 people tuned in to watch the event.
LONDON ASSEMBLY HUSTINGS

We hosted several hustings for the London Assembly elections taking place in constituencies with Jewish communities including Ealing and Hillingdon, Barnet and Camden, and Brent and Harrow. In Havering and Redbridge, where we didn’t host hustings, we produced a short video of the candidates answering questions on Jewish issues.

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HUSTINGS

We also ran Hertfordshire County Council hustings for the Jewish community in Bushey North and Bushey South as well as Borehamwood North and Borehamwood South. With there being a by-election in Borehamwood Kenilworth on Hertsmere Council, we arranged pseudo hustings between candidates Dan Ozarow and Rabbi David Neifeld.

Four spar at Assembly hustings

Antisemitism and improving air quality were among issues discussed by representatives of four parties at a London Assembly hustings for Barnet and Camden, writes Jesse Fruizer.

Only two of the four speakers on Monday night were candidates — Marisha Ray from the Liberal Democrats and councillor Anne Clarke from Labour. Neither Kirsten de Keyser (Green Party) or Roberto Weeden-Sanz (Conservatives) were present at the event held by the Jewish Leadership Council event. Instead, they were represented by Zack Polanski for the Greens — himself running for the Assembly in West Central London — and Barnet Council’s Peter Zinkin for the Conservatives.

A fifth candidate, Martin Smith for the Reform Party, was in the Zoom audience for the event, but complained he had been excluded from the hustings by organisers. A decision had been taken only to include parties where polls showed they could pass an electoral threshold of five percent — this did not apply to the Reform Party anywhere in the country.

The event was organised by the London Jewish Forum, Board of Deputies and J.I.C and moderated by Jewish News’ Lee Harpin.
The London Jewish Forum is a joint venture of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and Jewish Leadership Council. Its work is based on a joint programme agreed with both organisations focusing on the Jewish community’s engagement and interaction with the Mayor, the GLA, London’s councils and MPs. It works as Hertfordshire Jewish Forum and Essex Jewish Forum in operating in those counties.