

HMD 2010: Local Activity Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to assist with the planning and organisation of community commemorations of HMD. This advice is general and recognises that every event must be relevant to the individual host community. HMDT will provide a range of display and handout materials, electronic presentations and short film on DVD – these materials will be available in autumn 2009. These can be downloaded once available or ordered by emailing enquiries@hmd.org.uk or calling 0845 838 1883. You can keep up to date with availability of resources by signing up online to receive our email newsletter on our website <http://www.hmd.org.uk/news/>

School and home-teaching resources including case studies, lesson plans and assemblies can be downloaded from the education section of the HMD website. New resources for 2010 will be available in the autumn term.

Members of the HMDT team are always available to discuss how best to develop and deliver meaningful commemorations within your own community and can provide training sessions for members of your planning team. To find out more contact any member of the HMDT team on 0845 838 1883 or enquiries@hmd.org.uk

About Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) is commemorated internationally on 27th January each year. The first HMD commemoration took place in the UK in January 2001 and since then councils, schools, community and faith groups as well as individuals have marked HMD and used it as a key date in the calendar to explore equality and inclusion within their own communities. January 27th 2010 will mark the 65th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, the largest of the Nazi killing centres

On HMD we commemorate victims and honour the survivors of the Holocaust and Nazi persecution including the six million Jews, the Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), Black Germans, the Disabled, Gay Men and Lesbians, Jehovah's Witnesses and political and religious opponents of the Nazi regime. HMD remembers subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and the ongoing atrocities today in Darfur and also recognises that people in Britain today are targeted because of their differences. HMD acts as a reminder of our responsibility to protect the civil and human rights of all people in our society and across the world. It challenges all of us to recognise the lessons which we can learn from the past and use these lessons to work in our families, schools and communities to create a safer future. A future which celebrates the differences between us.

HMD is distinct from Yom HaShoah which is the Jewish day of remembrance for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Yom HaShoah 2010 will take place on Monday 12 April 2010. For more information about Yom HaShoah please contact Yad Vashem UK. www.yadvashem.org.uk/

The lessons of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides are of great relevance and importance to every community in the UK. The Holocaust did not happen here, few UK residents were murdered by the Nazis and, with the exception of the Channel Islands, Jews were not deported from the UK to concentration camps. Despite this the Holocaust remains a event to us in Britain – a small number of British citizens were murdered by the Nazis, others were imprisoned, British forces fought against fascism and liberated the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp – other Britons rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Jewish refugees fled to Britain before the outbreak of the Second World War including 10,000 unaccompanied child refugees on the Kindertransport operation. Survivors of concentration camps and ghettos also arrived in the UK after their liberation. These refugees and survivors and their families have contributed greatly to the growth of business, cultural and political life in Britain.

Our situation in Britain today is not the same as in Nazi Germany, or in Pol Pot's Cambodia or Rwanda during the 1994 genocide however the evils of prejudice and discrimination exist here. Individuals and communities are targeted, bullied, excluded and attacked because of their religion, ethnicity, disability or sexuality. Genocide does not happen overnight and HMD offers us the opportunity to reflect on the actions which lead to it which include discrimination, exclusion, legislation which targets individual groups or communities and the growth of attacks on members of specific groups.

We urge everyone to use HMD as an opportunity to examine how individuals, groups and communities are treated and consider how we can work together to prevent discrimination and exclusion and build safer, more cohesive communities.

On HMD 2010 we have the opportunity to hear the stories of Holocaust survivors, their experiences of persecution and loss. We can acknowledge their strength for rebuilding their lives in the UK and can pledge to act on their hopes for the future where their experiences are remembered and passed on to future generations as a warning against the dangers of extremism, discrimination and exclusion.

About Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) is a national charity formed in 2005. Our vision is that the Holocaust and subsequent genocides are known; that victims are commemorated and lessons learned are translated into contemporary action in the UK.

HMDT is responsible for the annual, national commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day and raises awareness, informs and educates about the Holocaust and its contemporary relevance – especially to issues of racism; prejudice and discrimination. Each year we produce a theme to create a nationwide focus for HMD and a range of free resources which complement this theme.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2010

HMD 2010 marks the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. On this day, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is challenging everyone across the UK to become part of a **Legacy of Hope**. HMD 2010 offers an opportunity to listen to the voices from the Holocaust and Nazi persecution, and to make the lessons of hope for a safer, inclusive society where the difference between us are respected a reality today and in the future.

Holocaust survivors have played an immense role in bringing our attention to the lessons of the Holocaust. They speak of pain and loss, of strength and survival, of despair and their wish for a **Legacy of Hope**. They encourage us to look within and without, to be sure of our moral compass, to be certain of our choices and to use our voice, whenever we can, to speak out. They have translated difficult experiences into a wish to create a future that is free from the dangers of exclusion and persecution. They have passed a message of resilience and hope to the next generation.

Our responsibility is to remember those who were persecuted and murdered, so that their lives were not lost in vain. Our challenge is to make the experience and words of the victims and survivors of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides a meaningful part of our future. The aspirations of those who have suffered from the effects of the Holocaust and of genocide around the world, should inform our lives today. Their words can make us think about our own attitudes, our behaviour, our choices, the way we vote, the way we interact with one another, the way we respect and celebrate the differences between us and the way in which we build a safer future together. It is their example that can inspire us to greater action. We need to ask ourselves what we should be doing today to build a safer, stronger society so that the risk of the building blocks of genocide ever being laid is removed.

As humanitarian activist Hugo Slim says of the voices that speak out of tragedy to our shared sense of humanity: "We need to listen, for a change."

You can read the full HMD 2010 theme paper on the HMD website.

You could use the **Legacy of Hope** theme as a starting point when organising your commemoration and consider how you can use it as a focus for equality and anti-discrimination work that you already carry out. You may wish to commit to carrying forward the story of one specific survivor to ensure that their message of hope continues to be heard in the future or you could focus on one particular call such as Rabbi Hugo Gryn's contention that "you can only be safe and secure in a society that practices tolerance, cherishes harmony and can celebrate difference". You can use HMD 2010 as the opportunity to celebrate the differences within your own community.

It is important that any commemoration of HMD 2010 recognises the experiences of Holocaust, Nazi persecution and genocide survivors and offers a commitment to remember the individuals, families and communities devastated by Nazi persecution, however it is equally important that this remembrance is coupled with a commitment to carry forward the **Legacy of Hope**, passed on to us by survivors. Their legacy can be harnessed to encourage us all to work to create a future where people are not targeted because of their race, religion, sexuality, disability, ethnicity or political affiliation.

Your Event

There is no such thing as a standard HMD commemoration. Each event must reflect the individual nature and circumstances of the community hosting the event. A range of events have taken place across the country to mark HMD including large civic events, discussions on the impact of hatred, music performances and more reflective tree-planting and wreath-laying ceremonies. The HMD09 Commemorative Book with details of almost 500 events from 2009 can be downloaded from the website or ordered by emailing enquiries@hmd.org.uk. This book offers a view of how the Day is marked across the UK and some suggestions on good practice.

Top Tips for your event organisation:

Include a time for remembrance – this does not have to be the main focus of your event, however HMD does commemorate the loss of millions of lives, including the six million Jews, and it is appropriate to recognise this.

Don't be afraid of contemporary issues affecting your community – HMD offers the opportunity to look at our own communities and explore any issues of exclusion within them and offers the challenge to create more cohesive communities. Do remember however that HMD is not an opportunity for partisan political campaigning.

Consult communities who have a particular interest in HMD – Nazi persecution, subsequent genocides and exclusion affected a wide range of communities and many will want to ensure that their own experiences and opinions are taken into account. These groups may include the Jewish community and Holocaust survivors, Gypsy and Traveller representatives, LGBT groups, refugees from across the world, disability groups, religious representatives, members of minority ethnic communities and those working in equality and diversity roles.

Involve as much as your community as possible – think about who can take part in HMD. Schools, libraries, museums, youth groups and faith groups can all play a part in a large scale community event as well as commemorating HMD within their own organisations. HMD is a day for everyone, regardless of age, race, sexual orientation, religion or community.

Use the HMD 2010 theme – by using the theme you will be creating a unified message with other events across the country and create a focus for commemorations. The 2010 theme **The Legacy of Hope** offers the opportunity to consider the experience of Holocaust survivors and their wishes for the future and to make a commitment to carry these hopes and wishes forward in our own actions.

Ensure when you are planning your event that you are as inclusive as possible. You may wish to have a planning committee with representatives of different communities with an interest in HMD but this isn't always necessary. You should however work with a variety of individuals, communities and organisations to ensure that a wide range of views are taken into account when developing your programme of commemoration. Including different community and faith groups in your planning is a powerful way to show that HMD is an event for every member of the community.

Groups to include in consultation and planning:

Holocaust and genocide survivor organisations

Councils – especially equalities departments

Disability groups

Ex-service groups

Gypsy & Traveller groups

Jewish community

LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) groups

Libraries

Race Equality Councils

Refugee/Asylum Seeker bodies

Schools

Student unions

Trade Unions
Youth groups

This is not an exhaustive list and you will know groups within your own community who can also contribute to the organisation of your HMD event.

Holocaust Memorial Day should be an integral part of your equalities calendar and you can relate work on HMD to other campaigns and dates of interest throughout the year such as Black History Month, Refugee Week or LGBT History Month.

You can use the HMD09 commemorative book as a useful source of ideas to stimulate your event planning. Some event formats which have proven to be popular and effective in the past include:

Music performances – you can use music banned by the Nazis such as works by Jewish composers including Mahler and Mendelssohn; music written in response to the Holocaust or music by composers murdered or affected by the Holocaust or subsequent genocides such as Gideon Klein or Viktor Ullmann. You may wish to create your own piece of music with a local choir or musician, who will be able to assist you in developing a unique piece for your community.

Visit the music section of the HMD website for further suggestions and information on organisations who may be able to help.

Literature evening – book groups can use suggested activities on the HMD website to discuss books related to the themes of Holocaust Memorial Day or read poetry by survivors of the Holocaust or genocide. A range of poetry is available to download. Discuss within the group how these books and poems contribute towards the **Legacy of Hope** and how you can keep this legacy alive.

Celebrate the lives of survivors – Holocaust and genocide survivors and refugees from conflicts around the world have made a positive contribution to British society. Use HMD 2010 to celebrate the cultural diversity within our communities – events could include a day long festival which invites refugees (past and present), asylum seekers and members of the wider community to come together to learn more about each other.

A series of awareness-raising events - in the period leading up to HMD hold awareness raising events such as a series of film showings which explore different experiences of the Holocaust, persecution and genocide. Advice on suitable films is available from HMDT – don't forget to secure permission from the copyright owner if showing a film to an audience. The HMD 2010 short film will be available to order free of charge in autumn 2009.

Hold artistic competitions for local schools – find out what **The Legacy of Hope** means to local schoolchildren through art, music or creative writing competitions. Use winning entries during a civic event.

Venue

Just as there is no set HMD event there is also no set venue for commemorations. Most public and private spaces are suitable and you should choose your venue based on the event you are holding. In previous years successful commemorations have been held in schools, places of worship, town halls and civic centres, memorial gardens, cinemas, community centres and shopping centres. Consider a range of options and how these will appeal to the audiences you wish to attract.

Ensure the venue is fully accessible – this is particularly important for elderly or Disabled attendees. Your venue should include wheelchair access and an induction loop. You may also wish to consider making a sign language interpreter available.

Ensure people can reach you – try to select a venue with good public transport links and good parking facilities.

Take audience size into account – while you cannot always know how many people are likely to attend choose a venue which is suitable for the audience size. Try not to have a space which is either too large and looks empty or too small and cramped.

Remember the weather – the period around HMD is likely to be cold and any venue must have adequate heating, particularly if elderly people are attending.

Book early – once you have decided on your ideal venue book as early as possible. This will make it easier to confirm other aspects of your event such as speakers.

Speaker

The presence of a speaker at a Holocaust Memorial Day event can help to bring an immediacy and relevance to the event and offers a first hand-warning about the dangers of hatred, exclusion and persecution. A speaker who has survived the Holocaust, genocide or extreme exclusion can express personally their own hopes for the future and how they would like to see the audience take the **Legacy of Hope** forward.

The most frequently requested speakers for HMD events are Holocaust survivors or refugees from Nazi persecution, particularly those who came to Britain on the Kindertransport operation. Due to the decreasing numbers of people still able to attend and speak publicly it will not always be possible to secure the attendance of a Holocaust survivor at your event. Think about inviting survivors of subsequent genocides to share their story or a victim of hate crime to discuss exclusion and discrimination today. You may also wish to consider using survivor testimony read by local representatives of your community, or using any of the vast catalogue of recorded testimony as part of your commemoration.

Some key points to remember when considering inviting a speaker to attend your event:

Know what you want your event to achieve – is it a memorial service or a commitment to carry the **Legacy of Hope** forward? Knowing what your aim is will help to shape the entire programme and help identify which speakers will be suitable.

Ask early – Demand for speakers on and around HMD is always very high and there are limited numbers of people who are able to attend commemorations.

Keep in touch with your speaker – once you have a confirmed speaker at your event make sure you discuss with them all the relevant details such as the purpose and agenda of your event; who else will be speaking; how long you would like them to speak for and whether they would be happy to take questions; what audience you expect; how long the full event will last and what images you intend to use.

Who else will be speaking – if you intend to invite more than one speaker to your event consider if their experiences and messages are complementary. Think about how many speakers you want at your commemoration. While different experiences can greatly contribute to an audience's understanding of difficult events – too many speakers can have the opposite impact and cause dilution of the message and weariness among the audience.

Make it easy for your speaker – make sure that they can reach your venue. Offer to either arrange or pay for transport and if necessary offer to provide accommodation. Arrange practical elements such as where you wish your speaker to sit and who will meet the speaker when they arrive. If your main speaker is a Holocaust or genocide survivor it is likely that they will be relating a traumatic time in their lives and this is likely to be an emotional experience for both the speaker and the audience. Allow some time in the programme for this session to over-run. Your speaker may wish a pause after giving their testimony and this can be a good time for a period of quiet reflection.

Visuals

The use of visual materials such as slide-shows, presentations, posters and film can contribute to an audience's understanding of the history and contemporary context of an HMD commemoration. There are some important points to remember when considering which images to select:

Never use images for shock value – while the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and genocide are shocking and there is a wealth of photographic and video evidence of the atrocities committed it is important to remember that you must never dehumanise the victims. Images of corpses and open graves in particular should be avoided. If you feel that a particular image, while shocking, adds to the impact of your event issue a brief warning before using it.

Consider your audience – there may be young children and survivors of the events under discussion in your audience. If you feel that an image could be too upsetting then do not use it. If you have a Holocaust or genocide survivor speaking discuss your choice of images in advance of your event to ensure that they are comfortable.

Avoid glamourising the Nazis – images of Nazi salutes, uniforms, rallies, swastikas etc should be avoided where possible. If used ensure it is within the context of highlighting the consequences of Nazi policies.

Link your images to the theme – what images best illustrate **The Legacy of Hope**? These images could include Holocaust survivors as they are today, an illustration of cultures which genocide sought to destroy or images which represent co-operation within your own community. If you hold a programme of education and awareness raising events in the build-up to HMD you could use images of these to create a record of how your community is working together to create a **Legacy of Hope**.

Always secure permission from copyright owners before using any images.

Examples of images you may wish to consider using are available on the HMD website

As with all aspects of your event organisation please contact HMDT on enquiries@hmd.org.uk or 0845 883 1883 if you would like to discuss any queries you may have about visuals you are considering using as part of your commemoration.

Publicising your event

Wherever possible HMD commemorative events should be open to the public so that as many members of the community as possible can participate. If your event is open to the public it is important that people can find out easily where and when the event is taking place and how to attend.

List your event on the HMD website – this is the first port of call for members of the public who wish to know about events in their local area. Try to include as much information as possible in your entry.

Use community or parish magazines - offer to write an article about what HMD is and why it is important to commemorate it in your community. If you require assistance with producing your article please contact us on 0845 838 1883 or enquiries@hmd.org.uk. Take into account that many magazines for December and January are produced several months in advance so it is important to make contact early.

Tell everyone you know about the event - if you have a steering group or consultation body ask each member to ensure the communities or groups which they represent are invited and know about the commemoration.

Contact community and faith groups in the area - ask them to inform their members. Include all groups who may have an interest in HMD, equality and diversity issues.

Publicise your event widely - in internal newsletters, bulletins, intranet, notice boards and website. Ask local libraries, shops, businesses, faith groups, supermarkets, community and youth centres to display your posters.

Use social media – there are a range of social media options to help publicise HMD events. You can create a Facebook event and encourage people to invite their friends to attend; you can use Twitter to spread the word to a vast network of individuals or you could upload photos of your preparation and event to a Flickr account (please make sure you obtain the copyright holder's permission first).

In addition to using your own contacts to publicise your event try to ensure that the local media are aware of HMD and why you are commemorating the Day within your community:

Tell the media early - Invite your local newspapers, radio and television stations to write about and attend the event. Call the news desks in advance and identify a suitable contact to follow up your story. This could be a news, social, community or education reporter. Try and have an individual connected to the event who would be prepared to give an interview to the media. It could be the key guest, a survivor or someone with an interesting story associated with HMD. They should feel comfortable speaking to the journalist and have a few key points they should focus on communicating.

Create interest in a human story - if you have a guest speaker who has survived the Holocaust or is a refugee suggest that your local newspaper run a feature story on their life as an introduction to your commemoration. Check first with your speaker that they are happy for this to happen.

Make it easy for journalists - know what deadlines they are working to and make sure you produce material in good time – it will greatly increase the chances of a story being published. Find out how each journalist prefers to receive press releases – is it by email or fax? It is likely to be by email - try pasting the text into the body of the email rather than sending attachments. Be clear and concise, so the journalist can grasp the core details after reading it for the first time. Ensure it is written in plain English, without lapsing into jargon. Try to include a website address from which they can gain further information - either your own or www.hmd.org.uk

Tell people more than once - send out a press release both before and after your event. The HMD website contains downloadable template press releases which you can amend to suit your own event. Always remember to include the Who, What, Why, Where and When and a complete programme of your event. The HMD logo will be included on all information released to the press throughout the year. Download the logo from the HMD website and copy it into your press release.

Take photos - Even if your local paper is sending a photographer remember to take your own camera. Use a digital camera and take high resolution images – preferably over 1MB as this will be the most suitable for printing in newspapers and the HMDT review of 2010. Take appropriate photos while your event is taking place to capture the action and atmosphere. Don't rely on posed photos which often look staid.

It is important to HMDT that we know where and when events are taking place – this allows us to direct regional and local media towards events in their communities and to more effectively target our support and resources. Even if your event is not open to the general public we still want to hear about it. Please let us know by emailing enquiries@hmd.org.uk or calling 0845 838 1883.

Other Points to Remember

There are a number of points you may also wish to take into account when organising your commemoration of HMD 2010:

Refreshments – if you are offering food and drink to those attending please remember that different religions have different rules regarding what is and is not suitable. You may wish to offer Kosher or Halal menus although for most cultures a vegetarian menu is a suitable alternative. Please do not offer pork, beef or shellfish dishes. If you are offering alcoholic drinks you should also provide water and soft drinks on a separate tray or table.

Security – the vast majority of HMD events do not require any specific security measures however you may be aware of local issues or tensions which could lead to security concerns. Contact your local police for further advice.

Budget – even when running a low cost event there are still a number of budgetary implications including venue hire, publicity, catering and speakers' expenses. Think about how you can raise money through local sponsorship or by contacting grant-giving organisations. HMDT cannot provide financial assistance, however all of our resources are free of charge and we're here to supply advice as you need it.

Use HMDT – we are here to help as much as we can and our website has a range of free resources including, podcasts, artwork and book group activities. You can contact members of the HMDT team on enquiries@hmd.org.uk or call us on 0845 838 1883.

The success of Holocaust Memorial Day lies in the hundreds of local community and education events which take place across the country. By working together we can help to take forward the Legacy of Hope and create a safer, more secure future for us all.

Thank you for being a part of HMD 2010.