

16 October 2023

To the Jewish communities of Greater Manchester and region

In these sad and darkest of times for Israel that most of us can remember, on behalf of myself and the Management Board of the JRC, I wanted to update you on the incredible work taking place behind the scenes both nationally and at a local level to re-assure you our Jewish community is and continues to feel safe and protected.

In an unprecedented show of support for the UK, the government and official opposition are standing behind Israel's right to protect itself. They are united in their unequivocal condemnation of Hamas and their recognition that there is absolutely, no moral equivalence to the justification of their barbaric and heinous atrocities. Yesterday, the Chief Rabbi met with King Charles in a similar show of solidarity with the Jewish community. We have also appreciated Downing Street, Parliament, City Hall and Central Library being lit with the Israeli flag.

Around the clock, our national community leadership and particularly the Jewish Leadership Council, Board of Deputies and Community Security Trust are working tirelessly with government and the Metropolitan Police to keep our communities and streets safe as the conflict unfolds. As a demonstration of ongoing support, the Government announced a further £3m to keep our communities protected across the UK.

Closer to home, and as the lead organisation representing the Greater Manchester Jewish community, we are extremely proud of the strong relationships and friendships we have built with local civic leaders, MPs, Mayors and their local councils, Greater Manchester Police and interfaith groups across the religious spectrum. Many of these attended our Interfaith Succot Dinner only last week at Heathlands Village together with the Lord Lieutenant Diane Hawkins and the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester Mary-Liz Walker.

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Less than a week later many of these leaders were out in force to demonstrate their support for our Jewish community once again in standing with Israel at our Vigil in Central Manchester, together with the Chief Rabbi, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham and Lord Mann, Independent Advisor to the Prime Minister on Antisemitism. As a community it is both comforting and re-assuring to know that these longstanding relationships and friendships, which mean so much to us, have engendered the strong support we are experiencing across the region, and I want to take this opportunity of sincerely thanking them for that. Also, whilst community organisations and schools have sadly but inevitably had to increase their own security, GMP have noticeably stepped up their visibility with more patrols in place and a commitment for zero tolerance on our streets for any behaviour likely to incite unlawful or antisemitic behaviour - for this we thank them wholeheartedly too.

With so many close ties to Israel in our region, we send our heartfelt wishes to anyone who has lost family or friends. We also pray the hostages are returned safely and for our brave soldiers of the IDF.

Our community incubated the early foundations of Zionism, and we are therefore proud those long associations have endured many unfortunate setbacks along the way. Together as a community we remain strong and united in our support for the Jewish state. Rest assured we will continue to put steps in place to protect our community both physically as well as mentally as this dynamic conflict unfolds.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Adlestone". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a horizontal line.

Mark Adlestone OBE DL
Chair