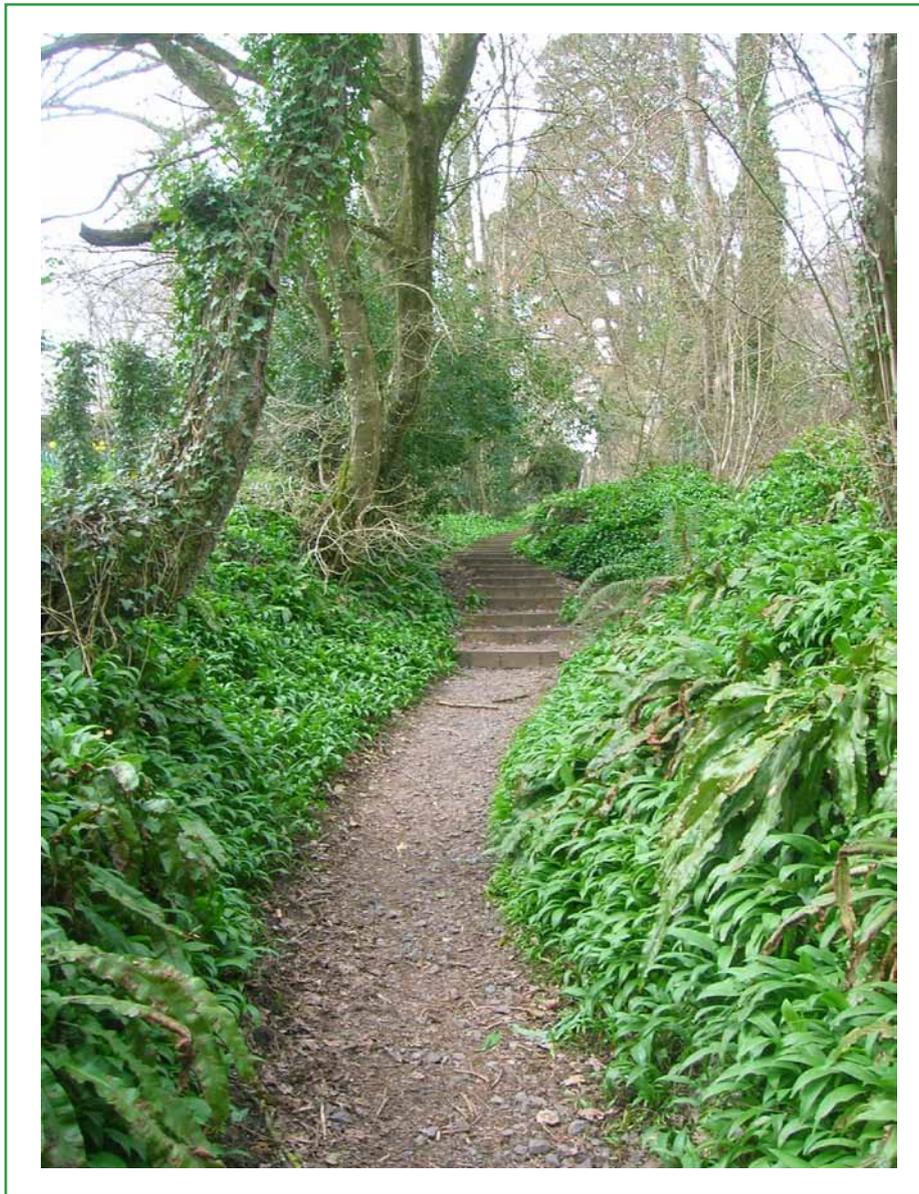


# earthQuaker

living  
witness  
Quakers for Sustainability



newsletter  
issue 88  
spring 2015



Wild garlic path in Dorset - Dee Sayce

Human Dimensions of Climate Change  
Answering that of God in Political Parties

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## Editorial

Welcome to our Britain Yearly Meeting edition of earthQuaker. The theme for this YM and the next two is “Living out our faith in the world” and there are lots of special interest meetings on sustainability (see the diary on page 9). Living Witness is involved in running one for the BYM Sustainability Group on “What’s Quaker about our sustainability commitment”. There’s more on this theme in Laurie Michaelis’ articles on the human dimensions of climate change (page 5) and on Doug Gwyn’s book *A Sustainable Life* (page 10).

We invited contributions on the general election for this issue of earthQuaker. We’ve had to be selective in what we publish because, as a registered charity, Living Witness cannot support any political party. Laurie Michaelis (below) explores what it might mean to answer that of God in all of them, and Lesley Grahame (page 3) encourages you to get involved in politics and use your vote.

The politicians aren’t talking much about climate change but most of the parties have policies in their manifestos. If you want advice on who to vote for try [www.voteforpolicies.co.uk](http://www.voteforpolicies.co.uk). Or look at the QPSW Quakernomics website, [www.quakerweb.org.uk/blog/](http://www.quakerweb.org.uk/blog/), for an analysis of policies related to energy justice in the party manifestos.

Dee

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### Answering that of God in political parties

Laurie Michaelis

We won’t build a sustainable civilisation by one group of people winning control, or even persuading others of a “right” way forward. If our civilisation is to be transformed, a critical mass of the people must be committed hearts, minds and souls to the flourishing of all life. In looking for the most effective route to change, experience and research backs up George Fox’s words: be patterns and examples, and answer that of God in everyone. It doesn’t help to join one side of the political debate, shouting at people on the other. But it can help to live and act in integrity with our principles, and to befriend people who seem to have different values so we can find common ground.

In Anglophone countries sustainability often seems connected with the political left. A 2013 report from Climate Outreach and Information Network described how centre-right values, like responsibility for our local communities and for future generations, can support action on climate change. Another report made connections with Welsh national identity. So what would it mean to answer that of God in each of the political parties? What values do they stand for that we can all endorse?

British politics has long represented a conversation among three values: liberty, equality and stability. Each of these may originally have been associated with a single party but differences have blurred as the three dominant parties absorbed the others’ narratives. In particular they all embrace libertarianism. The new parties are responses to problems that have emerged from this convergence. There is a desire for a sense of local belonging, whose shadow side is excluding strangers. There is also a desire to connect beyond our kin, to nature, other species, people on the other side of the world, future generations. But this can threaten existing interests and loyalties.

Wouldn’t it be amazing if the parties could work together, in a conversation about how to develop policies that reflect all their values? Much of the election campaign has been negative. When it’s over, I’m thinking about what to write to my newly elected MP. She is likely to be one of two candidates for whom I do not expect to vote. I think my letter needs to be positive, supportive, endorsing the values I find most positive in her campaign, seeking to open a conversation, explaining what I and my community are doing to try to live more sustainably, and asking for her support.

(Adam Corner, *A New Conversation With The Centre Right: Values, Frames and Narratives*, Climate Outreach and Information Network, 2013. Available at [www.climateoutreach.org.uk](http://www.climateoutreach.org.uk))

## Use it or lose it

Lesley Grahame

Lesley Grahame calls on Friends to use their vote. *“True godliness don’t turn men out of the world but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavours to mend it.”*

William Penn, 1682. Quaker faith and practice 23.02.

Gandhi said that when he gave people bread he was called a saint, when he asked why they had no bread, he was called a communist.



openinternet.com.au

The famous gagging law introduced to limit charities’ campaign spend seems designed to stop people of goodwill, charity workers, from asking about the distribution of bread –i.e. becoming political, holding politicians to account. They don’t mind us knitting 7-mile scarves to show the scale of opposition to nuclear weapons – as long as we go back to our knitting afterwards.

However, ‘politician’, as a label is almost enough of a slur to stop people wanting to go into it.

Ministry takes many forms and one of them is political.

When I am out canvassing and knock on the doors of Jehovah’s Witnesses, they sometimes tell me that they don’t vote, because everything is in God’s hands. I reply that I’m a Quaker, and believe that the only hands God has are ours.

We are integrated, connected human beings when the things we do support what we believe in. For example, I believe in fairness so I buy goods that are fairly traded, I care about the soil so I grow or buy food on produced on organic principles. I care about climate change so I will call on my council, my union, my pension fund, my church, to take their money out of fossil fuels and put it into something better, something that meets the needs of people and planet, rather than destroying our ability to meet those needs.

When most people don’t vote, politics is discredited. It stops representing the majority of people, and the people who don’t vote don’t get into the habit, and maybe don’t take as much part or as much interest as they might. That makes them very vulnerable in my experience – to being manipulated, left behind and disillusioned.

The winners aren’t other parties, but interests who want to operate with public scrutiny and accountability, perhaps because they’re up to no good.

I will use my hard-won right to vote to promote peace, equality, simplicity and truth.

Will you use your vote? If not, whom will you blame when things go wrong?

Among the reasons people give for not voting are

“They’re all the same”

“I don’t know enough”

“It won’t make any difference”

In addition, very, very rarely, “I don’t care” or “I don’t vote because I’ve never voted before”

“They’re all the same.” Can’t blame anyone for thinking that, with policies that feed the rich while poor folk have to rely on food banks, with failure to act on climate change, with policies that allow inequality to spiral and conflict to escalate into war.

“I don’t know enough.” That’s a good reason for not voting. It’s often used as a cop-out, but sometimes it’s sincere, and I’ve met plenty of people agonising over a difficult choice. Sometimes that choice is between voting for what you want most, or against what you most fear, faith over practicality or maybe faith as

practicality. Sometimes those who say they don't know enough are among the most thoughtful, and it's sad to lose their votes for that reason.

So will you use your vote? And will you do any more than that, like maybe encourage other people to? Like having enough money, the vote often seems more important when you don't have it than when you do, and can take it for granted.

It's one thing to lobby politicians, but why not help choose them, and influence them when they're most keen to hear from you? Moreover, there's no need to stop there – you can keep in touch with your representative, take part in public consultations, maybe even consider standing – it's not that bad...

Sometimes that choice is between voting for what you want most, or against what you most fear. Faith over practicality or maybe faith as practicality.

Quakers have played leading roles in many struggles for equality, and shouldn't need reminding of the importance of voting rights, as part of full, adult citizenship. Think slavery, suffragettes and the many battles, violent and non-violent, that people face in order to get heard.

We talk about crises in economy, environment, society, and often they are crises of democracy.

**Now we have that voice here, let's use it before we lose it.**

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## Hopes and Fears

Jo Ropley

The Climate Summit in Paris 2015 looms large as a focus for hope when the world's leaders will aim to achieve, for the first time in 20+ years of UN negotiations, a binding, universal agreement on climate change. The fear is that negotiations fall short and we face further costly delay in actions to avoid the worst impacts.

The US Department of Defence recent report states that extreme weather, rising temperatures, unpredictable rainfall and rising oceans could fuel armed insurgency and heighten the impact of a pandemic, through their effects on political instability, poverty, migration and resource disputes.

Many big business groups recognise how climate and energy policy decisions have an enormous impact on investments and are concerned about the potential cost and risk associated with delayed action. The World Bank recognises the efficacy of taxation: *"The most powerful move that a government can make in the fight against climate change is to put a price on carbon"*, but politicians are fearful of reactions of the electorate.

There is a growing movement in the US for a revenue neutral carbon tax: a steadily rising tax on the CO<sub>2</sub> of fossil fuels, with 100% of the revenues reimbursed directly to all households, protecting them from the financial impact of the essential transition to a clean energy economy. But as fossil fuels cost increase with such a tax, demand for low emission products would likewise increase, bringing down their cost as production rises and motivates investment in a low carbon economy. Carbon tax border adjustments are essential to protect exports and encourage importing countries to follow suit and there lies a difficulty for the UK as part of the EU trading block.



**Citizens' Climate Lobby**

However, the *'Carbon Tax and Dividend'* idea has the potential to be an equitable and efficient tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and stabilising our climate.

Further info: [citizensclimatelobby.org](http://citizensclimatelobby.org)

# Human Dimensions of Climate Change

Laurie Michaelis

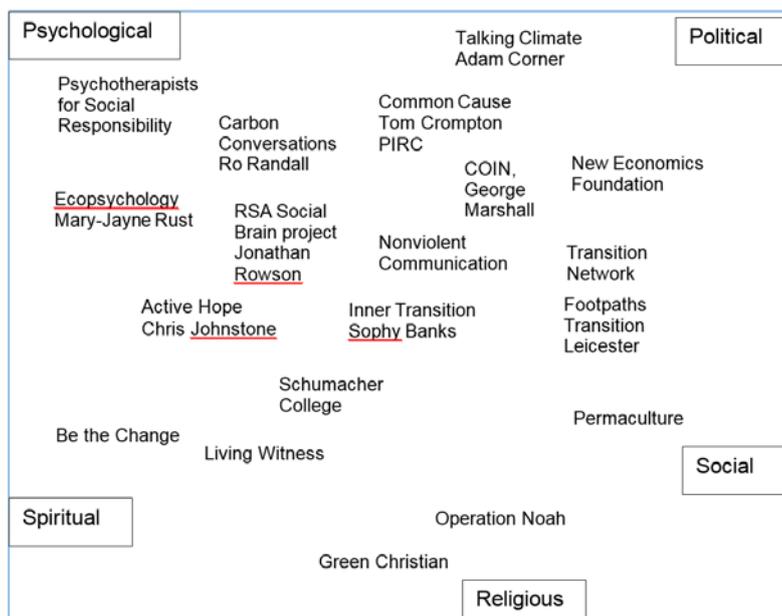
Some Friends feel engaged in a global, diverse grassroots movement for social and eco-justice – described by Paul Hawken in *Blessed Unrest* and by Naomi Klein in *This Changes Everything*. However, others think it is probably too late to stop runaway climate change.

The truth is that none of us knows what is going to happen, or what will work. At one level the problem is really simple – we need to stop burning fossil fuels and degrading ecosystems. Trees and other plants need to be allowed to grow and soils need to be restored to remove CO2 from the atmosphere. But climate change arises from hugely complex, interconnected systems – involving technology, markets, regulatory frameworks, the media, human psychology and much more. If runaway climate change is to be prevented there will need to be a shift in all of these systems.

Public and political debate has focused either on the science of climate change – whether it is happening or not – or on practical actions and technologies to stop it. There is a huge soft, slippery area that is occasionally referred to, but which people struggle to get hold of, around the social, psychological and spiritual dimensions.

Friends and Meetings have been making practical changes in their lives and buildings. This is a crucial first step to showing ourselves and others that we can live nonviolently. Quakers are active in the politics of climate change, especially in the fossil fuel disinvestment movement. This is a vital part of our corporate contribution to wider change. I believe we also have a particular contribution to make within the constellation of approaches to the human dimensions of climate change.

On 14th March twelve Friends gathered in Oxford for a meeting of our human dimensions network, which emerged from the Canterbury Commitment Gathering in Swanwick last year. We started to map out organisations, networks and individuals working in this area (see figure). They have different emphases – social, spiritual, psychological, political, religious – but they form a broad community of approaches.



We spent some time worship-sharing on ways we have engaged with these issues, and with whom. We are in widely differing situations. Some feel we, or our meetings, are stuck in our climate engagement. Others feel great progress is being made. Some are focusing on political or practical action, although most of us also feel the need to work on the social, psychological and spiritual dimensions (as one would expect given the theme of the day). We have experience and strong connections with many of the organisations and approaches mentioned. We do feel that Quaker faith and practice has something to bring to this community, and that there is progress in BYM's engagement with climate change and sustainability. We talked about some of the ideas on our Quaker contribution that have been aired in the Human Dimensions e-mail network and on our blog. You can sign up to both at [www.livingwitness.org.uk](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk).

We are in the early stages of this work and it connects closely to a question that is increasingly being asked among Friends: *"What is Quaker about our sustainability commitment?"*. This will be the focus of a special interest meeting at Yearly Meeting (see diary page 9). The next step for the Human Dimensions Network is a retreat at the Quaker Community, Bamford, over the summer solstice (18th-22nd June), where we plan to explore the issues in depth. There will also be more material on the blog.

# Biomass Heating – barking up the wrong tree?

Alan Stratford

The Friends' Meeting House in Brighton is in the heart of the historic old town and comprises an original Meeting Room of 1806 and later Victorian extensions which provided an adult education centre. The whole building is now used throughout the week by a wide range of community, social and charitable groups, as well as by Brighton Quaker Meeting.

Conscious of the Canterbury commitment and also of inadequate heating for users of the building, a full energy audit was carried out to identify and prioritise a programme of improvements to reduce the building's carbon footprint. Of the possible alternative sources of heating, a number had to be ruled out at an early stage (ie solar, wind, ground source and air source heat pumps) due to the limitations of being a listed building surrounded by other properties. However, the biomass wood heating option appeared to be a real possibility, and we embarked on the journey of investigation into what was being promoted as a key component in rebalancing energy sources away from fossil fuel dependency. We were fortunate in having assistance from a firm of biomass boiler engineers who were able to devise an arrangement based on twin boilers providing enough heating output. These and a fuel hopper, all to be installed within the confines of the existing building.

Having established the technical feasibility of going for biomass, the proposal was endorsed enthusiastically by the Meeting, and so further detailed work on practicalities was undertaken. Out of this work we learnt the following which may be helpful to others thinking of going down this route:

Biomass fuel (commonly in the form of wood pellets manufactured from timber by-products) is classed as a carbon neutral renewable. Whilst the combustion of the wood does produce CO<sub>2</sub>, it is "neutral" as long as it is clear that replacement timber is being grown which then removes the equivalent amount of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere through that natural growth. So, where biomass fuel is being taken from a local forest and the area is being replanted, then the "carbon neutral" description should hold. Wood pellets are often made from waste wood which would otherwise be left to decay, giving off methane. Where timber is being felled and not being replaced, or is being transported long distances, the claim of carbon neutrality is doubtful.

Biomass fuel needs careful handling and storage when compared to homogeneous fuels like electricity and gas. Poor delivery practices can cause too much dust - which will choke the burner – or fuel could become damp and burn inefficiently.

Biomass boilers generally come from European countries which have a long and successful record of using biomass fuel. Whilst the best boilers are reliable, it seems to be the accompanying electronic control mechanisms and fuel feeds from hopper to boiler which cause breakdowns.

The government subsidies payable to biomass boiler users under the 'Renewable Heat Incentive' appear generous in that the cash flow models show that the initial investment should be recovered in fewer than ten years, leaving a further ten years of subsidy income for the user. However, the modelling is based on assumptions about future costs of biomass fuel, relative to gas or oil prices. If you are dependent on the market for supplies of wood fuel, then these assumptions may be hazardous and there is anecdotally a feeling that wood fuel prices are already increasing because of the level of subsidy.

Although these various risks and uncertainties of changing to biomass do take the shine off the idea, they need to be set against the strength of the underlying intention of reducing carbon emissions. For Brighton Meeting House, however, an entirely new factor arose from the local Council, when looking into the necessary planning and listed building consents. Although the Council's sustainability team was very supportive of biomass installations, when the matter reached their colleagues responsible for air quality, an absolute block was put on the proposal on the grounds that a biomass boiler would have an adverse impact on air quality in an urban location where nitrogen dioxide levels were already in breach of guidelines due to town centre traffic.

Biomass boilers run very efficiently and because this is at a high temperature, they may produce greater NO<sub>x</sub> emissions than some of the latest gas boilers which are now designed to run at lower temperatures. However, the extent of the increased NO<sub>x</sub> emissions is very small indeed in relation to the emissions of, say, a diesel vehicle operating in the location or compared to a domestic log-burning grate in the location.

Air pollution from vehicles is an important matter, which has been covered in earthQuaker before now, but this absolute ban on biomass fuel because of just a very slight increase in NO<sub>x</sub> does seem to be an over-reaction and ignores the “big picture” of the need to reduce fossil fuel usage. The very recent introduction of an Air Quality Management Area around our location seems to be the reason for the Council not making any concessions.

Although we will now have to go ahead and install a high-efficiency gas boiler, we will continue with our programme of energy reduction work which has already seen improved insulation, draught proofing and secondary glazing, and will proceed to LED lighting systems. Let us hope that technological advances continue to develop to give us other simpler solutions for renewable and sustainable fuels!

## Letters

### Population Matters

It was very heartening to find that you had an issue of earthQuaker devoted to population. My Monthly Meeting, Quarterly Meeting and Yearly Meeting approved a traveling minute in the early 1990s for me to travel under the concern about rapid population growth and I visited over 20 Monthly Meetings and three Yearly Meetings and was invited to give a plenary talk at the Friends General Conference Gathering in 2001. In Baltimore Yearly Meeting, we also approved incorporating relevant queries (for Faith and Practice) on population concerns for couples considering marriage.

Further support for the concern came from the Friends committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN) which was formed in the US in 1987. However, since the US attacked Iraq in 2003, I have given priority to peace concerns so have only shared peace concerns among Friends when specifically asked.

My Monthly Meeting oversight committee also helped me in drafting pamphlets which speak directly to population matters. The titles are:

A Witness on Sexuality for Friends

Adoption, An Earth-Friendly Alternative

Immigration in a Crowded World - A Friends Perspective

Seeking Clearness on Childbearing in a Crowded World

Toward Taking Away the Occasion of Abortion

These were also seasoned by the Publications committee and the full Steering committee of FCUN. (Note: For the one on abortion it took us three years to reach unity.) They were done fifteen to twenty years ago but are being updated at present. Also much of the material in them is still pertinent (e.g. the queries/questions). These are all available on the quakerearthcare.org website under publications. (FCUN changed its name to Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) a decade or so ago.) Two generic ones on population seem to be missing from the website.

The arguments in the articles in earthQuaker about overconsumption in developed countries are fine but nevertheless are tangential to the main concern on population. Specifically, on a finite planet the only population growth rate which is sustainable in the long run is 0.0 so the question then is how do we get there. Also just as persons give up some individualism in joining the Society of Friends, so as a species we need to be made conscious of important limits on reproduction that a finite planet implies. In this vein the piece in Science magazine from 1968 “Tragedy of the Commons” is useful reading.

### Stan Becker

Baltimore Homewood Monthly Meeting, USA

P.S. I am a demographer by profession and actually changed my research area as a result of insights gained from sharing with Friends. (Specifically, I am perhaps best known in professional circles for the piece “Couples and Re-productive Health” in Studies in Family Planning in 1996.)

## Over Population

My maternal Grandmother, born 1879, had 12 live births, but only 8 lived into adulthood, and 2 of those dies prematurely! People throughout history up to the end of the second world war, had large families so their children would take care of them in old age, as pensions didn't exist. They thought only half their children would survive, due to disease, poverty, and squalor. This is the reason why most of the world still have large families, that, and the lack of, or discouragement of contraception by the Catholic Church!

This aspect of over population was barely touched on by contributors, and not at all as to why large families are no longer necessary in the developed world, in fact birth rates have been falling in Europe for decades. It was the introduction of the Beveridge Report recommendations in 1945, when Labour came to power, that encouraged families to plan, and reduce their family, knowing they would grow up healthy, employed, educated, and well housed, relative to pre-war standards anyway. Once this was achieved, and with better Old Age Pensions (sic) there was no need for large families!

Dennis Franklin

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## Petition for a United Nations Declaration of Human Responsibilities

I have started a Petition for a United Nations Declaration of Human Responsibilities and would like your help to get it off the ground. Will you take a minute to sign it right now? Here's the link:

[www.change.org/p/u-n-create-a-declaration-of-human-responsibilities](http://www.change.org/p/u-n-create-a-declaration-of-human-responsibilities)

Here's why I think it is important:

Because we are one human family and need to come together and declare our willingness to be take responsibility for our humanity. This is the outline text:

### Declaration of Human Responsibility

1. We declare that our primary responsibility is to our humanity; that this first loyalty transcends all others such as those of state, ethnicity or religion.
2. We declare our collective responsibility in enabling all humans to access our universal needs of food, warmth, shelter and security.
3. We declare that as inhabitants of planet Earth we accept our responsibility to manage its resources sustainably with reverence and respect for all life.

If you want to support the aims of this petition, please pass this on to your friends.

Simenon Honoré

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## Quaker Earthcare Witness

The North American Friends' environmental organization is Quaker Earthcare Witness. One Friend has typified our organisation as a quilt made up of many squares, with QEW sewing them together to make a unified whole. Several of us have a special interest in issues of human population and would be happy to hear from British Friends with a similar interest.

The QEW website is: [www.quakerearthcare.org](http://www.quakerearthcare.org). Under the heading of 'publications' one can find several pamphlets on population, all of which are being revised now. "*Seeking Cleanness on Childbearing in a Crowded World*" can be downloaded at [www.quakerearthcare.org](http://www.quakerearthcare.org)

### Richard Grossman

Please feel free to contact me at: [richard@population-matters.org](mailto:richard@population-matters.org)  
(Please note the hyphen in the email address; I am not connected with the excellent organization Population Matters which is located on your side of the Atlantic!)

*Seeking  
Cleanness on  
Childbearing  
in a Crowded  
World*



## Mobiles and Microwaves

In 2009, a Korean research team did a pooled analysis of 23 studies involving nearly 38,000 people & found a harmful effect between mobiles & tumours of the brain, head & neck. The study was blind – researchers didn't know who were mobile users & who were not. Since then, studies by 5 independent research groups found significantly increased risks of acoustic neuroma – a benign tumour of the cranial nerve supplying the ear. This must be surgically removed in a major op that frequently results in permanent facial paralysis. They found a rise in glioma (astrocytoma) - cancer of the cells including neurons of the nervous system. Meningioma - cancer of the meninges, membrane covering the brain & spinal cord. In a 2014 French study by INSERM (National Institute for Health & Medical Research) researchers found almost 3 times (& in some cases nearly 6 times) more gliomas in long-term heavy mobile phone users. There was a more than 2-fold greater risk of meningiomas. Japanese researchers found more than a 3-fold extra risk of acoustic neuromas in people using mobiles for over 20 minutes a day for 5 years. Swedish research by cancer experts over 15 years clearly shows “a consistent association between longer-term use of mobile & cordless phones & glioma & acoustic neuroma.” In its 2013 official report the prestigious International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) concluded that radiation from mobile phones is “possibly carcinogenic to humans.”

The journal “What Doctors Don't Tell You” (WDDTY) advises: Limit use of mobiles to essential short calls; children should use them only in emergency; wear an air-tube headset, not a wired one, as the latter intensifies radiation in the ear canal; don't use your mobile in an enclosed metal space, such as a car or lift; buy a mobile with a low Specific Absorption Rate (SAR); use a landline; text instead of talk; turn your mobile off when possible & ring callers back on a landline later. (Long list of references given in the article from “WDDTY” February 2015.)

A Wills

## Diary 2015

### Human Dimensions of Climate Change

Thurs 18th-Sunday 22 June, at Quaker Community, Bamford, Derbys - [www.quakercommunity.org.uk](http://www.quakercommunity.org.uk)

How can our Quaker spiritual practice and insight into psychology, community and relationships help us respond to climate change? £150-£240 (according to ability to pay)

For a programme and registration form e-mail: [laurie@livingwitness.org.uk](mailto:laurie@livingwitness.org.uk)

**Sacred Economics** - Fri 14th – Sun 16th August 2015 at Woodbrooke. [www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses)

**Community Carbon Reduction Facilitators Workshop** Sat 20th June Sun 21st June 2015

Hexham Community Centre, Northumberland. More details - email [barbaragrundey@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barbaragrundey@yahoo.co.uk)

## Sustainability-related Special Interest Meetings at Britain Yearly Meeting

**Saturday 2nd May 12:30–13:30**

**What's Quaker about our commitment to sustainability?** Britain Yearly Meeting Sustainability Group. Drayton House, Ricardo Room.

**Still Green Third Age Cohousing.** Still Green Third Age Cohousing Milton Keynes.

Drayton House – B04.

**Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations.** Meet David Shreeve, Environmental Adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Margaret Fell Room.

**QPSW Economics, Sustainability & Peace Subcommittee.** Principles for a new economy. Bloomsbury Suite.

**Sunday 3rd May 12:30–13:30**

**QPSW Economics, Sustainability & Peace Subcommittee.** Energy justice and climate change.

Drayton House – B04.

For more details and other events see the Events Listing at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym)

## Book Review

### **A Sustainable Life: Quaker Faith and Practice in the Renewal of Creation**

by Douglas Gwyn

What is Quaker about our sustainability concern? In *A Sustainable Life*, Doug Gwyn answers with a call to faith: "Sustainability is... the framework in which Friends today must contemplate, even rethink, every aspect of our Quaker faith and practice... These are times that call us urgently to reconsider and reinvest."

The book explores sixteen themes – aspects of Quaker experience, values and practices. It presents them in pairs that might seem to be in tension or that complement each other, as opposing spokes of a wheel. The spokes meet at the hub: "the place of unknowing we experience as we live within these tensions and paradoxes".

Doug's call to us starts with daily personal practice, becoming more consistently awake in the Spirit: standing still in the Light, sinking down to the Seed – the source of new life. This is the preparation of our hearts, minds and wills for gathered meetings for worship, in which we put ourselves entirely at the disposal of the divine mind and will. From such meetings ministry and prophetic witness can arise. Ministry is more than sharing intriguing ideas and passionate feelings. Prophetic witness is not just speaking out controversially. True ministry and prophecy arise from our individual and corporate readiness to be God's instruments in our words, lives and actions.

A sustainable life is an undivided life – one in which we live, speak and act with integrity. It needs to be sustainable for our personal relationships, our finances, our bodies and the biosphere. It means seeking consistency with Quaker testimony as a whole, and constant discernment to address the many dilemmas that arise, sometimes using Quaker practices like clearness committees.

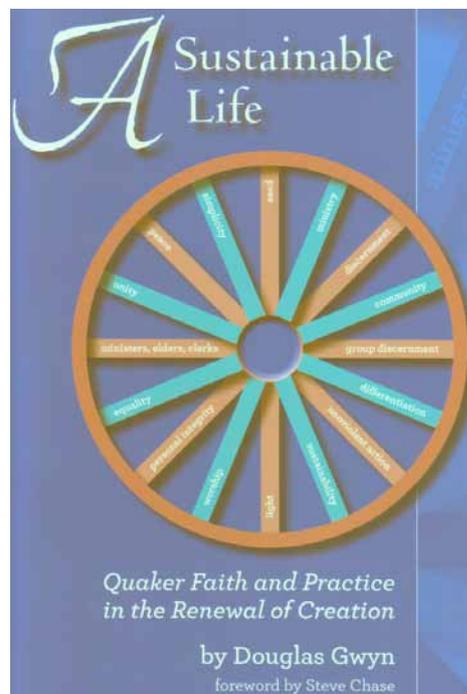
Doug writes about the healthy Quaker community as being inclusive, yet able to challenge individuals to stretch. It requires people to lead and serve, grounded always in group discernment. Following the undivided life in community means talking through our conflicts, admitting our mistakes, forgiving but not forgetting.

Finding the unity in our Quaker diversity – respecting that of God in everyone even though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways – is a foundation for our peace witness. We may be able to go on to work as prophets and reconcilers in the world, befriending those who might seem to be our enemies, and engaging the powers through nonviolent action.

Sustainability is not another "testimony", but a way of "re-viewing" Quaker practice and integrating all the dynamic tensions. If peace was the dominant theme of Quaker testimony in the twentieth century, Doug writes that personal simplicity and the work for a sustainable human society on earth will focus our energies in this century.

Like Ben Pink Dandelion's Swarthmore Lecture, *A Sustainable Life* invites Friends to a renewal of our corporate spiritual calling, or Covenant. In Doug's wheel he shows how – perhaps as with any true path – that entails holding paradoxes. And he shows how every aspect of Quaker faith and practice is implicit in every other. I found it accessible and compelling description of Quaker faith and practice, its integrity, its roots in the past and its relevance to the present and future.

A longer version of this review was published in *The Friend*, 17th April 2015.



## Climate Change

Our world is experiencing unprecedented climate change, unless we address it, it threatens all life on earth. World leaders have a chance to commit to effective, significant CO2 reductions at the 21st Climate Summit in Paris 2015. It is vital that they do so. Delaying for another 10 years will lead to more than 2 degrees warming, and a climate that may be unsustainable for us.

Will you join us in a force of courage and spiritual strength, to support our leaders to commit to vital CO2 reduction by joining them at 21:00 each evening for a minute's silence wherever you are so that we can all focus on this need?

### Devon Quakers

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## Deadline for the next issue of earthQuaker - 1st June 2015

Please post or email contributions to the editor  
Dee Sayce, 7, Bowden Crescent, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4LN  
or **01663 308656** - **07837 578382** or email: [dee@livingwitness.org.uk](mailto:dee@livingwitness.org.uk)

### All contributions welcome articles, reports, poems, ideas, letters, photos

Include your postal address and telephone number or email address but we will not include contributors' contact details in earthQuaker, unless specifically asked to. Members wishing to contact a contributor can get in touch through the editor - contact details above.

We reserve the right to edit but will always try to check substantial edits with the author.

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## Membership

I wish to join Living Witness as an individual member.

Name:

Suggested donation £10.00  
(£3.00 for age 18-25)  
Free to under 18's

Address:

Please make cheque payable to  
"Living Witness Project"

Email/phone:

and send to:

Delete as appropriate - I prefer earthQuaker:

by post (b&w)

by email as a pdf (colour)

I am happy to access it from [www.livingwitness.org.uk](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk) (colour)

Living Witness  
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Living Witness (LW) is a Quaker charity supporting Friends' witness to sustainable living and taking it to the wider community in Britain and elsewhere.

LW has worked since 2002 with a growing network of Quaker meetings, connected through regular link group gatherings, newsletters and shared resources.



At the beginning of 2008 LWP merged with Quaker Green Action, which since 1986 has been the main forum for Friends sharing a Concern for sustainability.

We welcome both individual Friends and meetings as members of our network and participants in our gatherings. Please get in touch with the LW co-ordinator if you would like a workshop or speaker session in your meeting.

The co-ordinator is Laurie Michaelis. The office address is Living Witness, 7, Bowden Crescent, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4LN. To contact Laurie by email: [laurie@livingwitness.org.uk](mailto:laurie@livingwitness.org.uk)

Website is [www.livingwitness.org.uk](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk), where publications including earthQuaker (colour version), can be downloaded.

"The great challenge of the twenty-first century is to raise people everywhere to a decent standard of living while preserving as much of the rest of life as possible."

Edward O. Wilson

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