

NETWORK PRIORITIES:

YOUR FEEDBACK AND OUR PLANS



**BRITAIN PALESTINE
FRIENDSHIP AND
TWINNING NETWORK**

TWINNINGWITHPALESTINE.NET



MAKE FRIENDS BUILD SOLIDARITY INSPIRE HOPE

Here are the key highlights from conversations with twenty two of the Britain Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network's Groups in Spring 2020. This is a summary of the responses received from groups, and information about the network's plans, based on this feedback.

Thank you to those of you who were able to share your thoughts, ideas, suggestions and time. If there is any group or person who would like to still do so, we would love to hear from you- please get in touch. We welcome any feedback or suggestions from any group, at any time.



WHAT YOU TOLD US YOU WOULD LIKE FROM BPFTN

Learning from, sharing and communicating with other groups and the network:

- People want to do this more; they want to share ideas for events, activities, contacts, speaker information, and fundraising, and know more about what other groups do.
- Groups were interested in a private, online space for group members to give people a chance to share challenges and solutions and help with morale and motivation. Facebook was suggested.
- Assistance and enabling of joint projects between different groups.
- Lots of interest in regional / thematic networks; many were already part of informal networks but would like more contact and connection - in a low maintenance way!
- Information about other groups events so they could join these - this could be done through regional networks and better group connectivity.

Resources on topics such as:

- Twinning resources - including ideas for activities and events, effective twinning guide, how to engage new and younger people in friendship and twinning activities, templates for presentations, events, logos etc. that could be used to help with advertising events.
- Morale boosting and staying motivated.
- Practical travel info and fundraising tips.
- Palestine - people don't want repeats of what already exists but links and suggestions on where to find out more about different topics would be useful.

Speakers and events:

- Lots of people said it would be useful to know, earlier, when people or groups are coming over from the West Bank so they can try and organise events.
- A DVD library was suggested as one way to keep film nights fresh and interesting, managed by the Committee so people don't have to buy films but can borrow them.
- List of suggested speakers (and charges).

Feeling more connected to the national network:

- Ideas from BPFTN for projects or places that groups could support.
- Sharing of minutes from the national committee meetings could be shared with group committee members.
- An active Facebook group or other forum for communicating with other groups and the network.
- An up to date website with useful information, resources, links to groups and BPFTN's plans.
- A newsletter or equivalent to be shared with all group members, from the network.

Feeling more connected to Palestine:

- Groups wanted to see the development of the Palestinian side of the network, and this being strengthened.
- Some groups talked about wanting to hear more from their Palestinian contacts and to build other links as well.



WHAT GROUPS ARE HAPPY TO OFFER OTHER GROUPS AND THE NETWORK

- Info from their own events, newsletters and website updates to contribute to BPFTN resources, materials or newsletters that are developed (no extra work involved for groups- this would be repurposing existing material and content).
- Support to new groups in setting up, if time permits.
- Participation in cross network communication and activities- this is seen as really helpful and beneficial by all groups and is something people would like to do more of.
- Most groups were happy to offer their members the chance to be on the BPFTN mailing list once it is clear what communications members would receive throughout the year.
- Others wanted to trial this with their committee only to start with.
- Participation in smaller networks.
- Responses to network emails when information or input requested.

COMMON CHALLENGES

- People felt short of time and like they had a lot of competing priorities; feeling like what they do is not enough.
- Morale and motivation can ebb and flow as can people's availability and what is possible.
- Finding out about speakers / potential events too late to organise things well.
- Email overload!

WHAT BPFTN HOPES TO OFFER

BPFTN will do its best to respond to the needs and requests of its member groups and welcomes feedback at any point. Like its member groups, the time and capacity of the committee is limited, so this summary is what we hope to provide and explore offering to the network. Please bear with us as we trial new things and manage competing priorities. If anyone would like to get involved in this or other work with BPFTN please do let us know, we'd love to hear from you.

Connection and communication with other groups:

- A new, private, Facebook group will be set up for anyone who is part of an existing twinning or friendship group to join. This will be a safe online space for people to share information, ideas, challenges, solutions and morale support. The group will also be a place for people to share details of events so others can join or replicate. All groups will be invited to join. As many already use Facebook this was seen as the way to maximise engagement- setting up a different online forum does not often work. If you want to participate but are not on Facebook please let us know.
- New groups will be offered the chance to speak with existing groups (e.g. ones close to them geographically, ones who are linking with a similar / same place or group in Palestine)
- Smaller / regional networks is an idea to be explored and trialled - if anyone is keen to be part of a pilot please let us know! These smaller networks don't need to be regional only - they could also be based on where groups are linked with in Palestine, or by theme, for example those linked with churches.

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- Information on the website about each group so people can find out more.
- We will continue to share information on behalf of groups if requested and share the details of each group to all committees regularly so groups can contact each other independently if they wish to.

Resources:

- Resources will be developed to support groups in setting up, ideas for events and activities, morale boosting, templates for presentations and marketing, attracting new people to groups, providing practical information on things like travel and fundraising etc. These will be designed to save time, offer ideas and help with motivation.

Website and information:

- Complete revamp of current website. New website will provide links to information, advice, resources and other groups so people can get in touch with each other.
- The website will include a summary of each group and contact for each group on the website, as well as a message from BPFTN's patrons and the Palestinian Head of Mission in the UK.
- Information will also include background resources on Palestine.

Connection to BPFTN:

- A version of network meeting minutes will be shared with all group contacts.
- Communication with groups to request their views on BPFTN's role as a network.
- When BPFTN writes to network groups, it will be made clear if the message is intended for the group committee or all group members. If the latter it will come in a shareable format.
- The idea of a semi regular newsletter will be discussed and decided upon- if this goes ahead we will use content from groups who are happy to share their news and updates.
- Once the website is improved a draft email for groups to share with their members will be written, asking if they would like to join the BPFTN mailing list.

Connection to Palestine:

- BPFTN is currently working with five people in Palestine who are starting to set up the equivalent national network for friendship and twinning in Palestine, and are keen to support this (but not lead it).
- BPFTN committee to explore running discrete projects that would help with this e.g. setting up a DVD library, keeping groups aware of when speakers are coming to the UK.



Please do stay in touch with us and let us know how we can best support you

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Twitter @BPFTN.