



# Windows for Peace (UK)

MAY 2011

ISSUE ELEVEN

## 15 Israeli and Palestinian youth in Edinburgh ...

**Young people, aged 17 and under, from Jalkamus, a village in the Jenin area in the West Bank, Tel Aviv and the Galilee town of Tamra took part in the Summer School.**

The two-week intensive programme allowed the groups to strengthen their mutual trust and therefore provide a safe environment for them to study their pasts – the Nakba (1948 Palestinian exodus meaning the “disaster”, “catastrophe” or “cataclysm”) and the Holocaust and their impact on our lives today.

They stayed at the Merchiston Castle School in Edinburgh. The group visited tourist attractions in Edinburgh and met with youngsters from Edinburgh and Selkirk.

They had public meetings in Edinburgh and then in Liverpool.



*The Edinburgh Summer School July 2010*

Almost 100 people, including youth groups from Rochdale and Liverpool, attended the Liverpool event which was “unforgettable”. Supporters travelled from as far as Leeds.

For many summer school participants, this was the first time they had ever faced an audience. They showed great courage and dignity when answering the audience’s questions.

The group has continued to work together, as young journalists, sharing their experience with the readers of Windows Hebrew-Arabic magazine for youth. Through this they continue to cope with the tragic history of our peoples.

You contributed nearly £29,000 without which the Summer School would not have happened.

**Thanks  
to each and everyone of  
you for your support**

Difficult times in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian territories makes the work of Windows Channels for Communication even harder than usual. So we are enormously grateful for the courage and dedication of all those involved to keep the work going. None of what we do would be possible without your dedication.

### **Vacancy**

We are currently looking for support to develop and maintain the Windows for Peace UK website.

If you feel you have the time to commit to volunteer your services to Windows, please contact Ken Singer:  
[ken@windowsforpeaceuk.org](mailto:ken@windowsforpeaceuk.org).



For further information about **Windows Channels for Communication** (our partner organisation in Israel and occupied Palestinian territories), please visit our website:  
[www.windowsforpeaceuk.org/CfC.htm](http://www.windowsforpeaceuk.org/CfC.htm)

## Our Mission Statement ...

**Our work is based on a belief in a democratic future for all the people of the region, all recognizing the others' rights to live there with comprehensive human rights and equality. We oppose any violence, oppression, discrimination or occupation.**

We are pleased to say that we now have a mission statement (see above). Achieving this has been a lengthy, sometimes difficult, but extremely necessary process.

## Work with young people in the UK



### Youth dialogue successfully launches student network

In February, the Youth Dialogue group launched a national network for student groups concerned with discussing the conflict. The network offers training and practice in dialogue methods and for groups to share their experiences. Twenty people, from eight universities are involved. They include Muslims, Jews, a Palestinian and an Israeli. At the first meeting, held in Wolverhampton in February 2011, we had electric but peaceful discussions about things we feel passionate about. Participants based in Birmingham formed a new dialogue group and hosted our next event. Our facilitators' team will work with groups at universities over the next few months. Our aim is to actively encourage groups to use dialogue methods by increasing their skills and confidence in using these methods.

For more information, contact [efrat@windowsforpeaceuk.org](mailto:efrat@windowsforpeaceuk.org)

### QE Boys School. Barnet. London

Youth dialogue facilitators run lunchtime sessions in schools. In March 2011, after a session at QE Boys School in Barnet, London, Alex Davis, co-chair of the Jewish Society wrote:

“ ... I have been speaking to a lot of boys from the Jewish and Islamic Prayer Society. The feedback has been very positive and they all loved the session you did, learning a lot of new facts and opinions to do with the conflict and the challenges it raises both for Jews and Muslims. I think that the discussions on what would actually happen if peace was achieved, were especially fascinating because we often find it hard to imagine a permanent peace and what this would mean for Israel and its Arab neighbours.”

## Comments from youth dialogue facilitators

Youth Dialogue work is undertaken by a national team of seven facilitators aged 19-30. They say:

“As an Israeli who recently moved to the UK, being involved in Windows Youth Dialogue gives me a wider perspective of how the conflict influences different groups. I meet new people, new opinions, new partners.”

*Efrat Kolenburg (Bristol)*

“I am delighted to be working so closely with my Muslim and Jewish peers to effect change on campuses locally and regionally, by working at a grassroots level, to create a new narrative that is not pro-Israeli/Palestinian or Muslim/Jewish but pro-human and pro-solution, is, I feel, taking a positive step forward.”

*Sahera Parveen (Manchester)*

“I am part of a wonderful team that takes care to nurture me and provides me with a platform to grow. Through my learning, I am currently setting up a group in my home city.”

*Shaila Sharif (Birmingham)*

## Helen O and Brenda Beecham

Sadly, Windows lost two wonderful supporters in 2010: Lady Brenda Beecham, the sister of our Trustee Ros Razaida and Ros's good friend Helen O.



**Helen O**, a peace activist, was a woman of many talents – singer, musician and circle dance teacher. She played in the bands at Windows for Peace garden parties and led a number of circle dance evenings in Manley and Chester to raise money for Windows. She recorded a CD, 'Helen O Sings Songs for Peace' to raise money to buy computer equipment so that the young people at the Tulkarem Windows centre in the West Bank would be able to communicate by email and video

link with the young people at the Windows centre in Tel Aviv. Around 350 copies have been sold; its popularity due, no doubt, to Helen's hauntingly beautiful voice.

Helen died suddenly on 23rd April 2010. Knowing what Windows for Peace meant to Helen, her family kindly asked that the future proceeds of Helen's Greek CD 'Zoi/Life' be given to Windows as well as the donations made in Helen's memory.

**Brenda Beecham** first became interested in Windows after a visit she made to the Peace Village - Neve Shalom ~ Wahat al-Salam - during a circle dancing holiday in



Israel in November 2005. Everyone was very disappointed when Israeli soldiers at the checkpoint prevented a Palestinian dancer from coming from the West Bank to teach the group Palestinian Debka. This had a profound effect on Brenda and influenced her decision to go with her sister Ros to the Windows office in Tel Aviv.

She was so impressed that the following year Brenda took her longstanding friend Judy Sischy to the Windows office to meet Rutie. Realizing how difficult it was for the Windows young journalists to meet together in the Middle East, Judy invited them to Edinburgh for a two week Summer School. Brenda and Judy also raised the £30,000 necessary to enable the resoundingly successful 2008 Edinburgh Summer School to take place.

Brenda was diagnosed with terminal colon cancer in September 2008. Despite her illness, Brenda organised a concert in Newcastle to raise money for the 2010 Summer School where she spoke beautifully about Windows. Brenda visited Israel with her family for the last time in October 2009 and was very pleased to be able to attend a presentation given by the young journalists from the 2008 Edinburgh Summer School at the UN High Commission in Jerusalem. This and her subsequent meeting with the young people, their facilitators and Rutie was one of the highlights of her holiday. Brenda died peacefully on 3rd September 2010.

**Both Brenda and Helen are greatly missed by all involved with Windows both in the UK and the Middle East.**

## Financial Report for the year ending 30th September 2010

The year which ended in September 2010 was, in financial terms, our most successful yet.

### Income

Total income was £131,403 and expenditure was £126,210.

2009/10 was exceptional for two reasons:

1. There was a specific fund-raising effort for the Summer School held in Edinburgh. This appeal raised almost £29,000.
2. One generous donor (Dr Alfred Bader) matched our

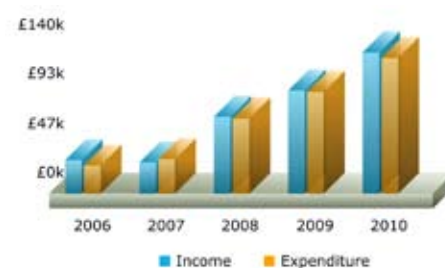
funding pound for pound up to £48,000.

The remaining £54,000 was more representative of our normal income. This came from individual donors and trusts, synagogues and churches, fund-raising events, sale of cards and CDs plus specific funds raised to support our UK-based Youth Dialogue and Training programmes.

### Expenditure

The expenditure comprised £33,500 for the Summer School, £84,600 to support the work of Windows

in Israel and Palestine and £6,000 on the Youth Dialogue and Training programmes. General administrative costs of running the charity amounted to £2,058 – just 1.6% of income.



## Trustees news

We have four Trustees who have joined the organisation; three of them introduce themselves below.

### Yaakov Atik



Israel has had a central place in my biography. My family came from Israel (then part of Palestine). I grew up in New York and lived in Israel for 17 years until 1990, when I came to England. My involvement with Israel and Palestine came late and received a great impetus when I met Rutie Atsmon at a workshop in Manchester. Since that time, I have been involved in getting the Leeds community to take part in Windows activity and currently, there are about 20 people who identify and are interested in the Windows programme.

### Sahera Parveen



I was a support worker on two summer peace camps for Israeli and Palestinian young people in the UK. In March 2010 I returned from a six month period in Bethlehem. The trip was incredibly life-affirming. With the strong links I have maintained with the young Israelis and Palestinians I worked with, I am even more committed to creating a safer and more cohesive society for them to live together in peace.

### Farhat Zaheer-Flaherty

The 'problem in the Middle East' and 'peace negotiations' are things that went on in the background as I grew up and none of it really



registered. I grew up in North London among a large Jewish community yet this topic was never raised.

Fast forward to 2008: Operation Cast Lead and I could not ignore what was going on. Being caught up in right/wrong didn't allow for things to move forward. A former trustee introduced me to Windows for Peace UK. Here is an organisation that allows people to be heard. For wrong/right to be taken out of the equation and instead for understanding and humanness to creep back in, slowly but surely.

**Eyal Pundik Sagie** is our most recent recruit. He represents the London group. As a young person he participated in the Windows Channel for Communication programme.

**Xen Hassan** has recently stepped down as Trustee, but still maintains a strong interest in the work and actively dialogues with us.

**We warmly welcome our new Trustees and thank Xen for her invaluable and continuing contribution.**

## Get involved

To contact Windows for Peace UK local groups:

### London:

[contact@windowsforpeaceuk.org](mailto:contact@windowsforpeaceuk.org)

### Liverpool & West Cheshire:

Penny Roberts:

[penny@windowsforpeaceuk.org](mailto:penny@windowsforpeaceuk.org)

### Leeds:

Yaakov Atik:

[yaakov.atik@ntlworld.com](mailto:yaakov.atik@ntlworld.com)

Ros Razaida:

[ros@windowsforpeaceuk.org](mailto:ros@windowsforpeaceuk.org)

## Making a Donation

You can make a donation on line [www.windowsforpeaceuk.org](http://www.windowsforpeaceuk.org) or by sending a cheque with the form below.

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Please tick this box if you do **not** want to be added to the Windows for Peace (UK) mailing list. Your details will not be passed on to any other organisation.

Cheques are payable to **Windows for Peace (UK)** Please post to : **Windows for Peace (UK), PO Box 177, Manchester M21 9YP**