



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **The Stabbing of a Muslim in Forest Hill**

**(December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016)**

It is with great shock and regret that we learned of the stabbing yesterday, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at Forest Hill Train Station in the London Borough of Lewisham in what was clearly an Islamophobic attack.

The London Borough of Lewisham has an exemplary record of community cohesion with faith and non-faith communities living side by side and standing together against racism, xenophobia and bigotry. It is for this reason that this attack is all the more distressing as it shows that the rise of this vile ideology that is Islamophobia has now gained at such a pace as to threaten the very fabric of Lewisham.

As is often the case when a person who professes the Islamic faith carries out a horrific crime for politically motivated reasons, questions are immediately asked by the media, the Government, law enforcement agencies and policy makers as to who or what radicalised the individual in question and whether there is even something inherently flawed with Islamic beliefs. Yet time and time again, Muslims are being attacked here in the UK and no queries are being made as to who or what is radicalising and driving these individuals to carry out these horrific actions against Muslims. We can only imagine the sheer terror of being confronted by a knife-wielding attacker and thank Allah (God) the Almighty that no loss of life occurred.

To the Muslim community, we would urge that you and your family members stay vigilant at all times when travelling. Whilst it is natural to feel frightful in times like this, we advise you to remain steadfast, confident, assertive and strong and to never silently tolerate abuse, verbal or physical. Whenever possible, try not to be a casual bystander to any abuse, whether against Muslims or non-Muslims, keeping in mind that your action should always be reasonable and proportionate and within the limits of the law, and should never enflame the situation and the police should be contacted as soon as possible.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victim, his family and with the wider Muslim community suffering oppression at this most difficult of times, particularly in Aleppo and Burma.