

Press release: Communities Secretary praises Holocaust survivors on visit to survivors centre in Hendon

Survivors of the Holocaust were today praised for their fortitude and “great service” to Britain by Communities Secretary, the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, as he stressed the importance of plans for a new national memorial.

On a visit to Jewish Care’s Holocaust Survivors’ Centre in Hendon, Mr Brokenshire said the memorial will ensure we never forget one of the darkest chapters in human history.

He also announced that a time capsule will be buried at the proposed site and invited survivors and others to think about what should go in the capsule alongside their hopes for the memorial.

Mr Brokenshire met and spoke to survivors about the challenges they faced as refugees in Britain after the war, how they went on to build new lives for themselves and became part of the essential fabric of British life.

It was also an opportunity to discuss the importance of the new National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre planned for Victoria Tower Gardens beside Parliament, as a significant proportion of the centre’s content will be devoted to survivors’ testimony.

Speaking after the visit to the weekly ‘Yiddish and Kiddush’ social club held at the Hendon centre, Mr Brokenshire said:

For more than 70 years the survivors who built a community here in Hendon have done Britain and the world a great service.

Through their powerful testimony, in the retelling of difficult, personal, tragic stories we’ve learnt the terrible consequences of where bigotry, intolerance and division can lead.

The striking National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre is a powerful symbol of our commitment to remembering the men, women and children who were murdered in the Holocaust but also those who survived and made their lives in this country.

Rightly located in the shadow of Parliament, it will be the focal point for national remembrance of the Holocaust. The view of Parliament from the Memorial will provide a constant reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences.

The Holocaust remains the worst example of the disintegration of democratic values and remains unsurpassed in its horror.

A time capsule will be buried at the site. In a century's time, those opening it will be reminded that survivors fought long and hard for this memorial.

As these first-person testimonies fade with time, the Memorial and Learning Centre will make sure Britain will never forget.

Jewish Care's [Holocaust Survivors' Centre](#) is the only centre in the UK designed and run specifically for Holocaust survivors. It provides outings, lunches, music concerts, talks on art and culture and therapeutic events 6 days a week.

The Centre also records testimonies and links survivors to schools so that they can share their experiences with future generations as well as arranges Holocaust education trips to Poland.

The [United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial](#) is dedicated to the 6 million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust and all other victims of the Nazis and their collaborators.

It will honour and remember all victims and survivors of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides and educate future generations on the importance of fighting prejudice and persecution in all its forms.

The proposals have been developed with great sensitivity to the existing context and character of Victoria Tower Gardens. The vast majority of the park's green space will be retained and enhanced and views over Parliament and the river Thames will be improved with a range of accessible seating and a new boardwalk along the embankment.