Factsheet

UNTOLD stories HMD 2011 HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Advice for Rural Local Authorities holding HMD 2011 events

HMD 07 event in Wellingborough
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What is Holocaust Memorial Day?

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) is a day for everyone. On 27 January each year, we pause to remember the millions of people who have been murdered or whose lives have been changed beyond recognition during the Holocaust, under Nazi persecution and in the subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur. We honour the survivors of those regimes of hatred and we use HMD as an opportunity to reflect on the ways in which we live our lives today. HMD offers us all the chance to create a safer, better future.

HMD has been commemorated in the UK since 2001, and in 2005 the United Nations declared 27 January as an international day for remembrance and contemporary action. Anyone can organise an event to mark HMD, and many hundreds of events already take place. HMDT will provide you with the **free resources** and advice to assist you in setting up your HMD event. Any member of the HMDT team can help – call us on 0845 838 1883 or email us – **enquiries@hmd.org.uk**.

Why is HMD relevant?

Genocide doesn't just happen. It begins when the differences between us stop being celebrated and respected. Genocide is an act of extreme exclusion, when a State-sponsored regime of hatred is allowed to proceed unchecked. Our communities in the UK are not facing the dangers of Pol Pot's Cambodia, or that of Nazi occupied Europe but the evils of prejudice, discrimination and exclusion are present around us today. By looking at how the building blocks of genocide are laid, you are given a choice – you can choose to stand by and do nothing or you can make the choice to speak out against anyone who bullies, stereotypes, persecutes or attacks those who are different to them. In making this choice and making the values of inclusion and respect part of everyday life and behaviour, you honour those whose lives were destroyed during the Holocaust, under Nazi persecution and in the subsequent genocides and ensure that their lives were not wasted.

Why should Rural Local Authorities hold a HMD event?

Local Authorities serving rural areas face a different challenge from those in more urban areas. This factsheet is intended to assist those based in rural communities to mark HMD and to involve their communities with their activities.

Rural areas are often the most energetic and vibrant communities, whose citizens and residents can powerfully demonstrate the value of local action. This grass-roots approach can make HMD activities well supported and meaningful for our contemporary lives.

Rural Authorities will benefit from considering events which bring their communities together – whether physically or virtually. Stories from dispersed communities can help us to unpack the HMD 2011 theme **Untold Stories**. Using lessons from communities of the past we can learn how to make our society stronger and safer today.

www.hmd.org.uk PO Box 61074, London, SE1P 5BX 0845 838 1883

Living in a rural area can be isolating, especially for minority communities. Commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day has helped to bring geographically spread out members of local communities together. We have taken a range of approaches to encouraging local people to engage with HMD, from big exhibitions in the city to smaller travelling displays that are toured around community centres in the market towns. HMD is always relevant and pertinent to the lives of people in our local communities.

Sarah Skelton, Community Heritage Officer, Hereford Museums

What kind of event should I organise?

There's no such thing as a right or wrong HMD event. The best events and activities reflect the needs of your audience. With over 11,000 rural communities in England alone the scope of the type of events that can be held are endless. Don't worry if you don't have a budget associated with putting on a HMD 2011 event – all of the resources we provide are free of charge.

Some ideas for events in Rural Communities include:

- displaying posters from our free **Campaign Pack** in your village hall
- writing articles for Parish Councils Newsletters or village websites
- sending a mail out to all residents with the free HMD handout materials
- hold events in village halls or community centres
- find the **Untold Stories** in your community. Ask residents to share their stories, either on a bespoke blog or through initiatives which already take place in your area
- encourage your mobile library to display books relevant to HMD. You can point them toward our bespoke **advice for Libraries**
- if you have a mobile cinema, ask them to show the HMD 2011 short film – available in our free Campaign Pack
- use existing community and cultural priorities in your Local Authority to encourage participation in HMD

What should I do next?

It's not too late to start planning your HMD activity. First things first – order our free **Campaign Pack** for resources and advice.

Talk to us

The HMDT team are here to help. We can provide you with ideas and guidance through our advice service, as well as sending you our free resources. We're always happy to hear from you.

t – **0845 838 1883**

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Seek inspiration from our **HMD event slideshow** and see how others have participated in or held HMD events.