

THE ONLY ANTISEMITISM HE'S ENCOUNTERED IS FROM FELLOW JEWS

Kippa-wearer is parliament's new standards commissioner

BY SIMON YAFFE

THE reputation of UK politicians is rarely high — and, thanks to events over the past couple of years, trust in MPs seems to have totally eroded.

And Westminster's new Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards believes matters have reached a "low point".

Daniel Greenberg, who will take up his role as the UK's independent parliamentary commissioner for standards early next year, told the *Jewish Telegraph*: "Trust is troublingly low.

"Part of the challenge of my new role will be to help the vast majority of MPs who do have a strong commitment to the standards of public life.

"I hope that we can shift the narrative a little bit and re-establish trust."

The 57-year-old, who has 30 years experience in the private and public sectors dealing with legislation, was a Parliamentary Counsel for 20 years and is currently an officer in the House of Commons.

Born in London and of

Ukrainian Jewish ancestry, he was raised in what he described as a "traditionally Orthodox home".

Mr Greenberg, who wears a kippa, read law at Cambridge.

"There were a few other people from a frum background there and, nowadays, I think they also have those from charedi backgrounds, so it has never been a problem," he said.

The 57-year-old went on to work for the Lord Chancellor's Department, as a legal adviser in civil policy, before moving to the Parliamentary Counsel Cabinet Office for almost 19 years, where he drafted acts of Parliament.

After that, he worked part-time for a London law firm, serving as its part-time in-house Parliamentary Counsel, where he advised on a range of legislation projects, including drafting, training, compliance, lobbying and other matters.

And, since 2016, he has been the House of Commons' counsel for domestic legislation, which means he advises the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments and gives other advice in relation to legislation and Parliamentary law.

The father-of-four, who is

married to psychology teacher Julia, said: "There is a code of conduct about how MPs are to behave, such as registering interests and declaring interests.

"The job of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards will be to oversee compliance.

"I am looking forward to it and it should be a challenge."

Mr Greenberg has experienced antisemitism — but not from a source one may usually expect.

"It has been almost entirely from other Jews," he explained.

"Jews tend to be intolerant of other Jews who don't follow their particular approach to Judaism.

"Some other Jews think that only their balance of religion and secularism is the right one.

"The suggestions that I ought not to wear my kippa in the Palace of Westminster have come from Jewish people."

Observing Shabbat and the High Holy Days has never been a problem, either.

In 1998, Mr Greenberg was part of the team behind legislation for the Good Friday Agreement.

But it fell during yomtov.

Mr Greenberg recalled: "My rabbi at the time ruled that the work I was doing was *pikuach nefesh* and that I could be driven in to carry out my functions.

"In the end, I walked to my office and back."

Mr Greenberg, who was appointed Companion of the Order of the Bath in the 2021 New Year's Honours for services to Parliament, has also served as editor of *Stroud's Judicial Dictionary* and *Craies on Legislation*, general editor of *Jowitt's Dictionary of English Law*, general editor of *Westlaw UK Annotated Statutes and Topics Encyclopaedia*.

He has also written a number of books, including *How to Become Jewish (And Why Not To)* and *What If God's a Christian? An Orthodox But Sceptical Jewish View of the World*, and has recently finished penning a tome on the practice of *gittin*, the tractate which discusses the laws of the *get*.

Two of Mr Greenberg's children live in Israel, and he and his wife own a home in Beit Shemesh, near Jerusalem.



NEW ROLE: Daniel Greenberg

PICTURE: YAKIR ZUR



CONSERVATIVE, Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs wrote Christmas cards and packed bags of warm clothing and toiletries for the homeless in Westminster, as part of a Mitzvah Day project held inside the House of Commons.

MPs including Bury South's Christian Wakeford and Leeds North West's Alex Sobel were supporting homeless charity The Passage.

The event was organised by Mitzvah Day along with the Board of Deputies and the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Jews.

Guests included Mitzvah Day chief executive Stuart Diamond and chairman Laura Marks, as well as Board president Marie van der Zyl.

Politicians unite for Mitzvah Day

Dame Margaret Hodge, who hosted it, said: "As MPs from all parties, we got together to support Mitzvah Day and recognise the importance of the work done by Britain's faith community to promote a loving attitude and help those in society who desperately need it."

Pictured, from left: Stuart Diamond, MP Charlotte Nichols, The Passage's Milita Raymond, Laura Marks, Marie van der Zyl, Alex Sobel and Max Elgot, of The Passage

Dementia expert's take new role at Belong care village

BELONG Morris Feinmann has named leading dementia expert Caroline Baker as head of dementia and care quality. It is a newly created role with a focus on driving the not-for-profit organisation's dementia strategy and advancing its track record for quality at the Didsbury care village.

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