



# Dundee–Nablus Twinning Association

رابطة توأمة دندي نابلس



## Convener's report 2018

It has been another exciting year for the Association. In this report I want to outline the approach the committee is taking to our task of furthering the aims of the Association. From our constitution the key aims are:

1. To promote and foster friendship between the people of Dundee and those of Nablus
2. To broaden mutual understanding of the cultural, recreational, educational and commercial activities of the linked cities

These are quite wide and challenging aims and the Association has of necessity to carefully select which activities to undertake. We want to be confident that we can deliver on these commitments with the limited resources available to us. The resources in question being our members.

### Strategy

To help us prioritise our work, we held a strategy and planning meeting in December. My thanks to all who attended and to those we contributed to the lovely food and refreshments available. The key conclusions of that meeting have been circulated to members. Here I want to highlight the decision to focus our work into three key areas:

1. Organise our own events;
2. Support/work with other groups;
3. Produce/publish material - on our own or with others.

At the AGM we will be presenting our suggestions for future actions under these three headings. For now, I will briefly summarise the work undertaken over the past 12 months.

### Organising our own events

- Dundee Flower and Food Festival - this has become a yearly activity for the Association and last September we again had a stall at the Festival, to promote our work.
- Dundee Westfest - after a gap of a few years, we were back at Westfest on Sunday 3rd June. Our stall, and the mint tea, attracted a lot of interest, including one new member.
- Exhibition in Central Library - 50 years of occupation and 37 years of twinning. This was a week-long exhibition during October and attracted a lot of interest.
- Exhibition in Community Centres - following on from the main exhibition in the Central Library we have mounted a smaller version in some of the city's community centres. So far, the display has been to Finmill, Kirkton, Menzieshill and Ardler. We are hoping it will be seen in other centres over the summer.
- Talks to local groups - as part of our display in community centres, we have offered to give an illustrated talk on DNTA to groups in the centre. The first of these was a very lively engagement with the Young at Heart Group at Kirkton.
- Talks in Madigan's café - we have started a programme of early evening talks in Madigan's. These talks by members or guests will be on topics likely to be of interest to our members and will not be restricted to Nablus only, but will be focused on matters relevant to Palestine. We have managed to hold two talks over the spring - on traditional Palestinian

embroidery and on the work of FONSA - the Friends of Nablus and surrounding areas charity. We intend to continue this series in the autumn.

### Support/work with other groups

- The DNTA is there to support the work of the Council, as the twinning remains an initiative of the Lord Provost. This year we had the pleasure of meeting with the current LP, Ian Borthwick. This was a very positive encounter and the LP was impressed by the range of our work. We look forward to working more closely with the Council.
- BPFTN (Britain-Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network) - DNTA is a member of this network and this year our secretary, Mike Whitehead was able to attend their AGM in Liverpool.
- Nablus Festival - this looks like it will become a yearly event and the Association has given a small donation to support this work in Nablus. Two of our members, Mike and Sandy Stuart attended this year's festival.
- Concert in the Steps theatre - the Association was delighted to invite the San Ghanny Choir to Dundee. The Edinburgh based group had performed in Nablus in the festival and their vibrant concert was a fitting and enjoyable climax to the exhibition.
- University of Dundee – during the current year the Association has strengthened our links with the University, which is pursuing its own links with An Najah National University in Nablus. We hope this will lead to more Palestinian students coming to Dundee.
- Dundee Photographic Society - members of the committee met with a representative of the DPS. They are hoping to mount an exhibition in Nablus. We will continue to offer our support to the DPS to help them bring this initiative to fruition.

### Produce/publish material

- We are working on a new membership leaflet which should be available by the autumn.

This has been my first year as Convener of the Association, and it has been a pleasure and a privilege to represent DNTA in this role. My thanks to our members who continue to support our work. A special thank you to the other members of the committee whose dedicated work on our behalf ensures that we can continue to promote friendship and understanding between the people of Dundee and Nablus.

Below is a list of the current members of the committee. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our AGM on Tuesday 12th June.

Alister Rutherford  
Convener

### Committee Members 2017-2018

Alister Rutherford	Convener
Mary McGregor	Vice-convener and Press Officer
Mike Whitehead	Secretary
Mohamad Issa	Treasurer
Ian Borthwick	Lord Provost (ex officio)
Katherine Gray	Event Organiser
Christine Issa	Minute Secretary & Membership Secretary
Rosemary Marr	
Ashraf Mousa	(resigned during the year)
Marysia Kobylaska O'Sullivan	
Vanessa Stark	Event Organiser

# Convener's suggested priorities for 2018-19

## Our own work

1. Confirm Anniversary talk
2. Continue our presence at local events
3. Restart monthly talks in Madigan's
4. Consider holding formal celebratory dinner for members and guests
5. Start work on preparations for 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020
6. Finalise data protection policy
7. Consider showing films about Nablus and Palestine with discussion

## With others

1. Continue supporting Nablus festival
2. Promote volunteering in Nablus
3. Organise visit to Nablus
4. Conduct feasibility study into making a traditional Palestinian dress

## Produce materials

1. Start work on producing booklet on 40 years of twinning