

The Living Witness Project is a growing network of Quaker meetings and groups in Britain, exploring our corporate witness to sustainable living.

Living Witness Project

If you have any photos or other display material, please could we use it on the QGA stall at the Listed Informal Groups fair on the Wednesday evening?

Funding

Participating meetings have so far contributed about £6,000 to this year's cost of running LWP, with the majority coming from Oxford PM. This is a third of what we need. Can your meeting help?

Project news

The project is in transition from its initial experimental phase to establish itself on an ongoing basis. The network continues to grow rapidly. It's future will depend partly on the outcome of a review by Quaker Peace and Social Witness of the need for environmental work in our Yearly Meeting. QPSW plans to consider the issue in November.

EcoTeams

Fifteen Friends attended a training day for EcoTeam facilitators at Oxford FMH in June (see Newsletter 10 for more on this). Global Action Plan, the charity that runs the EcoTeam programme, is keen to work more with us, so hopefully we can organise a training in the north of England sometime soon. Our EcoTeams will run during the autumn of this year, and we'll have an opportunity in the Link Group to share and evaluate the experience.

Membership

Friends from four new meetings will be included in the Link Group as a result of getting involved in the EcoTeam project. They are: Anne Adams of Ludlow Meeting; Clare Ewins of Horsham Meeting; Joan Lewis of Reading Meeting; and Bryn Raven of Beccles Meeting. We will hopefully also have Friends from Ilkley and Scarborough PMs at the next Link Group meeting.

LWP at Yearly Meeting

Four LWP meetings – Hardshaw East, Huddersfield, Llanidloes and Oxford – have been asked to provide introductions at the Witness Group sessions on the Tuesday afternoon of Yearly Meeting. There are opportunities for Link Group Members to share their experiences in the YM plenary sessions and at the Quaker Green Action special interest group, at 4 p.m. on the Tuesday.

Newsletter No. 11: July 2005

News from meetings

Dorking and Horsham

Things seem to be stirring well in Dorking and Horsham MM! First we had a special issue in March this year of our journal *Dorking & Horsham Quaker* on Climate and Ecology. This inspired a Friend in one of our PMs to bring to MM a suggestion about the energy efficiency of our Meeting Houses – here is the resulting Minute.

Sustainable Energy in the Meeting House

Keith Puttick has shared his concern for the need to improve our use of sustainable energy in our MM buildings. He recommends that PMs should seek expert advice on this matter from the National Energy Foundation Consultancy. We agree to do this.

As MM newsletter editor I was also asked to include details of how to switch to Good Energy as an electricity supplier so the rest of the PMs could join Reigate and Dorking, who have already switched.

Suddenly green Friends seem to be popping up all over the MM! Clare Ewins from Horsham Meeting now works with me as co-editor of earthQuaker, the journal of Quaker Green Action, and she went to the Ecoteam training day in Oxford and hopes in due course to start a team up including some Friends from Horsham.

On another front all our PMs are now proud holders of Fairtrade certificates and we are applying to become a Fairtrade MM.

Finally in my bunch of joys the children in Dorking Meeting are happily growing their organic French beans and onions in the

Forthcoming Events

Contact Laurie (details overleaf) for more information on any of these

30 July – 6 August. York University: Britain Yearly Meeting. Our Quaker witness to the testimonies will be a strong theme.

QGA is offering a Special Interest Group session on responding to climate change, at 4 p.m. on the Tuesday. There will be a QGA stall at the Listed Informal Groups Fair, on the Wednesday evening.

25-30 August. QGA "Summer Camp". At Pardshaw FMH (Young Friends' Centre). Indoor sleeping, meeting, cooking and showers. Some camping space. Exploring the future of the sustainability concern in BYM.

1 October. Quakers and Climate Change. QGA meeting at Dorking FMH, including a business meeting for QGA Members.

21-23 October. LWP Link Group Meeting, Hill End, Oxford. Sharing experiences and approaches for facilitation, community building, and working with conflict in our meetings. If your meeting is considering joining LWP, please do send someone! Cost £30.

29 October. LWP day for Wensleydale & Swaledale MM. Bainside.

5 November. LWP day for Derby, Lincs & Notts GM, at Chesterfield FMH.

24-26 February 2006. LWP Link Group Meeting, Bilberry Hill Centre, Birmingham. Evaluating our experience with EcoTeams and making plans for the future.

MH garden. Also we are planning a special meeting to discuss the garden to see if we can agree on a policy about its management. The wardens have been trying to manage it for maximum biodiversity and hope this approach can be made an official policy so that they can have expert guidance to back up their amateur efforts.

Anne Brewer

Huddersfield

The following is an extract from a press release by Brighthouse MM Friends:

Quakers in Huddersfield, Bradford, Halifax, Scholes and Hebden Bridge have grouped together to send a strong plea to the G8 leaders to tackle the issue of global warming at the talks and have written to the UK government asking that they take a lead in negotiations.

Quaker Meetings in the region have also collectively signed up to the Operation Noah campaign, organised by Christian Ecology Link, which commits them to reducing their own greenhouse emissions by switching to renewable energy suppliers in their Meeting Houses, where applicable. Huddersfield Quaker Meeting House has, for example, switched over to the renewable energy supplier Good Energy, which sources all its energy from wind power, small hydro generation stations and solar photovoltaic sources in the UK.

Chayley Collis

Lancaster

1) We have done an initial investigation into the roof insulation at our Meeting House. It needs updating, renovating and perhaps replacing.

2) We have found out how much CO₂ we are emitting per year, thanks to a member who is setting up in business to help people determine and reduce their domestic/business emissions.

3) We have been offered a Wind Save Wind Turbine, but the City Council tells us that we cannot put it on the Meeting House as it is a listed building. We are exploring ways round this, and investigating which sort of turbine would be most suitable.

4) We visited Leighton Moss Nature Reserve at Silverdale and looked at the solar panels on the RSPB building. They produce some electricity, but not much. Not used for heating water.

5) We are focusing mainly on insulation and energy efficiency measures.

6) I am taking this report to the next Premises Committee later in July for consideration on expenses etc.

7) We take it in turns to write for the Monthly Meeting newsletter so that everyone knows what we are doing, and can contribute if they wish.

Laura Deacon

Llanidloes

Llanidloes recently held a shared LOAF supper jointly with Machynlleth meeting. We were joined by two Friends from Lampeter and Llanbydder as their meeting is thinking of joining LWP and wanted to find out more. Liz Butler gave an overview of the project and we discussed what our meetings had done.

The Hereford and Mid Wales MM link group had a weekend at the Pales recently, and I was asked to lead a workshop on the Saturday for the teenagers. The theme of the day was 'Everything is Connected', and activities such as a 'Web of Life' game and the Chocolate game illustrated this, the first by showing how an ecosystem built around a hedgerow is dramatically devastated by human intervention, the second showing how what we buy affects the earth and communities on the other side of the world. Our interconnectedness means that all our actions, whether positive or negative, have an impact. The young people were encouraged to reflect on what they could do personally to make a difference.

LLES (Llanidloes Energy Solutions) recently held a stall outside our local supermarket asking people to fill in our Energy Survey form in return for 4 free low-energy light bulbs. It was a very successful day. Interest was so high we had to pack up early as we ran out of bulbs! It led to a number of conversations about energy saving and at least one new LLES member.

A trip to Bishops Castle is planned shortly to hear about their town-wide environmental scheme which encompasses renewable energy projects, energy efficiency measures, food transport and education. We are hoping to be inspired to further efforts.

Gwen Prince

For more information or to get involved in the Living Witness Project, please get in touch with:

**Laurie Michaelis, 15 Sandfield Road,
Headington, Oxford, OX3 7RN;**

E-mail: laurie@livingwitness.org.uk.

Telephone: 01865 308306.

Website: www.quakergreenaction.org.uk/lwp/

Meetings participating in LWP:

Ackworth PM, Bournemouth & Swanage MM, Bristol & Frenchay MM, Chesterfield PM, Cotteridge PM, Dorking PM, Gloucester & Nailsworth MM, Horsham PM, Huddersfield PM, Ilkley PM, Lancaster PM, Leicester PM, Llanidloes RM, Ludlow PM, Machynlleth RM, Manchester Mount Street PM, Newcastle PM, Norwich & Lynn MM, Oxford PM, Scarborough PM, Settle PM/MM, South Wales MM, Taunton PM, Wythenshaw PM, Young Friends General Meeting,