

# ACTIVITY PACK FOR NETWORK GROUPS



**BRITAIN PALESTINE  
FRIENDSHIP AND  
TWINNING NETWORK**

**TWINNINGWITHPALESTINE.NET**



# MAKE FRIENDS BUILD SOLIDARITY INSPIRE HOPE

Building on the Ideas and Inspiration resource, this pack is designed to give groups a wide range of suggestions for all kinds of activities that friendship and twinning groups can organise or take part in here in the UK. It is based on a resource developed by network member [CADFA](#), which we are grateful for.

Where possible we've put links to events similar to those listed below so you can see which groups have organised similar events and reach out to them for advice or information if you need it. If you have any other ideas or experience to share, please let us know so we can add to this pack. Groups are always keen to hear about new and exciting ways they can inspire their members and communities to get involved. If you'd like to do any of the below but have questions or need a hand, [please get in touch](#)



## GROWING YOUR GROUP

Lots of the activities and suggestions in this pack will help grow your group (e.g. engaging with students, community groups etc.). These are some broad suggestions and approaches that can be taken:

- **Hold regular meetings (on or offline)**- public meetings are a good and important way of maintaining momentum and bringing in new people- especially if you entice them with speakers, live links to Palestine, and opportunities for friendship and food!
- **Marketing materials**- have a flyer available about your group, what you do and how to get involved. Include any website details and put the flyer on your website.
- **Stalls and local press**- look for opportunities to promote your group. Local newspapers are a great source of information. A local Church may run a Tradecraft fair for example, and may welcome friendship campaigns along. Pop up or regular stalls at local events are also a way to raise awareness of your group. [This guide](#) is written for a campaign against the arms trade but is very useful in showing how to use local media for campaigning.
- **Engage with groups you are already part of in your community**- e.g. choirs, sports clubs



## FRIENDSHIP AND TWINNING

- **Have a friendship statement**- encourage people (including MP's and local councillors) to sign it.
- **Appeal to members and non members** (e.g. using local press, existing contacts) for old digital cameras that could be given to your friendship or twinning link (if desired). These are great for helping your link show what daily life is like, and fun for children too.

## CAMPAIGNING ACTIVITIES

Some network groups campaign a lot more than others; if your group does do campaigning here are some ideas. We know it is easy to hear stories from Palestine or come back from visiting highly motivated, but also that the issues are complex and the need for action can be daunting. One way of acting in true solidarity and friendship with the people you know is by taking campaign actions. There are lots of specific campaign groups you can sign up to (link to Palestine website page when complete) but here are some ideas from twinning groups.

- **Delegations and politicians-** arrange for MPs, MEPs, councillors, or press to meet with your group. Try and get a letter of support. Ask them to sign your friendship statement and see if they would be interested in visiting Palestine.
- **Elections-** use these as a way to engage and raise awareness. For example, organise a hustings at a General Election. At local elections send a questionnaire to all candidates asking if they will support an official (formal) twinning if that is what your group wants. Publish the results.
- **Other human rights campaigns-** people concerned with the plight of the Palestinians are probably involved in other campaigns. Joint actions can be arranged to highlight an injustice- perhaps link up with other groups who are connected to your community or group in Palestine.
- **Host speakers and delegations** from Palestine- if you sign up to newsletters from different campaign groups you will hear when people are coming to Palestine from the UK. Get in touch with the hosting organisation and see if you can arrange an event. You could also ask [Ecumenical Accompaniers](#) (human rights monitors based in the UK but who spend three months in Palestine and Israel) to come and speak.
- **Writing to your MP, councillors or other elected officials-** there are lots of campaign groups who ask people to do this on certain key issues. Writing as a whole group is one way of getting the attention of your intended target. Lots of campaign groups offer template letters and instructions of the most effective way to do this - some examples include [CAABU](#), [MAP](#), [Amos Trust](#) and [The Balfour Project](#).
- **Petitions-** these are a good way to engage lots of people, and get contact details too.
- **Flags-** use the Palestinian flag when you are hosting a stall or meeting. You can explain the flag's colours are green, for the land of Palestine, white for the peace in which the Palestinian people lived before they were made refugees, red for their blood spilled trying to liberate their land, and black for their life under occupation.



## INCOME GENERATION AND FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

- **Sales-** sell locally produced olive oil, crafts and embroidery, and other products from Palestine in different settings. Lots of groups sell for [Zaytoun](#).
- **Fundraising-** raising money for something to benefit the people you are linked with can provide a useful focus to your campaign. But it's also very important to manage expectations about how much money (if any) your group plans to raise for its linked group or community in Palestine. If you do decide to do fundraising, there are lots of opportunities for this to be tagged onto events that also raise awareness of your group e.g. sponsored events, cultural events etc. Ideas for these are included below.



## ARTS AND CULTURE

- **Photo exhibitions-** your local library may well be interested in hosting a display, as will local churches and mosques, community groups and schools. Lots of groups have done this including [Liverpool Bil'in](#) who made it a joint project with children in both places.
- **Art exhibitions-** a picture paints a thousand words- this approach should not be underestimated. Local artists may well appreciate an opportunity to exhibit, and local people will find the pictures interesting. Local libraries and community centres may want to help you host an exhibition.
- **Quilt making-** sewn or embroidered patches from people in the U.K. and Palestine could produce a spectacular quilt. You could also raffle the end result.
- **Ribbons / Bracelets-** sell or make these as a way of encouraging people to show to show their support.
- **Music and dance events-** any cultural event with Palestinian music or dance will be popular and engage potentially new and different groups of people as well
- **Film nights and festivals-** there are lots of brilliant films about all things Palestine. [Film nights](#) or film festivals are great ways to get plenty of these seen. You could also organise a video link up with Palestine at some of the screenings.

## SPORTS AND LEISURE



- **Sports games and tournaments-** these can be organised using pretty much any sport with existing clubs and members. Examples include a group's 'Football and Falafel' event and hosting a girls football team from Bethlehem!
- **Organised a sponsored walk-** the Exeter Hebron Group did this (suggested leaflet - word doc). You could also do this for sponsored runs, bike rides, swims etc.
- **Organise a joint kite flying festival-** Camden Abu Dis did this- it makes for good publicity and are more likely to be reported on by local newspapers.
- **Open garden events-** this was done by West Wales Friends of Palestine and is always popular!

## FOOD AND DRINK



- **Palestinian breakfast in the park-** great way to reach new and younger audiences
- **Palestinian brunch or lunch event**
- **Palestine themed dinner party-** combine this with music or a film
- **Palestinian cookery class or demonstration-** use recipes from the many Palestinian cookbooks now available or try to team up with a local Palestinian chef or cook, or someone from the wider Middle East who might be able to help. You could even get a video of someone cooking something in your linked place / group and use this!
- **Mint or sage tea, Palestinian coffee, served with knafeh and baklava-** is there a more delicious way to engage new people in Palestine the place, and the issues?

## SEASONAL ACTIVITIES



Make sure you plan these far enough in advance to be effective. The good news is we broadly know when these times will be throughout the year, so no last minute surprises necessary!

- **Target seasonal events-** for example Easter, Christmas and festivities at the end of Ramadan offer an opportunity to have a stall promoting your group and to sell items from either your linked community or Palestine more broadly. Offer to speak, or arrange a speaker from Palestine, with local groups about what life in Palestine is like during Ramadan, Eid, Easter or Christmas.
- **Christmas stalls-** selling Palestinians crafts, calendars, oil and gifts always go down well as part of local Christmas fayres.
- **Christmas cards-** Many Palestinian Solidarity campaigns sell Christmas cards or you could make your own to sell.
- **Christmas services-** [Amos Trust](#) does a UK carols tour, always featuring Palestinian performers and speakers, which you could look to host in your town, village or city. Or you could arrange your own with performers from your community and a link up to Palestine.
- **Carol singing-** Liverpool Friends of Bil'in do this every year, singing traditional carols with alternative lyrics in Liverpool City Centre. [Contact them](#) or us for the lyrics (they are quite brilliant!)
- **Fairtrade Fortnight-** use this as an opportunity to promote your group, host events and sell products (if that is part of what your group does).
- **A Palestine festival!** This could be at any point in the year but you could use a seasonal hook to arrange it around. Hanwell Friends of Sabastiya did this with much success- [find out more here](#).



# COMMUNITY AND PROFESSIONAL LINKS

- **Religion-** use members of your group who are also active in their churches, mosques, synagogues or other religious forums to build interest and engagement . Use your members who are active in their local Church or Mosque to build interest.
- **Health and youth workers-** health professionals and / or their organisations and youth workers are often moved to act when they learn about what is happening in Palestine. Engaging with local youth or health charities or organisations is another way to expand the reach of your work.
- **Trade Unions-** there are lots of unions and cooperatives in Palestine with whom links can be built and many TUs in the UK are already part of campaigns. Try and get them involved or to affiliate. Affiliated organisations are more likely to respond to an appeal for funds (to bring children over for example).
- **Women-** women in particular suffer under occupation in Palestine. Linking with local women's groups here and in Palestine can often be a source of great friendship, connectivity and solidarity.
- **Penpal networks-** this is a fun and useful way of involving school children as well as providing an opportunity for people to practice their English and Arabic. This doesn't have to be limited to school children either- this can be done by anyone e.g. older people, women etc. Letters are fun but take time and post is unreliable- so make the most of the internet and use email to create these networks.





## YOUNG PEOPLE

- **Education-** aim to get your local teachers involved, with the aim of either bringing people over here to share their experiences or sending volunteers out there, both to learn about the Palestinian community you are twinned with and to help (teach English for example).
- **Students-** local colleges and universities can be somewhere to host meetings, and a way to reach potential new and motivated volunteers. CADFA organises student visits if you want to find out more about organising these.
- **Youth, sport and music-** use universally popular things like football or music to connect young people in Palestine and your community.
- **School twinning-** this takes a lot of effort but the results can be brilliant. Twin a local school with one in your twinned Palestinian community. Get the children to send each other pictures and drawings- both schools can create a wall of understanding. You need a dedicated teacher (the more the merrier) in both schools for this.



## ONLINE AND REMOTE EVENTS

Visiting Gaza can be close to impossible for many people in the UK, and it's very hard for people from Gaza to travel. It's also hard for Palestinians living in the West Bank to get visas to come to the UK and finance can be an issue for people wanting to travel from the UK to Palestine- it is not a cheap place to go. With all of this in mind, we don't need to limit our horizons. Palestinians are really well connected and so are we.

- **Online programmes for calls and meetings-** use Zoom, Skype, Facetime or WhatsApp video to keep in touch with both individuals, groups and communities. Check in regularly with your linked place or group and try to get them to join your meetings here.
- **Include your Palestinian friends in your plans-** for every event, meeting or initiative you're planning, always think about ways to include people from your linked place or group or Palestine more broadly. Can you get a speaker via Zoom? Is there a video recording or photos you can show from people in Palestine? It's likely there'll always be a way to make sure Palestinian voices and faces are part of your event.
- **Virtual visits-** link up with your contacts in Palestine and here in the UK to run a virtual visit to Palestine. This is great for low budgets or when travel is tricky and CADFA have done this. Use food, photos, culture and conversation to bring people to Palestine remotely.



## PUBLICITY AND MARKETING



- **Website-** having a simple website can help provide information about your link and your group activities. These can be built using simple website hosting platforms.
- **Leaflets-** always have leaflets available to hand out to interested parties promoting your group, its objectives and ways of contacting you. If you have a website, save them as a pdf file and put them on your website so that people can print them off.
- **Reach out to as many people as possible-** email lists should be kept up to date and used as just one way to promote events and activities; private invitations, flyers, posters and social media should all be used.
- **Start close to home -** speak to your neighbours, friends and family about your friendship and twinning links with Palestine- and ask them to pass the message on.

If you would like to talk about any of these ideas, share others, get some support, or have any questions please get in touch!

[palestinetwinning@yahoo.com](mailto:palestinetwinning@yahoo.com)

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