

Zoë Garbett
Mayor of Hackney
London Borough of Hackney
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
Hackney
London
E8 1EA

Sent via email
Mayor@haifa.muni.il

mayor@hackney.gov.uk

29 July 2026

Dear Mayor Yahav,

Twinning Relationship between the London Borough of Hackney and the City of Haifa

I am writing to you following my recent election as the Mayor of Hackney to introduce myself and to share an important update regarding our borough's international twinning relationships.

As I begin my term, my administration is triggering a review of our formal international partnerships to ensure they remain meaningful and align with Hackney's core values. Hackney and Haifa have shared a civic bond since 1968; however, in my view the relationship no longer reflects the strategic priorities of the Council.

At its meeting on 28 July, Hackney's Full Council agreed, in principle, the formal termination of our twinning agreement and all associated municipal ties. You can view a copy of the report [here](#). Rather than pursuing an immediate termination, based on legal advice Full Council agreed a phased process that will run over the next few months. As part of that process, I am writing to formally invite the views of your administration on the proposal to terminate the twinning agreement. I'd be grateful if

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you could send me any views on this matter by email to mayor@hackney.gov.uk by 7 October 2026. The Council has also commenced a period of engagement with interested parties, via our online Consultation & Engagement hub (<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/chief-executives/twinning/>), should you wish to share this with any other interested parties.

As the directly elected Mayor, I wish to be transparent about my administration's direction, as set out in my party's manifesto: my administration is seeking to conclude this chapter of our civic history. Given the ongoing humanitarian crisis, and the gravity of the UN Commission of Inquiry Reports concluding Israel has committed genocide, maintaining a civic connection in Israel is at odds with our anti-racist values. The Council stands up for human rights and wants to ensure our global connections reflect our shared core values. We want active, ethical partnerships that champion peace.

A final report will be brought back to a meeting of Hackney's Full Council this civic year, for a conclusive vote on the future of the twinning agreement. Until that time, all formal civic activity between our offices will remain suspended.

I have copied Martin Sugarman, Chair of the Hackney Anglo Israeli Friendship Association, for his information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Zoë Garbett', with a stylized, flowing script.

Zoë Garbett
Mayor of Hackney