

# CHELTHENHAM QUAKER

## JUNE 2011

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### MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

**Cheltenham:** Sundays at 10:30. Children are always welcome in our Sunday meetings for worship. If during the hour parents feel it is appropriate, they can go with them to the children's room, where they will be joined by one of the children's meeting volunteers. Fifth Sunday shared lunch.

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### DIARY (ALL OF THESE MEETINGS AT THE MEETING HOUSE UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)

#### May

Mo 23 7.30 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

#### June

We 1 2.30 **Peace Group.** Venue to be confirmed. All welcome.

Th 2 2.00 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

Su 5 11.30 **Local Meeting**

Mo 6 8.00 **Christians at Work:** "How on earth did I get here?" Rev. Jacqueline Rodwell, at the Cottages, Leckhampton Church

Th 9 6.30 **Area Meeting** at Painswick FMH, Vicarage Street. Tea from 5.30

Su 12 11.30 **Book sale** after Meeting for Worship

Mo 13 7.30 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

Th 16 2.00 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

Mo 27 7.30 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

#### July

Su 3 11.30 **Local Meeting**

Mo 4 8.00 **Christians at Work:** "Day in the life of a Hospital Chaplain", Rev. Katie McClure, at the Cottages, Leckhampton Church

We 6 2.30 **Peace Group.** Venue to be confirmed. All welcome

Th 7 2.00 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

Sa 9 2.00 **Area Meeting** at Stroud, Whiteway Colony Hall.

Mo 11 7.30 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

Th 21 2.00 **"Becoming Friends"** at the Meeting House

**June collection for Quaker and other charities:** Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, Freepost, WD4196, London N7 7BR. <[www.torturecare.org.uk](http://www.torturecare.org.uk)>

#### **Christians at Work, Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 8.00 at the Cottages, Leckhampton Church**

The speaker this month will be Rev. Jacqueline Rodwell, on "How on Earth did I get here?" Jacqueline, who is married with two grown up children, is Team Vicar of Emmanuel Church in Naunton Park, and she serves on a number of diocesan committees. Her church history includes Liberal Anglo-Catholic, American Episcopal and Evangelical Anglican, among others, and she suggests, "you could say, I've been about a bit ecclesiastically." All welcome, as usual.

Roy Crompton

## **Book Sale**

On Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> June, there will be a book sale after the morning meeting. This time there will be few, if any, ex library books, so it will help if people sort through their own books and bring any that they would like to give for the sale to the Meeting House, preferably on the day, but if not the week before. We don't have much room for storage. Thank you.

Proceeds will go towards library expenses. Books won't be priced, you donate what you like. Any books left over afterwards will be taken to the British Red Cross bookshop in Cheltenham.

Nancy sentence

## **Healing Group Reminder**

In the May Cheltenham Quaker there was a note from Maureen Steffen to do with the possible formation of a Healing Group. The discussion about this topic was postponed from the last Local Meeting to that which will take place on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. In the meantime, anybody who is interested might like to contact Maureen Steffen.

John Cross

## **Responsible Policy on Arms Sales**

The present policy of the government with regard to its claim of having a “responsible” policy on arms sales has been challenged by the present revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East.

The Peace Group is keeping Martin Horwood informed of our concern that this policy should be questioned.

“In the last year the government approved the supply of equipment, including tear gas, crowd control ammunition and sniper rifles to Libya and Bahrain, even though both are authoritarian regimes with a well-documented record of human rights abuses. Armoured vehicles sold by the UK have been used against protesters in Libya, and Saudi Arabia sent UK-made vehicles to help crush pro-democracy protests in Bahrain.

Unfortunately Libya is not a one-off. The U.K. routinely supplies regimes that have appalling human rights records. These include Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Israel and Sri Lanka. CAAT Magazine April – June 2011.”

The government needs to be made aware of the depth of feeling against its present arms policy.

Cynthia Baron

## **Notes from LM**

Energy Co-operative in Cheltenham: Ian Brighton talked about a proposal to establish an energy co-operative in Cheltenham. It may be for Quakers alone, but it is hoped others may join. We are asked to join the co-operative as individuals, and if possible invest in it. It is important to notify Alison Crane of our interest, as she will ask for a Minute in support of the proposal at the next Local Meeting, which will then be forwarded to QPSW to ask for a sustainability grant.

Proposed book group: Pat Dannahy brought forward a proposal to set up a book group for Cheltenham Quakers, as there appears to be considerable interest. The intention would be to extend and deepen our spiritual experience.

Healing Group: Maureen Steffen reminded us that we had been looking at the idea of setting up a healing group. Details as to how this might operate were in last month's Cheltenham Quaker, and interest is being sought.

Library Report: Margaret Cooper presented a report on the Meeting House library, which has undergone a radical renewal during the past year. Many out-of-date or scruffy books have been removed, and there is now a more eye-catching display, resulting in greater interest and more borrowings. A number of books have been given, and about 30 books have been bought, which together with bookstands, covers and stationery have amounted to an expenditure of £480. The latest book sale raised about £200 to offset this.

Quaker Boycott of Israeli Settlement Goods: Israel settlements in the illegally occupied West Bank cause harm and poverty to Palestinians, and are an obstacle to peace between Israel and the Palestinians. The international community has condemned these settlements from the beginning, but they have grown and prospered, and we are trading with them.

There are several things we can do:

- Write to our MPs stating that we do not want to see settlement goods on sale in the U.K.
- Avoid “West Bank” products when shopping
- Write to your supermarket saying you do not wish to buy produce from settlements and ask them to ensure that the goods they stock do not come from this source. Explain that by selling such produce they are undermining the chances for peace in Israel-Palestine, and supporting the economies of illegal entities.

Goods to avoid:

Asda, Morrisons, Sainsburys, Tesco, Waitrose and other supermarkets have conceded that they sell products from Israeli settlements, and they have so far refused to stop doing so. Marks and Spencers, the Co-operative Group, Unilever and Heineken have stopped trading with the settlements.

Products produced in settlements and sold in the UK include:-

- Herbs, fruit and vegetables (many sold under supermarket own labels) -Sainsburys, Tesco and Waitrose.
- Ahava cosmetics – John Lewis
- Some Soda Stream products – Robert Dyas and Sainsburys
- Some Keter plastics products, such as garden storage systems, tool boxes and bathroom accessories – B & Q and Homebase
- Beigel and Beigel baked goods – Tesco and Waitrose.

John Cross

### **Proposal to establish an Energy Co-operative in Cheltenham, with the support of local Quakers**

I am very excited about the possibility of setting up, with others, an Energy Co-operative in Cheltenham, to reduce carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels in the town and support the local economy, as well as assist in the relief of fuel poverty. I believe this is a spiritual concern, and I am therefore bringing it to Local Meeting in the hope of gaining the support of Friends.

As a professional energy advisor, and with a general concern for the sustainability of the planet, I have wanted to develop community based energy-saving projects for some time. Feed-in tariffs, whereby fuel companies pay a premium to the owner for every unit of electricity generated by renewable means (solar, water, wind), provide an excellent opportunity to generate money to invest in community energy-saving initiatives.

#### **How the co-operative might work**

- Set up a not-for profit Community Interest Company or Co-operative
- Identify suitable south-facing roofs on community, public or commercial buildings, or even social housing
- Sell shares or bonds to local investors
- Pay for the installation of solar photovoltaic (pv) panels on the roof(s) identified
- The free electricity generated goes to the user of the building
- The feed-in tariff is paid to the Co-operative, who can provide interest (possibly around 4%) to the investors, and use the surplus to invest in other community energy-saving projects
- The associated energy-saving projects might include:
  - Subsidised insulation
  - Assisting people to apply for grants for insulation
  - Assistance with clearing lofts so insulation can be installed
  - Personalised energy/carbon-saving advice to householders
  - Setting up a network of local community energy champions to encourage energy-saving

### **How far have I got?**

- I am already in discussion with a friend with some knowledge of similar schemes elsewhere
- Professionally, I can provide domestic energy advice and act as an independent surveyor for householders requiring insulation – my earnings can immediately generate income for the co-operative. (I intend that the Co-operative will pay me for my work , although I am prepared to put in voluntary time until it is established)
- I have identified other similar groups and organisations that can give support

### **Examples of similar schemes**

- Bristol Energy Co-operative [www.bristolenergy.coop](http://www.bristolenergy.coop) –new group operating on above model
- Hook Norton Low Carbon Ltd [www.hn-lc.org.uk](http://www.hn-lc.org.uk) – established group providing loans for home energy-saving measures, as well as community renewable energy projects.
- Low Carbon Oxford North [www.lcon.org.uk](http://www.lcon.org.uk) – provides practical carbon-saving advice as well as developing a community renewable energy project
- Ouse Valley Energy Services Company [www.ovesco.co.uk](http://www.ovesco.co.uk) – new group associated with Transition Lewes aiming to install solar panels on the roof of the local brewery

### **How Friends might support this concern**

- Individually, hold me in the light
- Provide a support group to help me test the concern and move forward
- Individually, invest in the Co-operative
- Individually, offer various skills and time to give practical assistance
- By providing a minute of support, enable me to apply for funding from QPSW for set-up costs [www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability-grants-guidance-notes](http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability-grants-guidance-notes)
- At a later date, consider with Area Meeting the possibility of installing solar pv panels on the south-facing roofs of the Meeting House – either through the Co-operative, or as an Area Meeting investment.

### **Next Steps**

An application to QPSW sustainability grants might help to pay for more detailed research, creation of a business plan, and set-up costs. Research might include:

- Advice from [www.planlocal.org.uk](http://www.planlocal.org.uk) – resources to assist setting up community low carbon projects
- Advice on setting up a co-operative, eg from [www.co-operative.coop/enterprisehub](http://www.co-operative.coop/enterprisehub)
- Visits to some or all of the above projects
- Advertising through existing local networks (Vision 21, Transition Town Cheltenham, Quakers, other faith and environmental groups, Council etc) to judge support from potential investors
- Advertising through the same networks to identify an initiating committee.
- Advertise through the same networks to identify suitable roofs
- Investigating partnerships with suitable solar pv installers

Alison Crane