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# Thousands of Young Muslims Gather in Surrey to Raise the Union Flag

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While London headlines were recently dominated by a divisive political rally, a very different gathering of young British Muslims took place quietly in the Surrey countryside.

From 19-21 September 2025, nearly 8,000 members of the **Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association UK (AMYA)** came together in Puttenham, near Guildford, for their annual **National Ijtema** — a three-day programme dedicated to faith, education, and service to the community.

The Ahmadiyya community, which has its largest UK mosque in **Morden** (the Baitul Futuh Mosque, one of the biggest in Western Europe) and another at **Southfields, Wimbledon**, is well established across South London and Surrey including Epsom. Locally, members are often seen involved in charitable activities such as foodbank support, litter-picking drives, and tree-planting schemes.

At the Surrey event, participants took part in academic and sporting competitions, discussions on civic responsibility, and practical workshops designed to encourage young Muslims to be active citizens. The highlight came when the Union Jack was raised and thousands pledged loyalty to the UK, echoing the teaching within Islam that "loyalty to one's nation is part of one's faith."

His Holiness **Mirza Masroor Ahmad**, worldwide head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, addressed the gathering via live broadcast. He urged the youth to reform themselves, to uphold honesty and respect, and to serve both God and humanity.

Abdul Quddus Arif, President of AMYA UK, said:

"The National Ijtema is a powerful demonstration of how faith and civic duty can go hand in hand. Our young people show their love for Britain not through empty gestures but through practical service - from food drives and blood donation to supporting the most vulnerable in society."

For decades the AMYA has raised millions for British charities, donated tonnes of food to foodbanks, and clocked up tens of thousands of volunteer hours. The Puttenham gathering was intended not just as an internal conference but as a visible statement of what patriotism can look like when it is rooted in service rather than division.

As one local attendee remarked, "We're proud to be British, proud to be Muslim, and proud to show that the two go hand in hand."

The Ahmadiyya community has long been a part of Surrey's wider social fabric, opening its mosques for interfaith dialogue and local visits, and regularly organising peace walks. Against a backdrop of national debate about protest and identity, this year's Ijtema sent a simple message: thousands of young Muslims are committed to building bridges and serving their country with dignity.

Sam Jones - Reporter



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