

# Brighton Tubas Schools Project

## Building links between schools in Brighton and Palestine



### How will teachers and pupils benefit?

The Brighton Tubas Schools Project aims to create lasting links between schools in Brighton and Tubas in the Palestinian West Bank region of Tubas.

This will give teachers and students the opportunity to:

- learn about the similarities and differences in their everyday lives, and the societies in which each other live;
- develop an understanding of each other;
- promote the learning of Arabic and English (Arabic is now a national curriculum target language not least to promote the social cohesion of our own civil society. English is essential to the economic development of the West Bank. counteract some of the isolation of the local community in the Tubas region);
- give a voice to the people of Tubas who feel they are ignored and/or silenced by the international media
- support practical projects that are initiated and run the local civil society.

### How does it work in practice?

The most effective way to develop links is to exchange letters, emails, drawings, paintings and photographs. Children can write descriptions of the many aspects of their lives, write diaries and (where there are video cameras available) they can make short video diaries.

We have started to use internet video links with other projects in Tubas, using very basic technology, and this could easily be used by schools.

All of this provides a stimulus for discussions, and a means to develop understanding.

The project is based on building friendships, rather than just giving support or funding. Those we have visited are all very keen to develop relationships with schools in Brighton. However, they all have small practical projects that schools in Brighton could support if they wanted to.





## Why Tubas?

Tubas region is approximately 24km across and 28km north to south. It spreads from Tubas town, in the northern hills of the Israeli occupied West Bank, over to the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley.

Traditionally most of the people are farmers, travelling from the town to their land in the Jordan Valley. However, 95% of the land and 98% of the water in the Jordan Valley has been taken from the Palestinians since 1967 and is now controlled by the Israeli Army and Israeli settlements. Palestinians struggling to survive often have no choice but to work in the Israeli settlements.

In the Jordan Valley villages the people have lost nearly all their land

and many have had their houses demolished. There is very little health care, education is limited, there are no phone lines or public transport, often there is no electricity.

The Jordan Valley can only be accessed from Tubas via Israeli Army checkpoints, which Palestinians cannot go through unless they have a Jordan Valley ID (which are only issued to existing residents of the Valley) – a situation reminiscent of the apartheid South African pass laws.

With the traditional links between the town and villages being restricted or severed, people are prevented from

seeing their families, and are increasingly losing their ability to earn a living from land that had been in their families for generations.



## Education in Tubas and Palestine



Palestine is a young society with a large proportion of its population under 20. As work opportunities have been restricted by the military

occupation, between 60 and 70% of the population are now unemployed. Military closures and curfews have led to a rise in poverty, and young people's hope have focused on gaining qualifications. Therefore education is of vital importance to every family.

The Tubas town and the nearby refugee camp and villages there are primary and secondary schools, as well as an Open University site. However, they are very under resourced, and military checkpoints can frequently prevent children from getting to school.

In the Jordan Valley the situation is

worse. Some villages only have schools for children up to the age of 12/13 years. After that children have to travel long distances, or stop going to school, some working in Israeli settlements to supplement their families income.

The children in Tubas are coping with the consequences of an economy that has been destroyed, many have families that have lost their land and other means of making a living, and regularly experience the Israeli army presence in their town, villages and schools. In contrast to this they like football and games just like any children in the UK.

## Zaytoun (Olive) Nursery School in Tubas

This is a nursery and first school for children up to the age of six. Parents have to pay as there is no state provision for this age group. Some children stay on because the school costs are cheaper than the taxi fare

to the state schools. Zahera is the English teacher.

Address: Zaytoun (The Olive) School, Accabe Street, Tubas





## Secondary Schools in Tubas

There is a secondary Girls School and Boys School in Tubas. Both are very keen to work with schools in Brighton.

They take children aged 12—18 years. There are around 500 pupils in each school.

We are currently supporting their attempts to obtain financial assistance for computers from the British Consulate.

The Girls school have asked for help with buying a drinking fountain.

Tubas Secondary Boys School:

Address: Tubas, Jenin District, West Bank, Palestine

Tel/fax: (00972) 925 74519

Tubas Secondary Girls School:

Address: Tubas, Jenin District, West Bank, Palestine

Tel: (00972) 92574235



## Schools in the Jordan Valley

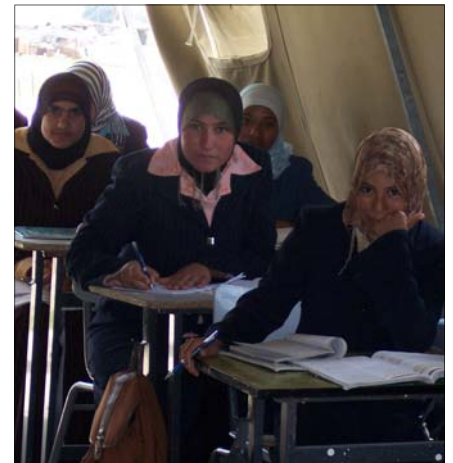
### Al Jifflik School

In 2005 the residents of Al Jifflik got together and built a school for children aged 12 yrs and over out of tents (having waited 38 years for permission from the Israeli authorities). They have now built new permanent classrooms and the school is thriving. Children from the Supplementary Arabic School in Brighton have been writing to them and raised £120 earlier this year for books and materials.

In April 2007 Brighton Quakers took them a laptop, and they hope to get internet access soon. They do not have a postal service so this would make a big difference to them.

They have asked us for volunteers with computer skills and first aid training, for science books and a computer lab.

Contact: Headteacher: Nawal Kanori  
[nawal.kanori2006@yahoo.com](mailto:nawal.kanori2006@yahoo.com)  
Tel (00972) 599 430 767



### Lower Fasayil School



Bricks baking in the sun ready to build Fasayil School (August 2007)

Lower Fasayil village in the Jordan Valley still has no school for Children over the age of 12 years, with many children having to work in nearby Israeli settlements.

Early in 2007 the local village committee decided to build one, ready to open in September this year. They have bought the materials with the help of donations of £1,500 from Brighton, levelled the land and made the 'hay and clay' bricks.

Two members of Brighton Tubas Friendship and Solidarity Group are spending two weeks in September 07 with them to build the school. They have been promised teachers by the Palestinian Authority once the school is built.

When the school opens we will be

able to provide a contact phone number for the Head teacher. They are unlikely to have a postal address or internet access.



Prospective student of the new Fasayil School



## Who are we?

The Schools Project is part of the Brighton Tubas Friendship and Solidarity Group, which was established in May 2006 following a visit to the Tubas region of Palestine by two Brighton residents.

### Our aims are

- To promote human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations) and respect for international humanitarian law in the Tubas a region of Palestine, by all or any of the following means:
- Establishing links between people and organisations in Brighton and Tubas regions, at a grassroots level.
- Raising awareness of human rights and humanitarian issues relevant to the Israeli occupation and confiscation of Palestinian land and resources in Tubas region;
- Researching and monitoring abuses of human rights and infringements of humanitarian law in Tubas region;
- Educating the public about human rights and humanitarian law;
- Promoting public support for human rights and the observance of humanitarian law;
- Working to eliminate abuses of human rights and infringements of humanitarian law in Tubas region;
- Working to obtain and promote redress for the victims of human rights abuses and their families and infringements of humanitarian law in Tubas region.

## Contact us

Brighton Tubas Friendship and Solidarity Group  
c/o Palestine Solidarity Campaign,  
Brighton Peace and Environment Centre,  
39-41 Surrey Street,  
Brighton,  
BN1 3PB

Tel: 07984 438655

Email: [tubas@brightonpalestine.org](mailto:tubas@brightonpalestine.org)

Website: <http://tubas.brightonpalestine.org>

We are working with a wide range of groups in both countries.

### In Tubas, Palestine, this includes:

- Tubas Women's Group;
- Tubas Prisoners' Society;
- Students and lecturers from Al Quds Open University in Tubas;
- Palestinian Red Crescent Society (health service providers);
- Tubas Co-operative of Livestock Farmers;
- a cooperative of farmers in the northern Jordan Valley;
- Stop the Wall;
- Al Jiftlik tent school;
- the Village Committee in Fasayil village

### In Brighton this includes:

- Amnesty International;
- Brighton Quakers;
- UNISON (B&H City Council Branch);
- Supplementary Arabic School;
- Muslim Women's Group;
- University of Sussex Students Union;
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign;
- Sussex Action for Peace

