

BRITAIN PALESTINE FRIENDSHIP AND TWINNING NETWORK



WELCOME to the BPFTN Summer Newsletter

MEMBERSHIP:

The BPFTN Constitution was amended at the AGM in March to allow individuals to become a member of the network in their own right. The minimum annual membership fee is £5.

The easiest way to become an individual member is to make a BACS payment to:

The Britain Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network

Sort code: 40 40 01 Account number: 42044951

Solidarity greetings from the BPFTN to the organisers of The Big Ride and all those taking part and supporting it.



Do you know of any Towns or Villages interested in joining the BPFTN?

At times we receive expressions of interest from people representing towns, villages, or organisations in the UK or in Palestine to form a friendship or twinning group. Due to a recent request, we have become aware we do not have a 'readily' available list of potential places or contacts and it may be useful to develop one going forward.

Therefore, to help with the latest UK request to develop a friendship group for a village or town in Palestine and, making use of our wonderful resources and contacts through all our network groups, could you send us any potential contacts for Palestinian villages or small towns who may be interested in forming a friendship group.

Please email palestinetwinning@gmail.com

FROM THE UNITE-SHU’FAT TWINNING GROUP:



Our Unite Community group comes under Unite the Union, London and Eastern Region. We have been working all year to bring over a small delegation from Shu’fat refugee camp in East Jerusalem. They will be here (visas permitting) from 9th to 27th September. We are finalising their very busy programme: London - Liverpool - Hastings - Halifax / Hebden Bridge - Orkney! It has been a pleasure getting support from and working with so many different groups and individuals to make this happen.



kenningtonbethlehem

Connecting London with Palestine, Kennington with Bethlehem

A round-up of the recent activities of the Kennington Bethlehem Link:

Our AGM in December, with the help of wonderful photographs from our friends in the Aida Refugee Camp, we created an exhibition of the Boots for Bethlehem project, for which we raised £700 at a Quiz Night to buy football boots for the youth team in the camp.

February: Our book group discussed *Our Women on the Ground: Essays by Arab Women* edited by Zahra Hankir.

April: 25 people attended an evening of talks/discussion on the theme *Eyewitness: Stories from the West Bank and Israel* with EAPPI observer Cheryl Kipping.

May: We wrote to our local MPs, Flo Eshalom and Neil Coyle, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Nakba - to highlight especially child detention and deaths in Palestine. Despite two follow-up letters we have still not received a response!

June: We had a stall of Zaytoun and home-made produce at the parish fete at Lambeth Palace at which we sold around £500 worth of products and had some good conversations.

The Derby & Derbyshire Friends of Hebron:



Dr Zomlot to visit city in Peace Week

As a major event in Derby's annual Peace Week Palestine's Ambassador to the UK, Dr Husam Zomlot, has accepted an invitation to Derby to speak.

The meeting on Thursday 21st September will start at 6.30 pm at the Quad, a city centre arts venue.

Dr Zomlot will try to answer the question "How can Derby help bring peace with justice to Palestinians?"

Ambassador Zomlot will be welcomed to Derby political and religious leaders. Sir Vincent Fean of the Balfour Project and Hamed Qawasmeh of Hebron's International Resource Network have also been invited to attend in person or by Zoom.

Crystal Palace Friends of Palestine (CPFP) has been very active over the summer. They have done a number of awareness raising stalls including at two local festivals (Penge and South Norwood) where they got lots of support and picked up a number of new members. They also hosted MAP's CEO for a talk on their work with the support of a local Labour councillor. As a result, they managed to get the topic of Palestine discussed amongst Labour Party members and it was evident that there is still much support amongst grassroots members despite efforts from above to silence them.

PALESTINE AT THE PALACE

ART, CRAFTS, MUSIC & FOOD

Saturday 2 September 2023

11am - 4pm

The Phoenix Community Centre
66 Westow Street, Upper Norwood,
London SE19 3AF

Adults £3 Children FREE



- Exhibition of works by award-winning Palestinian artists
- Original art and prints for sale
- Ceramics, embroidery and homeware
- Fair trade Palestinian produce
- Jewellery
- Live oud player
- Raffle

Visit our café serving traditional Palestinian food



Proceeds of raffle donated to
UK registered charity PalMusic



Email: crystalpalestinegroup@gmail.com
www.crystalpalacefriendsofpalestine.org

Dundee-Nablus Twinning Association

In June, Dundee-Nablus Twinning Association (DNTA) held a successful and well-attended Annual General Meeting. The highlight of the meeting was an update from Jim Malone and Shams Abu Ghazaleh, a firefighter from the Nablus Fire Department, on the progress on delivering a new fire appliance from Dundee to Nablus.

Jim, a retired Dundee firefighter and Fire Brigades Union activist, has been pivotal for many years in organising and providing a fire appliance, equipment and training for firefighters in Nablus and across the West Bank.



Both Jim and Shams described the mutual benefits in sharing knowledge, training and expertise in rescue and recovery. They hope the new appliance will be delivered before the end of the year.

Shams detailed the obstruction and assaults on fire personnel by the Israeli army and colonist settlers who surround the city, and indiscriminately fire on ambulance and fire crews going to the aid of victims of settler raids on houses and businesses throughout the area. The meeting resolved to continue our support of this aspect of the twinning arrangement.

The meeting then heard of a new twinning arrangement between the city of Wellington in New Zealand and Ramallah. A member of DNTA, originally from Wellington, was instrumental in achieving this. She used examples of DNTA twinning in her speech to Wellington council. She said that she found our work inspirational.

Members heard of the partnership with Friends of Nablus and Surrounding Areas (FONSA) in continuing support for nursing and midwifery students in Nablus; and the very successful olive tree campaign which has resulted in over 1000 trees being planted this year.

Mary McGregor also reported on the DNTA delegation to Nablus last November. It was a difficult and emotional visit given that the city had recently been under siege and a number of young people had been murdered by the IDF.

Members agreed to continue with fundraising and campaigning to highlight issues and concerns, but more importantly to continue working with local communities, schools and organisations in both cities to promote positive relationships and experiences.



FROM THE STAFFORD/BEIT LEQYA GROUP:

Leading up to summer months, our group's focus has been towards holding events to help raise funds for two visitors from Beit Leqya later this year. So far, we have held two events:

In May we had a fund-raising walk on Cannock Chase AONB; luckily this event coincided with beautiful sunny weather.

More recently on 9 July we held our annual open gardens with two lovely gardens opened to the public in Stafford.

Of course, both these events were supported by refreshments and tasty homemade cakes! These events also provide an ideal opportunity to talk about Palestine and sell 'Olive Oil' from Beit Leqya.

