

Durham Palestine Educational Trust
Reg. Charity No. 1085097

Registered address:

Redhills: Durham Miners Hall
Flass Street
Durham
DH1 4BD

Annual Report 2023-24

Trustees (All Trustees act in an honorary capacity)

Kamal Badreshany (**Assistant Secretary**), Christopher Bahl, Fadia Faqir, Nathan Griffin, Neil Griffin, Dave Harrop, Elaine Malcolm, Vin McIntyre, Roger Reeve, Bill Williamson (**Student Welfare Officer**), Diane Williamson (**Student Welfare Officer**), Eileen Williamson (**Treasurer**), Justin Willis (**Chair**), Penny Wilson (**Secretary**), Martin Wood.

Aims of the Trust

The Durham Palestine Educational Trust aims to:

- Contribute to the social, economic and political development of Palestine through scholarships for Palestinians to study in the UK at Durham University
- Increase awareness in Durham of events in Palestine, especially as they affect education
- Help students of Durham University to study at Palestinian universities
- Promote academic developments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and to promote links with, and academic exchanges between, them and Durham University

This report gives details of the activities undertaken by the Trust in pursuit of these aims. The Trust takes all appropriate measures to assess, mitigate and manage the risks associated with its activities.

Introduction

This has been a terrible year for Palestine. We have all become familiar with the grim daily news of death and destruction in Gaza; circumstances for those living in the West Bank have become extremely difficult. As I write, there seems no end to the suffering in sight. Every aspect of life has been profoundly affected – including higher education. Gaza's universities are in ruins, their staff and students displaced; many have been killed. West Bank universities operate in increasingly challenging circumstances.

The human and financial cost of the events of the last year are huge. DPET's work is tiny when compared with the scale of this loss. Yet it does offer hope, and a reminder that there will be a future. The work of DPET, and other charities like it, has never been of more importance.

The students who arrived in Durham in October 2023 faced an extraordinarily difficult year. Each day has brought new fears and new grief. Their perseverance in the face of these circumstances is admirable, and remarkable. All have completed their studies. We do not know what the future will hold for them, but we can be sure that they are resourceful, talented and determined and that they have much to contribute.

At the end of September, we welcomed five new students to Durham. Lina Al-Najjar, Farah Al-Mallahi, Shawkat Shrikha, Hiba Iftaiha and Taima Tammam. Each of them has faced a difficult journey. There are other students who hold DPET scholarships but have been unable to travel to

Durham this year; their scholarships have been deferred, with the support of the University, and we hope to be able to welcome these students to Durham next year.

The University has been consistently supportive and helpful throughout this year, staying in close contact with the students, and with DPET trustees. This support has come from many levels and is very much appreciated – it has been very reassuring for both students and trustees to know that the University is so committed. The recently-graduated cohort benefitted greatly from this support; the University has also been extremely helpful in arranging language tests and expediting study visa applications for the cohort who have just arrived. The list of those who should be thanked is long. It includes Karen O'Brien, Shaid Mahmood, Fiona O'Carroll, Claire O'Malley, Frances Donegan, Sam Dale and Margret Bidnell-Rowe – and many others, across the University, who have helped the students through the year.

Each year I thank the trustees for their commitment. This year, more than ever, I must draw attention to this. In particular, I must – once again – thank Bill and Diane Williamson, who work extraordinarily hard to bring students to Durham and who provide unstintingly generous kindness and hospitality to them once they are here. I would also like to express my appreciation for the continued, invaluable, work of Eileen Williamson as Treasurer and Penny Wilson as Secretary. DPET relies on its trustees and on a wider community of volunteers – my thanks to them all. DPET students feel welcomed and befriended by all colleagues associated with DPET; this has become a brand identity, an important part of our reputation and the Durham offer to our students.

Public benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning future activities. The trustees consider that the charity's activities reflect our aims and objectives, and that they are designed to provide accessible services and activities that benefit the appropriate sector of the public in accordance with our charitable activities. DPET students have met many people within and outside the university. They have given talks to various local groups and have introduced and shown films about Palestine to other students. They have organized fund-raising events to support people in Gaza.

Achievements and performance

DPET has now supported the postgraduate education of almost seventy Palestinians at Durham. Former students have gone on to make a range of contributions to the development of Palestine, as noted below.

Scholarship Competition 2024-25

The funds in the Pauline Bequest are held in perpetuity. The income from the Bequest is to be used to support Palestinian students to study for masters degrees at Durham, at the discretion of the Pauline Bequest Committee. Following the decision of that Committee, and thanks to a further gift agreement with the University, DPET has been able to use the income from the Pauline Bequest together with funds from other donations to provide studentships. As noted above, five students have started this year; next year, we expect to welcome seven students.

Despite the very difficult circumstances – including constant power cuts and internet outages - DPET received a significant number of strong applications for scholarships: 43 applications met the criteria for entry: 15 from men and 28 from women. 33 applicants were from Gaza and 10 from the West Bank. Many thanks to Bill Williamson, Dave Harrop and Elaine Malcolm for producing a shortlist of applicants, to Diane Williamson for providing administrative support by chasing references and processing applications.

It proved difficult to maintain the support which DPET usually offers to students in preparing for and taking the IELTS English language qualification (for admission to UK universities. The British Council, through which this was arranged, has been unable to operate in Gaza throughout the year. Fortunately, with support from the university, DPET has been able to help some students from Gaza, including some displaced to Egypt, to take the Durham Password Skills Test – an IELTS equivalent - free of charge.

Previous Students

Students from the academic year 2002/3 have made use of the graduate visa opportunity to find work in the UK. Mohammed Salha (Computer Science) works in a young IT company in Newcastle. Hassen Awashra (Plant Science) is working with an agricultural company in the North East, Miral Makhoul is working from Manchester for a Christian charity supporting initiatives in Palestine. Abrar Equilan works with an trading company in Birmingham with close links with the Middle East.

Graduates from the 2023/24 intake have had a very stressful year and two of them – Dalya Saleh (Education) and Samar Saleh (Anthropology) are unable to return to Gaza. Both are exploring possibilities to undertake PhDs. Four students from the West Bank – Ahmad Ashqar (Anthropology) Butheyra Qutaina (Renewable Energy and Management), Diana Hindya (Civil Engineering) and Zain Hamayel (Law) are seeking further professional development or PhD programmes in the UK.

DPET seeks to maintain contact with past students and with those who have not yet returned to Palestine. It is a pleasure to report that Eman Alasah (2019/20) completed her PhD at Northumbria University and now has a lectureship at a new university in Ramallah on the West Bank. Tamara Barakt (2016/17) successfully completed her PhD in Translation Studies and now holds a lectureship jointly with the University of Amman and Strathclyde. Wafa Alijla (2021/22) from Gaza is working as a civil engineer with a Newcastle based company. Two former DPET students – Mahmoud Shalabi (2014/15) and Tarneem Hammad (2020/21) are working in Gaza for the UK Charity, Medical Aid for Palestine. They are doing important work in dreadful circumstances. Arwa Alzraiy (2021/22), now a Durham PhD student, is marooned in Gaza unable to conduct the field work she planned for her research. Former students have built successful careers in finance and banking in Palestine, in work with NGOs, in higher education, social work, water engineering, heritage management and civil administration. Through marriage and recently to escape bombing, some now live outside Palestine. It is difficult to maintain contact with them all but DPET colleagues try to and there is great mutual benefit in doing so.

Fundraising Activities

While DPET is now supported in part by the Pauline Bequest, its work continues to depend on the generous gifts made by many regular donors. Without their support, it would be simply impossible to sustain the number of studentships that DPET now offers.

Planning for the future

With the support of the University, DPET organised a workshop in April 2024, to consider the future of higher education in Palestine. I would like to thank Bill Williamson for leading this initiative, which provided an opportunity for the students to share both their knowledge of the current, dire circumstances and their hopes and visions. The event generated many useful

suggestions – and reminded all involved of both the scale of the task of reconstruction that will be involved, and the importance of higher education for Palestine's future.

It is clear that DPET now responds to and supports a larger group of students whose needs, interests and aspirations have changed significantly. An important task lies ahead: to consider whether the role of DPET needs to change in ways that help realise its aims and objectives in the very changed circumstances of the lives of students in Palestine.

Justin Willis, Chair, Durham Palestine Education Trust, October 2024

DURHAM PALESTINE EDUCATIONAL TRUST

TREASURER'S REPORT: 2023-24

We thank all our donors for their continuing strong support for the Trust's work.

This year our surplus has reduced to £9,772.08, but that was to be expected because we brought six students from Palestine.

Standing Orders and One-off Donations

The money from standing order donors remain approximately the same and is topped up by the Gift Aid. Our thanks go to Roger Reeve for his regular donation and we still receiving donations from Mrs Abbott's estate.

Pauline Bequest

The Pauline Bequest dividend continues to contribute to our funds and in line with the provisions of the late Paul Fortescue's will, this income is to be used to support master's level education at the University of Durham, at the discretion of the Pauline Bequest Committee. The income is a very welcome addition to DPET's resources at a time of rising costs.

Flagstone

Interest from Flagstone has risen to £11,427.98. I'm expecting this to reduce next year because the funds will be less along with the interest rate which is expected to fall.

Total Assets

Our total assets at 30th September 2024 were £401,430.66, at increase of £9,772.66.

Reserve Policy

Even though we put in place a Reserve Policy last year and we agreed have 6 students last year our income has still increased. We would have liked to have had 6 students again this year but it has only been possible to bring 5. This year has been difficult for both our students and trustee due to the situation in Palestine, we are not sure how long this will continue.

My best wishes to everyone.

Eileen Williamson, Treasurer

22nd October 2024

Durham Palestine Education Trust

registered charity no. 1085097

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 30th September 2024

Receipts		2023-2024	2022-2023
Donations:			
From individuals:			
	Standing orders	£ 11,881.00	£ 13,081.00
	Other donations	£ 2,719.00	£ 2,411.13
	Abbot Bequest	£ 59,156.28	£ 76,000.00
From organisations:			
	Forte Securities		£ 5,000.00
	Peoples Bookshop	£ 176.71	
	CAF	£ 425.00	
	Charity Trust	£ 230.00	£ 300.00
	Amazon Associate fees		£ 51.44
	Give as you live/Paypal	£ 105.09	£ 81.14
	Paypal	£ 304.29	
Fundraising activities:			
	Book sales		£ 3,971.04
Other income:			
	Tax recovered through Gift Aid	£ 3,605.54	£ 6,736.78
	Interest	£ 11,824.81	£ 10,120.87
	Transfer from Pauline Bequest	£ 72,516.93	£ 73,718.96
	Transfer from Pauline Cash A/c		£ 163.84
TOTAL RECEIPTS		£ 162,944.65	£ 191,636.20
Payments			
Scholarships			
	Maintenance Grants	£ 141,495.00	£ 80,046.00
	Travel, visa, police registration etc	£ 10,424.26	£ 13,290.80
	British Council IELTS Scholarships	£ 176.00	
Total Scholarship Costs		£ 152,095.26	£ 93,336.80
Administrative expenses:			
	Management Fee	£ 689.67	
	Bank Charges	£ 120.00	
	Admin/Events	£ 267.64	£ 738.04
TOTAL PAYMENTS		£ 153,172.57	£ 94,074.84
Surplus/(deficit) of receipts over payments		£ 9,772.08	£ 97,561.36

Pauline Trust -Permanent Endowment
Durham Palestine Education Trust
registered charity no. 1085097

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 30th September 2024

Receipts		2023-2024	2022-2023
From Investments			
	Interest received from Evelyn (formerly Tilney)		£ 2.67
	Dividends & Interest	£ 74,953.70	£ 66,890.08
	Bank Interest		£ 0.35
	Equalisation Payments		£ 181.93
	Prior Year Adjustment		-£ 38.51
TOTAL RECEIPTS		£ 74,953.70	£ 67,036.52
Payments			
Transfers and expenses:			
	Bank charges etc		£ 55.00
	Transfer to Unrestricted Fund	£ 72,516.93	£ 73,718.96
	Transfer from CAF account		£ 163.84
	Investment charges	£ 13,516.64	£ 13,115.47
	LEI Charge	£ 72.00	£ 72.00
		£ 86,105.57	£ 87,125.27
Surplus/(deficit) of receipts over payments		-£ 11,151.87	-£ 20,088.75

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 30th September 2024

		2023-2024	2022-2023
Assets			
	Accumulated fund brought forward 1st October 2023	£ 1,674,240.96	£ 1,563,639.20
	Surplus/(Deficit) 2023-2024	-£ 11,151.87	-£ 20,088.75
	Change in market value of investments	£ 152,754.50	£ 130,690.51
	Accumulated fund carried forward 30 Sept 2024	£ 1,815,843.59	£ 1,674,240.96
represented by			
	CAF - Pauline Bequest Cash A/c		
	Evelyn (formerly Tilney)	£1,815,843.59	£ 1,674,240.96
TOTAL ASSETS		£1,815,843.59	£ 1,674,240.96

Statement approved by the Trustees on
and by the Trust's AGM on and signed on its behalf by:

Eileen Williamson E. Williamson
Treasurer
Date: 3-2-2005

Penny Wilson P. Wilson
Secretary
Date: 5-2-2005

This report has been independently examined by David Atkinson

Signature D. Atkinson
Date 28-1-2025

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 30th September 2024

		2023-2024	2022-2023
Accumulated fund brought forward 1st October 2023		£ 391,658.58	£ 294,097.22
Surplus/(Deficit) 2023-2024		£ 9,772.08	£ 97,561.36
Accumulated fund carried forward 30 Sept 2024		£ 401,430.66	£ 391,658.58
represented by			
	HSBC Current Account	£ 740.25	£ 744.12
	CAF Cash Account	£ 8,922.75	£ 2,094.09
	CAF Gold Account	£ 2,150.93	£ 53,776.24
	Flagstone Account	£ 389,610.07	£ 334,871.76
	Paypal Account	£ 6.66	£ 172.37
TOTAL ASSETS		£ 401,430.66	£ 391,658.58
Designated Funds		for 2024-25	for 2023-24
	Five scholarships (prev. year six)	£ 130,000.00	£ 132,440.00
	Travel and Visa costs etc.	£ 10,000.00	£ 6,000.00
	Contingency fund	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
	Total	£ 145,000.00	£ 143,440.00

Statement approved by the Trustees on
and by the Trust's AGM on and signed on its behalf by:

Eileen Williamson

Treasurer

Date:

3-2-2025

Penny Wilson

Secretary

Date:

5-2-2025

This report has been independently examined by Mr David Atkinson

Signature

Date

D. Atkinson

28-1-2025

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Durham Palestine Education Trust
registered charity no. 1085097

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Date: 3-2-2025

Penny Wilson P. Wilson
Secretary

Date: 5-2-2025

This report has been independently examined by David Atkinson

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Date 28-1-2025

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and by the Trust's AGM on and signed on its behalf by:

Eileen Williamson

Treasurer

Date:

E. Williamson
3-2-2025

Penny Wilson

Secretary

Date:

P. Wilson
5-2-2025

This report has been independently examined by Mr David Atkinson

Signature

Date

D. Atkinson
28-1-2025



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

The Durham Palestine Educational Trust

**On accounts for the year
ended**

30 September 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1085097

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

(Signature)

Date:

28-1-2025

Name:

David Atkinson

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Fellow of Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

Address:

3 Sturton Grange Mill, Warkworth, Northumberland NE65 0EZ

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).