

CHELTENHAM QUAKER

MARCH 2016

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Are on Sundays at 10.30 at Cheltenham Meeting House. There is usually a shared lunch on each fifth Sunday. Children are always welcome in our Sunday Meetings for Worship. On second and fourth Sundays children can go to the children's room where they will be joined by two of the Children's Meeting volunteers.

DIARY (All of these meetings are at the Meeting House unless otherwise stated.)

February			
Sunday	21	noon	Meeting for Learning led by Margaret Sheldrick on Elisabeth Fry
Friday	26	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
Sunday	28	morning	Food Bank Collection
Sunday	28	morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	28	noon	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing
March			
Sunday	6	11.50am	Local Meeting for Worship for Business
Thursday	10	7.45pm	Meeting of Pastoral Friends at Maureen Steffen's House
Friday	11	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
Saturday	12	1.30pm	Area Meeting for Worship for Business at Gloucester QMH preceded by workshop on housing at 10.00-12.30am see below
Sunday	20	noon	Local Meeting for Learning see below
Friday	25	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
Sunday	27	morning	Food Bank collection
Sunday	27	morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	27	noon	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing

Footsteps Café: (just down from the Meeting House) We meet on second and last Fridays of the month from 10.30am for a sociable get together. Everyone welcome. 25 March is Good Friday, so check with Jo or Janet whether the café is open.

Area Meeting: will be on Saturday 12 March at Gloucester Meeting House at 1.30pm. It will be preceded by a Meeting for Learning on Housing 10.00am to 12.30am. Contact Val Kirby to book and for more information.

Meeting for Learning: Sunday 20 March will be led by Ann Caro on '*Planning a Good Death*'. Please note there will be no Meeting for Learning on 17 April.

MARCH COLLECTION is for Quaker Housing Trust. This charity is a channel through which social housing projects can get advice, support, loans or grants that would be difficult to find elsewhere, and the channel through which Friends can express practical social witness through housing. But most of all it exists to support the creation of homes for people of any age, when they are vulnerable at points of transition in their lives. Without a home it is difficult to realize that of God in oneself. More information can be found on the website www.qht.org.uk.

Donations can be sent to Quaker Housing Trust, Friends House, 173-177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Tel: 020 7663 1036. Please see page 3 for further information from Alison.

Friends who are taxpayers are encouraged to send donations directly to the charity, using Gift Aid or a charity voucher (CAF, Charities Trust, etc) possibly adding a note to say that they belong to Cheltenham Quaker Meeting.

Items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to the editorial email address or by post to the editor
Janet Weyers by

Monday 21 March at the latest

Web address: <http://www.cheltenhamquaker.org.uk/newsletters.php>

NOTES FROM FEBRUARY LOCAL MEETING

Appointments: We agreed to release our Co-clerk Pat Dannahy for three months and the following arrangements have been made:

LM 6 March: Ian Brighton; LM 3 April: Ann Caro ; LM 1 May: Nigel Smith. Philip Paull will replace Sal Drummond at the table in March.

Treasurer Matters: Our Treasurer presented the annual accounts. We agreed to ask a small group of Friends to consider what to do with the legacy we have received from Sonya Allinson and come back to us with proposals.

Premises Matters: We agreed that there has been the necessity to shift from having most of our work done by volunteer Friends, as before, to paying for some work to be done. We now have a self-employed gardener for about two hours per month; and various maintenance matters have been put in to the hands of Beechwood, a company which can offer a variety of different expertise.

Peace Matters: The full report is published below but please note the next Area Meeting Peace Group meeting is on Friday 19 February at 1.30pm at Gloucester QMH.

Car Parking: please see below for the report from Premises Committee

NOTES FROM FEBRUARY AREA MEETING

Membership: We recorded the deaths of Annis Gue (Nailsworth); Mike Dawson (Nailsworth) and Frank Curtis (Cheltenham).

Appointments: We agreed to appoint Val Kirby (Nailsworth) to serve as clerk to trustees from January 2017 for the rest of the triennium and Lys Hocking (Cirencester) to serve as elder for the rest of the triennium. We agreed to release Jan Gronow from her role as assistant treasurer to Area Meeting.

Tabular statement: We received this report from our membership clerk, which shows that figures for membership over the last year have remained the same while the figure for attenders is slightly reduced.

QCEA conference: The report from this conference showed that there is a process of questioning going on as to the future of QCEA. Friends are encouraged to look at their website and contribute their thoughts.

Patterns of care in our Meetings: We met in small groups to consider especially the issue of care and communication in our Local Meetings. We agreed that to follow this we would consider at our next AM what our Meetings mean to us. We are asked to bring to that meeting an object or possession that expresses this.

The ‘echo chamber’: in August there is to be an exhibition in Friends House, London to mark the centenary of the right to conscientious objection. Our Friends and artists Fiona Meadley and Ruth Davey are gathering stories and photographs for that. They invite any Friends with a relative who was a CO in WW1 to participate in a workshop at Painswick QMH on 5 March. All are also welcome to a day in Stroud to help shape a sound installation of the inner voices of conscience.

The full minutes of LM and AM are available from our clerks and also have been sent out on ‘News of Friends’. If you don’t receive this service, contact Philip Paull to go on his list.

QUAKER MEETING HOUSE: CAR PARKING

There has been some confusion about parking arrangements outside the Meeting House. Hopefully the following points will clarify the situation.

1. We have **3 spaces** only – parking on the pavement adjacent to the Meeting House wall is legitimate – parking to the left of this may incur a parking fine, as some of us have discovered; we do not own this bit of land.
2. Friends may use the parking spaces during the week for Quaker business, including the coffee morning at Footsteps. If anyone wishes to use a space for personal business permission should be sought from the Lettings Officer or the Convenor of Premises, as this will depend on the hirers who may be using the premises.
3. Reserving a space: Friends bringing or collecting equipment, Food Bank items etc. may reserve a space if they let Ann Caro know (or in her absence another friend) the week before.
4. We have been putting notices of increasing severity on cars which are parked on our land and which do not belong to Friends. There is little else we can do at present.

Following the recommendations of the Quinquennial Survey, the car parking areas will be resurfaced, and hopefully some rearrangement might allow of an extra small car to be parked at the end of the Meeting House. We shall be looking into providing bollards which could be locked, to prevent illegal car parking.

Ann Caro
Lettings Officer

QUAKER HOUSING TRUST

The collection for March is for the Quaker Housing Trust. Next month will be my last meeting as a trustee, so I particularly want to encourage Friends to give generously, especially as the need has never been greater. We are encouraging Friends to recycle any wealth they might have gained through their own housing good fortune, by giving it to QHT – for example if you received a winter fuel allowance that you didn't need (particularly as the winter has been so mild), it might be appropriate to donate that.

In addition to providing grants and loans to projects providing affordable housing for rent, the Quaker Housing Trust is currently working with the Parliamentary Liaison Officer at Friends House to provide briefings on the proposed changes in housing legislation. The proposals will make providing genuinely affordable housing much harder, and thus adversely affect the lives of the poorest in our communities, who may be homeless or inadequately housed through no fault of their own.

In this climate of austerity, the financial support QHT can offer is growing even more important, and demand for funding is increasing. At the last meeting, we were able to help the following projects:

Two almshouse charities, one undertaking new-build and one refurbishing their properties.

Supported housing for single homeless men.

Feasibility study considering options for safe houses for survivors of human trafficking.

We are currently working with the following projects to see whether we may be able to help:

Move-on accommodation for people with addictions

Supported housing for brain injured people

Supported housing for young homeless

Community Land Trust wanting to provide affordable housing in an expensive part of the country.

Find out more about the housing crisis, what Quakers are already doing and what else we could do, at the workshop on March 12th advertised elsewhere in the newsletter. There is also a good article in the current Quaker News.

Quaker Housing Trust website: www.qht.org.uk

Alison Crane

PEACE MESSENGER REPORT to LM FEBRUARY 2016

This month I want to focus on how our Meeting House is used for peace-making and peace building activities. Most notably, the international babies and toddler group, a project run by Global Footsteps, began last month, and meets here on a Thursday morning, supported by several Friends. Caroline Anton-Smith is one of the leaders, and she brings lots of experience and ideas.

The number of parents, carers and children has grown each week, as has the number of nationalities represented. The adults say how refreshing it is not to be the only one from a different country, and seem to welcome the opportunity to share ideas and information. It is early days, but it seems set to grow and offer a variety of ways of making good connections between different countries and cultures, at an informal grassroots level.

I think our Meeting House is an important means by which Cheltenham Quakers facilitate and enable co-operation and peace. The fact that so many different religious groups use the building exemplifies our celebration of diversity. People using the premises have said how they appreciate the sense of peacefulness which characterises the Meeting House.

The building is also used for encouraging global understanding, through meetings informing and educating the public on international and cross-cultural issues, organised by bodies such as the Interfaith Network, Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, and Global Justice.

Personal and family peace and reconciliation is no doubt helped by the various therapeutic groups that use the premises, notably Suicide Crisis and Alcoholics Anonymous.

As Ann Caro, our lettings officer said in her recent report for our "How does the truth Prosper" contribution to Area Meeting, "Our lettings represent consistent and valuable outreach to the local community, and our Quaker life is enriched by the diversity of people who use and value our Meeting House."

The next Area Meeting Peace Group meeting is on Friday 19 February at 1.30pm in Gloucester QMH.

Alison Crane

CHELTENHAM QUAKERS SPIRITUAL ADVENTURE DAY Saturday 23 April at Gloucester QMH.

'*Sitting Under the Bodhi Tree*' is the title chosen by tutor Ginny Wall for our day exploring spiritual practices from other faiths. The Bodhi Tree is the Tree under which the Buddha reached enlightenment and session titles - '*Light Filtering through Leaves*' and '*Branching Out*' follow the tree metaphor. Ginny will use a diagram of '**the tree of contemplative practice**' during the day to show how some of the practices we will use fit into the bigger picture of practices from all faiths.

I now have leaflets explaining the programme for the day, what to bring and how to pay. Please collect a leaflet from me if you have signed the list or may consider coming. The cost is £35 and bursary assistance is available.

Dinah Clements

YEARLY MEETING 2016: This will be held from Friday 27 May – Monday 30 May at Friends House, London. Documents to help us prepare, whether or not we plan to attend, should be available from our clerks. The web address will be www.quaker.org.uk/ym. This year we are asked to register in advance and details of how to do this are available from our clerks or online.

GLOBAL FOOTSTEPS COOKSTOVE PROJECT

Imagine cooking over an open fire. Sounds fun? Makes you think of camp-fires and toasted marshmallows? **Think again.** Imagine that the fire is in your kitchen. There's no chimney so the smoke gets in your lungs and your eyes, causing chronic health problems. The fire requires constant attention, so you can't just leave a pot of stew to simmer while you get on with other chores. And when you're not cooking you spend precious hours collecting firewood that you then have to carry home in heavy bundles on your back or your head. You probably don't have time to consider the environmental impact - deforestation, carbon emissions, toxic smoke

This is what daily life is like for billions of families across the world. It doesn't need to be like that.

Cheltenham charity Global Footsteps are raising money for energy efficient cookstoves, which will reduce carbon emissions and help improve the health of families in rural Kenya, who currently cook on open fires. The charity is working in partnership with the carbon offsetting company CO2balance, based in Taunton, and the Aniga Women's Initiative in West Kisumu, to provide the cookstoves.

These simple but effective cookstoves are a tried and tested improvement, using much less wood than an open fire and burning more efficiently, with less smoke.

Alison Crane, a volunteer who has visited the area and spent time with the village women, said, "This is a brilliant project, because local CO2balance staff will train the women to make the stoves themselves, using local materials. They will then sell the stoves at a reduced price, and use the money to buy raw materials to make more stoves, or for other income generating projects. Many of the women I met are HIV positive, so their health problems are made worse by the toxic fumes from cooking on an open fire. I know the women, and they are a well-organised self-help group, so I'm sure the project will be a success. It is a win-win-win situation, improving health, lowering carbon emissions, reducing deforestation, and benefitting the local economy"

Benter Ndeda, a local politician and community worker who set up the Aniga Women's Initiative, said, "The main interest is because there is a shortage of firewood here, so people are keen on anything that will conserve it. Collecting firewood takes time, so other tasks are neglected. A group of 20 women will do the training initially, then they will train others."

Global Footsteps is encouraging supporters to offset their carbon emissions, particularly flights or other travel, by donating to this carbon saving project. Alternatively, people can give a cookstove instead of a gift for family or friends by donating £20, the cost of providing one stove. They will receive a gift card explaining the project.

More details, including a carbon calculator and the opportunity to donate online, and gift aid your donation, are available on the website <http://www.global-footsteps.org/cookstove.php>

Alison Crane

CHELTENHAM QUAKER MEETING

SUNDAY ROTA APRIL TO JULY 2016

Date	Doorkeeping	Flowers	Teas
3 April	Pat Dannahy	Mike Lang	Ann Caro
10 April	June Drummond	Margaret Johnson	Philip Paull
17 April	Margaret Sheldrick	Judy Roles	Jo Teakle
24 April	Tim Howarth	Ruth Baker	Alison Crane
1 May	Ian Brighton	Margot Roe	Jane Brighton
8 May	Jo Teakle	Lydia Sutcliffe	Janet Weyers
15 May	Chris Vyle	Jill Main	Jill Vyle
22 May	Julie Stubbs	Iris Terrell	Maureen Steffen
29 May	Rowland Carson	Jane Brighton	Dorothy Carson
5 June	Sal Drummond	Pat Dannahy	Mike Lang
12 June	June Drummond	Ruth Baker	Nigel Smith
19 June	Ann Caro	Margaret Johnson	Brenda Judge
26 June	Margot Roe	Jill Main	Richard Lacock
3 July	Joy Heaven	Janet Weyers	Margaret Sheldrick
10 July	Nigel Smith	Jill Vyle	Chris Vyle
17 July	Dorothy Carson	Iris Terrell	Rowland Carson
24 July	Alison Crane	Judy Roles	Sal Drummond
31 July	Julie Stubbs	Lydia Sutcliffe	Maureen Steffen

If a date is not convenient, please arrange a swap with someone else on the list

DOORKEEPING

Arrive by 10:00.

Read the list of instructions in the wooden rack on the wall by the door into the garden (possibly revised since your previous doorkeeping duty).

FLOWERS

Please try to have the flowers on the table by 10:15.

TEAS

It may be a good idea to ask someone else to help you.

Bring milk (2 pints) and biscuits.

Lay out cups and saucers and preheat the water before Meeting.

Take your expenses from the dish for contributions.

If you spot anything in need of repair or replacement in the kitchen please contact a member of the Premises Committee.

**If you would like to join the rota
contact Iain Main**