

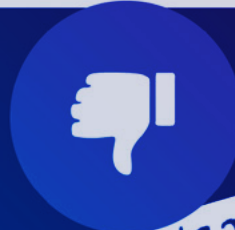
Antisemitic Discourse

in Britain 2021



Social media giants ignore '84%' of complaints on hate

Anti-vaxxers use their super-spreader networks to push Jew-hate to millions

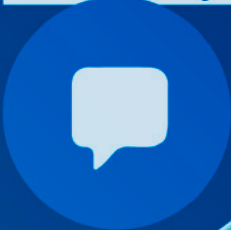


Jewish students are starting to ask if they are really safe at University

Minister warns social media sites to act on Jew-hate

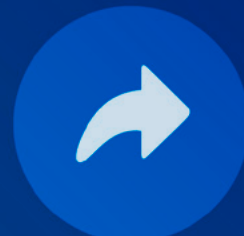


Community fearful as hate incidents increase sixfold



Campus hate surge should 'ring alarm bells'

Royal Court 'brushed off hate warnings last year'



CONTENTS

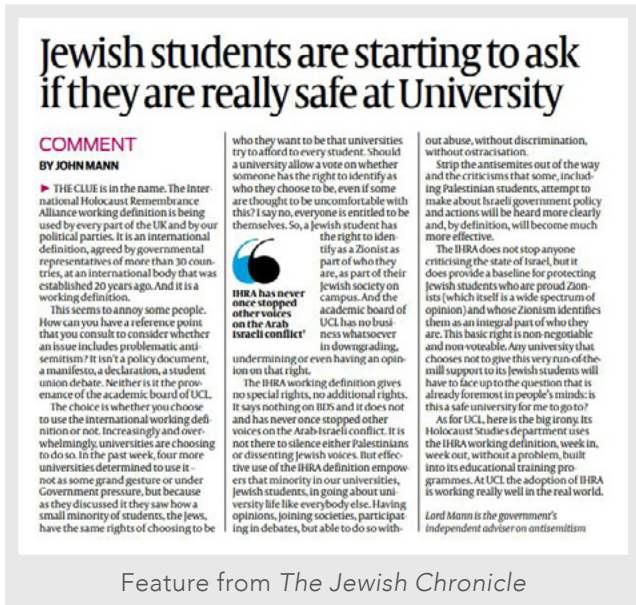
Executive summary	4	David Miller dismissed by the University of Bristol	16
Introduction	6	Antisemitic incidents on campus	19
Antisemitic discourse and antisemitism	7	University Antisemitism House of Lords Debate 21.01.21	20
Antisemitic impacts of legitimate debate and media coverage	7	Jewish student given antisemitic reading material	21
UK Jewish life:		Antisemitism and UK political parties	21
Putting antisemitism into context	8	Political condemnation of the rise in antisemitism during the Gaza conflict	22
Overview	8	The Labour Party and antisemitism	24
History	8	Allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party	26
Demography	8	Allegations of antisemitism in the Liberal Democrat Party	27
What is antisemitism?		Allegations of antisemitism in the Green Party	27
Background and concepts	9	Allegations of antisemitism in the Scottish National Party (SNP)	28
Antisemitism: background	9	Antisemitism in the media/social media	29
Types of antisemitism	9	Allegations of antisemitism directed at the BBC.	29
Interpretations of antisemitism	10	Antisemitism on social media	29
International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism (2016)	11	Woolf Institute, Antisemitism Policy Trust, CST	29
Antisemitism: Legal definitions	12	Centre for Countering Digital Hate	30
Race Relations Act 1976	12	Wiley returns	31
Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (1999)	12	Antisemitism spread on social media by Iran	32
British Jews:		Antisemitism at the Royal Court Theatre	32
Relationship with Zionism and Israel	13	Antisemitism in sport	33
Antisemitism and anti-Zionism	13	Covid-19 antisemitic discourse	35
Anti-Zionism	13		
Jews and anti-Zionism	14		
Anti-Zionism and criticism of Israel	14		
Antisemitic anti-Zionism and conspiracy theory	14		
Historical continuities between antisemitism and anti-Zionism	15		
Antisemitism on campus	16		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Antisemitism continued to play a role in the national discourse in Britain during 2021.
- David Miller, Professor of Political Sociology at the University of Bristol, made conspiratorial and implicitly threatening statements about Jewish students at Bristol. He was widely condemned, although hundreds of academics wrote a letter publicly supporting Miller and his research. **The university launched an investigation and Miller was eventually sacked from his position.**



Front page feature from *The Jewish Chronicle*



Feature from *The Jewish Chronicle*

- Antisemitic incidents on campus rose to their highest level, with a spike in May coinciding with the violence between Israel and Hamas. **The Education Secretary convened an antisemitism summit and continued to push for more universities to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism.** In January, the House of Lords held a debate about antisemitism on UK campuses, based partly on CST’s report on the subject released the previous December.

- The Labour Party under the leadership of Sir Keir Starmer **continued to take steps to eradicate antisemitism** from the party. Four groups were proscribed by the party and delegates at the party’s annual conference voted to overhaul the independent complaints process. The Jewish Labour Movement conducted a survey of its members, which showed that a majority believed the Labour Party was a safe space for Jews under the current leadership.
- Allegations of **antisemitism were directed at the BBC** after a report into an antisemitic attack on a bus containing Jews celebrating the festival of Chanukah contained a reference to an alleged, but disputed, anti-Muslim slur that was said to have been made by one of the victims.
- The huge rise in antisemitic hate incidents during the conflict between Israel and Hamas in May was **condemned by politicians across the political spectrum.** There were many statements expressing solidarity with the Jewish community.



Feature from Jewish News

- Antisemitism continued to proliferate on social media platforms. A number of reports were released looking into the various platforms and their processes to deal with antisemitic content.

Minister warns social media sites to act on Jew-hate

Surveys show tech giants fail to deal with vast majority of complaints about anti-Jewish material • CST reports record antisemitism in 2021

EXCLUSIVE BY JC REPORTERS

THE CULTURE Secretary has told the *JC* he will hold social media giants "toe to the line" over rampant online antisemitism as separate surveys showed the tech companies were failing to remove a large majority of Jew-hate posts reported to them.

Oliver Dowden warned sites including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and Instagram to "lean up their sites immediately", adding that if they failed to comply after new laws come in they could face huge fines or be blocked.

The warning came as the Community Security Trust reported record levels of antisemitic incidents in the first six months of this year.

The CST's report included 535 inci-

ents of online abuse, the charity's second highest half-year figure.

CST chief executive Mark Gardner described levels of anti-Jewish hatred in Britain as "more than anything seen in recent decades".

The intervention by the Culture Secretary also follows a report by the Centre for Countering Digital Hate which detailed how 84 per cent of posts – including Holocaust denial, anti-Jewish conspiracy theories and even incitement to violence against Jews – remained on social media sites even after they had been reported.

The CDH identified 714 antisemitic posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok and reported

CONTINUED ON P2

Feature from The Jewish Chronicle

- The rap artist Wiley returned to some social media platforms to make more antisemitic statements before he was once again removed.

- Antisemitism was allegedly spread on social media by an extensive global disinformation network run by Iran.
- The Royal Court Theatre in London apologised after an unscrupulous character in a new play was given a stereotypically Jewish-sounding name.

Royal Court 'brushed off hate warnings last year'

Dialect coach says she raised concerns over 'Jewish' name in play 18 months before scandal broke

EXCLUSIVE BY JEWEL MALKIN



THE ROYAL COURT theatre was warned 18 months ago that it was downgrading antisemitic concerns, one expert has brushed off all the warnings, a whistleblower has told the *JC* in an exclusive new interview.

Kate Thompson admits to speaking out on controversial play *Kate* early on, but says she was not taken seriously. She says the play's name, *Yiddish Fish*, had been written as a Jewish character in a comedy sketch as a punchline at a March 2019 event.

Ms Thompson, 52, who is not Jewish, asked for a meeting with the theatre's artistic director, who she says was "friendly but not interested".

She says she was told to "keep it to yourself" and that the play was "not antisemitic". She says she was told to "keep it to yourself" and that the play was "not antisemitic".

She says she was told to "keep it to yourself" and that the play was "not antisemitic". She says she was told to "keep it to yourself" and that the play was "not antisemitic".

Feature from The Jewish Chronicle

- Antisemitism played a role in both football and cricket. In football, there were examples of antisemitism in Scottish football, the word "holocaust" was misused and the rise and immediate fall of the European Super League led to antisemitic online comments. In cricket, it emerged that Azeem Rafiq, himself a victim of racism within the sport, had previously made antisemitic comments on Facebook. Rafiq apologised and underwent a process to learn about antisemitism, which received further media coverage.

INTRODUCTION

This CST *Antisemitic Discourse in Britain* report analyses written and verbal communication, discussion and rhetoric about antisemitism and related issues in Britain during 2021. It is published annually by CST.¹

‘Discourse’ is used in this report to mean ‘communicative action’: communication expressed in speech, written text, images and other forms of expression and propaganda.²

The report concentrates upon mainstream discourse. It cites numerous mainstream publications, groups and individuals who are by no means antisemitic, but whose behaviour may impact upon attitudes concerning Jews and antisemitism.

The report is not a survey of marginal or clandestine racist, extremist and radical circles, where antisemitism is much more common. Where such material is quoted within this report, it is usually for comparison with more mainstream sources, or because of the wider influence that such material may have.

CST distinguishes antisemitic discourse from actual antisemitic incidents and hate crimes against Jews or Jewish organisations and property.³

The 2006 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* noted the importance and complexity of antisemitic discourse and urged further study of it.⁴ By 2008, the parliamentary inquiry process had led to the issuing of the first progress report of the government’s task force against antisemitism. This stated of antisemitic discourse:

“Antisemitism in discourse is, by its nature, harder to identify and define than a physical attack on a person or place. It is more easily recognised by those who experience it than by those who engage in it.

“Antisemitic discourse is also hard to identify because the boundaries of acceptable discourse have become blurred to the point that individuals and organisations are not aware when these boundaries have been crossed, and because the language used is more subtle particularly in the contentious area of the dividing line between antisemitism and criticism of Israel or Zionism.”⁵

The 2015 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* noted the earlier finding by MPs in the 2006 report that: *“the significance of public discourse is that it influences attitudes which in turn influence actions.”⁶*

1 Previous reports are available on the CST website: www.cst.org.uk/publications

2 Paul Iganski & Abe Sweiry, *Understanding and Addressing the ‘Nazi Card’: Intervening Against Antisemitic Discourse*. London: European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism (2009)

3 CST’s annual *Antisemitic Incidents Report*, available at www.cst.org.uk/publications

4 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism*. London: The All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism (September 2006)

5 *All-Party Inquiry into Antisemitism: Government Response. One year on Progress Report*. London: The Stationery Office (12 May 2008), p. 12

6 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism*. London: The All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism (February 2015)

ANTISEMITIC DISCOURSE AND ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitic discourse influences and reflects hostile attitudes to Jews and Jewish-related issues. Hostile attitudes can lead to hostile actions and damaging impacts.

Physically, antisemitic discourse may contribute to an atmosphere in which antisemitic hate crimes against Jews and Jewish institutions are more likely to occur. Psychologically, it can make Jews feel isolated, vulnerable and hurt.

The purpose of this report is to help reduce antisemitism, by furthering the understanding of antisemitic discourse and its negative impacts on Jews and society as a whole.

Antisemitic impacts of legitimate debate and media coverage

Antisemitic impacts may arise from entirely legitimate situations that have no antisemitic intention. Statistics show that hate crimes against perceived members of any particular group can be triggered (or exacerbated) by public discourse or events related to that particular group. For example, antisemitic incident levels typically rise in relation to some public events and stories involving Jews, Jewish institutions, or Jewish-related subjects such as Israel.⁷

Negative media coverage of, or political comment on, Jewish-related events may be entirely legitimate, fair and in the public interest. Nevertheless, those debates can encourage antisemites or cause concern to Jews. This is more likely if such commentary involves inflammatory language or the use of traditional antisemitic imagery, or appears to single out one particular object or individual for scrutiny due to their being Jewish.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security organisation, explains the relation between antisemitic discourse and hostility as follows:

*"Expressions of anti-Semitism in public discourse remain a serious issue of concern as they exacerbate hostile attitudes towards Jews. They have the potential to fuel anti-Semitic incidents, leading to greater insecurity in the Jewish communities and in societies across the OSCE region."*⁸

⁷ Shown repeatedly in CST's annual *Antisemitic Incidents Report*. Also, Paul Iganski, Vicky Kielinger & Susan Paterson, *Hate Crimes Against London's Jews*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research (2005)

⁸ www.osce.org/cio/75676?download=true

UK JEWISH LIFE: Putting antisemitism into context

Any overall assessment of the condition of British Jewry demands proper consideration of both positive and negative aspects. Britain's diverse Jewish communities have many examples of success, vibrancy and confidence. Nevertheless, antisemitic hate crimes, antisemitic discourse and wider antisemitic attitudes in society are issues of considerable importance for British Jews.

Overview

Jewish life in Britain today is diverse, and most Jews are well integrated into wider society. Government and others often cite the Jewish community as the benchmark of successful minority integration. British Jews have full equal rights and protection in law, including against antisemitic incitement and bias. Jews who wish to live a Jewish life can do so in many ways, including pursuing educational, religious, cultural or political activities

Generally, overt antisemitism is deemed socially unacceptable and Jews have succeeded in many spheres of public and private life. Nevertheless, the long history of antisemitism, and its remaining manifestations, can cause significant concerns.

A 2014 report by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research noted that whilst *"most British Jews feel integrated into British society and that discrimination against Jews is largely a thing of the past"*, it is also the case that *"most Jews feel that levels of antisemitism have increased in recent years, particularly online, in the media, in academia and certain political contexts"*.⁹

History

Jews arrived in the British Isles in Roman times, but organised settlement followed the Norman Conquest of 1066. Massacres of Jews occurred in many cities in 1190, most notably in York. In 1290,

all Jews were expelled by King Edward I, but some converts to Christianity and secret adherents to Judaism remained. Following the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492, a covert Jewish community became established in London. The present British Jewish community, however, has existed since 1656, when Oliver Cromwell formally invited Jews to return to this country.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Jews were largely emancipated politically but still suffered formal and informal exclusion from some professions and institutions, while prejudice towards Jews – especially those who were recent immigrants – remained common. From 1881 to 1914, the influx of Russian Jewish immigrants saw the Jewish community's population rise from approximately 60,000 to approximately 300,000. Many Jews can trace their arrival in Britain back to this wave of immigration. Others can trace their British identity back considerably further. Considerable numbers of Jews of other national origins have arrived in recent years and decades, from countries including South Africa, Israel and France.

Demography

A total of 263,346 people answered 'Jewish' to the voluntary question on religion in the 2011 UK Census. For the first time, the 2011 Census showed Jews living in every local authority in England and Wales.¹⁰ Just under two-thirds of British Jews live in Greater London. Other major Jewish centres are in Manchester, Leeds, Gateshead, Birmingham and Glasgow.

The religious composition of the Jewish community is highly diverse and ranges from the strictly Orthodox to non-practising.

In essence, antisemitism is discrimination, prejudice or hostility against Jews.

⁹ Laura D Staetsky & Jonathan Boyd, *The Exceptional Case? Perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews in the United Kingdom*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research (July 2014)

¹⁰ Simon Roker, 'Census 2011: The Jewish breakdown', *Jewish Chronicle* (13 December 2012) <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/94111/census-2011-the-jewish-breakdown>

WHAT IS ANTISEMITISM? Background and concepts

The word ‘antisemitism’ came into use in the late nineteenth century to describe pseudoscientific racial discrimination against Jews, but is now used more generally to describe all forms of discrimination, prejudice or hostility towards Jews throughout history, and has been called “*The Longest Hatred*”.¹¹

It may be spelled as ‘antisemitism’ or as ‘anti-Semitism’. CST uses ‘antisemitism’, as this spelling limits the notion that there is such a thing as ‘Semitism’ to which one may be ‘anti’ (i.e. in opposition to).

Antisemitism: background

History shows that increases in anti-Jewish sentiment or actions often reflect growing extremism or divisions within society as a whole. Antisemitism is a subject that should concern not only Jews, but all of society.

The near-destruction of European Jewry in the Nazi Holocaust rendered open antisemitism taboo in public life. The strong association of antisemitism with the Nazi Holocaust can lead to the mistaken assumption that antisemitism is an exclusively far right, genocidal phenomenon that essentially ended after the Second World War.

Throughout history, anti-Jewish attitudes have taken many forms, including religious, nationalist, political, economic and racial-biological. Jews have been blamed for many phenomena, including the death of Jesus; the Black Death; the advent of liberalism, democracy, communism and capitalism; and for inciting numerous revolutions and wars.

A dominant antisemitic theme is the allegation that Jews are rich, powerful and cunning manipulators, set against the rest of society for their evil and

timeless purpose. The notion of Jewish power (for example as codified within the notorious hoax *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*) distinguishes antisemitism from other types of racism, which often depict their targets as ignorant and primitive.¹²

Antisemitism – like any other form of prejudice – is not solely found in the conscious motivation or intention of an individual or group.

Antisemitism can also reside in the resonance of a perpetrator’s behaviour, where this echoes or repeats older antisemitic accusations and behaviours.

Antisemitism can also be the impact (whether intended or inadvertent) of a person’s actions, or the consequence of the policies and practices of an organisation.

Types of antisemitism

Antisemitism is a global phenomenon, occurring even where there are no Jews. Its manifestation and expression may range from violent thuggery and murder to literary, philosophical and political discourse. Antisemitism has been described as an ideology in its own right, but others say it is undeserving of such status and should rather be regarded as a polluter of ideologies.¹³

Its persistence and adaptability are not doubted, yet precise definitions of antisemitism, its scale and the nature of its contemporary appearance can cause heated debate.

11 For example, Robert S Wistrich, *Anti-Semitism: The Longest Hatred*. Methuen (1991) and Screen Guides for Thames Television, *The Longest Hatred*. (1991)

12 See, Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*. London: Serif Books (1996), original publ. 1967

13 Anthony Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2010), p. xliv

Interpretations of antisemitism

Much has been written and discussed regarding what constitutes antisemitism. The definitions shown below are intended as a constructive guide to differing interpretations, but are the briefest of introductions to what is a very large topic.

Steve Cohen argued that antisemitism is defined by its ideological nature:

*"The peculiar and defining feature of anti-semitism is that it exists as an ideology. It provides its adherents with a universal and generalised interpretation of the world. This is the theory of the Jewish conspiracy, which depicts Jews as historically controlling and determining nature and human destiny. Anti-semitism is an ideology which has influenced millions of people precisely because it presents an explanation of the world by attributing such extreme powers to its motive force – the Jews."*¹⁴

Anthony Julius has argued that English antisemitism comprises "several kinds of anti-Semitism"; and he identifies four kinds that wholly or substantially "have an English provenance":

- "A radical anti-Semitism of defamation, expropriation, murder, and expulsion – that is, the anti-Semitism of medieval England, which completed itself in 1290, when there were no Jews left to torment."
- "A literary anti-Semitism – that is, an anti-Semitic account of Jews continuously present in the discourse of English literature...through to present times."
- "A modern, quotidian anti-Semitism of insult and partial exclusion, pervasive but contained... everyday anti-Semitism experienced by Jews... through to the late twentieth century."

- "A new configuration of anti-Zionisms, emerging in the late 1960s and the 1970s, which treats Zionism and the State of Israel as illegitimate Jewish enterprises. This perspective, heavily indebted to anti-Semitic tropes, now constitutes the greatest threat to Anglo-Jewish security and morale...By 'tropes' I mean those taken-for-granted utterances, those figures and metaphors through which more general positions are intimated, without ever being argued for."¹⁵

Brian Klug describes the importance of the imaginary 'Jew' (as distinct to the reality of Jews). He depicts the antisemitic caricature of this imaginary 'Jew' as follows:

*"The Jew belongs to a sinister people set apart from all others, not merely by its customs but by a collective character: arrogant yet obsequious; legalistic yet corrupt; flamboyant yet secretive. Always looking to turn a profit, Jews are as ruthless as they are tricky. Loyal only to their own, wherever they go they form a state within a state, preying upon the societies in whose midst they dwell. Their hidden hand controls the banks, the markets and the media. And when revolutions occur or nations go to war, it is the Jews – cohesive, powerful, clever and stubborn – who invariably pull the strings and reap the rewards."*¹⁶

¹⁴ Steve Cohen, *That's Funny, You Don't Look Anti-Semitic*. Leeds: Beyond the Pale Collective (1984), p. 11

¹⁵ Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora*, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii

¹⁶ Brian Klug, 'The Concept of Anti-Semitism', speech to Oxford University Chabad Society (7 June 2009) http://www.oxfordchabad.org/templates/articlecco_cdo/aid/922682/jewish/Anti-Semitism-Symposium.htm

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism (2016)

In December 2016, the UK Government formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.¹⁷ This is a non-legally binding definition of antisemitism that evolved from a previous working definition, drawn up by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in 2005, primarily to aid law enforcement when deciding whether crimes are antisemitic or not. This was intended to enable cross-comparison and assessment of levels of antisemitism, and of European nations' policing and prosecuting of antisemitism.

The IHRA definition includes a list of examples of attitudes and language that *"could, taking into account the overall context"* indicate antisemitism, which includes some attitudes and language that relate to Israel as well as to Jews per se. Some anti-Israel and anti-Zionist activists claim this unfairly renders their behaviour antisemitic. Some pro-Israel activists claim that the working definition defines and outlaws certain anti-Israel attitudes and acts as antisemitic. At times, both are guilty of neglecting the working definition's core purpose and its caveat about *"overall context"*.

Following the UK Government adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism, it has since been widely adopted, endorsed or used by authorities, agencies and institutions throughout British society, making it the standard non-legal definition that is used when trying to identify possible manifestations of antisemitism.



IHRA adoption plenary in Bucharest Credit IHRA

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-leads-the-way-in-tackling-anti-semitism>

ANTISEMITISM: Legal definitions

Legal definitions of antisemitism are primarily intended for police and judicial use in identifying antisemitic incidents and crimes, rather than defining discourse. Nevertheless, these definitions can provide useful tools for helping consider what may, or may not, constitute antisemitic discourse.

Race Relations Act 1976

The 2006 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* summarised antisemitism with reference to the Race Relations Act 1976, which is the basis for legal definitions of racism and antisemitism. This was repeated in the updated 2015 antisemitism inquiry report:

“Broadly, it is our view that any remark, insult or act the purpose or effect of which is to violate a Jewish person’s dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him is antisemitic.

“This reflects the definition of harassment under the Race Relations Act 1976. This definition can be applied to individuals and to the Jewish community as a whole.”¹⁸

Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (1999)

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident has significantly influenced societal interpretations of what does and does not constitute racism, strengthening the importance of the victim’s perception.

The 2006 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* and the updated 2015 report invoked the Lawrence Inquiry, stating:

“We take into account the view expressed in the Macpherson report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry that a racist act is defined by its victim. It is not acceptable for an individual to say ‘I am not a racist’ if his or her words or acts are perceived to be racist.

“We conclude that it is the Jewish community itself that is best qualified to determine what does and does not constitute antisemitism.”¹⁹

The UK Government Command response to the Parliamentary inquiry concurred, stating:

“The Government currently uses the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident which is an incident that is perceived as racist by the victim or any other person, and this would include antisemitism. This is a very wide and powerful definition as it clearly includes the ‘perception’ of the victim and others.”²⁰

¹⁸ *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* (2006), p. 1

¹⁹ *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* (2006), p. 1

²⁰ *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism: Government Response*. London: The Stationery Office (29 March 2007), p. 3

BRITISH JEWS: Relationship with Zionism and Israel

Zionism and Israel are, in part, Jewish responses to the long and often tragic history of antisemitism.

The complex dynamics between antisemitism, anti-Israel activity and anti-Zionism play an important role in debates over contemporary British antisemitism.

Overwhelmingly, British Jews do not come from Israel and their families have been British for at least two generations. Nevertheless, Israel plays an important role in the self-identity of many British Jews. This manifests in the practical sense of physical, emotional and family links that many Jews enjoy with Israel and Israeli citizens, as well as in the psychological sense of perceiving Israel as representing Jewish identity, refuge and rebirth in the post-Holocaust age.

A 2010 survey by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research found that 95% of British Jews said Israel plays some role in their Jewish identity, 82% said it plays a central or important role and 72% consider themselves 'Zionists'. The same survey found that 95% of British Jews have visited Israel.²¹ A similar survey by City University in 2015 found that 90% of British Jews support Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and 93% said Israel plays some role in their Jewish identity.²²

In recent years, Israel has been subject to repeated criticism and outright hostility from relatively large sections of the liberal left, including parts of the media, campaigning groups, trade unions, politicians, churches and the NGO sector. British Jews hold varying perspectives on the legitimacy and motivation of this behaviour, ranging from those who play a leading part in anti-Israel activity,

to those who regard these actions as antisemitic.

Antisemitism and anti-Zionism

Like racism, antisemitism can feed off criticism of Jews, Israel or Zionism, regardless of how fair or unfair, antisemitic or legitimate, that criticism may be.

Anti-Zionism

The term 'anti-Zionism' describes a wide range of hostile attitudes towards Jewish self-determination, and particularly towards Jewish peoplehood and the right of the Jewish people to have a nation state (now existing in Israel). Anti-Zionism that denies these beliefs, or seeks Israel's dissolution, should not be confused with criticism of Israel's actions. Anti-Zionism is a complex and contested term, because definitions of Zionism itself mean different things to different people. In particular, mainstream Jewish definitions of Zionism differ markedly from far left, far right and Islamist definitions – all of which tend to use (and denigrate) Zionism as a term of political abuse.

Not all anti-Zionists are antisemites and anti-Zionism is not necessarily antisemitic. For example, a minority of Jews do not believe, either for religious or political reasons, that the existence of Israel is in the best interests of the Jewish people. However, much anti-Zionism today is expressed in ways that are actively hostile towards Jews and towards the Jewish people as a group, and that bear similarities to older antisemitic language and imagery.

The malicious denial or misrepresentation of Jewish peoplehood is fundamentally antisemitic, as is politically motivated denial of the Jewish people's historical and religious links with the land of Israel.

²¹ David Graham & Jonathan Boyd, *Committed, concerned and conciliatory: The attitudes of Jews in Britain towards Israel*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research (July 2010), p. 9

²² Stephen Miller, Margaret Harris & Colin Shindler, *The Attitudes of British Jews Towards Israel*. London: City University, London (November 2015), p. 15

Jews and anti-Zionism

In the decades before the Second World War, anti-Zionism was a relatively widespread and respected position within mainstream Jewish politics. Many Jewish anti-Zionists opposed the idea of creating a Jewish state because they feared it would threaten the political and civic status of Jews in Diaspora communities. Others opposed Zionism because they believed that revolutionary socialism would emancipate Jews alongside the rest of humanity. Many strictly Orthodox Jews opposed Zionism on theological grounds relating to the coming of the Messiah. After the Holocaust and the creation (and survival) of Israel, Jewish opposition to Zionism declined markedly. Other than in some ultra-Orthodox or far left groups, Jews tend not to describe themselves as anti-Zionists.

Anti-Zionism and criticism of Israel

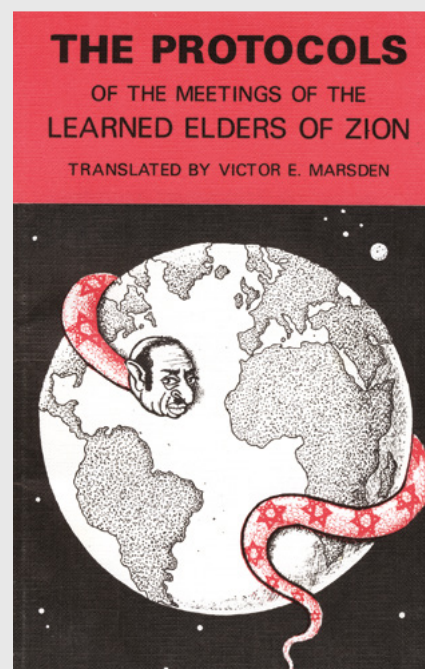
Antisemitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israel criticism or hatred are not the same as each other. They can, however, be hard to untangle and distinguish from one another. It is not necessarily antisemitic to criticise Israel or Zionism, even if the criticism is harsh or unfair. Gauging antisemitic motives and impacts largely depends upon the interaction of the following factors:

- **Target:** Are local Jews being singled out as recipients for criticism, bias or hatred that ostensibly derives from anti-Israel or anti-Zionist enmity?
- **Motivation:** To what extent is the criticism, or outright hatred, driven by the Jewish nature of Israel and/or Zionism?
- **Content:** Does the criticism, or hatred, use antisemitic or otherwise prejudiced language, themes or motifs?
- **Response to concerns:** Are local Jewish concerns about the above sincerely and equally heard? Or, are Jewish concerns viewed with hostility and singled out for scorn?

- **Repeat behaviour:** Does the offender repeat their behaviour, knowing the consequences and concerns that will be raised?

Antisemitic anti-Zionism and conspiracy theory

Antisemitism has changed and adapted throughout history to reflect the condition of Jews and the society around them at any given time. Today there is an antisemitic form of anti-Zionism that treats Zionism as a global, malevolent conspiracy, much as antisemites have portrayed Jews in the past. This can be found within far right, far left and extreme Islamist and New Age circles.



The notorious antisemitic forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* claims to reveal a supposed secret Jewish conspiracy to take over the world, depicted in this British version by a Jewish snake encircling the globe.

Championed by both far right and Islamist extremists, it includes chapters on Jewish control of war, politicians, finance and media. The Protocols contains old antisemitic themes that still resonate, impact and evolve in modern politics, media and discourse.

These different ideologies all use 'Zionism' and 'Zionist' as pejorative labels for political opponents, often regardless of whether the targets of their hatred are Jewish or pro-Israel, or not. In each different setting, Zionism is commonly discussed and perceived in ways that are strikingly similar to older antisemitic conspiracy theories (for example, as in *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*).

Employing the word 'Zionist' where the word 'Jew' would have previously appeared in open antisemitic discourse may, or may not, be deliberate obfuscation on the part of the user.

Nevertheless, it essentially fulfils the same psychological and political purpose as open antisemitism once did.

This antisemitic anti-Zionism has, at its core, a construction of Zionism as a political, financial, military and media conspiracy that is centred in Washington and Jerusalem, and which opposes authentic local interests. It is commonly found in extremist discourse, and sometimes alluded to in more diluted forms in mainstream discourse.

Unlike pre-war Jewish anti-Zionism, these modern anti-Zionists are not motivated by a concern for Jewish political and civic rights.

The 2006 *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* noted:

"One of the most difficult and contentious issues about which we have received evidence is the dividing line between antisemitism and criticism of Israel or Zionism.

"...discourse has developed that is in effect antisemitic because it views Zionism itself as a global force of unlimited power and malevolence throughout history. This definition of Zionism bears no relation to the understanding that most Jews have of the concept; that is, a movement of Jewish national liberation, born in the late nineteenth century with a geographical focus limited to Israel. Having re-defined Zionism in this way, traditional

*antisemitic notions of Jewish conspiratorial power, manipulation and subversion are then transferred from Jews (a racial and religious group) on to Zionism (a political movement). This is at the core of the 'New Antisemitism' on which so much has been written."*²³

Historical continuities between antisemitism and anti-Zionism

Other continuities between historical antisemitic themes and the type of modern anti-Zionism that is antisemitic can include the following:

- Alleging that Jewish holy books preach Jewish supremacy and that this is the basis for alleged Zionist racism.
- Dehumanising and demonising language comparing Jews to rats, cancer, plague and bacteria is now repeated in some depictions of Zionists and Israel. This reduces its target to a pest or disease to be cleansed.
- Scapegoating Jews as 'the Other'; blaming them for local and global problems; and demanding their destruction or conversion as a vital step in building a new, better world. This is echoed in the notion that Zionism is uniquely illegitimate, and that its destruction is required for the fulfilment of utopian ideological goals.
- The image of Jews as alien corrupters of traditional, authentic society and established morality endures in today's portrayals of Zionists as somehow hijacking other people's true will and nature, and thereby polluting domestic politics and society.

²³ *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism*, pp. 16–17

ANTISEMITISM ON CAMPUS

David Miller dismissed by the University of Bristol

Previous Antisemitic Discourse Reports (2018, 2019, 2020) have included articles about the words and actions of David Miller, professor at the University of Bristol.

On 13 February 2021, Miller spoke at an online campaign event entitled "In Defence of Free Speech", organised by Labour Against the Witch-Hunt, an organisation that was set up in 2017 to campaign against what it claims are politically motivated allegations of antisemitism within the party. At the event, Miller said: *"It's a question of how we defeat the ideology of Zionism in practice. How do we make sure Zionism is ended essentially. There's no other way of saying that."*²⁴

Miller also identified *"the head of the Bristol JSoc, the Jewish Society, along with the President of the Union of Jewish Students"* as people who had previously complained about him and described Bristol JSoc and UJS as *"formally members of the Zionist movement."*²⁵

In response to Miller's remarks, Bristol Jewish Society stated that: *"His comments will only succeed in making our campus a more hostile environment for Jewish students...Prof. Miller's words led to our President being targeted for abuse online. We will not sit by in silence and allow this hatred to be spread by representatives of our university towards its Jewish students. Action must be taken."*²⁶

Bristol Students' Union released a statement of solidarity with the Jewish Society in which

they said: *"We are deeply concerned by the points they have raised and stand in solidarity with our Jewish students. We will always support students who call for action against discrimination on our campus. Antisemitism is unacceptable."*²⁷

On 17 February, the Mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees, held an online meeting with members of Bristol University JSoc to discuss their complaints about David Miller. Rees said afterwards that he would be supporting them and meeting with the university to discuss the matter.²⁸

The following day, in an 'on the record' statement sent to journalist Ben Bloch, David Miller expanded on his speech at the online event: *"Zionism is and always has been a racist, violent, imperialist ideology premised on ethnic cleansing. It is an endemically anti-Arab and Islamophobic ideology. It has no place in any society. Bristol's JSoc, like all JSocs, operates under the auspices of the Union of Jewish Students (UJS), an Israel lobby group. The UJS is constitutionally bound to promoting Israel and campaigns to silence critics of Zionism or the State of Israel on British campuses. This campaign of censorship renders Arab and Muslim students, as well as anti-Zionist Jewish students, particularly unsafe."*²⁹

Thangam Debbonaire, MP for Bristol West, whose constituency covers the university, made the following comment about Miller's remarks: *"Completely unacceptable and I'm following this appalling behaviour by a Bristol Uni lecturer up with the university."*³⁰ She also attended and spoke at an online *"Get Hate off Campus"* rally organised by

²⁴ <https://twitter.com/hurryupharry/status/1360905103637626880> & <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/asked-about-end-zionism-prof-miller-education-secretary-says-i-do-not-expect-universities-to-to-1.518156>

²⁵ <https://recentstatementsbyprofdavidmillerconcerningbristoluniversity.wordpress.com/>

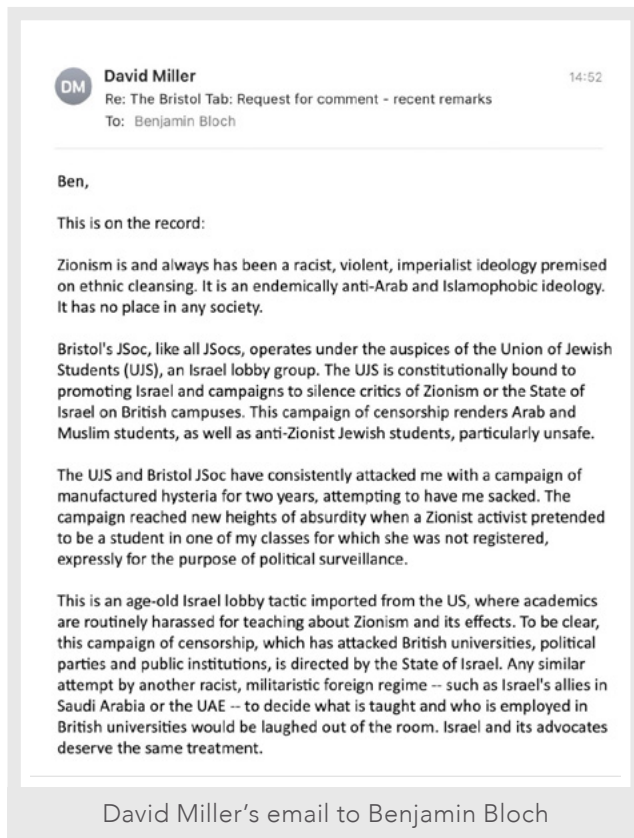
²⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/bristol.jsoc/posts/3054763434626431>

²⁷ <https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/articles/statement-of-solidarity-with-jsoc-9888>

²⁸ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/bristol-mayor-backs-jewish-students-in-row-over-end-zionism-academic-1.512009>

²⁹ <https://twitter.com/realBenBloch/status/1362432493593505796>

³⁰ <https://twitter.com/thangammp/status/1362489155163467780>



Bristol JSoc and UJS, which was held on 24 February.³¹

On 23 February, representatives from UJS and Bristol JSoc met with members of the senior management team from Bristol University to discuss concerns over Professor Miller and possible next steps. According to a UJS statement after the meeting: "Yet again, the University has failed to give concrete steps on what they can do to protect their Jewish students from hatred and racism both physically and digitally. We will not let this go and will continue to hold the University to account and get hate off campus."³²

³¹ <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/miller-hate-campaign-enabled-by-university-1.512167>

³² <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/bristol-university-yet-again-failed-to-act-on-end-zionism-professor/>

On 25 February, Christian Wakeford, MP for Bury South, brought up David Miller's comments in the House of Commons. He called for a debate on the need to improve university complaints procedures "which are failing Jewish students". In response, Jacob Rees-Mogg, then Leader of the House of Commons, called Miller's comments "deeply wicked and the sort of thing that decent people simply do not say" and he concluded by saying that "universities must be part of ensuring that antisemitism ceases to exist".³³

On the same day, an open letter was published in support of Miller from "Educators and researchers in support of Professor Miller", which was signed by over 450 academics from the UK and other countries. This letter stated: "We wish to express our serious concerns about the unrelenting and concerted efforts to publicly vilify our colleague Professor David Miller. Professor Miller is an eminent scholar. He is known internationally for exposing the role that powerful actors and well-resourced, co-ordinated networks play in manipulating and stage-managing public debates, including on racism. The impact of his research on the manipulation of narratives by lobby groups has been crucial to deepening public knowledge and discourse in this area."³⁴

On 2 March, a rival letter condemning Miller was signed by more than 800 academics. This letter accused Miller of making "morally reprehensible" statements that "risk the personal security and wellbeing of Jewish students and, more widely, Jews in the UK". It also stated: "We believe that Prof. Miller's depiction of Jewish students as Israeli-directed agents of a campaign of censorship is false, outrageous, and breaks all academic norms regarding the acceptable treatment of students."³⁵

³³ https://twitter.com/UJS_UK/status/1364897883976253440

³⁴ <https://supportmiller.org/educators-and-researchers>

³⁵ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/over-400-academics-condemn-bristol-professor-s-morally-reprehensible-comments-1.512459>



Two days later, more than 100 parliamentarians from both Houses of Parliament signed a letter from the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism to Professor Hugh Brady, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol, calling for action to be taken against Professor Miller. It accused Miller of undermining "the safety and security of Jewish students under the pretence of free speech... Reading Miller's work makes it clear that he believes in an antisemitic conspiracy fantasy... Professor Miller has brought your university into disrepute. You must now act before any further damage is done."³⁶

³⁶ https://twitter.com/APPGAA/status/1367474397200732171?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etwembed%7Ctwterm%5E1367474397200732171%7Ctwgr%5E%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fthetab.com%2Fuk%2Fbristol%2F2021%2F04%2F27%2Ftory-mp-says-bristol-uni-bosses-should-resign-as-they-care-nothing-about-anti-semitism-45639

In an article on 10 March, Steve Reed MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, wrote: "The University's inertia is inexplicable in the face of Professor David Miller continuing to stand by his deeply offensive remarks, including those directly targeting individual students in the University's Jewish Society. David Miller's views are extreme and abhorrent, but he goes beyond even that when he targets individual students such as the 'head' of the University of Bristol Jewish Society for abuse."³⁷

On 16 March, the University of Bristol released a statement in which they said: "We recognise that this matter has caused deep concern for some members of our community, and also that people hold very different views on the issues raised... We can confirm that the University has already initiated an investigation into this matter... The University's clear and consistently held position is that bullying, harassment, and discrimination are never acceptable. We remain committed to providing a positive experience for all our students and staff, including by providing a welcoming environment for Jewish students, and to fostering good relations and an inclusive University community."³⁸

At an Education Select Committee hearing on 23 June, Gavin Williamson, then Secretary of State for Education, was asked his position on Miller and replied: "I would never expect a university to tolerate racists and I would never expect a university to tolerate antisemitism. Where there is racism – whether that is manifested in antisemitic remarks – I would naturally expect there to be a proper and full employment procedure. I wouldn't expect any form of racism to be tolerated and I would expect those people who are committing antisemitism to be dismissed from the staff."³⁹

³⁷ <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/university-of-bristol-is-failing-to-protect-jewish-students/>

³⁸ <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/news/2021/march/public-statement.html>

³⁹ <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/asked-about-professor-miller-education-secretary-says-i-do-not-expect-universities-to-tolerate-racists-1.518156>

Robert Halfon MP, chair of the Committee, said: *"I think the behaviour of the management and the Vice Chancellor of Bristol University is pretty appalling, given what this academic has said."*⁴⁰

On 1 October, the University of Bristol released a statement explaining that: *"Following a full investigation, we can confirm that from today (Friday 1 October) Professor David Miller is no longer employed by the University of Bristol."*⁴¹ According to the statement, the reason behind their decision was that: *"a disciplinary hearing found Professor Miller did not meet the standards of behaviour we expect from our staff and the University has concluded that Professor Miller's employment should be terminated with immediate effect."*

CST released the following statement welcoming the termination of David Miller's employment at Bristol University:⁴²

Antisemitic incidents on campus

The context for these concerns about antisemitism on campus is a rise in university-related antisemitic incidents reported to CST. According to CST figures, the number of university-related antisemitic incidents rose from 70 in 2019-20 to 111 in 2020-21, a 59% rise. It is the highest total ever recorded since CST started recording campus data in 2002.⁴³

Out of the 111 total, 64 were reported in May, which coincided with the conflict between Israel and Hamas. Almost all the incidents involved verbal, written or online abuse, although there was one assault.

A total of 11 incidents were recorded at both the University of Bristol and the University of Warwick. There were ten incidents at University College London, nine incidents at Oxford University and eight incidents at the University of Birmingham.



CST strongly welcomes the news that Professor David Miller's employment has been terminated by Bristol University, following a series of antisemitic comments he has made in the past about Jewish students, Jewish communal organisations and about CST. The Union of Jewish Students, CST and Bristol Jewish Society have repeatedly complained about Miller's comments over the past two and a half years and it has taken far too long to reach this point, but we are relieved that Bristol has finally taken this necessary step. David Miller's comments alleging that Jewish students are agents of a foreign power and an enemy seeking to subvert democracy were dangerous, untrue and totally incompatible with his position of authority at the university. They were part of a wider conspiracist mindset that should have no place in academia. CST has supported Jewish students at Bristol throughout this difficult period and we hope they can now enjoy the new academic year, as all students have a right to do.

CST statement on David Miller's termination of employment

40 https://thetab.com/uk/bristol/2021/04/27/tory-mp-says-bristol-uni-bosses-should-resign-as-they-care-nothing-about-anti-semitism-45639?utm_source=hootsuite&utm_medium=&utm_term=&utm_content=&utm_campaign=

41 <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/news/2021/october/prof-miller-statement.html>

42 https://twitter.com/CST_UK/status/1443918158092546049

43 <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/new-survey-shows-antisemitism-at-all-time-high-at-universities-1.522572>

Following the release of the incidents data, Education Minister Nadhim Zahawi announced the convening of a summit on campus antisemitism, to be hosted by Universities Minister Michelle Donelan.⁴⁴

Zahawi said: *"Only last week I visited Auschwitz-Birkenau and that experience has left me even more determined to completely root out the evil of antisemitism from our campuses. We intend to bring together key stakeholders from the sector to examine what more can be done to make Jewish students and staff feel safe on campus."*

Zahawi also wrote: *"Education is the vaccine against antisemitism."*⁴⁵

The Office for Students published figures showing that a total of 216 higher education institutions in England, including 95 universities, had adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism. This is a rise from the 28 universities that had signed up to the definition by September 2020.⁴⁶

In September, Education Secretary Gavin Williamson told the Universities UK annual conference: *"The dreadful spike in antisemitic incidents on campus earlier this year demonstrates just how important this is and it goes without saying that there is simply no excuse for antisemitism or any other forms of racism anywhere but least of all in a university."*⁴⁷

On 27 April, Michelle Donelan MP, Minister of State for Universities, was questioned by the House of Commons Education Committee during an accountability hearing. Asked about the situation with Professor Miller at Bristol University,

Donelan said: *"Anti-Semitism in universities is abhorrent, and we have been working to encourage as many as possible to sign the IHRA definition, which Bristol already has done. This highlights the fact that it is not a panacea in addressing this issue."*⁴⁸

University Antisemitism House of Lords Debate 21.01.21

On 21 January, a debate was held in the House of Lords titled: *"Anti-semitism: University Campus Incidents"*. The debate was opened by Baroness Deech (crossbench): *"To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Community Security Trust Campus Antisemitism in Britain 2018–2020, published on 17 December, and in particular, the finding that the number of anti-Semitic incidents in universities has increased."*⁴⁹

Lord Mendelsohn (Labour) said: *"The problem on campus is more pronounced and, as the report attests, illustrates that for too long too little has been done to tackle students being radicalised and recruited to extremist ideas and politics with anti-Semitism at their centre, and the increasing role that academics play in propagation and denial of the problem. We need a more profound focus on the roots of such extremism and a more comprehensive view on how we tackle it."*

Baroness Tonge, who has a long record of antisemitic and other controversial statements (non-affiliated) said: *"To have 123 incidents—and increasing—in two years is serious, and I must say I was shocked when I read the nature of the abuse. What is missing, however, is any investigation into why these incidents are increasing. The graph in the report is very interesting, because it shows a sharp increase after*

⁴⁴ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/exclusive-minister-orders-summit-to-stamp-out-hate-on-campus-1.522611>

⁴⁵ <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/holocaust-education-is-our-only-vaccine-against-hatred/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/ofs-reports-significant-increase-in-universities-signing-up-to-ihra-definition-of-antisemitism/>

⁴⁷ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/education-secretary-praises-160-per-cent-rise-in-universities-adopting-ihra-1.520339>

⁴⁸ <https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/2104/pdf/>

⁴⁹ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2021-01-21/debates/C3E8CDFD-8212-4EFC-8DE4-43B2B0F8C2C8/Anti-SemitismUniversityCampusIncidents>. CST's report *Campus Antisemitism in Britain 2018-2020* can be read at <https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/b/2/Antisemitism%20on%20University%20Campuses.pdf>

the deadly attacks on Gaza in 2008-09 and 2014. Since then, with increasing violence in the West Bank and Gaza, the expansion of settlements and the occupation of east Jerusalem, anti-Semitic incidents have continued to rise. Whenever I suggest a connection between the two, I am told this is "victim blame", which it is not. The victims are innocent Jewish people—students, in this case. They are victims because of the illegal actions of the Israeli Government. Please will our Government investigate the connection?"

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar (Conservative), the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice, making his maiden speech, said: *"While this country is indeed a kingdom of kindness and of tolerance, we must be on our guard against anti-Semitism. That especially applies to universities, which play such a crucial role in our cultural and intellectual life. Universities should be at the forefront of tackling anti-Semitism, which manifests itself both as religious hatred and as racism. Their duty is to ensure that higher education is a genuinely fulfilling and welcoming experience for all...The number of anti-Semitic incidents in our universities has become a real cause for concern. Therefore, we again call on leaders across the sector to do more to ensure a zero-tolerance approach is now taken."*

Other speakers included Lord Greaves (Liberal Democrat), Lord Polak (Conservative), Baroness Warwick of Undercliffe (Labour), Baroness Altmann (Conservative), Lord Dodds of Duncairn (Democratic Unionist Party), Lord Pickles (Conservative), Baroness Ludford (Liberal Democrat), Baroness Falkner of Margravine (crossbench), Lord Sheikh (Conservative), Lord Mann (non-affiliated), Lord Wasserman (Conservative) and Lord Austin of Dudley (non-affiliated).

Jewish student given antisemitic reading material

A Jewish student reading politics at the London Institute in Paris (ULIP), part of the University of London, was given reading material claiming that *"Zionist law enforcement tactics like tear gas and rubber bullets" were being used against activists in San Diego, having been "tested on Palestinians by Israel and deployed on black and brown bodies by the United States."*⁵⁰ The suggestion that Israel is partly responsible for alleged abuse or wrongdoing by US law enforcement is a form of scapegoating that transfers blame for a domestic US issue onto Israel.

The student said she raised concerns about the material with staff on several occasions, but her explanations were *"always shut down"* and she was *"dismissed, discouraged, mocked and isolated"*.

A spokesperson for the University of London said course reading lists were *"drawn from internationally recognised academic texts and peer-reviewed publications"* and said that it was *"wholly against antisemitism and discrimination in all forms"*.

This student's experience echoes an article in CST's *Antisemitic Discourse Report 2020* regarding a conspiracy theory that spread around the world following the death of George Floyd, which was articulated by the actor Maxine Peake, who said in an interview: *"The tactics used by the police in America, kneeling on George Floyd's neck, that was learnt from seminars with Israeli secret services"*⁵¹.

⁵⁰ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/student-handed-blood-libel-course-material-on-violent-zionist-tactics-used-by-us-police-1.522704>

⁵¹ <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/6/d/Antisemitic%20Discourse%20Report%202020.1636025323.pdf>

ANTISEMITISM AND UK POLITICAL PARTIES

A number of developments during 2021 involved political parties seeking to take steps to address antisemitism, both in mainstream politics and in wider society.

Political condemnation of the rise in antisemitism during the Gaza conflict

Antisemitic incidents rose to record levels in May and June because of the escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine.⁵² It left many within UK Jewish communities feeling scared and vulnerable. Many politicians, on all sides, denounced the rise in antisemitic attacks and expressed solidarity with the Jewish community.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson tweeted his support for the Jewish community:⁵³



On 17 May, Robert Halfon (Conservative) asked an urgent question in the House of Commons about recent antisemitic attacks in the UK.⁵⁴ Halfon said: "As a proud British Jewish MP, I never imagined that I would live at a time when I and the Jewish community would question whether Britain is a safe place for Jews any more."

⁵² <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/f/c/Incidents%20Report%20Jan-Jun%202021.1627901074.pdf>

⁵³ https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1393944401504874502?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwtterm%5E1393944401504874502%7Ctwgr%5Ea4f2524c79ba044bc30c94b6e457ec8bfa1d579e%7Ctwcon%5Es1&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fd-22152375101275204014.ampproject.net%2F2209142312000%2Fframe.html

⁵⁴ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-05-17/debates/F3016C6F-117C-4328-9793-B88CD763BA41/AntisemiticAttacks>

Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, replied for the government: "No one could fail to be appalled by the disgraceful scenes of antisemitic abuse directed at members of the Jewish community in the past week... British Jews are not responsible for the actions of a Government thousands of miles away, but are made to feel as if they are... We are also doing our utmost to keep the Jewish community safe through the £65 million protective security grant to protect Jewish schools, synagogues and community buildings... Today, the Government and, I hope, the whole House send a clear message of support and reassurance to our Jewish friends and neighbours. We seek a society where the UK's largest established religions can live safely and freely, and can prosper, as an essential part of a nation that is confident in its diversity but ultimately strong in its unity."

Many other MPs spoke in the debate, including Yvette Cooper (Labour), who told the Commons: "The whole House will stand in solidarity with Jewish people across the country in the face of vile antisemitism, misogynistic hate speech, violence and incitement. No one should be in any doubt that attempting to blame Jewish communities for the actions of the Israeli Government is appalling antisemitism and is wrong."

Stuart McDonald (SNP) said: "...offers us an opportunity to unite in unequivocal opposition to, and condemnation of, antisemitism. There is never any excuse or justification for it, and hatred expressed here helps absolutely nobody, anywhere. The events that have already been described were absolutely horrendous—vile, targeted antisemitism and misogyny—and our solidarity goes out to the Jewish communities directly targeted and to everyone across the country who has suffered such hatred. We support all steps to bring the perpetrators to justice and all initiatives to tackle antisemitism."

Two days later, Keir Starmer, leader of the Labour Party, brought up the rise in antisemitism during Prime Minister's Questions:⁵⁵ *"I want to raise the appalling rise in antisemitism in the last week and the attacks and the violence we've seen...both the Prime Minister and I have condemned these antisemitic attacks and violence. But we will all know across this House that Jewish communities remain very anxious. So what more does the Prime Minister think can be done to provide the extra support and protection needed to reassure Jewish communities at this really very difficult time?"*

The Prime Minister replied: *"Mr Speaker, I share his horror at the outbreak of antisemitic incidents and the government has conveyed that message loud and clear to those responsible for enforcing the law against hate crime of that kind. But obviously we will continue to work and support the Jewish community in any way that we can...But also showing as a country and a society that we will call this out at every stage, Mr Speaker. We will not let it take root, we will not allow it to grow and fester."*

On the same day, Home Secretary Priti Patel and Robert Jenrick wrote an open letter to the Jewish community: *"The government is appalled by the disgraceful antisemitic incidents of recent days...Whatever one's views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there can be no justification for the racist behaviour we have seen on our streets and on social media... The existence of antisemitism in modern Britain, and the spike in antisemitic incidents that we have witnessed in recent days, should be felt by all as a stain on the UK. It is the duty of every decent person to call out and combat antisemitism wherever it is encountered."*⁵⁶

⁵⁵ <https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/9ed99067-5205-479a-a9f7-28867e325284?in=12:12:03&out=12:15:17>

⁵⁶ <https://www.thejc.com/comment/opinion/an-open-letter-to-the-jewish-community-1.516805>

On 20 May, the Prime Minister convened an emergency meeting with Jewish communal leaders to provide reassurance and support for the community. The Prime Minister told those present: *"Whatever the situation is in the Middle East, there is no excuse for the importing of prejudice to the streets of our country. In any form. The recent signs of antisemitism – such as the assault of Rabbi Goodwin, the disgusting parade of vehicles chanting hate speech through the streets of London, is intolerable and I take deep, deep exception. I condemn antisemitism in all its forms and I stand totally with our Jewish community. This is something that has always been the way, and often goes unsaid, but I feel it needs to be heard clearly."*⁵⁷

Two Labour MPs, Christian Wakeford (Bury South) and Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East), raised the issue of rising antisemitism in their constituencies with senior ministers, including the Home Secretary and the Communities Secretary. According to Hamilton: *"The Jewish community must not be subject to these disgraceful attacks, which is why we're calling on the Government to ensure the community is free from the threat of violence or antisemitism of any kind. It's vital that the Government steps in to provide extra support and protection to reassure the Jewish community at this difficult time."*⁵⁸

In July, an Early Day Motion was tabled in parliament entitled, *"Rise in antisemitic hate crime"*: *"That this House condemns the appalling rise in antisemitism in the weeks during and after the devastating escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine; notes with concern that the Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 628 antisemitic hate incidents between 8 May and 7 June 2021; regrets*

⁵⁷ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/uk-jewish-leaders-in-emergency-meeting-with-pm-over-surgings-antisemitism-1.516889>

⁵⁸ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/north-of-england/mps-sound-alarm-over-rising-jew-hate-in-their-constituencies-1.517058>

that is the highest number of antisemitic hate crimes that the CST has ever recorded in any month-long period; notes with further concern that this represents roughly four times the normal number expected during that period; believes it is shameful that in the UK, British Jews often suffer when violence flares up in a region thousands of miles away; and resolves to continue to call out all injustices in the Middle East and seek for a peaceful solution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict.”⁵⁹

In November, Priti Patel told a CST event: *“I for one will not stand by and I will not turn a blind eye to the threats that the community faces. If the Jewish community does not feel secure, then our whole national fabric is diminished...We will, at every level, fight antisemitism and there will be no excuses. No exceptions. No justifications.”⁶⁰*

The Labour Party and antisemitism

In July, Labour’s National Executive Committee (NEC) voted to proscribe four organisations, Labour Against the Witch-Hunt, Socialist Appeal, Labour in Exile and Resist, that are *“not compatible with Labour’s rules, or our aims and values”*.

Furthermore, anyone found to be a member of a proscribed group will be automatically barred from the party. The NEC also agreed to make antisemitism training by the Jewish Labour Movement compulsory for any member seeking elected public office in the party.⁶¹

At the Labour Party conference held in Brighton in September, delegates voted by 73.64% in favour of overhauling the party’s independent complaints process in line with reforms called for by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in its report on antisemitism in the party. The rule change aims to remove any political interference in disciplinary and complaints cases.

⁵⁹ <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/58818>

⁶⁰ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/patel-vows-to-make-uk-safe-for-jews-1.522660>

⁶¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jul/20/labour-votes-to-ban-four-far-left-factions-that-supported-corbys-leadership>

Following the vote, party leader Sir Keir Starmer said:

“This is a decisive and important day in the history of the Labour party. I promised to tackle antisemitism in our party. We’ve now closed the door on a shameful chapter in our history. I want to acknowledge the courage of all the people who spoke up against it.”⁶²

According to Mike Katz, national chair of the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM):

“Today Labour took a huge step towards rebuilding trust with the Jewish community.”⁶³

CST’s statement on the EHRC rule changes adopted by the Labour Party welcomed the rule changes, but warned that *“There is still much work to be done”* and promised to *“continue to monitor Labour’s progress”*.⁶⁴

In November, a report was released by the Fabian Society called *“More to do. Unequal experiences of Labour Party membership”*.⁶⁵ The report was based on a survey of Labour Party members to find out how their experiences within the party varied according to identity and background. The report found that across a number of questions, Jewish members reported the worst experiences. Specifically, 65% of Jewish members disagreed that other local members are all friendly and welcoming. The survey was carried out in August 2021, before the party agreed to set up a new disciplinary system.

In December, the JLM released the results of a survey amongst their members to investigate what progress the party had made in tackling antisemitism and making it a safe space for Jewish

⁶² <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/starmer-wins-vote-to-bring-in-new-independent-complaints-process-1.520868>

⁶³ <https://www.thejc.com/comment/opinion/labour-is-now-a-safe-place-for-jews-1.520863>

⁶⁴ https://twitter.com/CST_UK/status/1442483807068643333

⁶⁵ <https://fabians.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/More-to-do-Fabian-report-v2.pdf>

The EHRC rule changes adopted by the Labour Party yesterday are a necessary, significant and welcome step forwards in the party's efforts to deal with the antisemitism that became so widespread and embedded in Labour under its previous leadership. There is still much work to be done, but this is the kind of meaningful progress that CST hoped for when we agreed to work constructively with Labour under its new leadership to assist their response to the EHRC's report, which had ruled that Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party had repeatedly and unlawfully discriminated against Jews. CST will continue to monitor Labour's progress and work with our communal partners, and the Jewish Labour Movement in particular, to push antisemitism out of the Labour Party.



CST's statement on the EHRC rule changes

members. The survey was carried out in late October and early November, a year on from the EHRC investigation. The results indicated that *"progress has been made, Labour is safer for Jews under Starmer and the vast majority trust him to tackle antisemitism."*⁶⁶

Amongst the key findings were:⁶⁷

- 70% said Labour is a safe space for Jewish people under Keir Starmer's leadership. Only 4% agreed it was under Jeremy Corbyn.
- 91% agreed that Starmer is genuinely trying to tackle antisemitism.
- 85% agreed that under Starmer's leadership they trust the party to tackle antisemitism. Only 2.8% agreed this was the case under Corbyn's leadership.

- 88% agreed that over the past year, the party has made positive changes to its policies, processes, rules and culture in relation to antisemitism.
- 74% agreed that any complaints they make to the party about antisemitism will be taken seriously.

⁶⁶ https://www.jewishlabour.uk/jlm_membership_survey_a_year_on_from_the_ehrc_report

⁶⁷ https://d3n8a8pro7yhmx.cloudfront.net/jewishlabour/pages/843/attachments/original/1640689750/JLM_Survey_findings_-_final_Dec_2021.pdf?1640689750

Jewish Labour Movement Membership survey

A year on from the Equality and Human Rights Commission's investigation into antisemitism in the Labour Party, the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM) sought its members views on what progress the party had made in tackling antisemitism, and making the party a safe space for Jewish members. This document outlines the survey's key findings.



December 2021

JLM Membership Survey, December 2021

Allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party

In February, eight elected Labour Party office holders in Wales were suspended in the wake of the EHRC's report into antisemitism in the party. One of the eight was reportedly being investigated for alleged antisemitism.⁶⁸

In March, two local constituency Labour parties (East Ham and West Ham), which were suspended following allegations of corruption and electoral fraud, were also the subject of at least 12 complaints of antisemitism. The allegations involved six members, including officials elected to its executive committee.⁶⁹

A Labour councillor in Haringey, Noah Tucker, was suspended by the Labour Party soon after returning from a six-month suspension for sharing antisemitic content. The latest suspension, according to the party, was based on new material that it was not previously aware of.⁷⁰

Preston Tabois, a Labour councillor in Haringey, was removed from the party's list of London Assembly election candidates on the grounds that his past conduct left him below the threshold required to stand for election. Tabois was suspended by the party in August 2020 over a complaint of alleged antisemitism, including comments involving conspiracy theories.⁷¹

In April, the Labour Party suspended 16 people in the Peterborough Labour Party and the North West Cambridgeshire constituency local party over allegations of antisemitism. They reportedly included nine sitting councillors and seven activists.⁷²

In September, Jeremy Hawthorn, a Liverpool Riverside CLP campaigns officer, was suspended from the Labour Party for 24 months following an investigation into allegations of antisemitism on social media.⁷³

Nick Dodds, the vice chair of the Labour Party's Walsall South local branch, was suspended from the party pending an investigation into comments he allegedly made at the party conference in Brighton about Labour having changed because Keir Starmer's "wife is Jewish" and that Starmer was surrounded by too many advisers who are Jewish.⁷⁴

In November, Jo Bird, a Labour councillor on the Wirral, Merseyside, was expelled from the party for her support for the proscribed group Labour Against the Witch-Hunt.⁷⁵

Pamela Fitzpatrick, a Labour councillor and former parliamentary candidate in Harrow East, was expelled from the party over an interview she gave to the newspaper of the proscribed group Socialist Appeal.⁷⁶

Redbridge Labour Group removed the whip from Councillor Khaled Noor, who represents the Barkingside ward, after a complaint was upheld over his "intimidatory tone" towards the chair at a Group meeting held in January. Noor's behaviour was described as being "offensive, misogynistic, antisemitic and thereby unacceptable." Noor denied the claims and suggested he was the victim of Islamophobia and bullying.⁷⁷

⁶⁸ <https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2021-02-10/eight-labour-officials-in-wales-suspended-in-wake-of-anti-semitism-report>

⁶⁹ https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/suspended-east-london-labour-clps-facing-at-least-12-allegations-of-antisemitism-1.513135?utm_source=hootsuite&utm_medium=&utm_term=&utm_content=&utm_campaign=

⁷⁰ <https://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/noah-tucker-suspended-again-by-labour-party-7848722>

⁷¹ https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/haringey-labour-activist-who-faced-antisemitism-claims-is-removed-as-london-assembly-candidate-1.513637?utm_source=hootsuite&utm_medium=&utm_term=&utm_content=&utm_campaign=

⁷² <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/labour-party-suspends-16-over-alleged-antisemitism-1.516212>

⁷³ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/solicitor-suspended-by-labour-for-two-years-after-probe-into-antisemitism-claims/>

⁷⁴ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/labour-suspends-vice-chair-of-local-party-over-starmer-jewish-wife-remark/>

⁷⁵ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/labour-expels-councillor-who-said-claims-of-antisemitism-given-privileged-status/>

⁷⁶ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/labour-expels-councillor-who-said-claims-of-antisemitism-given-privileged-status/>

⁷⁷ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/cldr-has-whip-removed-after-alleged-offensive-misogynistic-antisemitic-rant/>

In December, Sam Gorst, a Liverpool councillor, had the Labour whip removed for support of a proscribed group. Gorst had previously been investigated over antisemitism allegations and was suspended from Labour for 12 months in August 2020. In September, Gorst was filmed chanting *"From the river to the sea Palestine will be free"* at a protest in Liverpool.⁷⁸

Allegation of antisemitism in the Liberal Democrat Party

In January, the Liberal Democrat Party expelled Geeta Sidhu-Robb, a former candidate for the Mayor of London. Footage emerged from the 1997 election campaign showing Sidhu-Robb urging Muslim voters in Blackburn not to vote for Labour's Jack Straw, claiming he was Jewish. She said: *"Don't vote for a Jew, Jack Straw is a Jew. If you vote for him you're voting for a Jew. Jews are the enemy of Muslims"*. Sidhu-Robb had originally been suspended in September 2020, pending an investigation.⁷⁹

Allegation of antisemitism in the Green Party

In May, David Williams, a member of the Green Party and former councillor, made a speech at a 'Free Palestine' protest held in Oxford in which he made a direct comparison between *"The Nuremberg Act of 1934"* and the Israeli Citizenship Act. Despite the comparison contravening the IHRA definition of antisemitism, Williams denied it was antisemitic and claimed that the IHRA definition *"was written to suppress criticism of the Israeli Government."* A Green Party spokesman said: *"The Green Party recognises that any comparison between the actions of the state of Israel and those of Nazi Germany are extremely offensive."*⁸⁰

During the Green Party autumn conference in October, guidance on antisemitism was adopted in a motion incorporating the IHRA definition,

⁷⁸ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/cldr-who-called-luciana-berger-a-hideous-traitor-no-longer-standing-for-party/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/lib-dems-expel-former-candidate-over-footage-of-antisemitic-campaign/>

⁸⁰ <https://www.theoxfordblue.co.uk/2021/05/18/claims-of-antisemitism-against-local-green-party-politician/>. It is likely that Williams intended to refer to the 1935 Nuremberg Laws.

the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism, which varies from the IHRA definition particularly over the question of how anti-Zionism may relate to antisemitism, and three other definitions.⁸¹ It was proposed by Joshua Alston who said it *"put us at the vanguard of the fight against antisemitism, and at the vanguard of the fight against the global far right while protecting our pro-Palestinian policy."* The motion was passed by a large majority, including Caroline Lucas, the one Green Party sitting MP. The text of the statement came with the added proviso that *"this motion does not in any way conflict with other policies on, for example, BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) and freedom of speech, and will not prevent legitimate criticism of the actions of any nation state"*.⁸² Shahrar Ali, the Green Party's policing and domestic safety spokesperson, described the motion as a *"fudge"* and the *"worst of all worlds"*. However, Zack Polanski, Green member of the London Assembly, commented: *"This is a definition which helps in understanding about antisemitism and also prevents false accusations of antisemitism. The IHRA definition does not preclude criticism of the Israeli Government in proportionate ways to any other country."*

According to a statement from Amanda Bowman, Vice President of The Board of Deputies of British Jews: *"By adopting a series of contradictory definitions of antisemitism, the Green Party has not helped Jews. The Board of Deputies advice is clear: the globally-respected International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition is the only definition that should be adopted. By adopting other definitions, the Green Party is attempting to please both the mainstream Jewish community and those determined to claim that criticising Israel can never under any circumstances be antisemitic. They simply cannot have it both ways."*⁸³

⁸¹ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/greens-vote-to-adopt-two-contradictory-definitions-of-anti-jewish-racism/>

⁸² <https://leftfootforward.org/2021/10/green-party-adopts-antisemitism-guidance-including-ihra-and-jerusalem-declaration-definitions/>

⁸³ <https://bod.org.uk/bod-news/green-party-has-not-helped-jews-over-antisemitism-definition/>

Allegations of antisemitism in the Scottish National Party (SNP)

On 4 April, in the run up to the May Scottish Parliament election, the SNP reportedly refused to remove its candidate for the constituency of Uddingston and Bellshill, Stephanie Callaghan, after it emerged that in a tweet she had compared rejection of a second Scottish independence referendum to the Holocaust.⁸⁴ Callaghan, who had been an SNP councillor in Hamilton since 2016, made the comment in 2017 in response to the referendum's rejection by the UK's then prime minister, Theresa May. Callaghan deleted the post and apologised "unreservedly" for being "insensitive" and causing offence, saying that her words were "poorly chosen" and she would be "seeking to work with groups" such as the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC), the representative body for Scottish Jewish communities. Callaghan went on to retain the seat for the SNP with a 5,306-vote majority over the Scottish Labour Party.

Another SNP candidate for the Scottish Parliament election, Suzanne McLaughlin, had posted offensive comments on social media in 2015. Mrs McLaughlin, one of the party's regional list candidates for Glasgow, posted on Twitter: "Lest anyone be in any doubt. Zionism is akin to fascism. #genocide" and "Israel is a terrorist state".⁸⁵ Despite calls for a full investigation by the SNP, the party said that McLaughlin had both deleted the tweets and apologised for her "choice of words". However, despite the SNP having adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism, the party made no explicit admission that their candidate's comments were antisemitic.

In September, it emerged that two Scottish Green Party MSPs appointed to junior ministerial positions had previously made offensive comments regarding Israel and "Jewish supremacy". The ministers, Patrick Harvie MSP for Glasgow (Region) and Lorna Slater MSP for Lothian (Region) are co-leaders of the Scottish Green Party (SGP) which has refused to endorse the IHRA definition. Moreover, at the SGP's October 2015 conference the party adopted a policy motion which condemned Israel as being a "racist" state and Zionism as a "racist ideology based on Jewish supremacy". Nicola Sturgeon said she hadn't "specifically raised it" with her two SGP ministers but that she had "zero tolerance" of antisemitism and that there was no place for it in Scotland. An SGP spokesperson told ITV that their party abhorred antisemitism and that there was "no place for any anti-Jewish prejudice in society."⁸⁶

⁸⁴ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/fury-over-snp-candidate-stephanie-callaghans-holocaust-tweet-j0qffvch>

⁸⁵ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9528819/SNP-election-candidate-forced-apologise.html>

⁸⁶ <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/tories-call-for-greens-to-be-removed-from-government-after-concerns-by-jewish-community-3379946>

ANTISEMITISM IN THE MEDIA/SOCIAL MEDIA

Allegations of antisemitism directed at the BBC

At the end of November, a group of young Jews driving around central London in a bus to celebrate the festival of Chanukah was attacked on Oxford Street. A group of three men approached the bus, shouted antisemitic abuse, made gestures and spat at them. A video of the incident was shared widely on social media. The Metropolitan Police said they were investigating the incident as an antisemitic hate crime. The Prime Minister described the video of the incident as “*disturbing*”.⁸⁷

The initial BBC report included an accusation that during the incident a slur about Muslims was heard coming from inside the bus. This claim was disputed by some Jewish communal representatives, who analysed a recording of the sound from inside the bus.⁸⁸ Marie van der Zyl, President of the Board of Deputies, wrote: “*That misreporting is a colossal error on the part of the BBC. It has added insult to injury in accusing victims of antisemitism of being guilty of bigotry themselves.*” An estimated 250 people attended a protest outside Broadcasting House holding banners stating: “*BBC News stop blaming Jews*”.⁸⁹

The BBC amended its initial report and, in response to criticism of the reporting, the BBC’s director general instructed the Executive Complaints Unit (ECU), which is editorially independent from the BBC, to investigate issues relating to the report and the dispute. The ECU findings, published at the end of January, determined that the complaints were partly upheld in relation to accuracy and impartiality.⁹⁰

The brazenness of the incident itself, combined with the public argument over the BBC’s reporting of it, caused immense anger and upset in the Jewish community.

Antisemitism on social media

Throughout 2021, a number of organisations produced reports on the prevalence of antisemitism in social media.

Woolf Institute, Antisemitism Policy Trust, CST

Over the course of the year, the Woolf Institute in conjunction with the Antisemitism Policy Trust and CST produced three reports shining a light on antisemitism within different sections of social media.⁹¹ Dr Julian Hargreaves, Director of Research at the Woolf Institute who led the project, commenting on the trio of reports said: “*Taken together, this series identifies and underlines that antisemitism persists on major social media platforms, and that either the tools for addressing it are not fit-for-purpose, or the public policies professed by the world’s leading social media giants are at best, poorly enforced and at worst, are completely ineffectual.*”⁹²

In “*Unsafe Search: Why Google’s SafeSearch function is not fit for purpose*”⁹³, researchers analysed images and texts related to Jewish jokes collected via Google Images. They discovered that explicitly antisemitic content was likely to be returned whether Google’s safety tools were switched on or off. The report highlighted that Google neither had adequate software to identify explicit or offensive material nor a satisfactory function that enabled users to filter out antisemitic content. It recommended rapid improvement in the filtering software being used as well as a larger

⁸⁷ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/12/31/jewish-leaders-confront-bbc-colossal-error-anti-semitic-attack/>

⁸⁸ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-59495842>

⁸⁹ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/dozens-attend-anti-bbc-protest-over-chanukah-bus-attack-coverage/>

⁹⁰ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/contact/ecu/oxford-street>

⁹¹ <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/antisemitism-online>

⁹² <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/more-than-half-a-million-antisemitic-tweets-sent-per-year-shocking-new-report-says/>

⁹³ <https://antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Unsafe-Search-Report.pdf>



Unsafe Search: Why Google's SafeSearch function is not fit for purpose



Instagram: Bad Influence

team of annotators to proactively and expertly moderate content.

"Instagram: Bad Influence"⁹⁴ demonstrated the extent to which aggressive trolling was mixed up with antisemitism on Instagram. Hashtags such as "#synagogueofsatan" and "#gasjews" were shared and liked by thousands of users across the platform. Antisemitic content was also being supplied to users searching for non-antisemitic conspiracy content. Anti-Israel attitudes inexorably led to graphic displays of anti-Jewish feeling. The report recommended that Instagram should instigate a review of harmful conspiracy theories and requires better algorithmic filtering of antisemitic keywords linked to such theories.

In the report "Twitter: The extent and nature of antisemitism on Twitter in the UK",⁹⁵ it was estimated that up to 1,350 explicitly antisemitic tweets were posted each day in the UK. This added up to almost half a million of such tweets being made each year, two for every Jewish person in the UK. Subject matter covered tropes about Hitler and the Holocaust and comparisons of Covid vaccines to the Holocaust. Regarding the findings, Danny Stone,

⁹⁴ <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/9/1/Instagram-Report.1630924369.pdf>

⁹⁵ <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/assets/file-downloads/Twitter-report.pdf>

chief executive of the Antisemitism Policy Trust said: "This new report makes it crystal clear that Twitter's systems for discovering and acting against anti-Jewish racism still aren't good enough. As the Government considers new internet safety laws, I hope this report will weigh heavily on ministers' minds."

Twitter responding to the report commented: "We strongly condemn antisemitism in any form. We're working to make Twitter a safer place for online engagement, and to that end, improving the speed and scale of our rule enforcement is a top priority for us. We recognise that there's more to do, and we'll continue to listen and integrate stakeholders' feedback in these ongoing efforts."⁹⁶

Centre for Countering Digital Hate

At the end of July, the Centre for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) released a report entitled "Failure To Protect".⁹⁷ Between May and June, researchers from CCDH scoured Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and YouTube for any examples of posts exhibiting antisemitism. All in all, they came across 714 pieces of content which had been viewed 7.3 million times.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/more-than-half-a-million-antisemitic-tweets-sent-per-year-shocking-new-report-says/>

⁹⁷ https://252f2edd-1c8b-49f5-9bb2-cb57bb47e4ba.filesusr.com/ugd/f4d9b9_9383f90cb66f423dbb5aa0a3dd03cb64.pdf

⁹⁸ https://252f2edd-1c8b-49f5-9bb2-cb57bb47e4ba.filesusr.com/ugd/f4d9b9_08ab7f4e6ef44ff4a05044d8aef3f3b7.pdf



Subject matter encompassed antisemitic conspiracy theories regarding 9/11, the Covid pandemic and the general control of world affairs by Jews. There was also much neo-Nazi content dealing with Hitler, Holocaust denial and racist caricatures.

When these were reported, the vast majority, 84%, were not acted upon. 89% of posts dealing with antisemitic conspiracy theories were left untouched, as well as 80% concerning Holocaust denial, and 74% alleging blood libels. Instagram, TikTok and Twitter allowed hashtags such as #rothschild, #fakejews and #killthejews, while TikTok only removed 5% of accounts that racially abused Jewish users. The worst to perform was Facebook which failed to act on 89% of reported posts.

Imran Ahmed, chief executive of CCDH, commented that the findings showed social media was a "safe space for racists to normalise their conspiracies and hateful rhetoric without fear of consequences" and that the published research showed "that social media companies allow bigots to keep their accounts open and their hate to remain online, even when human moderators are notified."⁹⁹

⁹⁹ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/social-media-giants-fail-to-curb-90-of-antisemitism-fzn5tc3cd>

The report made a number of recommendations to stem the tide of such proliferation including introducing financial penalties to incentivise proper moderation and ban groups and hashtags that are clearly antisemitic. Facebook responded by saying: "These reports do not account for the fact that we have taken action on 15 times the amount of hate speech since 2017, the prevalence of hate speech is decreasing on our platform and, of the hate speech we remove, 97 percent was found before someone reported it."

Wiley returns

In the summer of 2020, the rapper Wiley, whose real name is Richard Cowie, used social media to launch a series of antisemitic tirades focusing on the pernicious influence of Jewish power as he saw it. As a result, he was banned from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.¹⁰⁰

Wiley came back to social media, re-joining Instagram and posting again in March 2021. By the end of the year, he launched another online assault against Jewish people. He shared on Instagram a video of the Nation of Islam leader, Louis Farrakhan, talking about how he was "here to separate the good Jews from the Satanic Jews."¹⁰¹ Having created a new account on Twitter, he shared an image of himself wearing traditional Hasidic garb, along with a video entitled "The Jewish faces that control hip hop and mainstream black music".¹⁰² He also used as his profile picture on Twitter an image of Joe Glassman, an activist with the Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA), and posted a series of attacks against him. When the social media platforms were notified, Wiley's Instagram account was removed and his Twitter account "was permanently suspended for violations of the Twitter rules on hateful conduct policy."¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/6/d/Antisemitic%20Discourse%20Report%202020.1636025323.pdf>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/wiley-kicked-off-instagram-and-twitter-again-after-posting-'satanic-jews'-video-1.523256>

¹⁰² <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/banned-rapper-wiley-returned-tweet-antisemitic-hate-fnn76210v>

¹⁰³ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/twitter-suspends-wiley-again-for-claiming-satanic-jews-control-music/>

Antisemitism spread on social media by Iran

An investigation by the Jewish Chronicle uncovered what it described as an extensive global disinformation network run by Iran, which pushes out antisemitic propaganda and sows discord in western countries by peddling conspiracy theories.¹⁰⁴

The network allegedly consists of hundreds of websites based in Tehran and thousands of social media accounts, which were traced to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC).

One of the key nodes in this network is allegedly the International Union of Virtual Media (IUVM), an archive site that contains extensive material pushing a pro-Iranian agenda. This provides instant content to feed news sites or social media 'bots', some of which pose as journalists or official news sources.

Another alleged node in the network, focusing on Britain, is an IRGC-linked TV station called Vision Plus, which was originally called MWF Press, but changed its name. The Iraq-based Al-Ghadeer TV station, owned by the pro-Iranian Badr Organisation, also operates at least eight social media accounts. The investigation also found that Apple and Android were offering IRGC-linked apps, including an app representing the al-Masirah TV satellite channel and the Iraqi Radio and Television Union.

Antisemitism at the Royal Court Theatre

In November, a new play opened at the Royal Court Theatre in London called 'Rare Earth Mettle' by Al Smith. Described as a "*brutally comic exploration of risk, delusion and power*",¹⁰⁵ it concerned the unscrupulous attempts of a Silicon Valley millionaire, CEO of the world's largest electric car company, to get hold of a massive lithium deposit in Bolivia. This character is understood to have been based on Elon Musk,¹⁰⁶ CEO of Tesla Motors, and was originally given the Jewish-sounding name 'Hershel Fink.'

This was seen by many as perpetuating a negative Jewish stereotype of the ruthless, self-aggrandising businessman exploiting hard-working gentiles. The director and dramaturg, Emma Jude Harris, wrote: "*'Hershel' is Hebrew for 'little deer', a stock Yiddish comedy name, and the first name of The Simpsons' Krusty the Clown. 'Fink' is an Ashkenazic and German surname, as well as a pejorative term for a snitch with antisemitic undertones. The combined name is extremely Jewish, and, therefore, a deeply sinister choice for the character of a power-hungry, evil mogul...*" She also added: "*During over five years of development, no one at the Royal Court noticed the troubling implications of this name and the character to which it was attached.*"¹⁰⁷ This was even when the theatre had been working closely with Sour Lemons, a consultancy that focused on educating about anti-Black racism.¹⁰⁸

The Royal Court is no stranger to accusations of antisemitism. In 1987, it was due to premier Jim Allen's play 'Perdition' which alleged collaboration between Jewish leaders in Hungary and the Nazis. After a protest and outcry from the community, Perdition was cancelled. Ken Loach, who directed the play, blamed 'the Jewish Lobby.' It had also staged in 2009 Caryl Churchill's play, 'Seven Jewish Children' which similarly drew allegations of antisemitism. What made matters worse regarding 'Rare Earth Mettle' was that, despite initial denials, it emerged that earlier in the year a Jewish director had drawn attention to the antisemitic stereotyping in the new play at a workshop held at the Royal Court.

Faced with mounting criticism, the theatre initially claimed that 'Hershel Fink' had never meant to be a Jewish character, and that there was no reference to his being Jewish in the play. They then apologised for what had happened by issuing a statement on 6 November saying:

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.thejc.com/news/world/exclusive-iran-s-shadowy-uk-network-revealed-1.517965>

¹⁰⁵ <https://royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/rareearthmettle/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/royal-court-theatre-apologises-unreservedly-for-giving-billionaire-character-a-jewish-name-1.522367>

¹⁰⁷ <http://exeuntmagazine.com/features/jews-tired-royal-court-rare-earth-mettle-enough-enough/>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-inside-story-of-the-royal-court-theatres-antisemitism-ggln306lf>

"We acknowledge that this is an example of unconscious bias and we will reflect deeply on how this has happened in the coming days."

They added that they would *"reflect on the process that enabled the name to remain and what is missing in our systems that would have mitigated this unnecessary harm."* The name of the main character was then swiftly changed to 'Henry Finn.' In a later statement, the Royal Court said: *"We acknowledge our wrongdoing and will include antisemitism in future anti-oppression practices and training. We are meeting with providers of this training over the coming weeks and they will be appointed in consultation with the Board."*¹⁰⁹ They also promised to investigate the events around the workshop when the antisemitic stereotyping had first been raised. The theatre further added: *"We hope the experience on Rare Earth Mettle can be a catalyst. Through learning more about the Jewish experience and antisemitism in theatre, the Royal Court will work to dismantle antisemitism internally and will strive to join up with other organisations across the industry"* and that *"we are proud of the work we have been, and are still developing, with Jewish writers and artists."*

Antisemitism in sport

Antisemitism manifested itself in the world of football in a number of ways across the course of 2021. Right at the start of the year, Nir Bitton, an Israeli footballer based in Glasgow who played for Celtic, endured a blizzard of antisemitic abuse after his team lost to Rangers.¹¹⁰ He was called insults including *"dirty Jew b*****d"* and a *"Zionist rat"* on social media. His wife also received abuse. One tweet called for both of them to be killed. Celtic promised Jewish leaders in Scotland an inquiry into abuse, but by the end of the year this had still not happened.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ <https://royalcourttheatre.com/rare-earth-mettle-events-and-actions-status-update/>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.standard.co.uk/sport/football/tottenham-social-media-racism-daniel-levy-heung-min-son-b929276.html>

¹¹¹ <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/exclusive-celtic-refuse-to-confirm-promised-investigation-into-antisemitic-abuse-5ea220y9aFbcCqGCB50915>

The extent of antisemitism among Scottish football fans was something highlighted by the campaign group, Show Racism The Red Card. Jordan Allison, its campaign manager, warned that Scottish clubs are not doing enough: *"The victims don't feel confident enough to report it to police or stewards. In turn, the stewards are not trained in how to record it as a form of racism. There's far more work to be done. We are so far behind in Scotland that the authorities are not at the stage yet where they can do something about it."* This was clearly illustrated by the number of incidents which occurred at the men's World Cup qualifier match between Israel and Scotland at Hampden Park on 9 October. In the run-up to the game, one Scotland fan posted on Facebook: *"Is it OK to sing 'We Hate England More Than Jews?'"*¹¹²

Daniel Levy, the chairman of Tottenham Hotspur, also received antisemitic hate after his team lost a game to Manchester United in April.¹¹³ This was widely condemned, including by David Lammy, the MP for Tottenham.

The use of the word 'Yid' in relation to Tottenham Hotspur has proved controversial for some time, but the club in recent years has become proactive in dealing with the issue. It held a consultation with fans in 2019 and worked with various focus groups in 2020.¹¹⁴ The word 'Yid' is now not permitted on any of the team's merchandise or in club outlets. In November, the online sports magazine, The Athletic, reported that the club going forward wanted *"to try and provide fans with more information about the slur and its origins, as well as historical context as to why it is so harmful."* This was especially targeted at younger fans who knew less about the offensive word's origins.

¹¹² <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/exclusive-celtic-refuse-to-confirm-promised-investigation-into-antisemitic-abuse-5ea220y9aFbcCqGCB50915>

¹¹³ <https://www.standard.co.uk/sport/football/tottenham-social-media-racism-daniel-levy-heung-min-son-b929276.html>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/tottenham-to-educate-fans-who-proudly-chant-race-hate-slur>

In April, there was a proposal to form a European Super League that led to antisemitic abuse being directed online at some of the senior executives and football club owners who were involved in the plan. The ESL was intended to be a breakaway exclusive league consisting of six of the UK's top-flight teams, including Chelsea, Manchester United, and Tottenham Hotspur, all of whom had Jewish owners and/or chief executives. One account tweeted: *"Notably, most of the owners of these 'big' football clubs pushing for a Super League are Jews, including Roman Abramovic [sic] and the Glazers... Jews are ruining football, they don't give a f*** about the Gentile fans."* Another said: *"All this talk of the European Super League. It's jew rats behind it. All money grabbing c***s. It's no wonder that people hate them as much as the muslims."*¹¹⁵

On 23 October, Joey Barton, manager of Bristol Rovers, when talking about his club's defeat to Newport County, said: *"Someone gets in and does well, gets injured. Someone gets in, does well for a game, then has a holocaust, a nightmare, an absolute disaster."*¹¹⁶ He faced criticism for debasing the significance of the Holocaust by using it in a football analogy. Karen Pollock, chief executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, tweeted: *"A bad football match is nothing like the Holocaust and this is clearly an inappropriate comparison – it is why our work is so important."*

On 28 November, Carlton Cole, a football pundit on BBC 5 Live, while commenting on a Premier League game between West Ham and Manchester City, remarked: *"You've got to give Man City some respect... otherwise you are going to get picked off and then it will be a Holocaust, and you don't want that."* Cole, who was previously fined twice for making offensive comments on Twitter, immediately issued an on-air apology. He then tweeted:

*"No it was totally unacceptable. And I understand the gravity of my mistake."*¹¹⁷

The world of cricket also saw antisemitism controversies in 2021. In mid-November the former cricketer, Azeem Rafiq, emotionally testified in front of the Culture, Media and Sport select committee how through his experiences he had found English cricket institutionally racist.¹¹⁸ As a teenager, playing for Barnsley Woolley Miners, he had been forced to drink wine. When he started playing for Yorkshire Cricket Club in 2008, he and other players from a Pakistani background faced a constant litany of derogatory slurs.

A few days after this, Rafiq was also revealed as the originator of racism, when *The Times* unearthed an exchange of Facebook messages between him and another cricketer, Ateeq Javid, in 2011. In their messaging, they refer to another Asian cricketer who doesn't want to spend money on a meal out as *"he is a jew."* Rafiq comments that he *"probs go after my 2nds again ha . . . Only jews do that sort of sh*t."* Faced with this revelation, Rafiq swiftly apologised and tweeted: *"At no point will I ever try and defend the indefensible. For those I have hurt I am sincerely sorry. I will continue to front up and own any more mistakes I have made."*¹¹⁹ Rafiq went on to meet members of the Jewish community, including Holocaust survivors and representatives of CST, to better understand antisemitism and the Holocaust.

In early November, a 2010 tweet made by Andrew Gale, former Yorkshire cricket captain and head coach at the club was uncovered. Directed at Paul Dews, former head of media at Leeds United football club, Gale had written: *"Thought you might pipe up! Button it yid!"*¹²⁰ Gale was suspended from his position, with both his club and the England and Wales Cricket Board launching investigations.

¹¹⁷ <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/bbc-5-live-pundit-apologises-after-west-ham-holocaust-gaffe/>

¹¹⁸ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/azeem-rafiq-apologises-for-antisemitic-text-messages-87snclgr5>

¹¹⁹ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/exclusive-i-deserve-the-flak-over-antisemitic-comments-azeem-rafiq-tells-jc-1.522726>

¹²⁰ <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/yorkshire-county-cricket-club-suspends-head-coach-over-yid-tweet/>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/plan-for-new-european-football-league-triggers-wave-of-antisemitic-abuse-1.514894>

¹¹⁶ <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/a-holocaust-manager-joey-barton-on-his-football-team-selection-woes/>

I was sent an image of this exchange from early 2011 today. I have gone back to check my account and it is me - I have absolutely no excuses. I am ashamed of this exchange and have now deleted it so as not to cause further offence. I was 19 at the time and I hope and believe I am a different person today. I am incredibly angry at myself and I apologise to the Jewish community and everyone who is rightly offended by this

Azeem Rafiq's apology for antisemitic remarks

Gale claimed he was referring to a chant that was prevalent at the time in relation to Leeds fans, and which he, as a Huddersfield Town supporter, was joking about. He described what happened next: *"Within a few minutes of the post, Paul called me and explained the meaning of the word and that it was offensive to Jews. I was completely unaware of this meaning... You must have been sent a screenshot of the post that someone took at the time and waited 11 years to release. I would never have used the word had I been aware of its offensive meaning and I have never used it since."* He then quickly deleted the tweet.¹²¹ Alex Sobel, the Leeds North West MP, commented: *"As someone who has experienced offensive racist language like this, I certainly do not consider it banter. This is yet another example of casual racism coming from a trusted member within our cricket club. The picture is getting clearer by the day of a serious cultural problem not just at the club, but in cricket more widely. We need root and branch reform in the game."*

Covid-19 antisemitic discourse

Antisemitic discourse connected to the Covid-19 pandemic continued to play a role in 2021. CST recorded 78 antisemitic incidents with Covid-related discourse in 2021, which is a 95% increase on the 40 such incidents recorded the previous year.¹²²

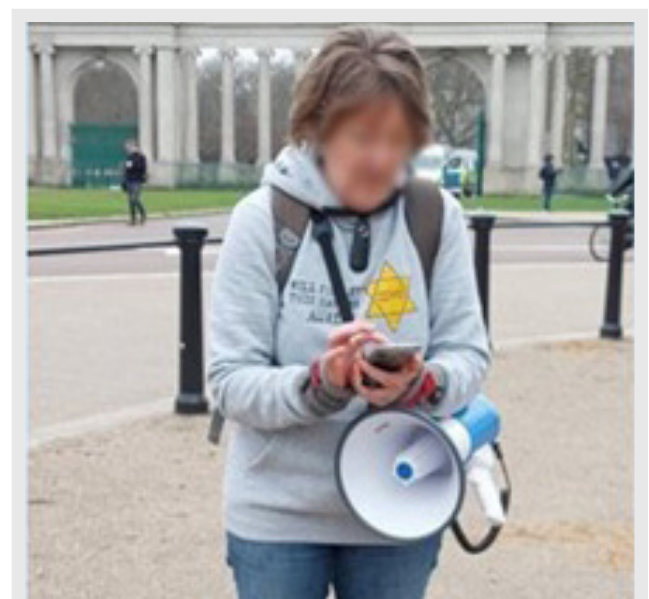
¹²¹ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cricket/2021/11/09/exclusive-yorkshire-cricket-chief-executive-mark-arthur-leave/>

¹²² <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/f/f/Incidents%20Report%202021.1644318940.pdf>

One of the tactics that individuals within the Covid conspiracy movement utilised is the deliberate use of Holocaust imagery and terminology. This is intended to imply that the laws and regulations enacted by governments around the world to deal with a pandemic caused by a highly infectious airborne virus, including lockdown restrictions and vaccinations, are equivalent to how Jews were treated in Nazi Germany.

This tactic included the wearing of home-made yellow stars at protests, invoking the yellow stars that Jews living under Nazi rule were forced to wear to mark them out from the rest of the population. It also involved the comparison of lockdown restrictions and vaccine passports to the Nuremberg Laws in Nazi Germany, which were a set of racial laws that excluded Jews from large swathes of German society.

This abuse and misuse of the genocide of European Jewry by Nazi Germany during the Holocaust, either by the use of language or imagery taken from the Nazi persecution of Jews, is antisemitic and deeply offensive to Jewish people, as well as being historically inaccurate. It represents a form of Holocaust revisionism and distortion that ultimately minimises the experiences of Jews during that period.



A yellow star at an anti-lockdown protest in London, March

CST'S MISSION

- **Promote good relations** between British Jews and the rest of British society by working towards the elimination of racism, and antisemitism in particular.
- **Represent British Jews** on issues of racism, antisemitism, extremism, policing and security.
- **Facilitate Jewish life** by protecting Jews from the dangers of antisemitism, and antisemitic terrorism in particular.
- **Help those who are victims** of antisemitic hatred, harassment or bias.
- **Promote research** into racism, antisemitism and extremism; and to use this research for the benefit of both the Jewish community and society in general.
- **Speak responsibly** at all times, without exaggeration or political favour, on antisemitism and associated issues.



Published by Community Security Trust © 2022

The text and illustrations may only be reproduced with prior permission of Community Security Trust



Scan the QR code to visit CST's social media accounts

National Emergency Number (24-hour) **0800 032 3263**

London (Head Office) **020 8457 9999**

Manchester (Northern Regional Office) **0161 792 6666**

www.cst.org.uk

CST is a registered charity in
England and Wales (1042391)
and Scotland (SC043612)