Listed status for UK mosques

Tuesday 13 March, 2018

The Woking Mosque upgraded to a Grade 1 listed building

We congratulate our Muslim brothers and sisters on the recognition of various mosques around the UK as listed buildings, helping thereby to preserve the history of the establishment of Islam in the UK. It has to be said that the message these mosques gave to the people of this country at that time, in the early part of the twentieth century, is far removed from what is propagated from their hallowed halls these days.

All the early mosques, among which The Woking Mosque had the pride of place, sent a message of peace to the local population. At the time, the Woking Mosque was under the control and management of this organisation, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Commenting on the message of Islam which went out from the Woking Mosque, Christian missionaries said that it was something new and fresh which they had not come across in their travels in the Muslim majority countries.

The one outstanding element of this message was to declare that a Muslim is a person who says that he or she is a Muslim and that no one has the right to judge people's faith or declare any Muslim an unbeliever and outside the fold of Islam. At that time, for example, a Shia Muslim would lead the prayers and Sunni Muslims would pray behind him and vice versa. Kings, Presidents and Prime Ministers went to the Woking Mosque to see such an amazing sight in such an eye-opening place.

The first significant and complete English translation of the Holy Quran by a Muslim was printed and published from the Woking Mosque. The first English language magazine on Islam in the West, *The Islamic Review*, was published from the Woking Mosque. The idea for the creation of Pakistan was put forward at the Woking Mosque. The idea for the creation of the Organisation of Islamic Countries was mooted there. The Woking Mosque was the hub of all intellectual and missionary activity in the UK.

We welcome the recognition of the structure and fabric of the building. However, it is just as important, if not more so, to preserve and propagate the message that went out from the Woking Mosque. We pray that the Woking Mosque again becomes the glory that it was once and that it does not just remain as a fantastic building where the Holy Quran is merely learnt by heart.

The Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam (*Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam*) was established in Lahore in 1914 to promote the informed understanding of Islam in the West. In the UK it operated the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking until the early 1960s. Its new headquarters is at *Dar-us-Salaam*, 15 Stanley Avenue, Wembley, HA0 4JQ, UK. In 1924, in Berlin, it built the first mosque in Continental Europe of the modern era. The German Government recognises the Berlin Mosque as part of the German national heritage. From its European and other centres around the world this organisation has taught that Islam promotes peace, harmony and mutual respect between all communities and nationalities.

Submissions in 2016 to UK Parliament Inquiries:

- *Countering Extremism*
    - Our submission: pdf • html
- *Sharia Councils:*
    - Our submission: pdf • html

Woking Mosque and Muslim Mission: history

Maulana Muhammad Ali's Quran Translation (first published at Woking, 1917)

Media:



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