

Petition from the descendants of the Jews of Bruchsal

To Lord Mayor Cornelia Petzold-Schick
To Mayor Andreas Glaser
To the members of Bruchsal Municipal Council

March 2021

Dear Lord Mayor Petzold-Schick,
Dear Mayor Glaser,
Dear Councillors

In 1880, when construction of the new synagogue in Bruchsal began, Jewish families looked forward to a positive future in a spirit of optimism. The Jewish community had grown to 730 members, and it was decided to demolish the old synagogue on the actual property and build a new synagogue on the site. The Jewish community raised the enormous sum of 140.000 Marks for the new building.

Jewish families were well integrated in the city, and Jews and Christians worked in harmony. New trading and industrial businesses were founded and the city of Bruchsal enjoyed growing prosperity.

The new synagogue became the community centre for our parents, grandparents and great grandparents, until 1933. The period that followed was devastating for the Jewish community.

Bruchsal already remembers this destructive period in many ways.

We, the descendants of the Jews of Bruchsal, wish for a powerful connection with Bruchsal, the place where we have our roots. Right now the opportunity presents itself to remember Jews of Baden of that time on the site of the synagogue that was destroyed by the Third Reich. Perhaps a once in a lifetime chance to convey to the world a sense of the long period of the shared culture of Jews and Christians.

On this site, which was so important for our descendants, we want to build bridges from the past into the future. For us, the House of History of Baden Jews belongs in this place that is steeped in history. A space of meeting, of remembrance, of fellowship for all residents of Bruchsal as well as for all the descendants of the Jews for whom Bruchsal was home, who are now dispersed all over the world.

Which town in Baden could be better suited for this purpose?

From the many returns we received, we learn that even a few petitioners do not have their roots among the Jews of Bruchsal. Of course, we have also taken these petitioners into account.

We would greatly appreciate your support in realising the project for the establishment of the House of History of Baden Jews.

The petitioners:

S. Grosz (London)

P. Odenheimer (Basel)

R. Schrag (New York)

U. Schüler (near Hamburg)