

The Association of Jewish Refugees

The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) provides an extensive range of social and welfare services and financial assistance to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution living in the UK.

Founded in 1941 by Jewish refugees from central Europe, the AJR has accumulated more than 60 years' experience attending to the needs of Holocaust refugees and survivors who came to this country before, during and after the Second World War. About 75,000 refugees – including approximately 10,000 children on the Kindertransport – arrived in Britain from Nazi-occupied Europe in the late 1930s. New waves of immigration to Britain of former Nazi victims followed the 1956 Hungarian revolution, the 1967 Czech uprising and the break-up of the Soviet Union after 1989.

As part of their nationwide programme of home visits, a team of social care workers assess members' needs and where appropriate eligibility for several financial support schemes, designed to enable members to continue to live with dignity in their own home for as long as possible. On behalf of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany, the AJR administers emergency social welfare and care funds, which can be used to pay for several services and essential items including dental treatment, urgent house repairs, recuperative convalescence, and homecare packages.

The AJR operates more than 44 regional groups throughout the country, offering the members with similar backgrounds, from all countries across Europe, a unique opportunity to socialise, share their experiences and enjoy entertainment and excursions. It is at these gatherings that many former friends have been re-united after more than 60 years.

The AJR also provides the services of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims which researches evidence to prove and expedite compensation claims for persecution, including dormant bank accounts and unpaid insurance policies. It also campaigns for changes in tax and social security legislation, so that Holocaust survivors and refugees can benefit fully from indemnifications they receive. For members and others attempting to re-establish contact with friends or family members lost track of during the war years, AJR Journal publishes a regular column of Search Notices. Authors, makers of television documentaries, research institutes, academics and students also place notices to invite testimony from members who witnessed the relevant events and to obtain access to original documents and photographs.

The AJR offers its members a wide range of entertainment and activities including art and computer classes, a card club, bridge tournaments, day trips, a library, and an in-house shop. AJR members also benefit from the services of an optician and a chiropodist. The monthly Luncheon Club combines lunch with guest speakers and artists performing musical programmes.

Volunteer Taks:

- **Outreach events**
 - Attend and assist at outreach events
 - Diary planning for the department
 - Administration for outreach events
 - Update of website with forthcoming meetings and events

- **Communications**
 - Create content for the social media accounts
 - Create graphics, using Canva, for events
- **Project “My Story”**
 - Work with the project lead to create a database of keywords, tags and significant dates for the 50 book archive which can be used for social media and other marketing purposes
- **Education and Heritage**
 - Update records on the UK Holocaust Map
 - Write social media posts featuring different locations on the Heritage Map
 - Assist with ongoing programmes resulting from the 80 Trees project
- **Volunteers Department**
 - Make regular visits to allocated AJR clients (1 day per week)
 - Provide assistance for events such as Volunteer’s Week, Carer’s Week

The volunteer will be supported in a number of ways to ensure that he/she has the best possible information and training to assist him/her in their tasks, including:

- Training sessions covering relevant volunteering topics, such as 'Effective Listening Skills' or 'Dealing with Depression'
- Regular support and supervision by the Head of Volunteer Services
- Reimbursement of all upcoming travel costs by AJR

What is expected from a volunteer:

- Knowledge about and interest in history about the Third Reich, Holocaust, Second World War, Germany after 1945
- Very good social skills, such as active listening, patience, empathy
- Tolerance, unbiased attitude towards others
- Excellent English written and oral skills
- Good organisational skills
- Good communication skills
- Ability to work independently
- Dress smart - appropriately for office work (no jeans)