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THE MINUTE NEWS



COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Universities Minister Jo Johnson discusses antisemitism and religious freedoms with Jewish groups



Jewish community organisations this week held a meeting with Universities Minister Jo Johnson, arranged by the Board of Deputies. Topics discussed included antisemitism and freedom of speech, religious freedom issues and ways in which the new government will be able to support Jewish students and academics.

Board of Deputies Vice President Amanda Bowman led the delegation, which comprised colleagues from the Union of Jewish Students, the Jewish Leadership Council, the Community Security Trust, and University Jewish Chaplaincy.

In a joint statement, Board of Deputies Vice President Amanda Bowman, UJS President Esther Offenberg, the JLC's Claudia Mendoza, CST's Jonny Newton and Jewish Chaplaincy representative Rabbi Michael Rosenfeld-Schueler said:

"The Jewish community is pleased to welcome Minister Jo Johnson back to the role of Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation.

"We would like to thank the Minister for meeting with us, and for the opportunity to discuss key areas of

Universities Minister Jo Johnson said: “I am pleased to have met with the Board of Deputies of British Jews and other members from Jewish representative groups today to discuss Jewish students and academics’ experience in higher education.

“I have listened to the concerns and challenges Jewish students face and I am clear that there is no place within higher education for any form of hatred or discrimination – including antisemitism. That is why the Government is working with the Office for Students and UUK to take action to ensure everyone can thrive at university.”

importance for Jewish students, academics, and the wider community.

“The Minister’s previous work in the role on the issues of antisemitism and freedom of speech on campus reassures us that under this government, Jewish life on campus will thrive in a safe and welcoming environment for all. We look forward to working with the Minister to address our shared priorities.”

Marie van der Zyl: Trump statement ‘flies in the face of his professed stance on anti-Jewish hate’

Board of Deputies President Marie van der Zyl has reacted to President Donald Trump’s statement in which he said that Jews voting for a Democrat “show either a total lack of knowledge or great disloyalty”.

Marie said: “Whatever one thinks of the antics of certain Democrat politicians, to single out Jewish voters and accuse them of the ancient slur of ‘disloyalty’ – when antisemitic violence is on the rise – is reckless and flies in the face of President Trump’s professed strong stance against anti-Jewish hate. American Jews – like British Jews – will vote for candidates from any party that best represent them on the full spectrum of issues, from healthcare and education, to fighting antisemitism.”

Read the JC story [here](#) and the Jewish News report [here](#).

Board of Deputies Vice President responds to GCSE results

Responding to today’s GCSE results, Board of Deputies Vice President Edwin Shuker said: “B’hatzlacha to all those receiving results today - and mazel tov to pupils, teachers and schools for all your hard work. We hope it pays off and that you receive the results you were hoping for.

“The number of entries for Modern Hebrew has declined quite significantly, which is concerning against an otherwise upward trend of modern foreign languages.

“This could be an anomalous fluctuation, as does happen with smaller subjects, but we will continue to work with exam boards and schools to ensure Modern Hebrew remains an option for our pupils. In the new academic year, we will engage with Jewish schools to understand whether this is just an anomaly or a systemic issue, and how we might address it together.”



Board of Deputies President Marie van der Zyl was in Petach Tikva for the football game this week between the Israel women's national team and Chelsea Women. The fixture was to promote the development of women's sport in Israel. Chelsea won 3-1.

BEYOND COEXISTENCE: INTERFAITH IN ACTION

Join the Board of Deputies of British Jews for a half-day conference, addressing some of the most topical questions in interfaith relations.

Sunday 8th September 11:15 AM
North West London location
£5, including a kosher lunch
[Click here to register: https://bookintefaith.eventbrite.co.uk](https://bookintefaith.eventbrite.co.uk)

How can we challenge *racism* together?
How should we talk about *the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*?
How can we act together for *social justice*?

Featuring:
Edwin Shuker, Imam Carl Asim MBE, HOPE not Hate, Solutions Not Sides,
The Council of Christians and Jews, Mitzvah Day, and more.

 **BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF
BRITISH JEWS**
ADVOCACY FOR THE COMMUNITY

The last few tickets are available for our conference on interfaith relations, “Beyond Coexistence”, on Sunday 8th September. The full programme has now been announced, with sessions on challenging racism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, social justice and scriptural reasoning. Tickets are £5 including a kosher lunch. [Book here](#)

ACTIVITY REPORT

RECRUITMENT

The Board of Deputies is looking for outstanding candidates to fill five roles – Head of Fundraising, Director of Operations, Director of Finance, Executive Assistant and Public Affairs Officer. You can find full job descriptions and details of how to apply [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL

President Marie van der Zyl met British Ambassador Neil Wigan during her visit to Israel.

Senior Vice President Sheila Gewolb and **International Relations Officer Marius Bischoff** met the Ambassador of Tajikistan, Masud Khalifazoda, for an introductory meeting.

Senior Vice President Sheila Gewolb and **International Relations Officer Marius Bischoff** met a delegation from the German Bundestag, including Kerstin Griese MdB, Eva Hoegl MdB, Christian Lange MdB, and diplomatic staff here in London, to discuss antisemitism and the current situation of the Jewish community.

Senior Vice President Sheila Gewolb and **International Relations Officer Marius Bischoff** met Gady Gronich, Chief of staff and Executive Director of the Conference of European Rabbis (CER) for an introductory meeting.

International Relations Officer Marius Bischoff met Naomi Chalupczak, political analyst at the US Embassy, to discuss antisemitism and challenges to religious freedoms.

EDUCATION

Education Policy and Youth Engagement Officer Jake Berger and **Education Development Manager Sara Perlmutter** attended a Joint Council for Qualifications briefing on the 2019 GCSE results.

Education Policy and Youth Engagement Officer Jake Berger attended a roundtable at the Department for Education about guidance on safeguarding in out-of-school settings.

POLITICAL

Board of Deputies President Marie van der Zyl commented on the appearance of Brexit Party MEPS on a radio show which promotes Holocaust deniers and antisemitic conspiracy theorists. She said: “Brexit Party candidates – and indeed politicians of all stripes – should stay far away from this show which has hosted Holocaust deniers, praised antisemites and has links to the notorious connoisseur of antisemitic conspiracy theories, David Icke. So far in 2019 the Brexit Party have had a leader and treasurer resign over racism allegations. This latest revelation reflects a very concerning trend and the party must take unrelenting action to stamp out prejudice.”

INTERFAITH

Interfaith and Social Action Officer Anthony Silkoff met Jude Levermore, Head of Mission at the Methodist Church in Britain. They discussed opportunities for Methodist-Jewish collaboration on issues such as climate change and social justice, as well as matters of importance to the Jewish community, such as antisemitism.

COMMUNITY

Chief Executive Gillian Merron and **Community Engagement Officer Lauren Keiles** met Matt Plen, Chief Executive of Masorti Judaism.