

# Holocaust Memorial Day 2026 Impact Report



HOLOCAUST  
MEMORIAL  
DAY TRUST



Remember the past. Protect the future.



Rt Hon Sir Sajid Javid



Olivia Marks-Woldman OBE

## Making an Impact The Power of Remembrance

On 27 January, Holocaust Memorial Day, we commemorate the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered during the Holocaust, and the millions more murdered under Nazi persecution. We also remember where persecution led in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

Holocaust Memorial Day reaches millions of people in powerful and meaningful ways across the UK. This year, our reach extended further than ever before through our nationwide billboard campaign, encouraging people to join us to Light the Darkness and to stand against antisemitism (anti-Jewish hatred) and all prejudice today.

Six giant 3D candles were displayed in Piccadilly Circus, representing the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered during the Holocaust, while more than 3,000 digital billboards carried the message nationwide, generating over 10 million impacts (opportunities to view the advertisement). Hundreds of thousands of people lit candles in their homes and communities, and 230 landmarks across the country were illuminated in purple. Radio adverts across Global's network – including Capital, Heart, Classic FM, LBC and Smooth – also amplified the call to action.

Commemorations included a special event at Buckingham Palace, where Their Majesties The King and Queen brought together Holocaust survivors and lit Holocaust Memorial Day candles – sending a powerful message to the nation about the enduring importance of remembrance. There were also HMD events across 22 government departments with attendance by nearly 12,000 civil servants.

In total this year, an incredible 3,800 organisations marked Holocaust Memorial Day, which is 300 more than last year. This includes over 1,000 secondary schools, 17% of the total number of secondary schools, which has increased from 9% of secondary schools last year.

We are living through challenging times. Hatred, distortion and division are rising. This report shows how people across the UK responded: with engagement, learning and action. Together, these acts of remembrance and support demonstrate why Holocaust Memorial Day continues to matter, and how remembering and learning from the past helps protect the future.

Rt Hon Sir Sajid Javid  
Chair of Trustees

Olivia Marks-Woldman OBE  
Chief Executive

Front page image: Light the Darkness 3D billboard campaign at Piccadilly Circus © Ocean Outdoor

## Holocaust Memorial Day 2026 in numbers

230

landmarks and buildings lit in purple for Light the Darkness  
(200 in 2025)



Light the Darkness awareness campaign featured on over **3,000** billboards nationwide with over **10 million** impacts  
(400 in 2025)

3,800

organisations marked HMD 2026  
(3,500 in 2025)



1,000

secondary schools marked HMD  
17% of secondary schools nationwide  
(up from 9% in 2025)



Millions

of Royal Mail items stamped with HMD 2026 and our strapline



130,000

pupils watched the educational film 'It began with words'  
(New for 2026)

Light the Darkness radio ad generated

14 million

impacts, airing over 900 times across multiple stations  
(New for 2026)



24,000

social media engagements  
(10,000 in 2025)



Holocaust survivors alongside special guests and HMDT representatives

Images © HMDT/Sam Churchill

# UK National Ceremony 2026



Clive Myrie

The UK National Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony, commemorating the murder of six million Jewish men, women and children, took place at Sinfonia Smith Square in Westminster, London. The Ceremony was hosted by broadcaster and journalist Clive Myrie. Opened by Sir Sajid Javid, the Ceremony brought together senior political, faith and cultural leaders, and survivors, reflecting the national importance of the day. Speakers included the



Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis



Archbishop of Canterbury

Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG); Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis; The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dame Sarah Mullally and the actor Matt Lucas OBE. The Ceremony concluded with a special performance by Electric Umbrella, who performed the song 'Tikkun Olam - Repair the World'.

The Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt Hon David Lammy MP, Shadow Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon Priti Patel MP; MHCLG Minister, Miatta Fahnbulleh MP and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP, were among the audience.

Guests heard powerful testimony from Holocaust survivors Agnes Kaposi MBE, Peter Lantos BEM and Henny Franks, whose lives span persecution, survival and decades of commitment to education and remembrance.

*In a moment of hope and unity, Holocaust survivors lit candles alongside survivors from Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur, and members of the second and third generations - powerfully embodying this year's theme, Bridging Generations, and the shared responsibility to remember the past in order to protect the future.*



Electric Umbrella



Matt Lucas



Candle-lighters



Rachel Levy BEM with Their Majesties

# Their Majesties mark Holocaust Memorial Day

**Holocaust survivors and their families gathered at Buckingham Palace as Their Majesties The King and Queen marked Holocaust Memorial Day 2026 on 27 January. His Majesty The King is Patron of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.**

The event took place at Buckingham Palace, where a series of portraits of Holocaust survivors are displayed as part of the Royal Collection. The occasion brought together Holocaust survivors, many attending with their families, including those portrayed in the landmark series 'Seven Portraits: Surviving the Holocaust', alongside the families of survivors featured in the series who have sadly since passed away. The event gave the opportunity to view the portraits again and for many guests, to see them for the first time on the walls of Buckingham Palace.



Helen Aronson BEM



Ivor Perl BEM and Emma Sherrard

*During the event, both Their Majesties lit special Holocaust Memorial Day candles, assisted by Holocaust survivor, Rachel Levy BEM.*

Images © Ian Jones

# Light the Darkness

On 27 January at 8pm, the nation came together for Light the Darkness – our powerful UK-wide moment of remembrance.

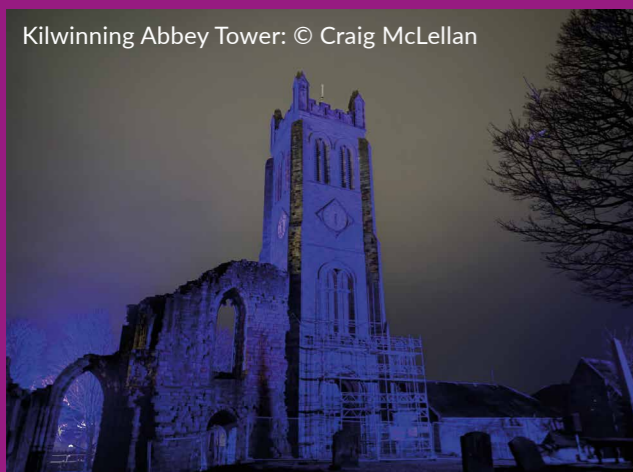


At 8pm, Piccadilly Circus was transformed into a place of reflection as the iconic Piccadilly Lights displayed six giant 3D candles, representing the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered during the Holocaust.

Across the UK, hundreds of thousands of people also took part in their own homes and communities, lighting candles and placing them in their windows, while 230 renowned landmarks and buildings were illuminated in purple.

This year, Light the Darkness reached further than ever before, with a clear focus on standing against antisemitism. A week-long nationwide billboard campaign, created in partnership with Ocean Outdoor and supported by JCDecaux, Global and Bauer Media, extended the moment into towns and cities across the country.

Advertisements appeared on more than 3,000 digital billboards, generating over 10 million impacts (opportunities to view the advertisement), with many screens enabling passersby to light a virtual candle via a QR code. Radio adverts across Global's network further amplified the campaign and generated more than 14 million impacts (opportunities for listeners to hear the advertisement), airing over 900 times in the week leading up to and on Holocaust Memorial Day.



*Hundreds of thousands of people lit candles in their homes and communities, and 230 landmarks across the country were illuminated in purple.*

## Light the Darkness Campaign



**3,000+**  
billboards



**24 million+**  
impacts nationwide



**230**  
buildings lit up

London Eye: HMDT/Mark Lewis

## Radio Ads ran across Global's radio network



## Thank you!

*We are hugely grateful to our partners Ocean Outdoor, JCDecaux, Global and Bauer Media, for their pro bono support, which helped us reach more people than ever before this year.*

## Government department HMD Champions

Holocaust Memorial Day events were hosted by 22 government departments this year, with attendance by nearly 12,000 civil servants. Holocaust survivors with second and third generation speakers, as well as Bosnian survivors, delivered powerful, thought-provoking testimonies. Cabinet minister speakers included Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP, Foreign Secretary and Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.



Foreign Office event



Rt Hon John Swinney MSP © Phil Wilkinson



National Ceremony – Wales © Welsh Government



© Press Eye

### The Devolved Nations

In addition to the UK National Ceremony, we supported the national Ceremonies in Wales, Scotland and the regional Ceremony in Northern Ireland.

The Scotland Ceremony, held at the Scottish Parliament, featured testimony from Holocaust survivor, Joan Salter MBE and Cambodian survivor, Var Ashe Houston BEM; alongside speeches from Rt Hon John Swinney MSP, First Minister of Scotland and Siobhan Brown MSP, Minister for Victims and Community Safety.

The Welsh Ceremony took place at the Temple of Peace in Cardiff and included a poetry reading from Eluned Morgan MS, First Minister of Wales, reflections from the Lord Mayor of Cardiff and Archbishop of Cardiff, as well as testimony from Holocaust survivor, Peter Lantos BEM.

The Northern Ireland Ceremony, at Belfast City Hall, featured testimony from Holocaust survivor, Janine Webber BEM, pictured with Michelle O'Neill MLA, First Minister of Northern Ireland; Emma Little Pengelly MLA, deputy First Minister and HMDT Vice Chair, Sir Leigh Lewis KCB.

## Media coverage

Our work to ensure the public is aware of and understands Holocaust Memorial Day resulted in nearly 2,000 media mentions – the second highest on record and comparable to last year's milestone marking the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

Broadcast was particularly strong this year, accounting for 42% of all coverage – our highest proportion to date. Television appearances included Sky News, ITV's Good Morning Britain, and the BBC's The One Show and Sunday Morning Live. Interviews featured HMDT spokespeople Sir Sajid Javid and Olivia Marks-Woldman OBE, alongside Holocaust survivors and Next Gen Ambassadors.

Social media also played a key role in amplifying reach and reinforcing messaging. Increased activity across Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn led to notable growth in followers and engagement. Collaborations with historian Alice Loxton (1.8 million followers), barrister and author Rob Rinder MBE, the Speaker of the House of Commons and sister organisations broadened our audience. The Prince and Princess of Wales further amplified reach by lighting an HMDT candle for Light the Darkness and tagging us, which we reshared across our channels.

*Our strategic and integrated media campaign ensured Holocaust Memorial Day remained highly visible nationwide and effectively communicated this year's theme.*

Over **24,000** social media engagements

Nearly **2,000** media mentions

Sky News



# Learning from the past to protect the future

In preparation for Holocaust Memorial Day 2026, we launched a series of new education resources to help schools, community groups and individuals mark the day in meaningful and accessible ways. Designed to support thoughtful remembrance and informed discussion, these resources enabled communities across the UK to come together to remember those murdered simply because of who they were – and to reflect on the continued relevance of this history today.



Next Gen Ambassador Barnabas and Cambodian survivor, Sokphal Din BEM

A key addition was *It Began with Words*, a new film, narrated by Rob Rinder MBE, for students aged 14+. The film featured testimony from Holocaust survivors Peter Lantos BEM and Joan Salter MBE, alongside Cambodian genocide survivor Sokphal Din BEM, helping young people understand where prejudice can lead. Over 130,000 school pupils watched our new educational film.

Additional resources for this year included new survivor life stories, commemorative candles, stickers, flyers and pin badges.

All our resources ensure that Holocaust Memorial Day is not only a moment of remembrance, but also an opportunity to learn, reflect and take action, helping to protect the legacy of the past and shape a future built on empathy, understanding and respect.



**130,000+**

pupils watched new educational film



**3,800**

organisations marked HMD

“The students were respectfully engaged throughout. The opportunity to hear eyewitness accounts from survivors really brought home to all the reality of the subject.”

Steve Clarke, Education Officer, St Albans Cathedral



Next Gen Ambassador Hema and Holocaust survivor Peter Lantos BEM



## HMDT Next Gen Ambassadors

Next Gen Ambassador Joseph Knowles  
© HMDT and Sam Churchill

**Our Next Gen Ambassador programme supports young people aged 18–24 to build their knowledge, confidence and platforms, helping them communicate the importance of Holocaust Memorial Day to new audiences.**

This year, our Next Gen Ambassadors delivered their own Holocaust Memorial Day events for their peers, and played an active role in major HMD moments. Joseph Knowles spoke at the National Ceremony, and Molly Phillips wrote a piece for *The Big Issue*. Ambassadors have also led sessions across schools and universities throughout the year, strengthening our work and helping to reach the next generation.



Next Gen Ambassadors with Kindertransportee, Henny Franks © HMDT

“Simply raising awareness made a real impact and helped people see the relevance of Holocaust Memorial Day today. My presentation explored identity – linking conversations to how Jewish people were stripped of theirs during the Holocaust, which sparked meaningful discussions.”

Antonio Coman, Next Gen Ambassador

# Holocaust Memorial Day Case Studies



Clarinetist Julian Bliss



Steven Frank BEM

## Local Authorities

### Newcastle City Council

Supported by Newcastle City Council, the Brundibár Arts Festival marked its 10th anniversary this year with a powerful programme of events across the city to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day. Over the past decade, the festival has become a poignant reminder of the ongoing fight for peace and the extraordinary power of music to bring people together in reflection and hope. The anniversary programme showcased world-class talent, including internationally renowned clarinetist Julian Bliss and violinist Jack Liebeck. The programme comprised eight concerts and a special screening of *The Last Musician of Auschwitz* at Tyneside Cinema, followed by a Q&A with Simon Wallfisch, grandson of the film's subject.



### The Reform Club

The iconic London institution, the Reform Club continues to support Holocaust Memorial Day and this year hosted a special event with Holocaust survivor, Alfred Garwood MBE.

## Communities

### St Albans Cathedral

St Albans Cathedral welcomed 379 students from seven local schools for a special two-day programme marking Holocaust Memorial Day. This year's theme, *Bridging Generations*, invited communities to learn about the past and carry its lessons forward. The Cathedral hosted a series of educational sessions to help pupils learn more about the Holocaust. Workshops for students across different year groups explored pre-Nazi Jewish life and the significance of Holocaust Memorial Day. Attendees also watched our new educational film, *It Began with Words*. A highlight of the programme was testimony from Holocaust survivors Susie Barnett BEM and Steven Frank BEM, and Rwandan genocide survivor Sophie Masereka.

Planting the 21st cherry tree in Shropshire's county-wide Memorial Orchard.



## Schools

### School children plant cherry tree

Pupils at Whitchurch Junior School in Whitchurch, Shropshire marked Holocaust Memorial Day by planting the 21st cherry tree in Shropshire's county-wide Memorial Orchard. The whole school gathered for a special assembly attended by local councillors, the Mayor of Whitchurch, and representatives from the Shrewsbury and South Shropshire Interfaith Forums.

Children actively led the commemoration, reading their own poetry inspired by the *Bridging Generations* theme. They listened to reflections from faith leaders, took part in prayers and candle lighting, and helped plant the donated tree inside the school grounds.



Students at St Lawrence Secondary School were given a candle template and asked to decorate it to remember someone.

The pupils also created a collaborative flame artwork, made up of individual handprints and filled with the names of family members, symbolising remembrance and continuity across generations.

*Through reflection, creativity and community participation, the school demonstrated compassion, courage and a shared commitment to learning the lessons of the past and standing against prejudice today.*

### UCL Beacon Schools

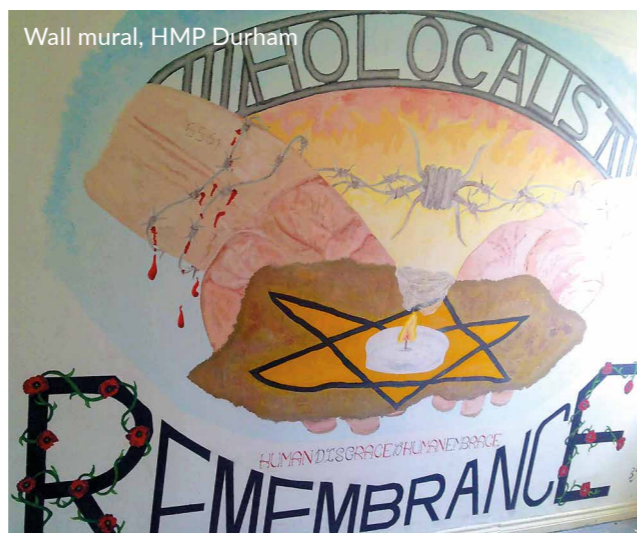
Across England, UCL Beacon Schools marked Holocaust Memorial Day with purpose and creativity. Schools across a wide range of communities found age-appropriate, research-informed ways to deepen understanding. Learners engaged with testimony and personal stories, explored complexity, and brought together education and commemoration in ways that honour the past and speak to the present. Activities ranged from newsletters and art to webcasts and assemblies. Highfields Secondary School even lit up in purple for Light the Darkness.



## Prisons Competition:

### Learning, reflection and rehabilitation

Each year we run a Prisons Engagement Competition across adult prisons in England and Wales, supporting learners to explore the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and where persecution led in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur, while reflecting on the continued relevance of prejudice today. This year, the programme was delivered in collaboration with Novus and supported by HMPPS, engaging more than 360 learners across 23 sites. Participants produced powerful creative responses that demonstrated meaningful engagement with Holocaust education, as well as the rehabilitative impact of creative expression. New for 2026, some prisons also hosted talks from second and third generation Holocaust survivor organisations, creating especially moving learning experiences.



Wall mural, HMP Durham

*"The event had such an impact on both staff and prisoners who attended. Two months on, I am still having conversations about how the testimony shared by Holocaust survivor Steven Frank BEM made us reflect on our own lives and how blessed we are."*



Seed skulls, HMP Kirkham



Sculptural seat, HMP Wymott

Diversity & Inclusion Manager at HMP Aylesbury, Denyse McNamee

### Royal Mail

Each year we work with Royal Mail to help mark Holocaust Memorial Day through a special postmark. This year, the postmark ran from Saturday 24 to Tuesday 27 January and featured the wording: Holocaust Memorial Day, 27 January and our strapline – Remember the past. Protect the future. There are millions of items of stamped mail each day.



Remember the past.  
**Protect the future.**

Holocaust Memorial Day reminds us of the human cost of hatred and the responsibility we all share to prevent it from happening again.

Each year, our work at the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust helps millions of people to connect with survivors' stories, understand where prejudice can lead, and choose empathy over division. In communities across the UK, people come together who might otherwise never meet, learning from the past to build a safer, more compassionate future.

This impact is only possible because of supporters like you. Your generosity ensures that remembrance continues to inspire action and that the lessons of the past protect the generations to come.

*Thank you for making the difference.*

### You can support us by:

- Making a donation via the QR code or [hmd.org.uk/donate](https://hmd.org.uk/donate)
- Joining Friends of HMDT with a regular donation
- Leaving a legacy to HMDT in your will

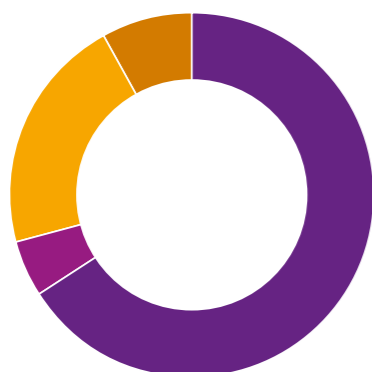


Scan to donate

# Finances

The figures below provide an indicative overview of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's income and expenditure for the year April 2025 to March 2026 (audited accounts will be published in our annual report).

## Income: £1.43 million



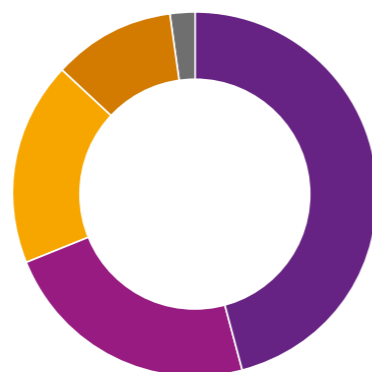
● MHCLG	66%
● Devolved administrations	5%
● Donations	21%
● Trusts and Foundation	8%
	<b>100%</b>

This first chart shows that we have received grants from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the governments of the devolved administrations.

These are alongside further grants from a number of trusts and foundations and donations from individuals. We remain immensely grateful to everyone who supports HMDT to continue its work, helping protect the legacy of the Holocaust against denial and distortion, and to shape a future built on empathy, understanding and respect.



## Expenditure: £1.41 million



● UK Ceremony and Communications	46%
● Outreach and Education	23%
● Operations	18%
● Fundraising	11%
● Governance	2%
	<b>100%</b>

This chart shows how we have spent money in the same period. The following outlines how we spent our income to deliver our work.

**UK Ceremony and Commemorations** includes the UK National Ceremony and other national events, including our Light the Darkness national moment, memory and legacy work, support for survivors to be involved in our work, website and social media engagement.

**Outreach and Education** includes support costs such as dedicated administration, events and outreach, engagement with young people in formal and informal education settings, public office engagement, engagement with adults in civic settings and communities, and resource creation and maintenance.

**Operations** includes all our central overheads such as office costs, audit and bookkeeping, staff recruitment and training, HR and responding to enquiries.

**Fundraising** includes all costs associated with fundraising event activities.

**Governance** includes all costs associated with trustee recruitment, meetings and development.

# Thank you

It is only with the kindness and generosity of our supporters that we can continue to embed Holocaust Memorial Day as a national day of commemoration in the UK.

Thank you to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and to the administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Thank you also to the many trusts, foundations and organisations that have supported our work so generously this year and individuals who have made donations or contributed their time and effort to Holocaust Memorial Day 2026.

## Honorary Vice President:

Laura Marks CBE

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*Our sincere thanks to our Vice Chair, Sir Leigh Lewis KCB, who steps down as Trustee after nine years of outstanding service and commitment to the Board.*

*"Each year, Holocaust Memorial Day brings us together to commemorate the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust. We remember the past, to protect the future. We are deeply grateful for all your support. At a time when antisemitism (anti-Jewish hatred) and prejudice are on the rise, it is more important than ever that we, as a nation, come together to build a future rooted in empathy, understanding and respect."*

Olivia Marks-Woldman OBE, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

## Staff Team:

A huge thank you to the team for all their exceptional work, dedication and compassion.

## Special thanks to:

- Atalanta
- Bauer Media
- Blavatnik Family Foundation
- British Airways
- Childwick Charitable Trust
- Claims Conference
- Clifford Chance
- Community Security Trust
- Culham St Gabriel's Trust
- Global
- JCDecaux
- Michael and Morven Heller Foundation
- Moriah Legacy Trust
- Ocean Outdoor
- Pearl and Dean
- Philip King Charitable Trust
- Postcard Productions
- Rathbones
- Story
- The Ronson Foundation
- The Worshipful Company of Drapers

Back page image: BFI IMAX in London lit up in purple for Light the Darkness © Ocean Outdoor



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