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March 2019  
 No. 531

## Quakers: Simple, Radical and Contemporary

Events for March and early April – in Meeting House, unless otherwise indicated

**NB:** There is a half hour Meeting for Worship (12.45 – 1.15 PM) **every Wednesday** followed by a simple lunch of soup, bread, cheese and fruit. All are welcome.

Sun 10 March	10.30 – 4 pm	Area Meeting – Horsham MH ( <i>see below</i> )
Sun 10 March	6.30 – 7.30 pm	MfW ( <i>Park House, Leatherhead</i> )
Sat 23 March	10.30 – 3.30 pm	Regional Meeting on QCEA – Littlehampton MH
Sun 24 March	12.30 pm	Friendly lunch
Fri 29 March- to be confirmed	2.30 – 4 pm	Meditation and Spiritual Exploration
Mon 1 April	8.30 – 9 pm	Healing/Upholding Prayer Group ( <i>in Friends' homes</i> )
Sun 7 April	12.00 – 12.30 pm	Quaker Faith & Practice discussion Group ( <i>see page 5</i> )
Fri 12 April	12.00 – 2.00 pm	Lent Lunch hosted by Dorking Meeting

(Advance notice: Sun 28 April Leith Hill Walk from Capel MH. Details in April Grapevine)

### Timetable for Area Meeting at Horsham Sunday 10 March

10.30 – 11.30 am Meeting for Worship, Tea/coffee break, 12.30 – 1.30 pm Area Business Meeting  
 Lunch break – bring your own  
 2.30 – 4.00 pm Fellowship

**Looking after our beautiful planet.  
 Let's leave a safe home for future generations**

A short video from FWCC on the impact of climate change on Quakers round the world.  
 Followed by a discussion facilitated by Sally and Eva Wrenwood.

### A GREEN TIP FOR MARCH

Only put as much water as you need in your kettle. Making yourself a cup of tea? Pour just one cupful of water into your kettle! It takes a lot of energy to boil water so, if you don't already, by making this a habit you'll save quite a lot of energy with the minimum of effort.



## NOTES FROM PREPARATIVE MEETING OF SUNDAY 3 MARCH

compiled by Anne Brewer

Back in January the Meeting sent a letter to our MP, Paul Beresford, in support of 'Humanity and Inclusion's **Stop Bombing Civilians' campaign**. A reply was received from our MP which insisted there was nothing the government could do about the bombing of civilians – ask Anne if you would like to see a copy. Anne drafted a reply to this and PM agreed to send it after a couple of minor changes. (A copy of this reply can be found on page 4)

Colin Brewer presented the **accounts for 2018**, which have been independently examined by John Morris of Guildford LM. These were approved, with thanks to Colin and John.

**Premises Committee** have been busy with a variety of jobs. The following jobs are underway or completed:

- Colin and Judy are training hirers so they can sign the disclaimer saying that they have accepted delegated responsibility for actions to be taken in the event of fire.
- A small yew growing into our common wall with Butterhill House, and the small tree near the front of the cottage whose roots were continually blocking the drain, have both been removed.
- The wooden housing of the screen winding gear has been modified to facilitate lubrication of all six bearings.
- Problems with our fire alarms have been rectified and all our fire equipment checked.
- The large notice board on the front wall has been re-sited by the Meeting House.

The following jobs will be done in the near future:

- Damp in the Ladies toilet: the plaster will be stripped back and the wall re-rendered with lime mortar during the summer.
- Draughts, especially through gaps round the front lobby door: the best solution is being investigated.
- Damp patch on the wall in the Large Hall: probable cause has been found.
- Cistern in the small toilet is not shutting off properly: a plumber is being called in.

**Heritage Open Days this year** are 13 to 22 September with the theme 'people power'. Su Johnston will find out which Saturday will best for us to open the Meeting House. We will open the screen 2 times and mount a suitable exhibition about some historic Quakers and maybe the Kinder Transport panels from last year. The Clerking team will consult with Rachel Hope about the wording to offer for the MVDC brochure.

We had a discussion about making the Meeting and individual Friend's homes and activities more **sustainable**. See following report.

### DISCUSSION ON SUSTAINABILITY IN PM

Back in 2011 Quakers agreed to work towards becoming a low carbon sustainable community and Yearly Meeting is asking how we are getting on. Our Meeting has really done quite well. It has won two eco-congregation awards for work done on sustainability of the Meeting House and garden, but there is scope for more work and some renewal needed of past work.





To reduce our emissions of the greenhouse gases causing climate change, the most important thing is to reduce our consumption of electricity and gas. We are signed up to Good Energy for electricity from 100% renewable sources and for green gas which is carbon neutral. This encourages investment in renewables but we have to recognise that what we use reduces the supply of renewables available to others. We can't be careless about energy usage until the UK energy supply is

100% renewable!

Ways to reduce energy consumption that were considered:

- Lower overnight temperature of MH from 12 to 10 degrees C – this was agreed.
- Renew draught-proofing, especially round front lobby door – Premises are working on this.
- Seal hole in Quiet Room ceiling – Premises may look into this after consultation with an architect to ensure it is not needed for ventilation.
- Seal gaps between floor boards in large hall, or carpet entire floor – consult as for hole in Quiet Room ceiling.
- Double glaze kitchen and small lobby windows.

We discussed making blankets available in the Large Hall so that if people felt chilly, rather than turn up the heating, they could wrap a blanket round the chilly part of their anatomy. This had a mixed reception but it was agreed that at least 2 blankets should be available for people who became ill.

Another idea was to put solar PV panels on the roof to generate electricity. The Dorking Solar Group could advise about this if the Meeting decides to explore the possibility.



Other areas which are important for reducing the destruction of our ecosystems and which the Meeting is quite good at are: planting the garden with insect-friendly plants, using organic gardening methods, using refillable bottles of eco-friendly cleaning materials, using eco-friendly paints, conserving water, using recycled paper or bamboo loo rolls, recycling/composting as much as possible, offering vegan/organic/locally produced refreshments, and banking with an eco-friendly bank. With an extinction rate 1,000 to 10,000 times higher than the natural rate ([https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/species\\_extinction\\_05\\_2007.pdf](https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/species_extinction_05_2007.pdf)) several species are going extinct every day. We surely must do our best to protect the environment.



Besides the sustainability of our building we are also encouraged to look at our impact on the environment as individual Quakers. There are ways to calculate our individual carbon footprints and discover what areas are most in need of action, but there was not much enthusiasm for this. We agreed to put up a board where Friends can record anonymously what they are doing to reduce their footprint, hopefully giving us all some new ideas. I will try and include a green tip in each issue of the Grapevine.

Anyone is welcome to ask me for a copy of my booklet 'Ready to reduce your Carbon Footprint?' and/or for a copy of a paper or online carbon footprint calculator.

Anne Brewer

## THE REPLY TO OUR MP RE STOP BOMBING CIVILIANS

The text of the reply, which was signed by Frances Poulton on behalf of the Meeting, is as follows:

Thank you for your reply, dated 21<sup>st</sup> January, to our letter regarding the Stop Bombing Civilians campaign and for your detailed analysis of the situation in Syria. We were pleased to read in your final paragraph that the UK has been generous in its financial assistance to Syrian refugees in camps in Jordan and Turkey and hope very much that this generosity will now be extended to those refugees who wish to come to the UK.

Referring to the main issue raised in our letter, we understand your point that questions in parliament or UN reports are not going to stop Assad bombing his citizens but we would suggest that international agreements do have some effect – take for example the Ottawa Treaty, banning landmines, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, banning chemical weapons. These bans have not eliminated the use of these inhumane weapons but they have reduced their use. Most importantly they are vital steps on the long road to a situation where conflict is resolved by discussion and mediation and it becomes unthinkable to attempt to prove you are right by throwing things at each other. We hoped you might agree that urging the UN to draw up a statement on the unacceptability of bombing civilians is a next step that could be taken and that the UK is in a position to initiate this.

We also note that you refer to Syria but not to Yemen. Here is a situation which, sadly, we in the UK are not helping by continuing to sell arms to Saudi Arabia who are bombing the civilians in Yemen causing terrible suffering. With our vision of a world where human beings finally learn to behave with intelligence and compassion, and to resolve conflict without recourse to violence, it is depressing to know that the UK is one of the top providers of armaments into the global system. However we realise it will be a long road to reach the realisation of our Quaker vision, hence our efforts to encourage the taking of the small step to make the bombing of civilians unacceptable in international law.

On reflection do you feel you could support this step? Yours etc...

## QUAKER DAY OF HEALING

The Meeting House was open as part of this National Event and we were joined by Friends from Reigate meeting. The day also coincided with Dorking's Climate Emergency events and Dorking Meeting offered to host a vegan lunch – as our contribution to promoting a more sustainable life style. It was a joy to see so many families with young children arriving – it is heartening to know that younger generations care about the planet and the future of their children. Generous donations on the day will enable further events to take place to continue raising awareness.



**We do not own the world, and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will. Show a loving consideration for all creatures, and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life. Rejoice in the splendour of God's continuing creation.**

*Advices and Queries No. 42*



## AN INVITATION . . .

I have been volunteering at the Patchworking Garden Project in Pixham for several months and am really enjoying working there. The project was started to enable people with learning or physical difficulties, or psychological health problems to volunteer and contribute to an inclusive community project – raising their confidence and self esteem. Everyone in the garden is equal and everyone has something unique to bring. The garden is the old kitchen garden of Friends Provident, now Aviva, created when the Quaker company moved to Dorking. Our Mid Week Meeting has generously donated to the project in the past.

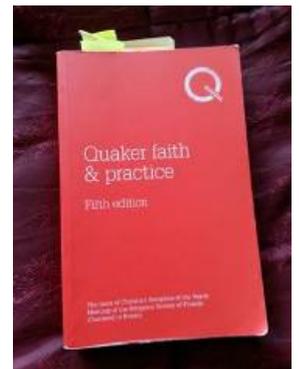
What have I learnt? Well, I don't know very much about gardening, but I have enjoyed learning new crafts and leading a couple of sessions. Would you please join us on April 6 for an Arts and Crafts Exhibition? Some of our volunteers are very talented and will be displaying and selling their work. The garden will be open from 10.30 to 2.30 with teas and cakes available, and plants for sale. Dogs and children are welcome – I will be running a workshop for children making mini notebooks. I hope you can join us.

Elizabeth Cooper

## QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE

One of our newer Attenders asked if it was possible to have a group to read and discuss sections of Quaker Faith & Practice. There was general agreement from those who come to them that we should use this as the format for our Enquirer's discussion sessions on the first Sunday of the month after MfW. So Sunday 7 April will be our first session. I suggest we start with Chapter 2 but am very open to suggestions. Anyone is welcome to join in.

Anne Brewer



## OUR YOUNG FRIENDS DO THEIR BIT

Last Sunday our Young Friends did a session on sustainability and discussed what they could do to help Dorking reduce its carbon footprint. They had a wonderful idea – they could draw chalk footprints on the pavements on Fridays with messages such as 'Make this a car-free Friday'. I understand they are working out whether they can put this idea into action.

Also Thomas announced he had decided to write a letter to the Head of his school suggesting that the school take action to become more sustainable. The text of his letter is in the box. It was delivered on 6 March. Well done Thomas!

*Dear Miss Sutton,*

*As part of climate emergency week I have been thinking about what we can do at school.*

*Here are some ideas: Switch to renewable energy; Never have disposable plastic cups and plates at lunch; Separate the food waste from the rubbish at lunch; Help me to create a climate emergency group to help raise awareness in school; Have a "Friday Footprint Day" every week (on Fridays) when we focus extra hard to minimise our carbon footprint.*

*Please may we have a talk about this so we can kick it off and get more ideas.*

*Also I would recommend watching the speech by Greta Thunberg from Sweden to give you a young person's perspective. Kind regards, Thomas.*



## KEYNOTE EVENT

Climate Emergency week in Dorking was one of a number across the country. [In an article in The Guardian this week](#) it was

reported that ‘Green councillors have persuaded more than 25 local authorities this week to declare a climate emergency – alongside schools and universities. These are some of the most inspirational and hopeful acts I’ve seen in years.’

So people with awareness of the grave implications of the failure to act on carbon reduction for our environment and human lives are coming together in respectable and orderly communities – predominantly peace-loving and law-abiding, noted for their industry and charity, and passionate about the message they are bringing.

Does that remind you of anything – such as early gatherings of people who came to be called Quakers?

By fortune, on the evening of Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March, Dorking Meeting House was able to host the ‘KeyNote’ event for Dorking’s emergency week (23<sup>rd</sup> February – 2<sup>nd</sup> March), and incorporate some Quaker silence into the closing of the evening.

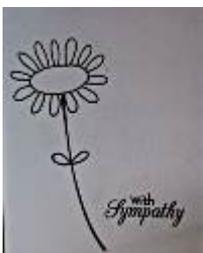
The agenda for the evening was particularly inspiring for me. Co-ordinated by Greenpeace and ‘Climate emergency’ leader, Pat Smith, it brought together a wide range of local groups who are promoting sustainability and use of local skills and resources, as well as businessmen committed to selling or explaining how to make ethical investments.

I was delighted to hear about the Repair Café which takes place at the Christian Centre on the first Saturday morning (up to 1pm) of the month. I had never properly understood the community fridge before and the groups XR (Extinction Rebellion) and the Horse Hill drilling protest group, were also there to explain what they do. Not to rest there, we went into groups and discussed more actions that we could take, coming back with a diverse range of possibilities including lobbying councils to make recycling initiatives more uniform across the country, attract more local groups to reach that 10% tipping point which will at least slow down the deterioration of our climate, and work to enable people more in education and in healthcare.

Finally we heard about all the ideas that people shared in these groups, and I think there was by this time a sense of us all in the meeting house, understanding how strongly we carried the will to make a difference to the climate change situation in the UK. In the same Guardian article above it was deplored that just 40 MPs showed up to a debate on climate change in the Commons chamber at the end of February. It was the first since September 2016 to talk about the biggest and most urgent crisis humanity has ever faced and that was the number who cared enough to be in parliament. There is no doubt about it – the people have the role at the moment, not our political leaders.

I think Quakers should be proud that we provided a place for Dorking people to celebrate what they are already doing, and actively think about how we could practically continue to do so.

Sarah Freeman



## NEWS OF FRIENDS

John Campbell, Eleanor’s husband, passed away peacefully, at home, on Sunday 3 March. The funeral will be on Friday 29 March, 2.45 pm at Randalls Park Crematorium. Please no dark clothes. Only family flowers. Afterwards all are invited to Dorking Golf Club. Any donations to Princess Alice Hospice.