

***The Living Witness Project is a growing network of Quaker meetings and groups in Britain, exploring our corporate witness to sustainable living. The project is funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.***

# Living Witness Project

**Newsletter No. 9:  
February 2005**

## **Project news**

from Laurie

### *Woodbrooke Conference*

The LWP conference at Woodbrooke, 17-19 March, aims both to nourish the Link Group community and to share our enthusiasm with others. If you haven't already signed up, now is the moment! We hope to learn from our successes and the challenges we've faced, reflect on the Quaker contribution to the world's search for a sustainable way of living, and plan future steps for the project.

Please encourage others from your meeting to attend! A flyer is included with this newsletter.

So far, about 25 Friends have told us they are coming, including most of the Link Group. We have sufficient project funds to pay for all Link Group members to attend but if your meeting can contribute, that would enable others to come. Woodbrooke is charging £110 per person for the weekend, and £25 for those attending on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> only.

### *Link Group Members*

We have one new Link Group member: Nikki Peterson from Cotteridge Meeting. Welcome Nikki!

Jo Abbess, who was participating in Link Group meetings from Poole Meeting, is now working in London. Bournemouth and Poole MM Friends have decided not to appoint another Link Group representative. We're hoping Jo will still make it to the Woodbrooke conference.

### *LWP funding*

The project support group agreed in September to apply for a second grant from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. At their November meeting, the

trustees decided not to offer the grant. The support group met in January to consider the implications.

We are clear that the project has not yet run its course – there is a growing need for this work, and Quakers within Britain Yearly Meeting are increasingly receptive to what we are trying to do. At present we have a substantial offer of funding from my own PM – £5000 for this year and at least £3000 for

each of the next two years. Quaker Green Action at its Meeting of Members last December agreed to contribute £500. These grants will ensure that the project continues but they will not pay for much staff time. We will apply for grants from other Quaker foundations, but we also need to ask for your help. Would your PM or MM be able to help with funding for the project?

### *Project evaluation*

I am evaluating the experience of the project so far, partly through visits to a small number of meetings, partly

through the Woodbrooke conference. In addition, Link Group members will receive an evaluation form with their copy of this newsletter, and I'll send a copy by e-mail for those of you who find electronic communication easier. Please do get it back to me by 28<sup>th</sup> February!

### *Resources*

A resource list is now available. It includes two draft booklets on working with meetings: one on eco-audits and the other on running study group sessions. Please let me know if you would like to try them now, otherwise they will be available at the Woodbrooke conference.

### *Quaker Ecoteams*

I've had a few responses from Friends interested in setting up Ecoteams in their meetings but not enough yet to justify a special training for Quaker Ecoteam facilitators. Please do tell me if you're interested! I think it would be well worth our while developing a link with Global Action Plan, the charity that runs the Ecoteam programme.

## ***Forthcoming Events***

***contact Laurie for details***

**18-20 February 2005, Lancaster FMH: Making Peace with the Earth.** Weekend workshop on Quaker witness to sustainable living.

**17-19 March 2005, Woodbrooke. Living Witness Conference and Link Group Meeting.** (See separate flyer)

**8-10 April 2005, Ratcliffe & Barking MM. Heaven on Earth**

**27-30 May 2005 (date tbc), Y Felin, Melinbyrhedin, Quakers and Permaculture Camp.**

**30 July – 6 August 2005, York University: Britain Yearly Meeting.** Our Quaker witness to the testimonies will be a strong theme.

## News from meetings

### *Llanidloes Energy Solutions*

We had an outstandingly successful public meeting in November On 'Good Wood - Wood Energy and Responsible Forestry'. Nearly 60 people crowded into the local church hall, with Friends giving a great deal of support. An encouraging sign that we are being taken very seriously by the local community were the numbers of people who were not the usual audience for 'green' topics. LLES Patron and our local Assembly Member Mick Bates, who is on the Energy Committee of the Welsh Assembly chaired the meeting with great interest and enthusiasm and paid tribute to LLES' work.

Can Llanidloes grow its own energy? was one of the questions that was considered. A local co-operative housing scheme has just installed a state of the art wood- pellet heating system, and we looked at that and at wood energy in general, and the local forestry project which is being sustainably managed. FSC(UK), the Forest Stewardship Council which certifies sustainably produced wood is based in Llanidloes, a fact which few local people knew about, so we finished with a look at their work which is increasingly gaining in publicity, with more and more wood products bearing the FSC logo.

The idea of locally produced wood energy has caught local imaginations, although the economic viability is as yet uncertain. However discussions on the issues were so earnest that I had difficulty in getting people to leave! The meeting resulted in 7 new members, and since then we have enrolled the Mayor and his wife as our 100th and 101st members, so LLES is growing in numbers and influence.

We are currently conducting an Energy Survey to determine the baseline energy needs of Llanidloes, and have recruited a local High School Student to do some research for us on public attitude to renewable energy. The local community newspaper gives us regular publicity, and we are gaining more and more local credibility and support.

*Gwen Prince*

### *Newcastle*

Tetrapak collection is now happening at about 6 supermarket car parks in borough of Sunderland. Next week when it is lunch at meeting the first lot will go to these boxes. There is one near me which is good, although I don't usually shop at Sainsbury's!

My gift to me this Christmas has been to put my name down for an allotment on Tunstall Hill.

Friends got me going last season by getting me to do a bit of theirs. I grew onions which have been lovely. We have only one plant left! Hope I get one allocated before the potato planting time.

*Patsy Wilson*

### *Oxford*

Oxford PM decided last year to lay down its annual garden party. Instead, we decided to have a New Year party in mid-January. Our Group on Sustainable Living took responsibility, organising the programme on a green theme and putting on a cabaret, games and singing. The event hugely exceeded expectations for attendance and enjoyment. The vegetarian shared meal was brilliant. GOSLings performed the QGA play (with most of the original cast from Summer Gathering 2003, plus new star Jessie Marcham as Young Friend). Other performances included singing ("I can't get along... Without my four-by-four"); dancing with high kicks that would have horrified George Fox (not quite on the green theme) and juggling. Pass-the-parcel meant everybody got some Fairtrade chocolate (we demonstrated our commitment to the social dimension of sustainability by sharing very well).

GOSLings' latest project is focusing on climate change. We are exploring how best to reach the Oxford public, whether through leafleting, stalls at fairs, or events.

*LM*

### *and from Meeting for Sufferings*

MfS received a minute in December from Dorking and Horsham MM asking for action on climate change. Friends were very supportive of the concern and the minute was forwarded to QPSW with an urgent request for advice. We also asked Finance and Property Central Committee to advise us on the potential for environmental reporting in our central work.

*LM*

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

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**Living Witness Project on the Web:  
<http://www.quakergreenaction.org/lwp/>**