

earthQuaker

*The newsletter of the Living Witness Project
Issue 61 May 2008*



The leading edge of the remaining part of the Larsen B ice shelf, taken March 4, 2008. Some of the huge ice shelves that line the coasts of the Antarctic Peninsula, which stretches out from Antarctica toward the South Atlantic Ocean have now disintegrated and are floating in chunks in the ocean. A large part of the Larsen Ice Shelf broke up in 1995 (from www.planetark.com)

Contents include:

- LWP developments ● a listening silence ●
 - 2008 edition of walk cheerfully.. ● News from LWP Meetings ●
 - LWP Link Group meeting ● Summer Camp ●
 - LWP Summer School ● Letters ● Book Review ●
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Editorial

As Laurie explains below, sadly for the LWP, Rachel Howell has left as our second coordinator. Rachel felt the offer of the short term research project to be both interesting, and a very useful foundation for her PhD, and decided the opportunity was too good to miss. In order to do it she had to leave as soon as possible. LWP will miss her input but I'm sure we all wish her well.

LWP member Clare Ewins' young son, Charlie, produced the poster on page 8 as part of a school project and I asked if I could print it in earthQuaker as I think it is brilliant!

The article on page 3 and the poem on page 5 both

express something which I feel is important—we need to listen deeply to our inner 'spirit' (that of God within) if we are to find the best way to respond to the many problems that humanity is facing. Each of us may be led to act in different ways but I am sure that if we are all sensitive to the promptings of love and truth then the outcome will be for the best.

The 2008 edition of *Walk Cheerfully, Step Lightly* is now available—see page 14.

Hope to see you at our summer camp (see page 16) the LWP Summer School (see page 7) or Yearly meeting (see page 6)!

Best wishes, **Anne Brewer**

Living Witness Project News

The last three months have been quite turbulent and exciting for LWP. We've seen an acceleration in the growth of our network: about 60 meetings have now joined, or are closely involved. Meeting for Sufferings has been developing its Long Term Framework, which is intended to provide a vision for the work of the whole of Britain Yearly Meeting including local meetings and other Quaker groups. Sustainability has emerged as a central priority. The draft text of the framework, to be considered at Yearly Meeting on May 23-26, particularly encourages Friends and meetings to work with LWP. We are also getting involved in wider developments, as the Quaker Council for European Affairs has asked us to work with them on a new project on climate, energy and conflict.

My co-worker, Rachel Howell, left us at the end of March to do university research on personal carbon allowances. She has a short-term research contract at Oxford University, and is starting a PhD in Edinburgh in the autumn. So there's a gap for me personally, and also in our capability to respond to Friends' requests for workshops and talks.

The LWP trustees and management group have taken the opportunity to rethink how we function. We have decided to take the QPSW Turning the Tide programme as our model, with most of the work done by a community of volunteer "Resource People". Essential elements of the planned programme include:

- **RPs** who make long term commitments to work with us, in particular speaking at and facilitating events for Quaker and other groups and organisations.
- One full time (or two part-time) **RP co-ordinator(s)** responsible for RP recruitment, training and support
- **Twice-yearly RP gatherings** to share experiences and new approaches and provide mutual support.
- **A regular newsletter** containing articles by RPs, reflecting on their experience of the work, probably as a section of earthQuaker.
- **A curriculum** of core texts and background reading for the use of RPs and others, developed by staff and RPs.
- **Resources** including workshop agendas and learning materials for use by RPs and others, developed by staff and RPs.

We're currently submitting grant applications to fund this development, which we hope will hugely expand our capacity to work with Quakers and others. If you think you might like to be an RP, please do get in touch with me. We are planning to begin building the RP community at our summer school at Swarthmoor Hall on 25-29 August—see page 7.

Laurie Michaelis
laurie@livingwitness.org.uk

The listening silence

Anne Davis of Dorking Meeting attended a Churches Together Climate Change Conference in Reading, on February 16 and was moved by the presentation by Maggie Gee from Alaska. Maggie explained that in her talk she had translated what the elders of the indigenous peoples in Alaska told her into language that British people would understand. She started with some statistics :

The impact of climate change increases as one goes north. On a scale of 1-10, if the impact is a 4 in Great Britain, it will be an 8 or 9 in the High Arctic.

- *A few months ago, thousands of walrus died in stampedes on the narrow beaches of the Chukchi Sea because all of the ice on that vast body of water had melted.*
- *Because of the failure of the ice, polar bears are moving as much as 100 miles inland, threatening small villages and interbreeding with brown bears. They are also starving and drowning.*
- *There is so much glacial melt, so much fresh water lying on top of salt, that salmon are now swimming underneath both subsistence and commercial nets. We used to line catch them at 30 feet. In the last two years we have had to drop our lines to 80 feet.*
- *Our massive backyard glacier in Juneau retreated 800 ft just during the summer months last year. We could see it change from day to day.*
- *Winter subsistence hunting and trapping, always perilous, have been made far more dangerous by river and sea ice that no longer freeze properly and cannot support snow machines, or even dog teams.*
- *Without pack ice, increasing wind, sea and wave heights erode silty and sandy shores. At last estimate 235 villages in Alaska will*

have to move inland.

- *The tree line is moving farther north every year.*

I could say much more about crazy weather, seasons that are erratic, melting permafrost, heavy metals that migrate to the poles, Inuit women who give birth only to girls, methane releases, trees dying from beetle. But these are symptoms, effects.

Then Maggie moved on to speak about silence:

I am certain, however, the Elders would much prefer me to spend the rest of my time telling you what they understand as the root cause of the climate change, which is that we have lost our core silence, inherent in our evolution, essential to our survival. Proof of this is our preoccupation with wildlife programmes on TV: as we watch the animals' core silence at work in their relationships with each other and their environment, we are looking at our own lost nature.

... all the talk is pointless unless we recover the work of silence, which alone can help us change our habits. The work of silence enables us to want to live simply. When we repeatedly yield all our cravings, all our thoughts and ways to the silence, its mysterious transfigurative power will effect necessary changes to our habits and our lives.

The Elders know that to survive you must listen. Deeply. For them, a mistake is the same as a lie, and a lie is the same as murder. For this reason Native peoples also regard with horror the white person's habit of ripping time away from space and motion, of which it is a function, and treating it as a discrete entity.

This conference urges us to take action on climate change. But all the talk is pointless unless we recover the work of silence, which alone can help us change our habits. The work of silence enables us to want to live simply. When we repeatedly yield all our cravings, all our thoughts and ways to the silence, its mysterious transfigurative power will effect necessary changes to our habits and our lives. Without it, we are trapped in the cycle of heedlessness. ...

... We need to support one another to find our way back to the core silence that reawakens our environmental and religious sensibility and brings us to spiritual maturity. Without this silence, we will be unable to change our destructive habits or realize our shared nature with God. Without silence we lose our humanity, and all that is most precious, including life itself.

This is the message from the elders of Alaska.

(Alaska.
From www.usatourist.com)



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Milton Keynes Living Witness Project Meeting, 27th October 2007.

Report by Sarah Gittins of Edinburgh Central

This day-long event, hosted by Rachel Howell and Laurie Michaelis (the then Living Witness Project coordinators from Oxford), brought together representatives of over 10 Quaker Meetings. It was mainly a regional gathering, however, and I was the only person from north of Leicester. There was a great deal packed into the day, too much to describe in detail here, but I hope to give an overview.

We began by looking at what different Meetings, represented at the day, were doing already as part of the Living Witness Project. Here are some examples:

- Milton Keynes has developed a sustainability policy for their meeting through doing the 'Be the Change' study pack (provided by LWP), they have a noticeboard of activities and 'greentips', and they are running a 'Car Share Challenge Sunday', rewarded by chocolate cake (to cut through the impression of nagging people to be greener).
- Cambridge have held showings and discussion of 'An Inconvenient Truth.'
- A man from Stafford is meeting with a small group to discuss communal living, potentially to include car-shares and allotments.
- Birmingham have installed extra insulation at their Meeting House, and changed all light-bulbs to energy efficient ones, cutting their



energy consumption by 34%. They are also involved in a large, exciting project to set up an eco-centre in a Quaker building, and one member is developing ways of teaching about climate-change in schools.

- A meeting in Wales have organised a local 'Green Fair', involving the whole town, this included the beginning of a campaign to make the town plastic-bag-free, making hundreds of cloth bags through distributing kits in local shops and holding workshop days. They also have a development worker going into local schools to talk about climate change.
- Leicester held a 'Green Fair' too, with stalls from inter-faith groups and an eco-house, and a litter-sorting table.
- Oxford have a sustainable living group, and have been running carbon foot-print surgeries

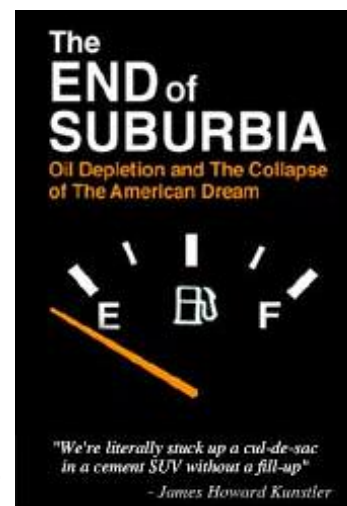
at lunchtimes.

- I told the group about our plans for a Quaker allotment in Edinburgh and Living Witness day at the Meeting House.

We looked at how the activities were dispersed across the spectrum from personal to local to regional etc. and recognised that a great deal of individual activity is happening, but also some very exciting wider-reaching projects. We were asked to keep Laurie and Rachel updated with our news so that it can be put into *earthQuaker*, the LWP newsletter.

We looked at new developments in Britain Yearly Meeting. QPSW are running a one year pilot project on human security and the environment, running a case-study in Uganda and Bangladesh. Friends House are carrying out an environmental audit (Friends House produces 600 tonnes of CO2 every year, a great proportion of which is said to be waste). LWP and QPSW are giving a joint input to the Meeting for Sufferings day in December. There are sustainability courses being run at Woodbrooke. There is a QCEA project on climate, energy and conflict, and there will be a QCEA conference in February. There's going to be a special environmental issue of the Friend, and they are looking for articles.

Looking at the situation in the nation as a whole, the feeling that the UK are back-peddling on environmental commitments was evident. It was recommended to write to Jonathan Porritt, as a potential ally with direct access to Gordon Brown. The Climate Change Rally on December 8th was highlighted, (there is also one happening that day in Glasgow). There was more positive news about 'Transition Towns'. These are cities preparing for a world after oil. Oxford is a Transition Town. The films 'Power of Community' and 'End of Suburbia' were suggested as useful viewing on this subject.



We discussed the idea of *Prophetic Witness*, that if we have an agenda, how do we test whether our witness is coming from the right place? Is our

witness grounded in worship, and coming from a positive rather than a negative place? Someone suggested that “to be prophets we need to love the age that we're in.” This discussion involved looking at what would particularly characterise Quaker witness about climate change, we were asked: what is our vision for a vibrant, prophetic Quaker witness to our society? Some of the ideas were: that a witnessing community would be committed, would celebrate renewal and give people the license to experiment, would speak out about positives, would challenge governments by lobbying and speaking truth to power; the witness would be discerning, would involve spiritual nurture and hope, would need to keep communicating, be involved in education, would look at ways of dealing with conflict in communities, would keep in touch with Quaker

testimonies, and be radical and daring.

We were also asked about the gaps between what is happening and what needs to happen. Several people spoke of the need for a positive vision, so that we have something to live towards. It was suggested that attitudes need to change to seeing less as more, and that there needs to be more Quaker campaigning and visibility.

The day was a good opportunity to make links with other Meetings, and had an atmosphere of mutual support, enthusiasm and inspiration. Several people shared difficulties with engaging members of their Meeting in a new project, but on the whole people seem excited about LWP, and empowered by setting things in motion within their Meetings and wider communities.

My Law—Tieme Ranapiri

This poem, attributed to a Maori was sent in by Judith Chandler. She felt it fitted well with Gwen Prince's article *Earth and the Sacred* in February *earthQuaker*. (Editor: I think it also fits well with the article on page 3—*the listening silence*)

The sun may be clouded , yet ever the sun
Will sweep on its course till the cycle is run.
And when into chaos the system is hurled
Again shall the Builder reshape a new world.

Your path may be clouded, uncertain your goal;
Move on—for your orbit is fixed to your soul.
And though it may lead into darkness of night
The torch of the Builder shall give it new light.

You were. You will be! Know this while you are:
Your spirit has travelled both long and afar.
It came from the Source, to the Source it returns -
The Spark which was lighted eternally burns.

It slept in a jewel. It leapt in a wave.
It roamed in the forest. It rose from the grave.
It took on strange garbs for long aeons of years
And now, in the soul of yourself It appears.

From body to body your spirit speeds on
It seeks a new form when the old one has gone
And the form that it finds is the fabric you wrought
On the loom of the Mind from the fibre of Thought.

As dew is drawn upwards, in rain to descend
Your thoughts drift away and in destiny blend.
You cannot escape them, for petty or great,
Or evil or noble, they fashion your Fate.

Somewhere on some planet, sometime and somehow
Your life will reflect your thoughts of your Now.
My Law is unerring, no blood can atone -
The structure you built you will live in - alone .



From cycle to cycle, through time and through space
Your lives with your longings will ever keep pace
And all that you ask for, and all you desire
Must come at your bidding, as flame out of fire.

Once list' to that Voice and all tumult is done -
Your life is the Life of the Infinite One.
In the hurrying race you are conscious of pause
With love the purpose, and love for the Cause.

You are your own Devil, you are your own God
You fashioned the paths your footsteps have trod.
And no-one can save you from Error or Sin
Until you have hark'd to the Spirit within.

Yearly Meeting and the Long Term Framework

If you haven't been to Yearly Meeting before, this year represents a great opportunity. We will have a LWP stall throughout, with our leaflets and publications available. If you're willing to be a presence on the stall some of the time that would be a great help. Sunday is perhaps the key day for sustainability issues, which we'll be exploring in the morning session on Being the Seeds of Change. We've got a LWP special interest group at lunch time entitled Quaker witness to sustainability – time to act!. Then in the afternoon, Yearly Meeting will be considering the Long Term Framework – which is about rethinking our Quaker work.

Every year, Britain Yearly Meeting receives a huge document called "Quaker Work", which is actually about the work of its own committees. It doesn't include the activities of local meetings or individual Friends working under concern. Many Friends have found this frustrating, partly because it contributes to a culture of "us and them"; partly because it seems to miss an opportunity to build our sense of ourselves as a prophetic, transformative community. The need for that development is particularly apparent in the context of climate change. An effective response requires us to challenge the Spirit of the Age, being patterns for a spiritually awake, sustainable way of life. And that means being involved at all levels, in our personal lives and worshipping communities, as well as through networks such as the Living Witness Project and, of course, the centrally managed work.

So it's quite exciting to see an effort to develop that way of being and working – which I think is what the Long Term Framework represents. Many earthQuaker readers will have been involved in the consultation process last year. The framework seeks to provide a context and vision for all work

done by Quakers in Britain. That doesn't mean we should only do things that are included – it's more an effort to develop a corporate sense of direction.

A questionnaire was sent out to local meetings and other Quaker organisations in mid-2007. It asked for responses on the criteria for deciding whether work should be done, on the priorities for work areas, and who should take the lead in each area. The results of the consultation and a first draft of the framework text were considered by Meeting for Sufferings in April 2008. The draft emphasised six work areas: strengthening the spiritual roots in our meetings and ourselves; speaking out in the world; peace; sustainability; a welcoming community (migration and interfaith issues); and criminal justice. It also set out aspirations for a new way of working, with central committees and staff focusing much more on facilitating work by Quakers, rather than doing it for us.

Sufferings of course had some comments – in particular wanting to strengthen the section on sustainability, and to broaden the focus of the criminal justice section to address justice in general. The revised draft is being considered at Yearly Meeting on 23-26 May and you can download it from www.quaker.org.uk. The sustainability section emphasises that sustainability must be integral to all that we do, corporately and individually. It reminds us that we are called to be patterns and examples, and also to engage in politics. The current draft asks all meetings and all members and attenders to work together, led by projects such as Living Witness.

YM is really the last chance for most Friends to have an input in the development of the framework before Sufferings finalises the text in the autumn – so I hope to see many of you there!

Laurie Michaelis

Smart Meters for Quaker Meetings

Harriet Martin of Cotteridge LM told us about a variety of Smart Meters at the last LWP Gathering. Surprisingly, just by learning how much electricity our domestic appliances use can lead to 10% saving or more. The best of the meters have a display, which can be programmed to show consumption in Kilowatts or money if the cost per Kw hr is known or equivalent CO2 produced. It only takes a few hours spread over a few days for a family to learn to economise on use of the items with greatest consumption or on low consumption 'stand by's' left on for long times.



We came up with a good idea which most Quaker Meetings can do—the Meeting buys a smart meter (or a member donates one they have finished with). It can then be loaned out to individual people/families using the routine library record system and many can get the benefit and help the climate at little or no cost.

Such meters at about £40 can be bought from Maplins, through www.efergy.com/en or uk@efergy.com or tel 08450177769

Harriet is a great enthusiast and offered to help with more information: harrietmartin@bopenworld.com

John Crookall-Greening

Summer School – Swarthmoor Hall 25-29 August

Would you like to be part of the new community of resource people, offering workshops and talks on sustainability to Quaker meetings and others? Do you want to help develop our LWP curriculum – the core texts and thinking at the centre of our work? Then you might like to come to our summer school, at Swarthmoor Hall in the Lake District, Monday to Friday, 25-29 August. We have booked the whole of the hall for the week, and we'll be self-catering.



The main event will run from Monday tea time to Friday lunch, but you can arrive on Sunday 24th if you like. Sessions will range from the science and politics of climate change to developing speaking and facilitation skills.

We will also focus on essential aspects of Quaker faith and practice, including Quaker testimony and our approaches to decision-making and action in the world.

We are currently seeking grants to cover the costs of participants who wish to become LWP resource people – but if you are able to find funding, for instance from your meeting, that would be very welcome! If you would just like to attend the summer school but not to become an RP, the cost will be £150.

Laurie Michaelis

Update on biofuels.

The message on biofuels seems to be getting through. A recent petition on the government's e-petition website read as follows:

"We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to recognize that, while some bio-fuels may have environmental benefits, the types of bio-fuel production being promoted by current policies are mainly environmentally damaging and are also threatening the food security of millions."

Details of Petition:

"We call on the PM to recognize that current EU and UK policy on bio-fuels:

- 1) Is largely encouraging bio-fuels that cause more emissions than they save;
- 2) Is leading to accelerated destruction of valuable habitat, such as tropical forest, with consequent loss of biodiversity and displacement of people;
- 3) Is already driving up food prices and will ultimately threaten many with starvation.

In the light of this, we call on the PM:

- 1) To scrap UK targets for bio-fuel substitution and to seek withdrawal of EU targets;
- 2) To target support for bio-fuels at fuels produced from waste, or from non-agricultural/forestry sources and to stop all support for bio-fuels that are not from these sources.
- 3) To link levels of support to levels of CO2 emission savings;
- 4) To ban the production/import of bio-fuels and bio-fuel feedstock, where their production is associated, directly, or indirectly, with habitat destruction, or with greater CO2 emissions than from fossil fuels."

This was the Government's response:

The Prime Minister has made clear that our agreement to future EU biofuel targets is conditional on our being satisfied that they can be met sustainably. We will be negotiating hard over the months ahead to ensure that EU legislation requires all biofuels to meet robust, mandatory sustainability standards.

In the absence of agreed international standards, the Government has worked to incorporate sustainability safeguards into the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) and from April 2008 all transport fuel suppliers in the UK will be required to report on the greenhouse gas savings and wider sustainability impacts associated with their biofuels in order to claim any credit for them under the RTFO.

We have always maintained that sustainable biofuels means taking account of social, economic and environmental impacts and the Renewable Fuels Agency (RFA) will monitor the impacts of increased biofuel demand and will report regularly to Parliament. In the longer term, more advanced biofuel technologies could reduce pressure on land because they can use a wider range of feedstocks, including waste, and the RTFO should help in their development.

On 21 February the Government also announced a study of the wider economic and environmental impacts, particularly the indirect impacts of different forms of biofuel production, and the results will help inform the development of both UK and EU policy and in the consideration of EU biofuel targets after 2010.

The Six 'Re's

Everyone's heard about reduce, reuse and recycle, so here's three more:

Refuse

Don't get what you don't need so you can just throw it away later.

Refuse

Repair

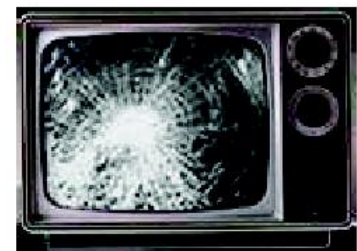
If something is broken don't replace it, repair it.

Repair

Rejoice

Rejoice in what you already have. This world is brilliant - much better than a PS3. So think about how lucky you are and cherish it.

Rejoice



Remember: refuse, repair
and rejoice!

By Charlie Ewins, age 8

ECOCELL—A new CEL Resource

LWP member Pete Redwood is the ecocell co-ordinator—contact him at 41 West Bank, Scarborough, YO12 4DX, 01723 353640 or email: predwood@christian-ecology.org.uk to buy the ecocell resource disc for £5 or for more information. He is available to meet you/your group for the cost of travel.

He writes:

I joined Christian Ecology Link as coordinator for EcoTeams. We came to the end of our contract with Global Action Plan in December and have decided not to renew it. Instead, I have been working with the team at CEL on a replacement which is better suited to religious groups. The result is 'ecocell', which has now been released.

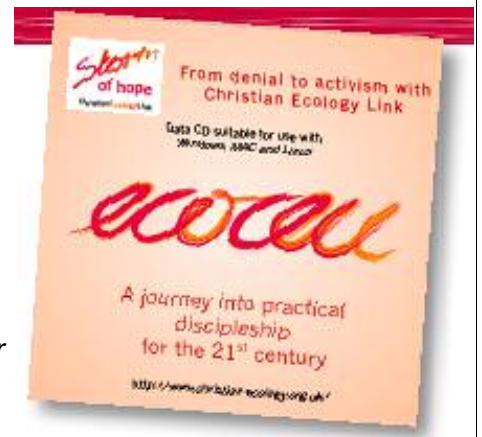
A note of explanation - in planning the CD I have been very careful to separate out the overtly Christian sections so that they can be omitted without any problems. The whole programme has been designed to be used by all groups, non-sectarian as well as religious groups wishing to use it for Bible study. Each module is broken down into the various elements so that it can be used however it is needed.

The topics covered are: **Module 2:** Waste ; **Module 3:** Shopping and food; **Module 4:** Energy in the home; **Module 5:** Water; **Module 6:** Transport and travel.

It offers a set of tools based around four key words:

- **See:** understand where we are and how we got here. Each module has facts and information, plus Bible studies to explore where all this fits in with our Christian faith.
- **Grieve:** when we think about the loss and damage to God's world we feel despair and sorrow in our hearts. Prayers and poetry try to put that sense of loss into words and help you to grieve.
- **Hope:** is the spiritual energy that empowers us to choose to take action to learn, pray, struggle and act so that God's kingdom can be realised in our damaged, exploited and unjust world. Each module has inspirational quotes and hope-filled stories of what others are doing to inspire action.
- **Act:** to find ways of living more lightly on the Earth. In each module you measure your current lifestyle, discuss ways to lighten your footprint and measure your progress throughout the course.

The common theme in each module is that we have become a consumerist society, which by definition means that we have to buy more and more, and throw more and more away in order to keep the economy going in its present form. There is a pressing need for the people in the richer nations to change their lifestyle within the next 40 years. That is a tall order, and in practice our individual emissions are rising year on year.



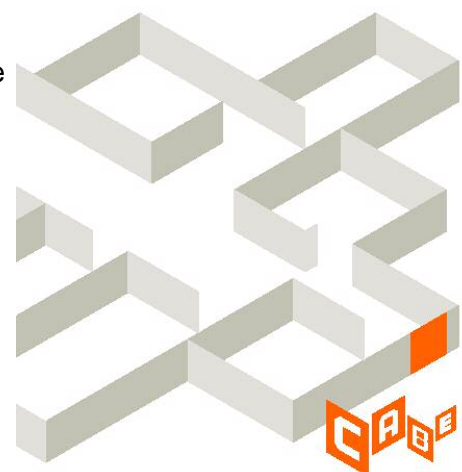
Green day: A climate change activity kit for schools

You might like to draw your local school's attention to this resource. Green day is a one-day event for schools about climate change, sustainability and the built environment. It is a fun and flexible way to integrate these themes into lessons and schoolwide activities and aims to make schools more sustainable in the long term. It is promoted by CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) as part of its education work. It provides ideas, activities and resources for holding a green day in your school, making it a more sustainable place in which to work, play and learn.

You can order up to three printed copies of this publication from CABE for free (for UK delivery only) or you can download it as a pdf file (184Kb) See <http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=2457>

If you don't have access to a computer you can ask the editor for a copy for cost of postage and paper.

Green day
A climate change
activity kit for schools



Barney Smith has sent us these notes from an environmental study day at **Leicester LM** Feb 12th 2008. They have now agreed to work for an eco-congregation award.

Our Vision

- **Knowing the neighbours and sharing things**
- **More equal wealth** – share problems equally
- **More understanding equality** – and **preparedness to sacrifice** (or compulsion by government?)
- **Being content with enough** – sharing, supporting, helping each other to all have enough
- **More localised food, leisure, work**
- **End economic growth** – live within our means and the worlds resources
- **Passing on our concerns to our children and grandchildren** – learning from them as well as educating them
- **It would be wonderful if everyone knew where their food and clothes came from**
- **Improved insulation in poorer property**, and adequate eco-friendly heating
- **“We should ‘love people and use things’, not ‘use people and love things’”** *Quote from Richard Rohr*

What would be different

- Turn things off
- Recycle more
- Social justice
- Working a 4-day week
- Freedom to use our time
- Prepared to sacrifice

The levers of change

- **Accurate data that everyone is aware of**
- **Legislation**
- **Education** – feeding into the current curriculum consultation
- **Force of numbers** – reaching the ‘tipping point’
- **Leading by example** – particularly public figures – for example the mayor using a hybrid car.
- **Pioneering projects** – e.g. community supported agriculture, car pools
- **Community building** – so we can work together
- **The Green Party** – getting councillors and MPs who can speak on the issues – and open debate.
- **Symbolic schemes** – e.g. plastic bag free queens road. Campaigns which draw in new people to join the ‘force of numbers’ on the bigger issues...
- **Voluntary schemes**
- **Collective action**

3 things we can do:

Personal	Collective (Quakers)	Political
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make more time and use it well to enjoy good things • Make a green map of Leicester for the meeting house and have a ‘greenbank’ of information and ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become an eco-congregation • Green the meeting house • Sharing more – car sharing, goods etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demanding information and being informed • Recognising our power to affect those in power • Speaking as a group

Dorking Meeting

On March 19th the chairman of the local council joined us for our mid-week meeting and officially presented us with our second eco-congregation award. We gained our first award in 2002 for our recycling and draught-proofing efforts so what have we done to deserve a second award? Actually quite a lot but three activities particularly impressed the assessors.

- Our intelligent boiler system. This amused the chairman—how can a boiler be intelligent? Well, the electronic control system for our new very efficient gas boiler can be programmed for a week ahead to heat just the rooms that will be in use at any time. Further it assesses the outside temperature and comes on just early enough to heat the rooms to the chosen temperature. So no gas is wasted.
- Our audit process. Our green team carried out an environmental audit of the Meeting House in November 07 and recommended areas for improvement. Premises Committee are considering our suggestions.
- Our contribution to promotion of green living principles outside of the Meeting. This refers to the environmental policy we have on our booking form for groups hiring the Meeting House; our public showings of the Al Gore film *An Inconvenient Truth*; and the booklet *Walk Cheerfully, Step Lightly*, which is available in



Anne Brewer, convenor of the green team and Colin Hope, Clerk of the Meeting, with the award.

our information room. Our environmental activities are also mentioned on our website – see www.dorking.quaker.eu.org and click on Meeting Activities.

Unfortunately the local press took no interest in our award but it was useful to meet the chairman as, once she finishes as chairman in May, she will be the sustainability officer on the Council's new executive body. Good news for the members of our green team who are part of the newly formed Green Mole

Forum, which aims to support wherever possible the local Councils 'How Green is our Valley?' initiative and chivvy them along if they don't keep up to scratch—see www.greenmoleforum.org.

Anne Brewer

Llanidloes Meeting.

News from LLES (Llanidloes Energy Solutions) We are having an Open Day where people who have put in extra energy saving measures or renewable energy systems like a wood-pellet stove or solar panels will open their homes so that people can talk to them and find out about how things work.

LLES continues our survey of homes in the area to help people find out their carbon footprint and reduce it. We are also planning another Green Fair on October 5/6th.

Gwen Prince

Book review *The Art of Sustainable Living* by Jeni Edwards

Jeni has written a delightful and timely account of her "thirty year quest to find solutions to what are now being recognised as present necessities": the challenge to live simply, and the rewards that embracing the challenge can bring. The book is offered as a "discussion document and future printings will be expanded to include comments", so Jeni invites us, as it were, to grow a book: very organic!

I like the idea of an evolving book. I have also much enjoyed the honesty with which Jeni has shared her trials as well as her triumphs. This is a story we can all relate to: the ongoing challenge to put our Quaker principals into practice, in a society, which has been steaming in the opposite direction.

I think her philosophy is summed up neatly in the following poem.

*When the means justifies the end
When your efforts are all aimed to bend
The means of your life to an end,
You will find that often you land
Far away from the end that you planned*

*Why not alter the way your mind leans
By swapping the end for the means?
Then wherever you land will be right
And the burden of life will be light (er).*

The book can be purchased from Jeni Edwards at: Wren's nest, Bankside, Youlgrave, Derbys DE45 1WD (01629 636550) price £4.99. It is also hoped we may have some at the stall at YM later in the month.

Fran Hicks

Letters

2 letters about biodiesel:

In response to your invitation in the newsletter to share experience:

I ran my 1998 V40 Volvo (with a renault engine in it) on 100% bio-diesel from cooking oil for 6 months in 1997 and was very happy with it. Performance, efficiency were good and smells were only very occasionally in evidence and even then in no way disturbing. I was buying from a start up businessman who had about 30 customers before he went out of business.

The problem with bio-diesel from cooking oil is that you need so much cooking oil! Even though he had free cooking oil supplies he collected from all the schools and restaurants in our area, there was not enough to sustain enough customers for a viable small two person business. I did also notice that he had the waste products to deal with.

Eoin McCarthy
Eoin(AT)threshold.uk.com

One of the articles in February eQ is about bio diesel—a cousin who lives nearby has a plant that he has made himself. For anyone trying this there are several regulations to note, as well as looking at catalyst recycling and how to deal with waste. We've done a little looking up on this.

I note that the regulations say no more than 5000 litres a year in batches no bigger than 100 litres at a time otherwise you need an environment agency licence - hence the recipe being restricted to less than 100 litres.

Interestingly a search on the website <http://customs.hmrc.gov.uk> revealed that duty is not payable for bio diesel used for heating and electricity, but is for vehicles. A CHP unit based on a vehicle diesel engine (like Fiat produce - and we have one running in one of the housing association flats in Derby) might be worth considering and then using the spare heat and CO2 in a greenhouse or polytunnel.

Part of the waste stream is glycol/Glycerine residue, you may find the following web site of interest:
http://journeytoforever.org/biodiesel_glycerin.html

At this time of year the best thing seems to be to make milk carton logs to supplement the wood burnt on your wood stove (after the wood stove is up to temperature). Making soap looks like a reasonable proposition, but there are other suggestions there too that may be of interest—like accelerating bio-digestion or composting. Another site gives better details for making the soap (next

years Christmas presents to the family!): <http://www.permaculture.com/node/535> .

The environment agency tracks people who put it down the drain: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/yourenv/857406/1173616/> so that is not a sensible route.

To collect old chip fat and the like, you will need to be registered for handling waste and will require a waste handling licence. This may include inspection of your premises and storage areas - chemicals and waste need to be in bunded areas, likewise any vehicles used for carrying the chip fat need to be suitably adapted to prevent contamination in case of a leak or accident.

Ian Care
Icare(AT)fish.co.uk

2 letters with useful info.

You may already know of this, but I thought I'd bring it to your attention. It contains a huge number of links about climate change.

Climate Change: A Guide to the Information and Disinformation

This online document is a journalists' resource guide devoted to climate. It is a collection of links, which are at this time primarily United States (US)-based, to various resources on climate from a wide range of sources, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, National Academies' National Research Council, American Bird Conservancy and National Wildlife Federation, Evangelical Environmental Network, Sierra Club, and the Pew Center, among many other individuals and groups. Chapters group the links according to their field of expertise, and, in some cases, give tips, such as: "50+ Really Serious Scientist Sources on Climate (who would probably be glad to talk to a journalist)."
<http://www.comminit.com/en/node/266739/306>

Roger Plenty
Roger(AT)rodborough.net

Just a small item which you might like to mention in Earth Quaker for the benefit of readers living in London. Some of them may not know about the Green Homes Concierge Scheme which was introduced recently by Ken Livingstone. For a fee of £199 you get a very comprehensive (2-3 hours) survey followed by a report with specific recommendations on what you can do to reduce the carbon footprint of your home including details of suppliers and estimates of costs and energy savings as well as the use of the service for follow up advice for 12 months. We are planning some building work and had a survey done in February. I have been very impressed with the quality of the service. The web site is:

www.greenhomesconcierge.co.uk.

Susanna Riviere

113 Cambridge Road, London SW20 0PU

www.susanna-riviere.co.uk

Quakers and wind turbines

At least three Quakers met by chance at the grand opening of Westmill Wind Farm Co-operative, near Swindon, on Saturday, May 3. There were probably more, but we became so absorbed in the story of the project's achievements, snatched from near-despair only a year earlier, that we didn't stop to inquire.

We had all put cash into the planned five turbines, which now each produce 1.3 megawatts: collectively enough power for two thousand houses. Some of us buy our electricity from Good Energy, which takes the output of three of the turbines. The project began fifteen years ago when the farmer, Adam Twine, began his effort to produce power as well as crops, an aim delayed,

inter alia, by planning committee meetings, contractors' failure to supply the promised turbines because of a rising world market, and finally price rises which the 500-plus co-operative members / investors efforts managed to cover.

Westmill's elected directors are enthusiastic for the co-operative structure and philosophy, as well as for the work of the engineers and contractors who finally pulled the whole thing together. Our grandchildren (13 and 10) are delighted that they will become members when they are 18 and the investment transfers to them. Like all children, they need to see the start of ways to meet climate change.

The beautiful wind turbines are visible from trains soon after leaving Swindon station, on the left travelling east. And they are as quiet as they are elegant.

Grace and John Crookall-Greening
johngrace@freenet.co.uk

Cyclone in Burma

BBC television 'Question Time' was in Dorking on the 9th May and I took two questions about the role of our country and other rich, Western countries in counteracting policies that are worsening the situation over changes in climate patterns. However despite the very recent terrible cyclone in Burma there were not enough questions on climate change to make environmental chaos a 'popular' subject, and so no questions on that topic were selected. Burma was briefly discussed but it went no further than debate about how to make air-drops. I have reflected on why climate change was not a 'popular' subject.

Burma has been hit by a cyclone that has riveted the world's attention to it, but unusual weather patterns are causing a rapidly increasing spate of natural disasters in less developed countries. The world looks on horrified while Burma's tyrannical generals prevent aid getting into the country. But I ask myself why doesn't the world lament its own tardiness in preventing this crisis of massive dimensions by properly assessing its humanitarian responsibilities and taking measures to at least slow down the rate of climate degradation.

In QF&P 27.39 early Friends are described as circumspect in matters of the spirit – 'They were "alive unto God" and sensed him everywhere. We need to perceive that the charity involved in relieving the suffering of others should not be an add-on

to politics but a natural aspect of a unified and healthy creation. We need to relax away from a politics of expediency into a politics of building a better world. It would then become necessary to do more than quibble over whether or not 5 million pounds was a generous enough amount of aid from the UK to Burma as they did at 'Question Time'. It would become a spirit-led incentive to address the root of the crisis.

NEARLY HALF the dead and missing in Burma are children, it was revealed -yesterday as - foreign aid began arriving in the cyclone-ravaged country.

Charity workers said as many as 24,000 children could have perished in Saturday's disaster.

An estimated 60,000 people are feared dead or missing.

(Daily Express. 12/05/08)

The right, moral action to take will be recognised not just because it was dictated in the bible, but because this kind of spiritual insight is applicable to our lives now. And as in 27.44 'Quakers are bridge people. I remain on that bridge, part of my roots reaching back into the Christian past and part stretching forward into the future where new symbols are being born.'

Michael Heseltine at the Question Time event commented on Gordon Brown as a 'workaholic', a 'demon for detail'. I regret that our leaders cannot look up from their bookishness and take an inspired lead in campaigning for urgent global action. Hopefully I believe that, though small at present, a fierce and urgent voice is interpreting the new symbols of degradation and crisis as a whole world responsibility. But it is currently being mistaken as deplorable fact by a mindset steeped in 'how the other half lives', rather than a message 'our world is bleeding'.

Sarah Freeman
azdak@btopenworld.com

Walk Cheerfully, Step Lightly 2008 edition is now available!

Walk Cheerfully, Step Lightly has now been fully updated - both the informative text, the contact list for resources and the carbon calculator. There are also more sections specifically to help green up businesses and offices. I hope you like the new cover!

It is still 50p (plus p&p if posted) to members of LWP or £1 including p&p to non-members. If you want to have a bulk lot to sell on a stall and raise some funds for your group then you can have them on sale or return—we charge 50p each for those you don't return (plus p&p for original parcel unless we can find a handy mutual Friend to deliver by hand or use Friends House as a collecting point) and you can sell them at £1.



You will be pleased to hear it has again been printed at very reasonable cost (45p per copy) by a local social printer (Netherne) who provide employment for disabled people and what's more it was collected by Colin and I on our bikes—4 miles both ways and uphill on the way back. Here are the photos to prove it!



Anne Brewer

Walk Cheerfully, Step Lightly

(with updated calculator for your contribution to climate change)



We can all listen if we will to the sounds of the earth, tuning into it with joy.
(London Yearly Meeting 1988)

Published 2008 by Living Witness Project
Quakers for sustainability

Learning lessons from Dolphins

A lovely story from Planet Ark. March 17th 2008

Moko the dolphin, a regular visitor to the coast of Mahia on the east Coast of New Zealand's North Island, became an instant hero after leading two pygmy whales that had repeatedly stranded into deep water on Monday.

Moko, who had been visiting the beach at Mahia on and off over the summer, arrived at the beach in the nick of time.

The disoriented mother and calf had resisted attempts to herd them out to sea, and kept re-stranding on the beach, to the point where the pair would likely have to be killed.

Then Moko appeared, and came right up to the whales before leading them out to sea.

"Quite clearly the attitude of the whales changed when the dolphin arrived on the scene. They re-

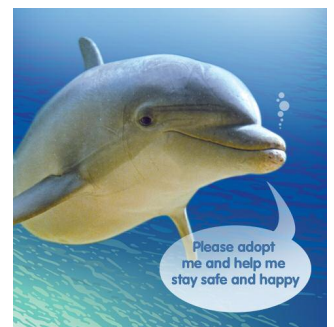
sponded virtually straight away," an observer said. "The dolphin managed in a couple of minutes what we had failed to do in an hour and a half."

The whales had not been sighted again in the area. However Moko had returned and was continuing to play with swimmers near the shore, as she has done for about the past six months.

According to Department of Conservation figures about 700 whales strand on New Zealand beaches every year.

The exact reasons why are not known, but theories include sickness, and sloping sandy beaches interfering with whales' sense of direction.

(from www.adoptadolphin.org.uk)



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

LWP 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 LWP co-ordinators if you would like a workshop or speaker session in your meeting.

The co-ordinator is **Laurie Michaelis**. The office address is Living Witness Project, Friends Meeting House, 43 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LW.

Laurie can also be contacted on ☎ 01865 725 244 or email: laurie@livingwitness.org.uk

The Project has a website www.livingwitness.org.uk, where publications including earthQuaker (colour version!) can be downloaded.

Deadline for the next issue of earthQuaker - 15th August 2008.

Please post or email contributions to the editor, Anne Brewer, at
6 Phoenix Cottages, Chapel Lane, Bookham, Surrey KT23 4QG
or ☎ 01372 456 421/ 0845 456 0334 or email: anne@dorking.quaker.eu.org

All contributions welcome—articles, reports, poems, ideas, letters!

Include your postal address and telephone number or email address. We will publish contributors' contact details unless specifically asked not to, so that members with a shared interest can get in touch directly. We reserve the right to edit but will always try to check substantial edits with the author.

Membership

I wish to join the Living Witness Project as an individual member.

Name:

Address:

Email/phone:

Delete as appropriate—I prefer earthQuaker by post (b&w) / I am happy to access it from www.livingwitness.org.uk (coloured)

I enclose £

Gift Aid declaration (please tick box if appropriate):

[] I would like you to reclaim tax on my donations (you must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations).

Date:

Suggested donation £5.00
(£3.00 for age 18-25);
Free to under 18's.

Please make cheque payable to "Living Witness Project"

and send to:
Living Witness Project
Friends Meeting House
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Oxford OX1 3LW

Quaker green events in 2008

23-26 May Britain Yearly Meeting, Friends House. LWP stall throughout and **Special Interest Group, Drayton House, Drayton Ricardo Lecture Theatre, Sunday 1-2pm**—*Quaker witness to sustainability – time to act!* The Western way of life must change in response to climate change and economic crisis. Friends have particular gifts to offer in the quest for an alternative. Come and find out how you and your meeting can get involved in developing our Quaker witness to sustainable living. See also page 6.

1–3 or 4 August Summer Camp. See adjacent box

5-8 August QPSW All-age Conference *Composting Our Potato Peelings is not enough* at Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick. Booking deadline June 20. Attendance by nomination from Area meetings. Info from: Anne Wilkinson, QPSW, Friends House,

25-29 August Living Witness Project Summer School, Swarthmoor Hall. See page 7

5-7 December Quaker Council for European Affairs Conference in Brussels: *Not privation but appropriate living: An opportunity for Friends to reflect on energy security, climate and conflict*. Details: <http://quaker.org/qcea/Conference2008/>

Summer Camp. Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd or Monday 4th August

Campsite: *Bikeways*, near Beccles in Suffolk, See www.bikeways.org.uk .

Transport links: Rail-links to Beccles, 6 flat miles from Bikeways! Some bus links from station.

Potential activities: permaculture workshop; helping in the garden; constructing a compost loo; visit to farm to see agroforestry in practice; canoeing on the nearby Waveney; biking to the seaside

Cost per person: camping £10 per night (including food). Car parking £5 (for duration of camp)

Booking form from: bryn@brynraven.plus.com or sae to: Bryn Raven, 'Sandlings', Blackheath Rd, Wenhaston, Halesworth, Suffolk. IP19 9HD

On site B and B available—arrange directly with Graham Eliot. Phone 01502 714661. (Cost per night for Band B £18 , less if Bed only). This does not include the cost of food for other meals, which would be £5 per day.



If undelivered please return to:

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