

Walks for Gaza



A guide to organising a
fundraising and solidarity walk.
By Emily Cropton, Tom Jeffreys
and Tiki Muir.

In his 2025 book, *One Day Everyone Will Always Have Been Against This*, writer Omar El Akkad discusses the idea of “walking away towards”:

“The idea that walking away is childish and unproductive is predicated on the inability to imagine anything but a walking away from, never a walking away toward - never that there might exist another destination.”

Introduction





Between October 2024 and October 2025, we have organised three solidarity walks to raise money for families in Gaza. Each walk has followed the outline of Gaza transposed onto a different location: along the River Tweed in October 2024; Edinburgh in May 2025; and north Northumberland in October 2025.

In placing one map on top of the other, the first thing you notice is how tiny Gaza is. 25 miles of coastline; a population of over 2 million people; bombed relentlessly, with barely a pause for breath, and no possibility to hide or escape. Each walk is approximately 64 miles / 103 km long and each one took us 4 days. In total, these three walks have raised over £16,000, sent directly to families in Gaza to help them survive the genocide.

Each journey has been precisely as Omar El Akkad describes: a walking away towards. A temporary collective space held amid a ruined present. A moment to focus, rage, grieve. To support one another and restate again the love and care and anger that bind us. To remember and imagine. Away towards together.

The purpose of this publication is to encourage you to organise your own solidarity and fundraising walk.

El Akkad continues:

“The walking away is not nihilism, it’s not cynicism, it’s not doing nothing - it’s a form of engagement more honest, more soul-affirming, than anything the system was ever prepared to offer.”

This is one of the most important parts of the walk, and can be time-consuming - especially if you plan to walk in an area you don't know so well. Route planning is worth doing carefully.

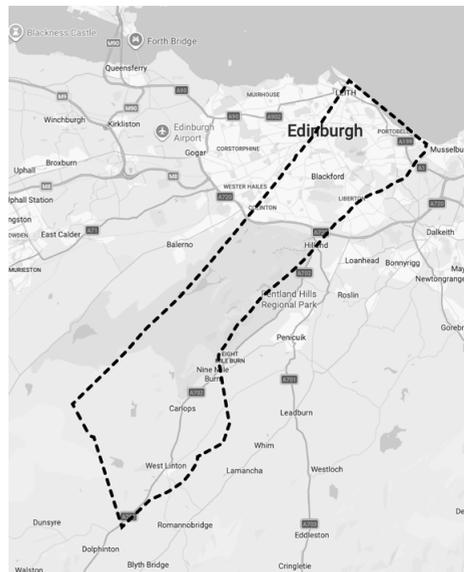
While these walks follow the outline of Gaza as closely as possible, we have largely stuck to existing footpaths and roads, so the interpretation is loose and depends on many factors (eg locations of possible food and accommodation, suitable paths, avoiding impassable private property, major roads or railways etc). There is always a balance between staying close to the outline and facilitating a manageable walk. The most

important thing is to choose a route which will be suitable for your group, so that the walking is achievable, even if it brings with it some challenges.

1. Outline v distance

The walk is the same distance as the outline of Gaza (approximately 62 miles / 100km) and in the same shape as the outline of Gaza. But because borders are straight lines imposed upon a map, while paths and even roads tend to be far more wiggly, the overall territory covered by the walk is smaller than that of Gaza.

Planning Your Route



2. Choosing a location

The first step is to decide the rough location of your walk. To do this, you might want to consider where you live, how you will travel to the start location and whether you are hoping that others will join you for parts of the walk. If you would like the walk to be accessible for others wishing to take part, it is helpful to have at least one day which starts at a train station, bus station or other transport interchange. This could be the first day of the walk, providing you with a way to access the start too. Knowing that your route needs to start or pass through this point can be a helpful anchor.



You might also like to create connections and meaning through your choice of walking route, for example walking along waterways, a coastline or a borderline for part of the route.

Planning Your Route



3. Length of your walk

It is helpful to decide how long you would like to walk each day. The outline of Gaza is approximately 62 miles, so a four day walk will involve between 14 and 18 miles per day, a five day walk will involve between 10 and 15 miles per day, a ten day walk will involve between 5 and 8 miles per day etc.

There is a balance between walking at a pace that will be inclusive to those in your group on any given day and ensuring you reach your destination in good time (eg for any evening meal bookings or before nightfall). Remember that the larger the group, the slower you will go. You may wish to schedule one shorter day and encourage less experienced walkers to join on that day.

4. Checking the route

While you should be able to plan most of your route using paper and digital maps, some details can only be understood accurately by walking them in person. Examples include whether a wall is climbable; whether a landowner has blocked access to a path; and whether a river is fordable or not.

The better you know your route, the less likely it is that you will get lost or need to take time-consuming detours. This is especially important if you are being joined by other walkers. Feeling that those leading do not know the way can be a major sap on group morale.

It may not always be possible to reccie every part of the route in advance but where applicable we would strongly advise it if possible.

The nature of the walk (the fact of following a super-imposed outline of Gaza rather than existing pathways or routes) means that logistics, accommodation, food, and travel to and from the route will need to be carefully considered and communicated to those considering joining you on the walk. This sometimes requires creative planning.

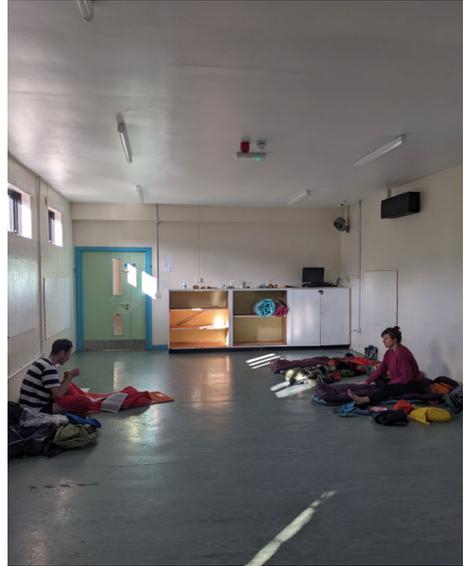
Planning

For each walk we have a google spreadsheet, accessible and editable for all walk organisers. This contains 3 tabs:

1. Route planning - including day-by-day start/end places and times, distance covered, evening meal and accommodation options, relevant contact details and any shops or other places to be aware of along the route.
2. Task list - with columns for who is responsible, the deadline, notes on actions taken and updates. See Appendix A.
3. Comrades - a list of who is planning to join on each day, how long for, contact details, whether or not they need evening meals and/or accommodation.



The hospitality of strangers, and the connections which that makes possible, can be a beautiful part of these walks.



Accommodation

We originally planned to try to stay with people along the route before alighting on the idea of using village halls. This kept costs very low (usually just a small donation) and meant we could be very flexible with numbers growing or shrinking. Drawbacks are comfort and the limitations it can impose upon your route planning. We have also camped and stayed at people's houses. The hospitality of strangers and the connections which that makes possible can be a beautiful part of these walks.

Travel

We tried to arrange walks so that at least the first and last days were relatively accessible via public transport. On the first walk, we also liaised with people to arrange liftshares, but this can be very time-consuming and we would suggest putting people in touch directly to arrange themselves. For one walk, we also partnered with a local arts organisation, who paid for a minibus to bring folks to the start of the walk in the morning and collect them at various pre-arranged points along the way. This required people to reserve a place in advance.

Food

We advised people to carry at least enough food for each day. Lots of stops with a large group will significantly slow things down. Bringing snacks to share is always a good idea! In general, we have booked pubs/restaurants for evening meals. Some village halls have kitchens so you could carry additional food to cook/reheat or arrange a supermarket/takeaway delivery. Depending on how remote your route is located, you may wish to carry enough food for the entire duration.





Every walk is a group undertaking. For us, a team of 3-4 people has been an effective way of sharing the organising work as well as a beautiful way of forging long-lasting bonds of connection through solidarity.

Mutual aid:

Direct to Palestinians

Not everyone appreciates the importance of giving money directly to families in Gaza. Some people feel more comfortable giving to large charities or international NGOs such as Medical Aid for Palestinians or the Red Cross. When communicating the purpose of the walk, it may be worth emphasising the value of giving money directly to families and community-led organisations on the ground. In many cases, aid supplied by international organisations is not making it through occupation blockades. Mutual aid ensures that money goes directly to those in need. It is the quickest and most efficient way to help Palestinians.

Platforms

We ran the first two fundraising campaigns using JustGiving. However, for the third walk, the platform denied our campaign while alluding vaguely to political interference. Instead, we used Chuffed. In terms of functionality, both platforms worked well, although with Chuffed you will need to spend some time adjusting the settings so that payments come through in the most manageable way for you.





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Have a target

having a realistic fundraising target gives your team and those considering donating a clear goal to aim for, which can be motivating. It also means that if you pass your target, you can consider easing off with your promotional efforts. There are many important causes competing for people's support.

This is a group effort

Ask that every single person participating in the walk either donates personally or shares the donation link to their networks.

Time-frame

A large majority of donations tend to come right before the walk starts and during the walk itself, as participants share photos etc. on social media. Donations continue to arrive after the walk is completed so we tend to keep the fundraiser live for at least two weeks longer.

The most effective way of spreading the word will depend on your own networks. We adopted a mix of the following:

Social media

We've found that the visual of the outline of Gaza transposed onto a map of your local area is a very effective means of communicating the purpose of the walk. It is visually striking and gets widely shared. Be prepared, however, that likes and shares do not always translate into donations. You need to be persistent and find several ways of continuing to talk about the walk. Canva can be a good, free tool for creating slides.

Group emails

A few emails to your personal or professional networks with a link to the fundraiser is a good way to spread the message.

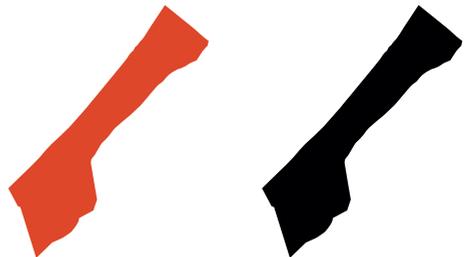
Personal outreach

Eg. through email or whatsapp, is usually effective, but can also be time-consuming. A group email, followed some time later, by one-to-one approaches can work well.

Personal networks

Try to think creatively. What relevant networks can you leverage appropriately? It might be a university mailing list or a local newsletter.

Promotion



Local solidarity groups

Search online for groups who may support the walk through sharing or participation.

QR codes

During the first walk, we printed flyers to hand to folks we met along the route. These included info about the walk's purpose and a QR code to donate. We found we didn't use them but it could be a useful tool for you.

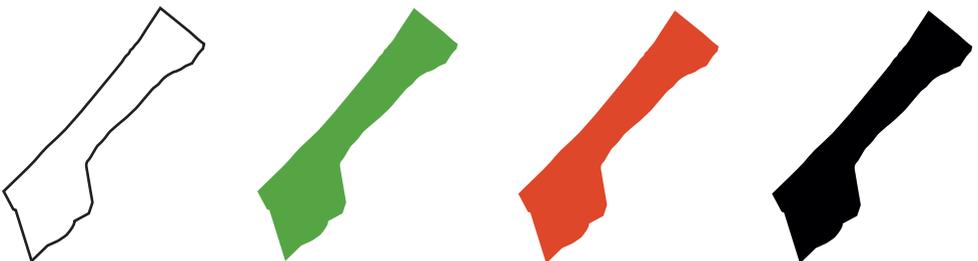
Afterwards

We emailed everyone a link to a shared Google Drive so that people could upload photographs, readings or other materials shared during the walk.

Press

Whether or not to approach newspapers, radio etc will depend on the circumstances of your walk. It could certainly help raise awareness and potentially increase donations. We had interest from some outlets but decided against press coverage in advance of the walks. As organisers, you have a duty of care to those taking part and we had concerns about making public precise locations, which could be used to target minoritised people in our group.

For post-walk press, a few nice photos may help your cause - for example, of folks holding flags in prominent or picturesque locations on the walk.



One crucial way that we kept focus on Palestine throughout each walk was by taking time to stop and read works about Palestine, especially Gaza, and by writers from Palestine and the diaspora. Reading out loud together can be a powerful collective experience.

We tried to choose readings that we felt would chime well with each walk and the locations we were in - eg. poetry relating to rivers or the sea; texts about maps or walking. We also encouraged everyone to bring a text to share if they wished. Poetry, shorter stories or short extracts from works of non-fiction tend to work best. Some recommended texts include:

Alycia Pirmohamed
the water library

Batool Abu Akleen
All Roads Lead to the Sky

Darius Simpson
Maybe the Rally Won't Get Us Free

Fady Judah
Truth is Never Finished

Fawaz Turki
The Seed Keepers

Hasib Hourani
rock flight

June Jordan
To sing a song of Palestine

Lisa Suhair Majaj
Palestine Hologram & Song

Lubna Ahmad
Gaza in my Eyes

Maya Abu Al Hayyat
After

Mosab Abu Toha
On Gaza Seashore

Samer Abu Hawwash
From the River to the Sea

Suheir Hammad
24 May 2009, Ramallah

Mahmoud Darwish
Standing Before the Ruins of
Al-Birweh



Reading out loud together can be a powerful collective experience.

Reading



There was one poem that we came to read every day, at the start of each day's walk. We are sharing this here with Mira's kind permission.

Mira Mattar

from 'And most of all I would miss the shadows of the tree's own leaves...' (Veer2, 2023)

**inessential
dream to be
'Palestinian' is
a position no
an orientation no
it is the whole
compass no
it is the stars
themselves no
it is the way
I'm going no
it is the way
to go no
it is the way
to stay no
it is the way**



Before

It is very important to communicate expectations clearly to participants in advance. The walk is not a fun day out. Depending on your route and who you expect to take part, participants will be expected to display some level of self-sufficiency (eg. bringing their own food, water, suitable clothing) and have the ability to walk the section they have chosen. But participants can only make well-informed decisions if you keep them well-informed. See the Appendix C for an example mail-out.

As with the question of press (page 15) there is a balance between publicly communicating enough info so that people can decide whether or not to join the walk without giving too much detail, especially around timings/locations, that could put people in vulnerable situations.

We vetted potential participants via brief online searches, only shared detailed itineraries with those who had directly contacted us to participate, and asked them not to share those details further.

During

In areas with patchy internet/ phone reception, we've found it can be difficult for people to join the walk mid-way through a day. In general, we've encouraged people to join at the beginning of any day and to depart whenever they wish.

One exception was the final day of the Edinburgh walk, where a group of people waited in a cafe for us to arrive. Together, we read *The Sea is Mohammad Al Khalid's*, a short story by Adanai Shibley, before walking the final hour to the seashore.

There is a balance between walking at a pace that will be inclusive to those in your group on any given day and ensuring you reach your destination in good time (eg for any evening meal bookings or before nightfall). Remember that the larger the group, the slower you will go. During the walk itself, you will have to negotiate this with care. Try to keep your group together and ask those at the front to slow down if necessary.

After

The lesson we have learned doing these walks is that they are emotionally intense and draining. Each walk feels like a little bubble of heightened awareness - removed from your everyday concerns and focused on solidarity with those in Gaza.

Walking together can form strong connections across the group, especially those involved in organising, but returning home alone can emphasise feelings of isolation. A sense of achievement on completing the walk, and the money raised, can be quickly undercut by the knowledge that the wider picture remains very bleak. You might wish to take a few days off work, if you can. You may prefer the distraction of returning to work.

We strongly recommend walk organisers check in regularly with each other in the week after the walk. Schedule a group video call for a few days later. Maybe have a relaxed day out together if you can.

Sample kit list

The kit list will need to be adapted to the seasons, the length of your walk, and the type of accommodation.

Personal equipment

- Rucksack - large enough to carry all you'll need and comfortable to wear all day
- Walking boots or shoes
- Waterproof jacket and trousers
- Warm, insulating jacket or fleece
- Comfortable walking clothing - lots of thin layers work better than one thick item
- Water bottle and / or flask for hot drinks
- Warm hat and gloves
- Sun cream and sun hat
- Personal toiletries
- Walking poles or stick

Safety equipment

- Map
- Compass
- First aid kit
- Tick tweezers - advisable if you are walking through moorland and long grass
- Head torch - fully charged or with new and spare batteries
- Whistle
- Battery pack for recharging your phone
- Small amount of cash

Camping equipment (if required):

- Tent
- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping mat
- Small stove and fuel - for making hot drinks and breakfast.

To do list

The list below is not exhaustive, but is a good starting point covering the main tasks.

Planning & logistics

- Plan and check route
- Make map
- Finalise dates
- Decide daily walk start times
- Walk the first section of the route to test it out
- Investigate unclear route sections

Reading

- Gather reading materials to share during the walk

Fundraising & Promotion

- Set up donations page
- Make social media slides
- Share the donations link

Food & accommodation

- Day 1 evening meal, accommodation, shops en route
- Day 2 evening meal, accommodation, shops en route
- Day 3 evening meal, accommodation, shops en route
- Day 4 evening meal, accommodation, shops en route
etc.



Contact

If you're planning your own walk and would like more information, you can contact one of our organising team, Emily, by email: croptonemily@gmail.com