

## CADFA | Linking Together 4 Human Rights

**A summer adventure during Covid... A genuine exchange.**

**Short report on CADFA's first virtual visit to the UK & CADFA's first virtual visit to Palestine (July and August 2020)**

**We are about to do two more virtual visits (September and October) and invite new people to take part**



Faced with Corona and the cancellation of our planned visits to Palestine and from Palestine to the UK, CADFA is really happy to have discovered the magic carpet we have been needing for years – We have run our summer visits on Zoom. The outcomes have been magic too – better than we could have imagined! Our visits to the UK in July and to Palestine in August have brought dozens of people together, led to lots of learning, developed the links between us and

We'd like to extend a very big thank you to the dozens of good people who helped in each country and made this experiment into a real success.

strengthened our determination to work for human rights in Palestine.

**Our July visit from Palestine to the UK** was offered to young Palestinians who took part in a 'speaking out' course to help them to organise their thoughts and experiences in English for an audience, They had an introductory course before the visit



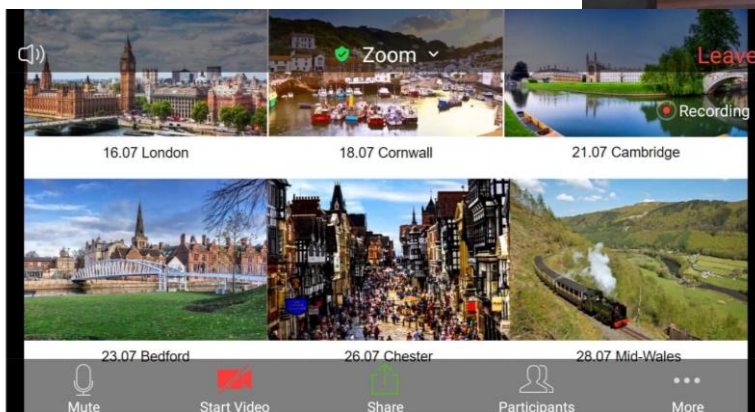
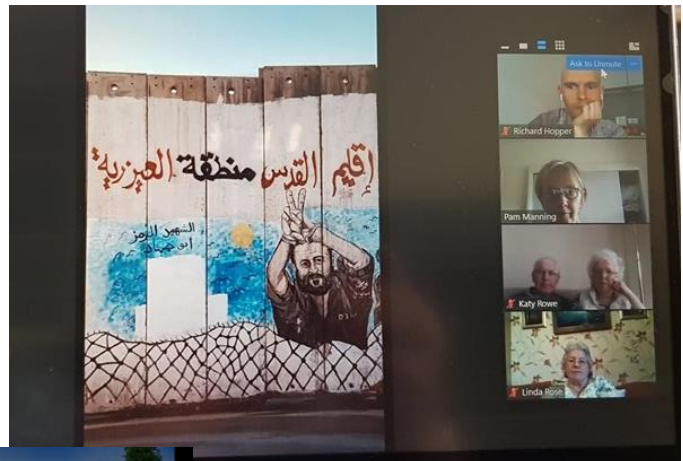
itself, and then during the visit they had feedback meetings to discuss how their public talks were going. This helped them to build their skills as well as to contribute very

well to discussions with the people they met on the tour.

The tour took young Palestinians virtually to London, Bedford, Cambridge, South Derbyshire, Chester and the Welsh Border where they were hosted by Palestine support and twinning groups, old friends of CADFA's. Most of these groups had been involved in our actual visits in the recent past and this was a different kind of adventure for us all.

It was a delight to work with local groups in these places who prepared pictures and slideshows and sometimes short videos to give an idea of their home towns to the visitors. In many places, this served to

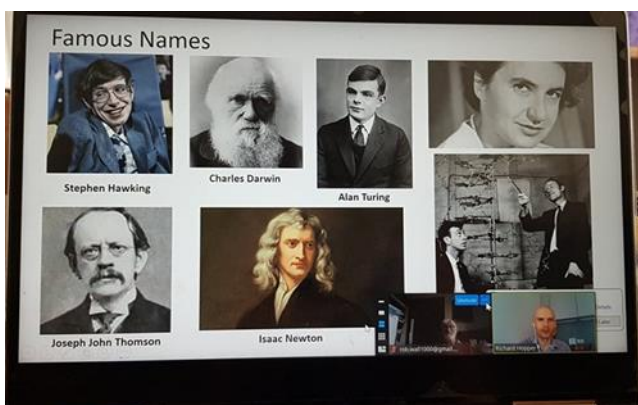
young people and (in one case) a parent to groups based in different parts of the UK. There were some very good public meetings, talking about different places and the pressures on the young people and their communities under Israeli occupation. These



meetings had a common underlying theme – Palestine and human rights – but they had different emphases (introductions to different places, students' links, twinning links, annexation) The participants talked about their own home towns and the human rights issues that faced their families and local communities. They

inform new people about the visit itself – and they were invited to the public meetings.

brought with them stories of very different places in Palestine – the cities of Ramallah, Hebron, the Jerusalem-suburb town of Abu Dis and the Bedouin village of Um al-Khair.



While they were (virtually) here, the Palestinians spoke at (Zoom) public meetings, and told of their lives as Palestinian students,

The visit served as a real exchange. The Palestinian visitors were interested in the different places they visited and the culture and society in Britain now; they enjoyed preparing and delivering talks. The UK people were shocked by hearing of the dangers and difficulties of movement, the problems of studying, working and the huge pressures of all sorts that the visitors told of. They came to share a real worry for the

future of young people living under military occupation in Palestine.

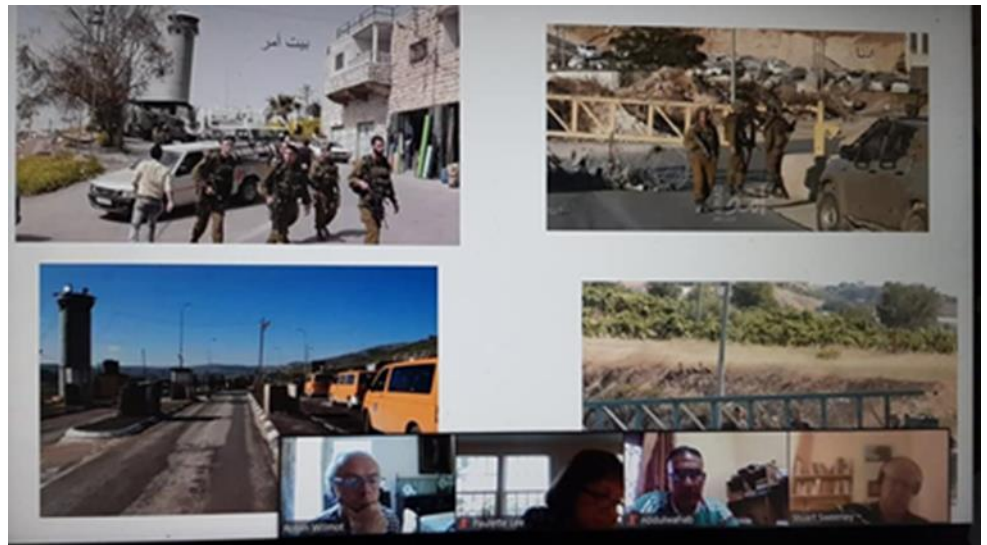
people living in refugee camps? Why couldn't they go home? Why do settlers treat

**Following this, [CADFA ran a virtual visit to Palestine in August.](#)**

This was modelled on CADFA's regular visits to the West Bank, based in Abu Dis with outings to other places and time to discuss what was being learned.

The visit was supported by people from many organisations across Palestine and the 'returned' visitors to the UK also contributed. We enjoyed taking 'visitors' not only from across the UK but also excitingly from the US and India to meet our Palestinian hosts.

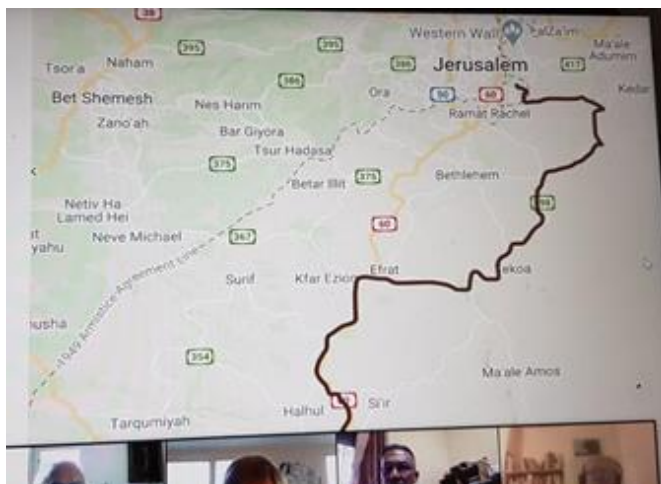
This visit went much better than we could have hoped. It was like a real visit in the way



Palestinians so badly? What were the Oslo Accords and what is their legacy? The strength of the visit was the personal accounts by people young and old – we had around 30 speakers with many sorts of experience - and visits to places and organisations in Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah and Nablus as well as a number of villages, refugee camps and Abu Dis itself.

Once again there were deep conversations during the visit about the history, the present and the ways forward throughout the visit. The visitors contributed to a blog

[vvpal.blogspot.com](http://vvpal.blogspot.com) and did moving presentations at the end about what they had learned and how they intend to use the knowledge that they had gained for the urgent work of seeking human rights for Palestinians.



that the group developed its solidarity and its conversation about the shocking situation they were being shown. Many questions struck at the heart of the matter – why were

CADFA has been working for sixteen years to build links and support communication between people of many backgrounds in the

*"I set out on this trip not quite knowing what to expect from a virtual visit to Palestine but I have been very impressed by the quality of speakers and the preparation that has been taken place every day to set the scene for us so that we are able to get a true picture of the stresses that the inhabitants of Palestine are under and the stoicism they portray despite everything they have to cope with and the restrictions they find themselves under day in day out, week in week out.*

*It has made me even more angry about the situation the Palestinians find themselves in than I was before. We have witnessed clear breaches of human rights on a regular basis. The stoicism of the Palestinian people never fails to amaze me. Unfairness does not go anywhere to describe the treatment that they are subjected to.*

*I have realised from what we have been shown and told that our media do not give the situation the air-time and coverage that it deserves. We were told today that when a black South African woman visited Palestine she became more and more angry during her visit watching the way the Palestinian people were treated in an apartheid situation. I thought the situation in South Africa was unbearable under apartheid but she explained how it was far worse in Palestine because at least in South Africa the whites wanted the blacks to work for them whereas the Israelis just do not want the Palestinians at all. They want them to leave. This comparison for me speaks volumes.*

*I will follow up on my visit by supporting BDS and visiting Cafe Palestina in Kentish Town when it reopens. I will also endeavour to spread the word about the plight of the Palestinians as far and wide as I possibly can.*

*I have really enjoyed my trip and hope to visit for real sometime."*

**Just one comment about the visit – Others will go on the blog [vvpal.blogspot.com](http://vvpal.blogspot.com) = and look out for the visitors' feedback meetings.**

UK and Palestine – like this virtual visit itself, the project may look simple but it depends on a lot of work and thought! We think that we've found a particular model that has proved



itself over time, and are delighted to have found a way despite Covid and its difficulties to continue with this work that we believe is interesting, motivating and important.

**Whether you are in Palestine or outside – no problem if you are not in the UK - we encourage individuals and groups to contact us for information about our upcoming visits!**



