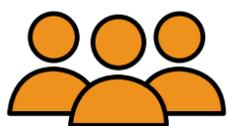


# TEN KEY STEPS TO TWINNING

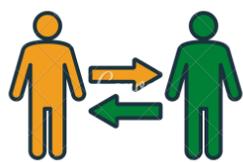
Britain Palestine Friendship  
Twinning Network



## 1: BUILD A TEAM IN THE UK

To get things going, you'll need a core group of people in your local community or interest group who have some time and can help get stuff done. Knowledge and experience of Palestine is a bonus, but anyone can build friendship and twinning links. To kick things off, you could invite a Palestinian speaker or someone who knows the country, or show a film to give people an understanding of the issues and to inspire them to join your group. Getting people involved with different skills from different backgrounds will help you avoid talking to the same people over and over again. Spread the word about your group and your aims, both online and in person. Think about what communications networks you are already part of, whether that's church notices or your sports team WhatsApp group. Make sure you highlight the benefits of friendship and twinning and of getting involved. Building a team means that you won't have to rely on one or two people.

If your link is going to be place based, think about the different elements of your town or community and approach different groups to get involved - for example, sports clubs, schools or universities, businesses or unions or women's groups. If you're hoping for formal twinning then you need involvement and engagement with your local authority- including taking delegations to Palestine.



## 2: ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH A GROUP IN PALESTINE

The group or place that you link with in Palestine will depend on what kind of link you want. For a formal twinning arrangement, things like size, location, historic or cultural links might be important to match with your home community. A friendship link is more flexible and can be built on a shared interest or common feature, such as a religious belief, a link between a school or university, a business or union, a theatre, choir, walking, running or cycling groups, a women's group, an environmental group, or a professional group. You will need to spend some time with your proposed partner organisation(s)- get to know them, and their understanding of why friendship and twinning works. If your link is place based, reaching out to interest groups will help you build stronger links with equivalent groups in Palestine, and you'll also attract more people to your group in the UK if they can see someone or something in Palestine that relates to them. Don't forget to reach out to the Britain Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network if you haven't already- we can help with building links and connections, and where to go from here.



## 3: DECIDE ON YOUR COMMON TWINNING AIMS

Deciding on what both groups want to get from friendship and twinning is an important question to answer early on. It's good to define your objectives, the types of activities you'll have and potentially agree some timeframes and ways of working together, including how you'll keep in touch and share news between groups. A formal twinning link will need a formal written arrangement between local authorities or other involved groups.



## 4: CREATE A SUPPORT STRUCTURE

Friendship and twinning links can ebb and flow, and sometimes energy can wane. If you've agreed what different people's roles and expectations are early on, it will help to keep things going. A small but active team who share out tasks and keep refreshed with new members, in each of the twinned places or organisations, can help to maintain connections, develop the partnership through new projects, and support each other. BPFTN can help too!



## 5: MAKE THINGS SUSTAINABLE AND ASK PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT

Strong friendships and true links of solidarity between people in different places need time to grow. Give people time to do this and to find what it is they have in common or want to share, and plan activities, links and projects together that are sustainable for both groups. If you do any campaigning related to the issues faced by people in Palestine, make sure it reflects what people in Palestine have shared with you. Twinning and friendship can be done on a shoestring but of course money helps for planning bigger activities or visits. Look for in-kind donations, and if you're in a formal twinning arrangement see if the local authority can support your activities. Fundraising for activities is also an option and lots of groups do it. Make sure you agree how the finances will be managed and reviewed.



## 6: STAY IN TOUCH

Meeting people face to face is brilliant - but it's not always possible, especially if you're twinning with people in Gaza. It's never been easier to connect with people despite these restrictions- use Zoom, WhatsApp, Skype or other online tools to make sure you stay in touch. Your groups can meet regularly face to face - just via the laptop or phone!



## 7: LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

Groups in the UK and Palestine can learn from each other's experiences, challenges and successes. Look out for opportunities to build these connections and share ideas. Use friendship and twinning as a way to keep learning about, and sharing more widely, the experiences of Palestinians living under occupation.



## 8: PLAN EVENTS THAT REACH YOUR WIDER COMMUNITY

Once your group in the UK and your link with Palestine is established, you may want to share what you've learned or plan events that raise awareness of the situation in Palestine. Whether that's food nights, film nights, talks or fundraisers, think about how you can spread the word beyond your core group to reach others. Invite your local media to cover the event, use social media to invite people and think about how the different aspects of your link are relevant to your home community. Could you invite someone from your Palestinian group to introduce the event via video link? Use the event to highlight the benefits of the friendship and invite others to get involved. What is it your Palestinian friends most want you to tell others in the UK?



## 9: ENJOY MAKING FRIENDS!

Twinning and friendship requires effort, enthusiasm, time and patience- and the rewards are many and plentiful. Sharing culture, experiences, life stories, jokes, challenges and ultimately friendships with people in Palestine, where solidarity and hope is so important, offers people a positive experience which truly makes a difference. You will also have fun, build lasting relationships, and probably end up eating a lot of delicious Palestinian food in the process!



## 10 :LOOK TO THE FUTURE

A twinning link can create an ideal environment for exchanges of ideas and experiences as well as opportunities to learn new things, try new ways of communicating and ultimately show solidarity over a long period of time. Keep conversations going with your group and be open to new ideas for events and activities here in the UK, as well as new projects and partnerships with your Palestinian friends.

### THE BRITAIN PALESTINE FRIENDSHIP AND TWINNING NETWORK (BPFTN)

is a membership network of around 35 different friendship and twinning groups which vary in size, location, activities and approaches but all have the common aim of building friendships and acting in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

We are available to help you set up or reawaken your group- please get in touch!



**MAKE FRIENDS  
BUILD SOLIDARITY  
INSPIRE HOPE**

