Ludlow Quaker Journal

September/October 2023

This Journal will publish anything that Friends think is of interest; so its range may be very wide. If you find it too long, select only what interests you from the Table of Contents. Please contact Barbara Mark if you would like to have something included or wonder if you have a subject that might be of interest.
It will be published on-line only and will come out when enough articles have been gathered in. Comments and letters to the editor are also welcome.
Do remember if this copy is pdf you can listen to it via Windows 10 'read aloud' option at the top of the sheet.

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Caring for God's Acre, thoughts for the Meeting House, some XR news, new web site for SSCA, Climate Protestors , Book reviews.

DO LOOK ON LUDLOW MEETING WEB SITE FOR ALL THE JOURNALS

Many thanks to everyone who has helped me on this issue.

Climate Vigil

Ludlow Quaker Meeting held a Climate Vigil on 29th September at the Linney, below Ludlow Castle, at 3pm. This was to join many other Quaker Meetings across the country who were also hold Climate Vigils. These were all done during Quaker Week.

It had been agreed at MfWfB on 17th September and it was then taken to a full Town Council meeting, where we were given permission.

We had 22 people attend with representatives from Ludlow 21, XR as well as Methodists and Anglicans.

We spoke about this vigil on Radio Shropshire the Sunday before and the Shropshire Star on-line had a short description of the Climate Vigil, with a photo, in their 5th October publications. Many thanks to them.

Advices and Queries 42 was read out at the Climate Vigil.
We do not own the world,and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will. Show a loving consideration for all creatures, and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibility, with reverence for life. Rejoice in the splendour of God's continuing creation.

There were also several other Ministries during that hour.

It seems to have been well received and we have had a few positive comments.

Christian View point

A word from Friends for the world today
Early Friends were great letter writers. They wrote letters to Kings, Emperors, Governments, other religious groups and to fellow Friends. We cherish these letters for the wisdom they offer us. These letters would have been written at the pace of a quill pen, slowly. We offer part of a letter written by a 17th Century Friend called Isaac Pennington. We suggest you read the meditation at the pace of a quill pen, slowly.
Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another and helping one another up with a tender hand…so watch your hearts and ways; watch one over another. Be gentle and tender.
We do not wish our readers to think this is easy but it is what we feel we are called to do in living the new commandment Jesus gave us in John 13:34 Love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you must love one another.
Ludlow Quaker Meeting
thank you John Crook

The Great North Run completed

by Tom Corke
I decided to do the GNR back in April to support Myeloma UK, as my father Paul Weeden has myeloma and has received two stem cell transplants. Myeloma UK support patients and families with information and work to promote new treatments in the UK.
My training was sporadic, fitting in around the demands of my home life and work. Most of the time motivation didn't come easily. With about 6 weeks to go I decided that I should at least run some distances longer than 5km, so I did a series of runs along the Fife Coastal Path that coincided with a period of warm weather here in Scotland. They were hard work, due to the heat and didn't make me look forward to the GNR. The nearer it got to the run the more nervous I got, partly because I was wondering why I had entered in the first place and the predicted hot weather for the day.
Race day came. I was excited and wanted to get going (partly so I could finish). I lined up on the start line hearing over the loud-speakers about it being Mo Farah's last ever race and then waited for over an hour to cross the start line myself. It was hot and sunny to start with but soon became overcast and more bearable. The showers and jets of water on the course helped cool me down. I was surprised by the number of people lining the course shouting, giving out snacks and generally being very encouraging. The race was hard work and about half way my feet were very sore, but there were plenty of distractions to take my mind off it. I crossed the finish line in 2 hours 32 minutes, which was pleasing, but annoyingly marginally shy of my target.
I was met at the finish by Paul, Rosie and my sons Euan and Ruis. It was great to celebrate with them. We then headed to the Myeloma UK tent where I got lots of snacks and a

welcome massage from a myeloma volunteer. Overall I managed to raise over £2,750 for Myeloma UK. Thanks to all those who have supported me – you can still donate here
After the race the sky turned black, the heavens opened and we all got absolutely soaked. The boys and I had to drive back from Newcastle to Fife that evening, so we headed to the nearest metro alongside 50000 + runners and spectators.
Unfortunately, it was closed due to flooding from the storm, so we tried the ferry instead, but the queue there was a couple of miles long. Luckily after 90 minutes the Metro re-opened, we got picked out of the queue by the staff and taken to the front as I had my young children with me. My cold and wet sons were delighted to be prioritised. We got back to our car at 7pm and eventually got home about 11pm, very tired, in need of our beds and sleep. Altogether a special day and one to remember for so many different reasons.

Quaker Truth and Integrity Group with Woodbrooke

Webinars on Truth and Integrity in Public affairs

16th November 2023 19:00 – 20:30

Title: Finding Kinder Ground in Politics

What do we mean by "kinder ground" in politics? Does it exist? We are all used to the bear pit in which debates within the House of Commons occur. Is there another way?

As part of our preparation for exploring Truth and Integrity in depth at British Yearly Meeting in July 2024, Woodbrooke is working to support the Quaker Truth and Integrity Group to host a series of webinars.

In this first webinar, Gerald Hewitson, Clerk of the Quaker Truth and Integrity group, will discuss with three MPs, how the work of the House of Commons can be done with kindness, co-operation and compromise.

We will hear from:

1. Phillip Dunne MP – Conservative member for Ludlow
2. Catherine West MP – Labour MP for Brentford and Isleworth
3. We hope to have an MP from the SNP (speaker to be confirmed)

https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/finding-kinder-ground-in-politics/

23rd November 2023 19:00 – 20:30

Title: Building Kinder Ground in Politics

How can we help build kinder ground in politics? How can we build relationships with our local MPs? How do we work with them to foster and strengthen dialogue and enable relationship building across ideological and political divides?

As part of our preparation for exploring Truth and Integrity in depth at British Yearly Meeting in July 2024, Woodbrooke is working to support the Quaker Truth and Integrity Group to host a series of webinars.

In this second webinar, Martina Weitsch of the Quaker Truth and Integrity Group, will lead us to examine what pressures MPs face- from constituents, issue specific groups, and party whips among others- and what kind of engagement they find helpful.

This session follows on from the "*Finding Kinder Ground in Politics*" webinar on 16 November but is a free-standing session.

https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/building-kinder-ground-in-politics

Parmesan cheese ice cream – with fresh ripe conference pears

This may sound odd but it really is delicious, even without the pears, and is very easy to make. The only problem is that conference pears are rarely on sale when they are ripe, so you need to buy the pears about 7/10 days, leaving them in an uncovered bowl, before you make the ice cream.

Ingredients

500g whipping cream
115g granulated sugar (preferably unrefined/cane sugar)
115g parmesan cheese, grated (Parmigiano-Reggiano is best, other parmesan cheeses are too chalky)

Makes about 700ml

Method

Bring the cream to the boil with the sugar, stirring constantly, then remove from the heat and add the grated parmesan cheese, stirring until it melts.
Allow to cool. Then scrape into a plastic container, cover and freeze overnight.

Note: *This is a thick ice that is unsuitable for churning.*

To serve, remove from the freezer and leave uncovered in the fridge for about 25/30 minutes. If you are pairing the ice cream with ripe pears, you may also like to leave the pears in the fridge for 25/30 minutes.

Conkers

It's conker time. What do
you remember?
Collecting more than you needed .
Making the hole with a skewer.
Problems getting the string
through, a good knot below.
Then all set for a knock out.

At Millingtons, in Shrewsbury, the drive has an avenue of Horse Chestnut trees. Most elderly. Two have had to be cut down sadly since I've been here
At this time of year there are lots of conkers. Everyone collects some to keep away the spiders. Not had any conker competitions that I know of.
Unfortunately many are left on the ground , their Chestnut coats glowing and the inside of the shells silky cream when first open. I feel sad that every year the trees produce these wonders and they get squashed by the vehicles using the drive. All that energy. Yet they still do and it and in Spring we see their lively flowered like pink and white candles.

Thank you Julia

Photo of Millingtons

A message from the Open Democracy group.

‘The UK’s arms export system is based on the principle of avoiding a clear risk of British weapons being used to commit serious violations of international law. There’s mounting evidence that Israel’s military conduct in Gaza during the last week has included indiscriminate attacks which have killed and injured large numbers of Palestinian civilians.

The government needs to follow its own rules and urgently suspend export licences for all arms transfers to Israel that risk being used to commit further unlawful attacks.”

Francesca Albanese, the UN's special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, warned last week that "Palestinians are in grave danger of mass ethnic cleansing".

openDemocracy asked the Department of Business and Trade if it would suspend and review its export licences for arms to Israel in light of the reported civilian killings. In response, the department said the licences were "under continual review" but there were "no immediate plans to stop arms export licences to Israel".

Emily Apple, media coordinator for the Campaign Against the Arm Trade, said: "It is disgusting that the Department for Business and Trade is refusing to suspend and review arms licences to Israel given the mounting evidence of war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza.'

Welcome to our Autumn 2023 Newsletter of South Shropshire Interfaith group

This group held a silent Peace Vigil on Saturday, 21st October, between 12.15 and 12.45pm gathering at the Auction Yard in Craven Arms, SY7 9BW.

Other news here happened before Hamas went into Israel.

The month of Muharram (September) is the start of the new calendar for Muslims, and many Muslims give a special greeting to one another as proved from the Prophetic narrations and greet each other with blessings. It would also be the norm to cook a lovely dish on the 10th Muharram after a day's fast, and many Muslims also make a new year's resolution.

Many of the local Muslim ladies got together for a picnic in Carding Mill Valley to celebrate.

September / October is the busiest time in the Jewish Calendar which is lunar with 12 months of 28 Days and a four yearly extra month to catch up.

The 2023 season of 'High Holy Days' starts with the Eve of New Year 'Erev Rosh Hashanah' followed by, for some, one day and for others two days of Rosh Hashanah. The Jewish New Year whilst a celebration, has unlike the secular New Year, a more serious side when Jews consider that during the following ten days of repentance the Almighty notionally sits with pen poised before completing an entry in the Book of Life.

Their behaviour is held in the balance until that write up on Yon Kippur, the Day of Atonement, which is a 25 hour total fast day and ends with the blowing of the Shofar, the ram's horn, and then we ask for forgiveness of sins against G*D such as breach of the Sabbath or Kosher food laws- and for forgiveness of sins against our fellows.

We must obtain that forgiveness from them before asking for it from the Almighty. Both occasions are times for family and community to be together in the home and in the Synagogue.
Yom Kippur is immediately followed by Succoth or Tabernacle seen partly as a Harvest Festival but more importantly we are reminded of the precariousness of life and that we are not all so fortunate as to have a roof over our heads.
Observant Jews will live or at least take meals in a temporary booth or outdoor structure which must have at least part of the roof open to the elements, bringing to mind the wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt prior to the gift of Torah to the world by G*D via Moses.
This then brings us to the final celebration which is SIMCHAT TORAH 'Rejoicing of the Law'. The Torah – Genesis to Deuteronomy – is read in Synagogue over twelve months with the end of Deuteronomy read and immediately started again with the beginning of Genesis.
The Scrolls are paraded and danced within the Synagogue, and it is considered a significant honour to be asked to read wither section.

We now all wait.

As this goes to press over 5,000 people of Gaza have been killed in, what appears to be, indiscriminate bombing.

Friends House put out an excellent statement when the war started. Do look at it if you have not seen it.

4 hostages have been released and some water and food is at last getting into Gaza.

People are asking what are the Israeli Government plans after they have destroyed Hamas. I am inclined to agree with the UN in the article by Humans Rights Group and fear Ethnic Cleansing.
Will the Palestinians ever get back to their homes in Gaza, or will it all be bulldozed and more Israeli homes go up on top of the rubble of war?

The seeds of war

Last Sunday at our small Leominster QM I read from A&Q 31 as a response to the troubles in our wider world. The sentence: "Search out whatever in your own way of life may contain the seeds of war." has stayed with me. We may take it as a personal call to look at our own actions and I pondered on where in my life I can or do avoid the seeds of war. Ensuring my money is not involved in violence or the manufacture of weapons is my starting point. Day to day, I bank with the Cooperative bank which has an ethical policy avoiding investing in funding companies making armaments. I shop for food at local shops or at the coop supermarket. This is part of ethical money management and there are tools to help. The magazine Ethical Consumer has been providing detailed information about consumer goods for many years helping to guide one to the most ethical manufacturer. A specific area where I have been able to avoid conflict minerals is using a Fairphone rather than a standard smart phone. So far this is the only piece of electronic eqipment that has such good credentials. When I earned enough to invest I put my money into ethical investment – this started with Friends Provident, originally a Quaker enterprise. There are independent financial advisors who specialise in ethical investment and likewise brokers.

The seeds of war lie in poverty and inequality so can I help in this aspect ?– I suppose donating to charities such as Oxfam is my way of supporting work towards a fairer world, to improving education and food security.
I am sure there are many other ways to work for peace – we all have a responsibility to act where we can.
While I am pondering on these challenges, world leaders are trying to calm the tension between Israel and Gaza – I hope when you read this the situation will have improved.
Thank you Annie

A contemplation on wisdom offered by the season of Autumn.

Autumn,
The season of vulnerability,
When the great arms of oak
Stretch their summer leaves
To the wild October winds.

All that has been life and green
Is stripped from strong trees,
And the tall, wide branches
Seem to be deathly wounded.

Across the lawns in layers
Lie the near-dead leaves;
Onto the forest floors they fall
As if to say: “all is lost”.

This is the season of vulnerability
When trees open wide to wounding,
When all the summer security
Is given away to another season.

Wiser are the trees than humans
Who clutch small arms round self,
Shielding their fragile hearts
And stifling future springtimes.

Joyce Rupp

Thank you Colin

Tax Justice (campaigning group**)**

The news from Tax Justice was focused on work they have been doing at the recent Party Political conferences.

There is a lot of energy around many organisations at the moment about raising taxes on the super rich as well as companies that have been given quite a generous tax advantages over the years. This does include companies like Amazon. There is a campaign going on at the moment about demanding Amazon pays its fair share of taxes around the world. There is a petition to sign for this work. Look at the web site.

Tax Justice has 6 wealth Tax policies and also is also finding information about tax fraud which escalated over COVID. It is an interesting campaign body to follow.

Ludlow Fairtrade Town Group

- The group is reinventing itself without the significant presence of a regular supply of Fairtrade and fairly traded products to sell now that Traidcraft has ceased to exist. However,St Laurence continues to run (led by a member of our Fairtrade group) a regular Sunday Fairtrade stall on Sundays with goods supplied through other ethical trading organisations.

- A successful Slow Fashion stall was run at the 2023 Green Festival which provided lots of information on the impact that clothes manufacture around the world has on suppliers and makers and on the environment - who made my clothes?' and 'What's in my clothes?'

- We have a Fairtrade rep appointed to the Chamber of Commerce committee.

- We are gradually making progress on the next version of the Fairtrade Shopping Guide for which we have funding from the Town Council. This will include local stockists of Fairtrade Certified products and also fairly traded goods to include crafts and clothing. It will be produced as an online document and a printed leaflet – hopefully by spring 24.

- The Fairtrade flower bed revamp (next to cannon outside the castle) has been completed thanks to work carried out through the Town Council and Guerilla Gardeners (a team of dedicated volunteer gardeners) and to grants from Ludlow 21 and Ludlow Chamber.

- Local schools are being re-contacted during this term as the new academic year gets underway. We have already established good links with a number of both state and private schools in and around Ludlow and have run assemblies and other learning opportunities, helping children/ students to build on their knowledge of how trade operates and the importance of fair trade in the lives of many communities in the developing world.

- We are planning on running a one off Fairtrade Town stall at the Local to Ludlow Market 10 – 2 on Thursday 23rd November. Fair trade crafts/ Christmas gifts will be on sale and there'll also be an emphasis on highlighting products grown in developing countries such as coffee and cocoa (chocolate) ***absolutely endangered because of climate change.*** Engaging with members of the public is essential in promoting fair trade and all it stands for, especially the link between trade justice and climate justice,
  Proceeds will go to Transform Trade.

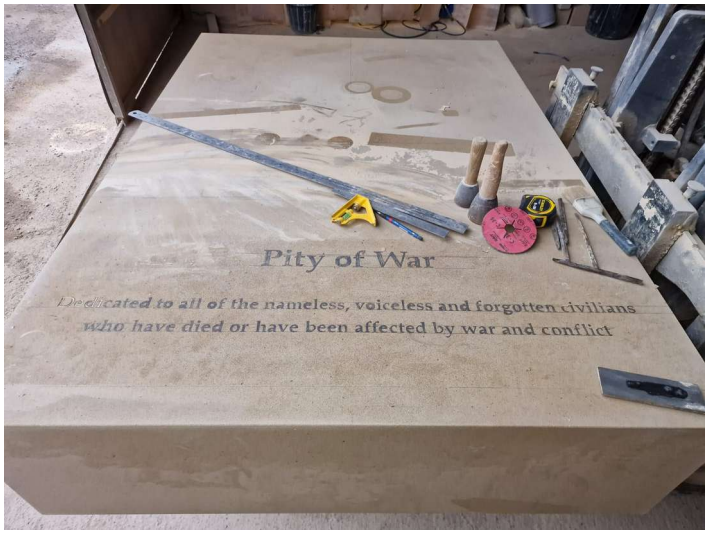
  Our group is busy with other aspects of our lives and often cannot do as much as we want to. However, we pack a punch and manage to stay reasonably active in the fair trade scene,
  Next year the Fairtrade Foundation will be celebrating 40 years since its formation. This is a considerable achievement and will be marked by a later than previously

celebration of Fairtrade Fortnight, 9-22nd September. **Keep a note in next year's diary!** Thank you Liz Taylor

Quaker Peacebuilding Perspectives

I emailed the Quaker Peacebuilding Perspectives group after reading their article in 6th October 2023 'The Friend' publication. Did any of you see the article? I was very impressed by the ideas they were sharing. They gave me an open opportunity to join their regular zoom meetings.
On Thursday 19th I did join them. It was fascinating. It was quite a small group, 8 in all, but there were 4 Quaker friends from America. These American friends were asking for help on the wording of a couple of sentences to send to the American Friends Committee on National legislation about the Israeli and Palestinian situation. I felt honoured to be involved in that.
They had said they greatly welcome any opportunity to build on wider support from like-minded groups and individuals. I hope to share the Pity of War project with them in the future.
So if anyone wants to know more please get in touch.

Pity of War Project
Here is a photo of plinth stone with the dedication which should be placed at the NMA around 26th October. Soon after the plinth is up the sculpture will go up as well. There have been a few more obstacles with the NMA but Peter has managed to work through them.



Marquette at Hereford Cathedral

We also have news that a maquette is to be put on display at Hereford Cathedral from 25th October until 11th November. So if you get a chance do visit Hereford and see a miniature of what will be going up at NMA. It is very moving. Thanks go to Jeff Beatty for organising this.

Environmental News

Caring for God's Acre news

We have just produced as new Fungi Spotter's Guide – featuring the most common fungi you can find in old burial grounds - free to download from our website.

Have you ever marvelled at the sudden appearance of fungi, especially during the cool and damp autumns? It's like stumbling upon a secret world. What's astonishing is that there are over 15,000 different fungi species in the UK alone!

Churchyards, cemeteries and other types of old burial ground happen to be excellent habitats for fungi and there are a few reasons for this. When you step into a churchyard you may notice a different microclimate compared to the surrounding areas. Buildings, stone walls, and trees can create ideal conditions for certain fungi species to thrive by forming pockets of higher humidity, cooler temperatures, and reduced wind. The peaceful nature of churchyards, with limited human activity, also helps fungi to flourish without disruption.

The grassland in old burial grounds has been relatively undisturbed and has not been fertilised or treated with chemicals, making it ideal for species such as colourful waxcaps. Waxcaps have fabulous names such as ballerina, goblet, spangle and parrot. They look like jewels scattered across the grass.

Fungi play a pivotal role in breaking down dead organic matter, such as fallen leaves, dead wood and decaying plants. Churchyards, with their wealth of organic material, provide a constant and abundant source of nutrients for these fungi.

Some fungi form symbiotic relationships with the roots of trees and other plants. In churchyards, you often find old, mature trees, which serve as hosts for mycorrhizal fungi in their root systems – a harmonious dance beneath the surface. Churchyards differ in terms of fungal diversity and abundance. Several factors, such as their geographical location, local climate, and soil composition, shape the kinds of fungi you come across in a particular spot.

The next time you find yourself leisurely wandering through a churchyard or cemetery during the cool embrace of autumn, seize the opportunity to spot some fungi and marvel at these often underappreciated organisms that play a vital role in enriching ecosystems.

Andrea
Andrea Gilpin andrea@cfga.org.uk
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

New Ideas for Ludlow Meeting House

Lots has been going on with discernment about our Meeting House. The minute below gives an idea where we are now.

Mins from Meeting for Worship for Business on 3rd September

23/36. A Sustainable Meeting House – an opportunity to work with South Shropshire Climate Action.

Paul Weeden and John Cherry have been in discussion with SSCA to explore the possibility of collaboration on the use of the Meeting House as an exemplar of their work on retrofitting old buildings. A paper explaining this has been circulated with the Agenda and is filed with these Minutes. Paul has spoken to us today to explain what is involved for us at this early stage.
We agree to explore the mutual benefits that a collaboration between Ludlow Local Meeting and South Shropshire Climate Action Group could bring in retrofitting Ludlow Quaker Meeting House. The twin purposes of this collaboration would be to improve the sustainability of the Meeting House and to produce a case study / exemplars for use by SSCA on the processes and issues involved with retrofitting.
We ask Paul and John to continue these discussions and report back to us in due course.

Looking back at the sustainability work done at Ludlow Meeting House is a bit difficult. I will do my best!
The building had wall insulation fitted in early 2000 and draft proofing was done in 2010. We had a condensing boiler in 2011. During this time the beginnings of a sustainability group was forming. However in 2011 at Yearly Meeting the Minute 36, called the Canterbury Commitment, called on all Quakers to do more for our planet. Meeting for Suffering sent our forms to find out how Meeting Houses were doing on this ecological commitment.
That is when an official sustainability committee was created. Jamie Wrench, Anne Adams, Brendan Sheehy, David Milner and myself were on this.
By 2013 Ludlow Meeting had a stall at the Green Festival and had a representative on Ludlow 21 group. In 2014 Area Meeting set up a sustainability group with members from every Local Meeting. A year after that it held a Zero Carbon Britannia conference which was very successful.

2015 Disinvestment was happening and we got involved in that. LED lighting was also now available. Brendan and Jamie left . Jamie was very involved with the Stretton Climate Care group, and Jonathan Catlin, John Ericson and Vicky Argyll joined the group.

In 2016 we produced a recipe book, and Colin was monitoring our gas and electricity use and David Milner our car use. By 2017 Susie Green and John Cherry joined the group, John had sadly died and Jonathan and Vicky had moved away.

2018 saw the committee become a group again to reduce the work load of the Nominations committee. David and Barbara joined the Marches Energy Environmental Network coordinated by Isabel Carter from the Diocesan Office. Murri and Ian took their place on the sustainability group.

Here are some thoughts from Murri

- a discussion on climate change led by a facilitator
- think small
- a sense of light footsteps on Mother Earth 24/7
- insulation for the Mtg Hse: windows, doors, roof (the walls were done in my time on Premises committee)
- look at and review the new plan for phase two with fresh eyes..poss. a professional designer

- double doors at entrance to keep in warmth
- better ventilation
- reusable spray bottles and cleaning fluids
- source locally and sustainable
- review packaging coming into Meeting House & make better choices
- enquire with local Fairtrade regarding their packaging
- tree planting in our garden
- Edible plants
- wildlife options to help bees, birds, bugs
- Car sharing
- monitoring travel (not just to mtg. hse)
- monitoring our energy meters

We've heard all of these before, but hopefully, with fresh eyes.

We encourage Friends to wear a sweater/wool socks rather that up the thermostat

live lightly, live adventurously, live fully

thank you Murri

XR news, March from South Hessary Tor to Duchy offices.

On Saturday 30th September, over 300 people gathered to protest, dance, and sing on Dartmoor. We believe coming together this way is one of the best ways to create change, because community is at the heart of everything.

The day started with our wonderful Emma Smart reading out our five demands for Prince William:

1. Restore the rainforest
2. Restore the bogs & heaths

3. Put life & colour back in the fields, restore the meadows
4. Bring back wild animals
5. Pay farmers to produce nature as well as food

Together, we marched up to South Hessary Tor with music thanks to Kimwei, and fellow musicians Christopher Dance and Lisa Rowe, where we gathered for storytelling and more music. Lisa Schneidau, a local storyteller, told us the story of Old Crockern, a guardian spirit of the moor which led into a performance by Mayday Morris.

Tony Whitehead, local ecologist and environmental campaigner, spoke of the vital connection between nature restoration and the worsening climate crisis, with particular relevance to these lands. And after descending back down the hill, we lay down the gauntlet down in front of the Duchy offices.

The incredible 13ft gauntlet was made by the Lost Giant Makers. Check them out on instagram: @thelostgiantmakers

The wonderful Emma Eberhardt from Flame brought the voice of young farmers to the event, and Guy Shrubsole reminded us why temperate rainforests are just so awe-inspiring. Holly Ebony, a local musician, brought us together in dream-like song, and Mayday Morris and Kimwei closed the day with more music and dance.

Our petition of over 76,000 signatures, organised by ourselves and 38 Degrees, was finally delivered to the doors of the Duchy office.

The day was incredibly moving and joyous for us all. Particularly from seeing so many people of all different ages bringing their energy and their love of nature and the moorlands.

This joy and enthusiasm was infectious and helped us get national media coverage in the BBC, Telegraph, and Guardian!

New Web site for SSCA

South Shropshire Climate Action's (SSCA) new website gives the people, communities and businesses of South Shropshire up to date tips on how to reduce their carbon footprints, save money, promote their health and wellbeing and enhance the natural environment.

We invite you to take a look at the website via this link (or you can cut and paste the link into your browser https://www.southshropshireclimateaction.org/)

SSCA published its "Next Steps" Climate Action Plan in 2021 to help the Ludlow Constituency reach net zero by 2030. The website helps to put that carbon reduction plan into action providing information and advice tailored to Shropshire.

No one needs to be convinced of the seriousness of the climate emergency, but much more help is needed to know what to do about it, and this website is focused on the actions we can all take, as individuals, communities, schools, town and parish councils and businesses. There are four main themes: energy & buildings, land & biodiversity, transport, and reuse – repair – recycle, each featuring a wealth of useful information, toolkits, videos and local examples to inspire you.

If you want to find help near at hand, there are links to the wide range of groups and activities already available in Shropshire. These include local repair cafés and climate action groups, household energy surveys provided by Lightfoot, Stretton Climate Care and Marches Energy Agency, Save Our Shropshire's carbon literacy workshops, and the many organisations supporting Shropshire's wildlife. By signing up to SSCA's newsletter we can also keep you fully informed of the opportunities happening locally including the latest news of forthcoming events. By working together, sharing our resources and ideas, we can make a real difference.

We welcome any feedback and suggestions as we continue to develop the site. Please email Nick and Fiona at ssca@mea.org.uk.

Best wishes

Fiona and Nick

Protest against Oil

Midlands XR group have some local events. They are joining a regular last Saturday of the month, water monitoring group in The Wyre Forest on 28th October and doing a Banner drop over the river Severn in Worcester on 29th October. They have an email group if you want to know everything they are doing.

Greta Thunberg has been busy again. She was arrested once outside the Energy Forum in London Park Lane on 18th October and again after that showing solidarity with the people of Gaza.

On a more positive note reading a recent Physics World there is news that 130 direct air capture (DAC) plants are to be built world wide to capture Carbon directly from the air. In US Occidental Petroleum is building one in Texas and a research company is building another in Louisiana. This is a 10 year plan. It will not be the answer of course as oil, as well as other things taken from the earth, will run out, but it may give humanity a breathing space to take long term action. Which, of course, governments should have done a long time ago!

Book Review

Gathering our Senses by Maggie Taylor-Sanders

I decided to re-read this book as I bought it it a while ago. I was quite surprised to see it was published in 2014, nearly 10 years ago!
Maggie has a clear vision of how humanity can not go on living the way we have been, as we strip the earth of everything, and has a proposal to make on how humans could live. She understands why humanity finds it so difficult to accept the obvious but suggests we listen to our hearts and then we could learn to observe what is around us much more easily.

‘ Thankfully the wisest among us have long since realised that at the heart of all religions is the same universal expression on human understanding of what it means to be human and how to be the best sort of human we are capable of being.’ page 91.

Looking back at creation she sees a vision of a new way of living in harmony with the natural world and ourselves. Can it happen? Well, we are always being told to imagine what we want before we set off on any journey. Here Maggie is doing this.

Sacred Nature by Karen Armstrong

I have not read anything by Karen before but I understand from Maureen that she was an excellent writer, and I was not disappointed.
Karen has an incredible knowledge of many of the worlds faiths, and in this book she examines their deep commitment to the natural world.
‘ The Qur’an reminds us of an important truth; the natural order cannot be sustained without balance.’ page 132
About Kenosis in the Greek world she says this is an ‘emptying of self’
‘ From a very early period. Kenosid was regarded as crucial not only to people’sspiritual life but to the entire world order’. Page 101

So if humanity can let go the egotistic life, that we have been told is the way to live, and revisit loosing our selfishness and re-discovering living as community, humanity may survive.

It was an excellent book and I was educated in so many ways about other religions and their belief in the wonder of creation. I could do with reading it again and again because I will never remember it all.