



Key Media Messages

Visit My Mosque 2019



Summary of key media messages below. See Page 3 for general media interview tips too!

Key Messages

1. **#VisitMyMosque** Day is going green for its **5th year anniversary!**
2. Over 200 mosques nationwide are helping **#KeepBritainTidy** this spring, as they open their doors to the general public on **#VisitMyMosque** day on **3rd March 2019**.
3. The purpose of the day is about helping communities in **building bridges** and **breaking down stereotypes**.
4. Many mosques in Britain have been actively organising street cleans for years. So this year mosques are partnering with the national environment charity Keep Britain Tidy to support the annual **#GBSpringClean** taking place 22 March – 23 April 2019, which aims to inspire over 500,000 Britons nationwide to join forces and collect and safely dispose of litter from our streets, parks and beaches.
5. Whatever faith or background you come from, care and cleanliness for our local environment is a unifying force that brings communities together
6. Visit My Mosque Day on 3rd March is a national day facilitated by the **Muslim Council of Britain**, the country's largest Muslim umbrella body with over 500 affiliated national, regional and local organisations.
7. Mosques from across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are taking part.
8. Muslims volunteers at their local mosques will be available to meet their local neighbours to learn more about each other's lives, **in particular our common values for the care of the environment and respecting mother nature**.
9. Visit My Mosque started with about 20 participating mosques in 2015 and has grown to over 200 mosques in 2019.
10. The participating mosques represent the diversity in Islamic traditions, with mosques from a wide variety of Islamic schools of thought and traditions taking part, including some of the country's largest mosques seasoned in doing outreach activities, as well as smaller mosques holding open days for the first time.

Call to Action

11. Visitors can find their nearest participating mosque online at www.visitmymosque.org/find or search hashtag **#visitmymosque**
12. Individuals and organisations can join a clean-up or pledge to pick up litter at www.keepbritaintidy.org



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Why is street cleaning important?

- In **Islam**, there is a saying: “Cleanliness is half of faith” – Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)
- In **Islam**, there is a saying: “When you remove stones, thorns and bones from the road... it counts for you as *Sadaqah* (Charity)” – Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)
- According to **Keep Britain Tidy**, an estimated 25 million tonnes of litter is dropped annually in Britain costing the UK taxpayer over £1 billion a year.
- Litter can harm wildlife. According to the **RSPCA**, 7,704 calls were received to report incidents of animals injured because of litter in 2017.
- Litter attracts litter. Research conducted by **Keep Britain Tidy** in 2012 showed that people are more likely to litter where litter is present.
- MPs get more letters complaining about litter and dog fouling than anything else.



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General Tips and Techniques for Media Interviews

- Begin with *Bismillah!*
- Be respectful and always stay calm
- Be at the studio/location in plenty of time
- Always assume the microphone is live, so try not to talk to yourself, or say anything you wouldn't want everyone to hear!
- Plan your message, prepare how to deliver it, then practice doing it.
- Have three key points you want to put across during the interview – this will help ensure you stay on track and deliver/achieve the outcome you want from the interview.
- For TV, don't take a crib-sheet with you - you cannot use it!
- Know the programme you're appearing on, and the audience that will be listening to you.
- You're talking to people in their homes: you have to grab their attention
- Before you start(/in advance), ask the person interviewing you the three key questions:
 - **Who's this for?** i.e. BBC will be looking for different things versus a local broadcaster, or versus a Muslim-focussed TV channel.
 - **Is it live or recorded?**
 - **What's your first question?** (Will help you understand what they're looking for)
- Always relate your answers back to the mosque open day itself and its overall aim of **building bridges** and **connecting communities** etc.
- Have "wow" facts or examples ready; miss out everything that's not strictly relevant
- Deliver your message - illustrate it - end by prompting the next question
- In a crisis, ABCD - Acknowledge, Bridge, Communicate, Dangle
- Put YOUR case, and respond to the unexpected
- Don't lecture the interviewer. Be conversational, as if you were in a café meeting a friend.
- Avoid jargon, abbreviations, cultural specifics, technical terms
- If occasionally you have to use any jargon, explain it at once
- Once in every interview, say "For example . . ." Then give one
- A difficult interviewer is often a friend in disguise
- Be passionate, be humane, be yourself!
- Smile and don't forget to thank them (before and afterwards) for the opportunity and taking interest

For further queries, contact the #VisitMyMosque Co-ordinator on visitmymosque@mcb.org.uk