

**WEST WALES FRIENDS OF PALESTINE**  
**CYFEILLION PALESTEINA YNG NGORLLEWIN CYMRU**



*Newsletter No 2 Cylchlythr Rhif 1 (February / Chwefror 2016)*

Welcome to our second newsletter! We begin by explaining our links to the Britain and Palestine Friendship Twinning Network, which supports similar groups all over the UK. Then an article explains the complex nature of land division and control on the West Bank- this is important because it has a devastating impact on the lives of the Palestinians and the development of their communities. Since our last newsletter two members of the group-Becca and Dave Vaughan- have been out to Palestine and they report on their visit to our twin community, Rummaneh. We also report on how the group celebrated the International Day of Solidarity with Palestine in November. The newsletter concludes with the chance to get involved in protesting against the UK government's plans to block local authority disinvestment in companies linked to the Israeli illegal occupation of Palestinian land. We also appeal for you to support our fundraising for an all weather canopy badly needed by the kindergarten in Rummaneh.

Thank you for your support and involvement. We would like more of this newsletter and our activities to be through the medium of Welsh, and so we would like to appeal for more Welsh speakers to become involved. For membership information please contact Ann Dorsett [dorscrox@aol.com](mailto:dorscrox@aol.com)

Croeso i'n hail gylchlythyr! Dechreuwn trwy esbonio ein cysylltiad â Rhwydwaith Gefeillio Prydain a Phalesteina, sy'n cefnogi grwpiau tebyg i ni dros y DU. Wedyn daw erthygl yn esbonio'r ffordd gymhleth y rhennir a rheolir tir ar y Lanfa Orllewinol – mae'n bwnc hollbwysig gan ei fod yn cael effaith ddychrynlyd ar fywyd Palesteiniaid a datblygiad eu cymunedau. Ers ein cylchlythyr diwethaf mae dau aelod o'r grŵp – Becca a Dave Vaughan – wedi bod mas ym Mhalesteina i ymweld â'r gymuned rydym wedi gefeillio â hi, sef Rummaneh. Adroddwn hefyd ar sut y dathlodd y grŵp Ddiwrnod Cydgefnogaeth i Balesteina nôl ym mis Tachwedd. Ar ddiwedd y cylchlythyr medrwch ddarllen am sut i ymuno yn y brotest yn erbyn cynlluniau llywodraeth y DU i rwystro awdurdodau lleol rhag tynnu nôl oddi wrth gwmnïau sy'n gysylltiedig â gweithred anghyfreithlon Israel o feddiannu tir Palesteina. Hefyd, rydym yn erfyn arnoch i gefnogi'n hymdrechion i godi arian tuag at osod to y medrir ei ddefnyddio ym mhob tywydd yn yr ysgol feithrin yn Rummaneh.

Diolch am eich cefnogaeth a'ch cyfraniad. Hoffwn petai mwy o'r cylchlythyr hwn a'n gweithgareddau eraill ar gael yn y Gymraeg, ac i'r diben hwn apelïwn ar Gymry Cymraeg i ymuno â ni. I gael rhagor o wybodaeth am aelodaeth cysylltwch ag Ann Dorset: [dorscrox@aol.com](mailto:dorscrox@aol.com)

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### FUTURE EVENTS

Monday 14th March 7.00-9.30 pm

Wesley Methodist Church, Cambrian Place,  
Carmarthen SA31 1QG  
(Behind Marks and Spencers and Boots)

#### AGM and film show

A short AGM will be followed by the showing of the award winning and Oscar long listed film ' **5 Broken Cameras** ' - the story of Bil'in, a West Bank village whose inhabitants have long been mounting a resistance to the occupation and appropriation of their land for neighbouring Israeli settlements.

"How often do you go into a theatre to watch a movie and then emerge 2 hours later with your life and your view of the world changed forever? ....One of the most astonishing and amazing things I've seen in the cinema for a long time" Michael Moore

#### Next event

Resistance Recipes coming in April

### The Britain and Palestine Friendship Twinning Network



WWFoP is not an isolated or unique group. We are a member of the Britain Palestine Friendship Twinning Network, which comprises an ever-growing number of member groups with friendship twinning links between Britain and Palestine. At present there are 32 groups, and the network encourages these twinning links with Palestinian communities - in refugee camps, rural villages, towns and universities. Our annual conference focused on sharing our own practical knowledge, skills and experiences, not on political issues.

Through the network we share our experiences of building friendship links, sharing skills and personal support and small-scale resources to assist with local priorities.

Examples to date are very diverse, including providing advice as to what visitors might expect in a guest house and support for its furnishing, football coaching, support for schools, funding the replacement of olive trees lost in the occupation and the purchasing of hens which provide for better nutrition and a small income for the families.

The network has no political or religious affiliation. Twinning allows us to focus on personal and community relationships and to fight the isolation felt so strongly by the people of Palestine. By our friendships, visits and support we demonstrate personally that they are not alone, and that people outside Palestine do know and care about them.

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### **Land, Occupation and Sovereignty**

*'We don't want to kill them; we just want them to leave'*

Israeli leader of illegal West Bank settlement speaking of the Palestinians on a recent Radio 4 documentary

The term Israeli occupation is contested and confusing but is widely understood to include Israeli control and illegal settlement of the West Bank. However, under the Interim Oslo Agreement of 1995 certain controls over some areas of the West Bank and Gaza were given to the Palestinian Authority. So who actually controls the West Bank?

Under the Interim Oslo Agreement of 1995 the West Bank was divided as follows:

Nearly 3 million Palestinians were seen as living within the following designated areas:

Area C: Approx. 59% of the land and under full Israeli military control. In practise this can mean, for example:

*Abu Nuwwar, occupied West Bank – 'The stone covered hilltops of Abu Nuwwar village are dotted with makeshift homes cobbled together with scrap metal, concrete blocks and tarps. Despite living in this Bedouin village for decades, more than 100 local families' homes are slated for demolition. Earlier this month, Israeli authorities came to Abu Nuwwar and informed the 700- person Bedouin population, part of the Jahalin tribe, that they had until May 31 to register to be transferred to a nearby planned township –*

*otherwise, Israel would send in bulldozers to flatten their homes and raze their lands.'*

A recent World Bank report commented that in Area C the physical access restrictions are the most visible, with 38% of the land area reserved by the Government of Israel to serve settlements and security objectives and a system of checkpoints, road closures, the Separation Barrier, and permit requirements for access that constrain movement of people and goods within and out of the West Bank. Recurrent destruction of trees, private homes and public infrastructure, as well as settlers' encroachments on private land create a permanent state of insecurity that deters Palestinian investment in Area C.

Area B: Rural Centres. This comprises about 22% of the West Bank and includes some 440 Palestinian villages and their surrounding lands and no Israeli settlements. It is under Palestinian civil control and joint Israeli-Palestinian security control.

Area A: This is under the control of the Palestinian Authority. It comprises mainly urban centres with scarce development land.

Again the World Bank report noted that the restrictions in Area C have significant consequences for Areas A & B where over 90% of the Palestinians reside. First by preventing urban areas from spreading into Area C, the restrictions create artificial land scarcities which severely distort land markets; second, they limit the scope for Palestinian municipalities and village councils to efficiently use the land at their disposal, to meet the needs of their growing urban populations.

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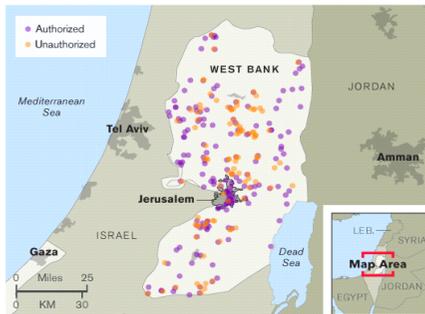


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The fourth area is East Jerusalem. Prior to 1967 and the failure of the Arab attack on Israel it was under Palestinian control. Under Oslo it was not classified and officially its status has not been resolved.

### Israelis in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

Some 580,000 Israelis live in 123 government-authorized settlements and about 100 unauthorized outposts in the West Bank and 12 major neighborhoods in East Jerusalem.



After 1967 large scale Israeli settlement of the West Bank commenced. While illegal under international law, the result is illustrated above. In addition they cause Palestinian areas A & B to be fragmented into enclaves with movement restrictions between them imposed by the Israeli military.

For example the city of Hebron, in Area A:

The largest city in the West Bank, 30km south of Jerusalem, it has a Palestinian population of 200,000, among who live 1000 Jewish settlers under Israeli military protection. In 1997 Hebron was divided into two areas: H1 under Palestinian control and H2 under Israeli control. Even in H2 Jewish settlers live in the midst of a large Palestinian population - 800 among 30, 000- connected to the large settlement in Kiryat Arba, and protected by a large military presence. Against an historic background of conflict between Jews and Arabs recent months have seen a large upsurge in violence. Following an attack on a settler, Israeli troops disguised as Palestinians raided the Palestinian hospital seeking a suspect, in

doing so killing a cousin of the suspect. A few days earlier Israeli troops raided the Palestinian al-Huriya radio station, ransacking and shutting down the station claiming it was inciting violence. The result is to undermine confidence in the P.A. – if it cannot protect a Palestinian hospital then what is its purpose? In the words of the Palestinian governor of the region “Hebron is paying a heavy price for the settlers in its old city. It is being reoccupied.”

The military and economic power exercised by Israel in the West Bank and the ever increasing number and size of illegal settlements questions the credibility of the Palestinian Authority. The question follows as to whether the unspoken intentions of the Israeli government are in fact those of the settler spokesperson given at the start of this piece.

Sources:

Al Jazeera English - Reporter Patrick Strickland 25/5/15

Wikipedia.org - West Bank areas in the Oslo II Accord

World Bank Report 'West Bank & Gaza: The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank.' 20/10/08

[www.bloombergvew.com](http://www.bloombergvew.com) piece first published 9/12/14

Observer 15/11/15

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### Twenty four hours in Rummaneh December 2015

During our eight day stay in Palestine we were delighted to spend 24 hours in Rumaneh, the town that WWFoP have linked with. It's a small town not far from Jenin in the northern tip of the West Bank, so is very close to the Wall / Fence. We met with Mohammed Sbehat and Hassam Fawwaz, the elected Chair and Treasurer of the Rummaneh Charitable Association, with the help of Burhan a local teacher of English. The Association covers four villages, Rummaneh, Taybe Aineen and Salim in a fairly rural area. In the premises of the Association, Mohammed outlined the independent nature of the area and the priorities of the Association.



Becca, Dave, Hassam, Mohammed and his son, at the Rummaneh Charitable Association

Rummaneh is the first town in Palestine on the Biblical route from Nazareth to Bethlehem so they would like, in time, to develop a pathway and guest house in the village as well as developing a meeting space for use by women in particular. Their immediate priorities though are resourcing Rummaneh's kindergarten so we jumped in Mohammed's car to go the short distance up the road. As it was after

hours we could have a good look around the school. It's a good solid building but needs more resources. At one stage the Charitable Association ran an internet café that generated income to run the kindergarten for 85 children, providing free meals as well as a strong start to their education and development. However, as people gained their own internet access, the café struggled and

Hassam and Mohammed made the difficult decision to sell the computers to pay the teaching staff. This year the Kindergarten could only afford to offer places to 45 children and has to charge them for their lunch. The teachers are paid a nominal fee and volunteer the remainder of their time. The priorities are:

- a canopy to create a covered area outside in the yard to protect the children from the hot sun (up to 40C) in summer and frequent rain in winter ( approx. cost £3k-£4k)
- outdoor play equipment e.g. slides, see-saw etc . (approx. cost £1k-£2k)
- a new minibus to transport children safely (approx. cost £26k).

Though Palestine has many issues related with third world economies, the prices and costs are those of the first world, mainly due to the stranglehold of Israel on their borders and economy. Hassam took a break from our discussion to pray, while Burhan outlined the future of how he saw Palestine and the strength he



Dhalia and children in a packed minibus

gained from the Koran. A friend of his had just been killed by Israeli soldiers. They talked of how to shelter children from the realities of the Israeli occupation and their desire to bring them up to be proud Palestinians and Muslims, and hating no one.

We agreed to break for the night and we went with Hassam who, as there

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is no accommodation in the town, kindly hosted us. It was real pleasure to meet his wife and four of his five children. Hassam runs a café/ restaurant in Rummaneh, so we were well fed and enjoyed a wonderful evening learning from and talking with the family. We spent a comfortable night on mattresses in the family's living room before rising fairly early the next morning to be at the kindergarten



Children at "assembly" at Rummaneh Kindergarten standing in the sun. The canopy will provide some much needed shade.

in time to see the children arrive in the minibus. It was indeed dangerously overcrowded, with about 26 children packed onto seats.

We met the head teacher Linda, a very calm and quietly impressive woman, who brings her four month old daughter to the kindergarten with her so that she can carry on teaching. A helper, Dhalia, showed us resources they had made for the children to help them learn shapes,

colours, numbers and concepts such as ordering giraffes and elephants according to size. The children delighted in these "games" and were also learning numbers and phrases (mostly "welcome"! ) in English.

It was a rare honour to see "assembly". The children line up outside (none of the rooms are large enough) and recite together verses of the Koran and rhymes about how to stay safe in winter,

months of the year etc. The need for the canopy to provide shelter was obvious.

It was a great privilege to spend so much time in Rumaneh making what we hope will be lasting friendships with ourselves and between our groups and communities. We undertook to bring back to Wales their messages of friendship and need for support, particularly in resourcing the kindergarten as described.

There is an open invitation to members of the group to attend the Kindergarten's graduation ceremony in late May this year. We will definitely be back in Palestine again soon.

Dave and Becca Vaughan

### APPEAL FOR RUMMANAH

WWFoP has agreed to help raise funds to build a canopy in the playground of Rummaneh Kindergarten.

Approximately £3k - £4k is needed to provide shelter from the hot sun in summer(30C+) and regular rain in winter.

The Passion for Palestine event on 30th January will start our campaign.

**If you would like to make a donation please send a cheque made payable to *West Wales Friends of Palestine* to our Treasurer : Mr Shaun Hague, Trecwnc, Glandwr, Whitland, SA34 0YD or if you have any have any other queries please contact our secretary, Sue Davies, [smbdavies@btinternet.com](mailto:smbdavies@btinternet.com)**



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### **Celebrating the International Day of Solidarity with Palestine, Saturday November 28<sup>th</sup> 2015.**

Two events took place on Nov 28<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the friendship between WWFoP and the four communities of Rummanah - a one hour candle lit street-vigil in Carmarthen and a musical evening at the Angel Inn, Llandeilo, to raise awareness and interest in supporting the purpose and work of our charity, WWFoP.

In Carmarthen, Kate and Pat, set up a small table decorated with the flag of Palestine. Many people came along to support the vigil and hand out leaflets to the passing throng of shoppers. A lot of interest was shown and about ten people joined us in lighting the candle, holding hands and having a two-minute silence in solidarity with Palestine. A very moving prayer for Peace was said by Ros Briagha and we all toasted Peace for Palestine with a glass of hot punch. Many thanks to all who joined us at the Peace Vigil despite the weather.

The musical evening was made possible by the kind generosity of many musicians and singers and helpers, who freely offered their time in preparing and performing on the night., Also the Angel Inn which kindly donated the room and staff support in setting up the venue and Post datum and other media outlets which advertised the events.

The event began with a talk by Pat Gill, giving an overview of the recent history of the increasingly difficult plight faced by Palestinians and an account of a visit by three members of the group to Rummanah in May 2015.

Following questions, the MC, Tim Martin, asked for the candles on every table to be lit for us all to take a moment in recognition of the plight of the people of Palestine, and the distress of all people in that area of the world. There followed a diverse musical line-up of brilliantly



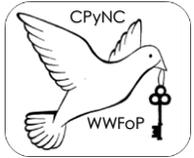
entertaining performances beginning with the group, Picasso Moon - Tim Shaw & friends - playing didgeridoo, guitar and a djembe drum followed by Fanny, Claudine & Co - a quartet of two violins, accordion and a Parisian singer - playing French café style music. Then, the harmonising voices of Jude and Christa, jazz pianist John playing solo and support artist to Jude singing the Blues. Bob Fish gave two great performances on the autoharp setting the scene for an audience acapella of 'Shalom-salaam', led by Clara. The evening closed with the Ammanford drumming group.

In total about 20 performers took part and about 60 people supported the event which raised £220 through donations and a raffle [with prizes donated by local people and businesses] which will fund projects to improve the wellbeing of the communities of Rummanah.

This event has generated much local enthusiasm and ideas to support WWFoP in giving friendship and help to the communities based around Rummanah. Look out for information about further events/meetings in the press, including Postdatum, on our website [www.westwalesfriendsofpalestine.com](http://www.westwalesfriendsofpalestine.com) and on Facebook. Terry and Pat

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West Wales Friends of Palestine  
Presents

### PASSION FOR PALESTINE

*An evening of Music and Awareness, featuring!*



Shanty Le Hara



Bob Fish & Henry Sears



China Blue Fish & Lucas



DJ Eugene aka Uncle Funk

**Saturday January 30th 7-11pm £6**  
**Llawhaden Hall, Llawhaden, SA67 8HR**

**West Wales to the West Bank...**  
Profits from the evening will fund projects improving the wellbeing of the West Bank community of Rummanah, which is twinned with West Wales Friends of Palestine

For more info: [the1.bobfish@gmail.com](mailto:the1.bobfish@gmail.com)



## Take action now for local democracy for Palestine!

The [UK Government is trying to prevent local authorities from divesting from companies linked to Israel's illegal occupation and settlements on Palestinian land](#). Authorities which refuse to contract with such companies are also being targeted.

[Please take action and make your voice heard: send a message to the government's consultation on this issue.](#)

This move will stop local councils from taking a principled stance by refusing to use and invest in **companies complicit in human rights abuses, such as Veolia and G4S**. Our local authorities should reflect our views, and be free to make the right business and ethical decisions without government interference.

This decision will not only undermine the ability of pension fund members to invest ethically, but **goes against OECD guidelines and the Foreign Office's own advice on investing in illegal Israeli settlements**. This paves the way for potentially risky investment by local authorities in illegal settlements, leading to possible financial losses for already cash-strapped local authorities.

[Please take action to protect local democracy and for the right of local authorities to act in accordance with international law.](#)

For more information on the **Boycott Divestment and Sanctions** movement:

<http://www.palestinecampaign.org/bds/>