Ludlow Quaker Journal

September/October 2024

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.

Contents:

page 2. Meeting House Open Day and other exhibitions
page 5. Peter Higgins
page 7. Quakers on YouTube
page 8. Poems and prayers
page 9. Book reviews
page 10. Ukrainian Thank you party
page 13. Environmental Issues pages
Ludlow Quaker Meeting sustainability; Life on Earth, a run-down by Green Peace; Caring for God's Acre news sheets; South Shropshire Climate Action News. South Shropshire Wildlife News; National March in London for clean water.

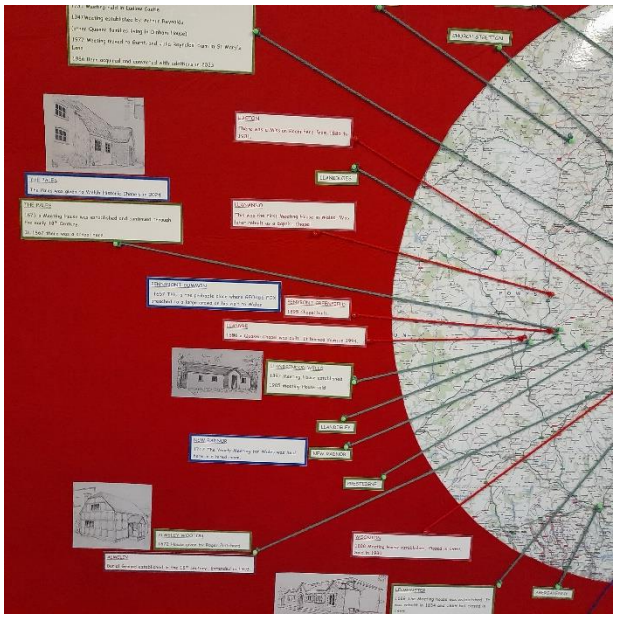
DO LOOK ON LUDLOW MEETING WEB SITE FOR ALL THE JOURNALS

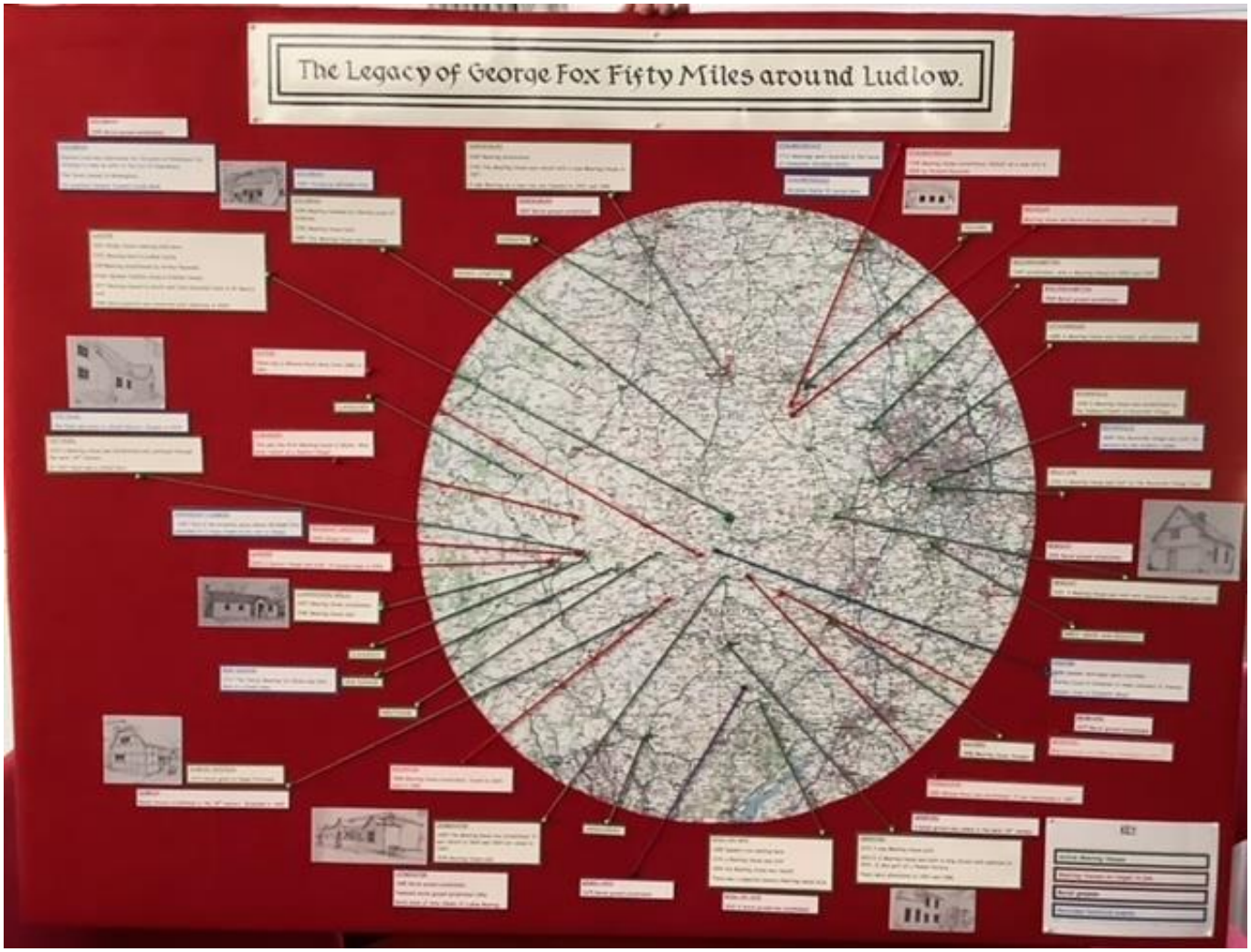
Many thanks to everyone who has helped me on this issue.

Open House

Ludlow Quaker Meeting House was opened to the public on Thursday 3rd October, during Quaker Week. On display there were a volume of books containing all of George Fox's Journal writings. Other informative books about George Fox were also available.

On the hallway display board was a large map where information about George Fox's travels around this area was displayed.





Please note the items with red strings represent early Quaker activity ie time of George Fox or soon after. (But not necessarily involving Fox himself.) The Green strings are for Quaker activity today.

It was lovely weather, and I know of 11 visitors who came to the Meeting House; many of whom were very complimentary.

Going along side the open day there was an exhibition in Ludlow Library about Quaker history and a display in Castle bookshop.

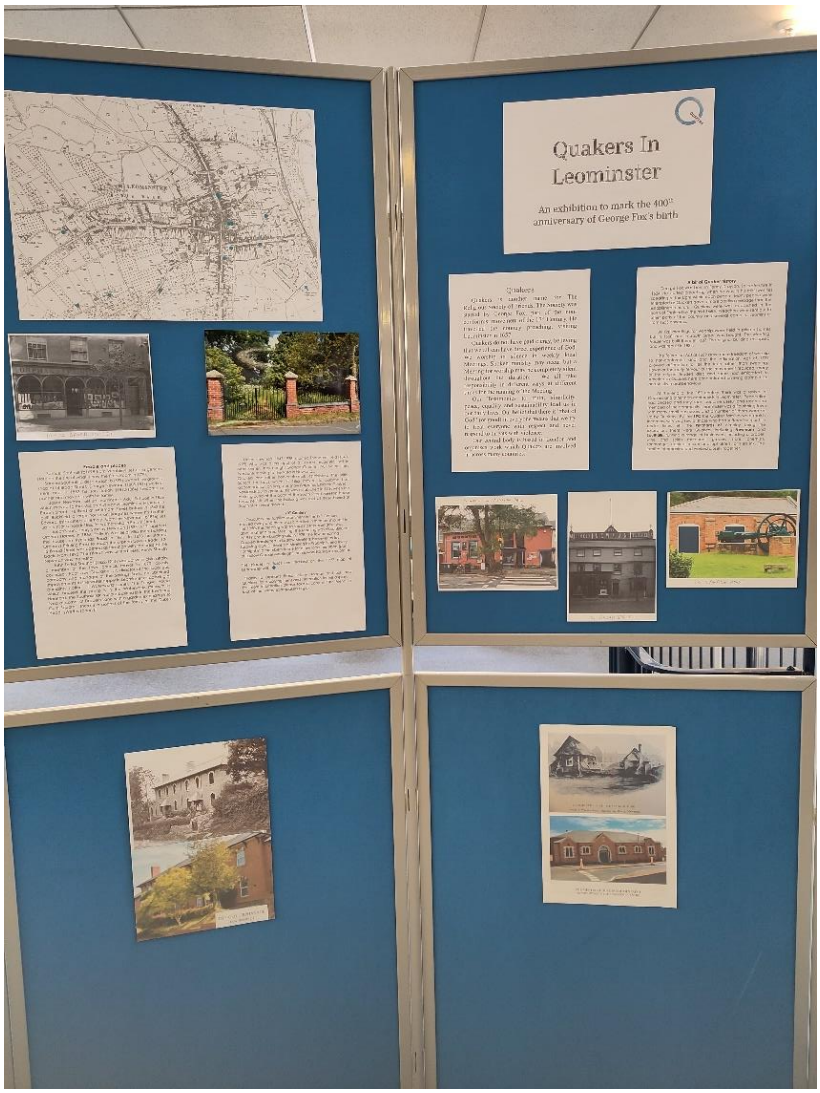
Bridget wrote

It was Ian Smith's idea that we asked Stanton of Castle Books if he would allow a display of some Quaker Books in his window during Quaker week. Some suitable books were acquired from the Quaker Bookshop in Friends' House and duly delivered, together with an explanatory notice about George Fox's anniversary. To our great delight some of the books were sold and we needed to replenish the window display, which was done with some duplicate copies from the library. Interestingly the most expensive books sold were *George Fox's Journal*, *George Fox and Early Quaker*

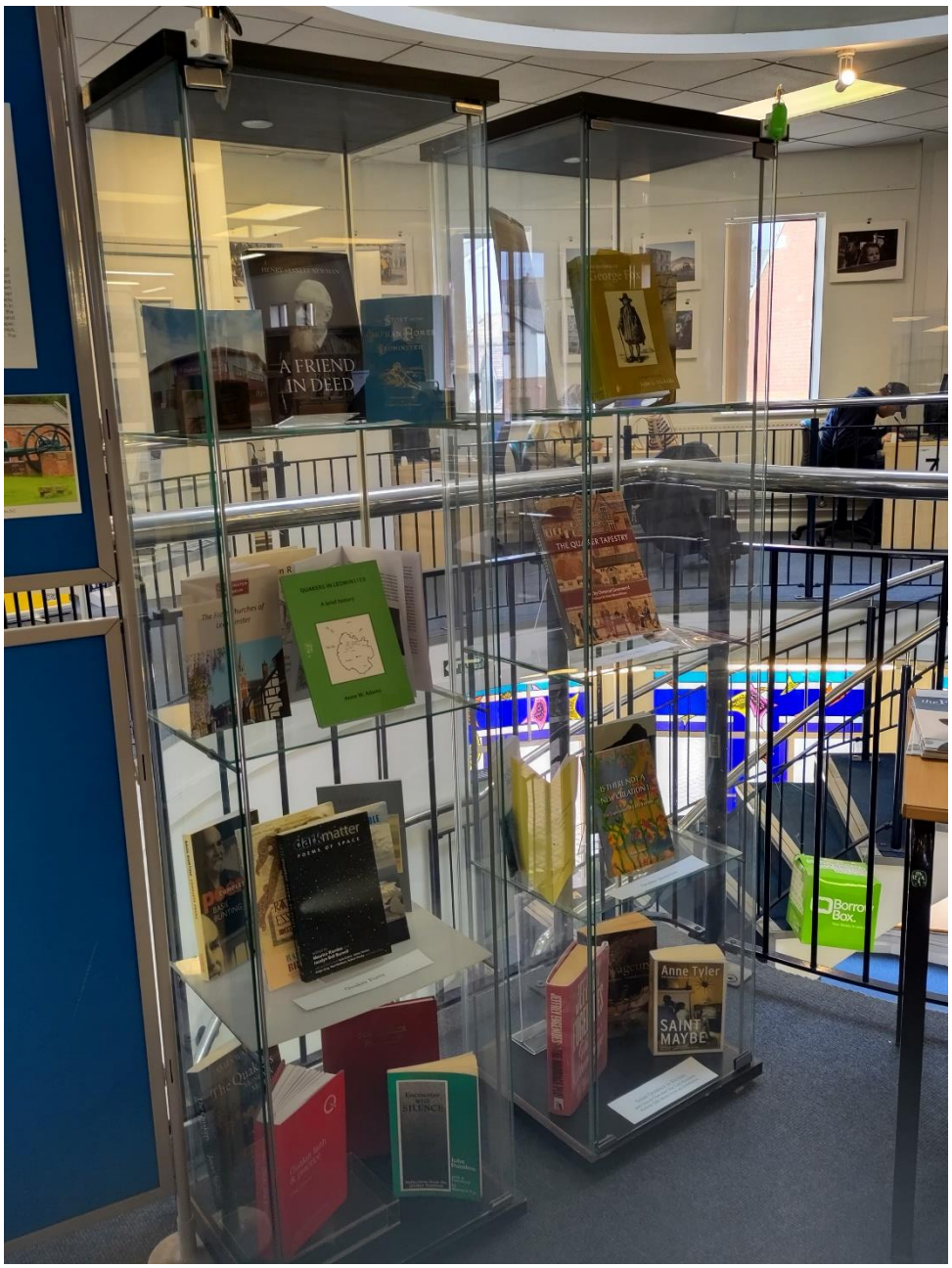
Culture, Quaker Spirituality, and George Fox and the Quakers. Also sold was *Chocolate Wars* by Deborah Cadbury. Perhaps not the most Quakerly title, but a book which demonstrates the variety of Quaker connections. We understand from Stanton that the display aroused considerable interest.
Thank you for this report Bridget.

Leominster Library display

Starting on 28th September a display was put up in Leominster Library. This was also following the history of the beginning of Quakerism and about the Quaker Meeting House in Leominster.



Thank you Annie Wood for sharing this news and photos



This exhibition is still up.

Peter Higgins

There was a full Meeting House on 20th September when Ludlow Quakers held a Memorial Service for Peter Higgins.

Friends Pauline Taylor and Lloyd Wilis came from Bognor Meeting where Peter used to be the warden. They stayed over night, it was such a long way for them, and were

much appreciative of the Memorial. Annie and Colin Holliday from Littlehampton Meeting also joined us as did Karen and Judy from Wrexham Meeting.

There were people from Ludlow with us, several who knew Peter as a dog walker and some who lived in the same sheltered housing complex.

There were friends of his from the Ukrainian Support group, including Erica Garner, who is the organiser for the refugee group. Irina, from the Ukraine, spoke passionately about Peter's care and commitment to them. Both she and Erica shared their tears with us.

Also joining us, which was very special, was Peter's niece Jo Greenless, who had brought photos of Peter which she put on displayed for us all to see.

Here are a three she has sent me to share here:

Peter and Jo

Maggie

I have been told that the nurse, who has taken Maggie to live with her and her family, took her to see Peter just before he died. That would have meant a lot to Peter.

Peter Higgins

Peter was a very generous man giving both time and support to people both within the Meeting and the wider Ludlow community. He was a bedrock who offered his time and resources to support the life of the Meeting. His experience in a number of different Meetings and at Friends House was invaluable in providing a different perspective. His cooking was much appreciated and his cakes were legendary. Regrettably there were times when his good intentions exceeded his ability to deliver. I tended to avoid lifts in his car as riding with Peter proved to be a scary experience.

I worked with Peter as assistant treasurer and treasurer for Ludlow Quaker Meeting over the last few years. We developed a good working relationship despite having different approaches to these roles. He was a knowledgeable treasurer, efficient, opinionated and often long winded in expressing his strong views about the way that Quakers should conduct their business. He was a force of nature who challenged both Ludlow LM and Southern Marches Area Meeting to think carefully about truth, honesty and transparency. He believed he was right and others were wrong but at the end of a 'discussion' he would often recognise that his view or approach was not necessarily shared and he would concede that there might be a different way forward – even if he continued to hold his own view and found it difficult to let go.

Peter adored his dog Maggie and the walks and activities they shared. His holidays usually involving fishing were carefully planned and I admired Peter's ability to continue camping into his seventies. I miss Peter – he has both enriched and challenged me in recent years.

Many thanks for this Paul

Peter was an energetic force within the committee that arranged the new buildings we had at Ludlow Meeting. This photo from 2019.

Quaker on Youtube

I wonder if any of you can remember when I wrote about an American YouTube channel in this Journal just before Covid? The You Tube channel was called *QuakerSpeak*. There was a new video posted regularly here and they were very interesting. I had a couple of feed back messages about this article, which was rather nice.
These You Tube videos can help those new to Quakers or those looking for information about Quakerism to find out a bit more in a very human and personal way.
Well, I have just read something about a UK based Quaker You Tube platform , in The Friend publication of 27th September 2024. It is under the Q Eye section at the back. The You Tube channel is run by Ollie Rowe and called *Quake it up*. He has been doing these videos for over 2 years now, every two weeks. He has done it for those new to Quakers. He has over 60 videos to look at and these include book revues, interviews, some on the history and theology of Quakerism, but lots with interesting twists. One of the ones I looked at was the Armoured Bears.
I would recommend a delve into his work.
I am very impressed by a young attender taking on such a commitment, and task, to help us all reflect on Quakerism . Long may he continue.

Barbara Mark

Poems

Affirmation

Let the days be warm
Let the fall be long
Let every child inside me find her shoes
and dance wildly, softly, toward the world.
I have a story I have never told;
Once, when I was small
I looked up at the sky and saw the wind
and knew I was a dancer made of song.

This is from Joseph Fasano who's mother wrote this at the age of 92 and with dementia using 'poetry prompts'.

Draw Breath

Breathe in the quiet purpose of this place;
Through outward stillness, seek a calm within.
Here we can find forgiveness and forgive;
Here feel the healing miracle begin.

Breathe out the busy world, the teeming mind,
The follies, fears and failures of the week;
Breathe out contention, pettiness and pride,
And wait in trust for "that of God" to speak.

Breathe in communion, friend with quiet friend,
Each drawing closer in this timeless hour;
As all our different needs and gifts are drawn
To the one source of comfort, love and power.

Breathe out at last, to God, the heart's full thanks
That we have seen this vision, known this grace;
Renewed through love, let us that love extend
Through all our daily life beyond this place.

Geoffrey Weeden

see also https://kingstonquakers.org/files/geoffrey_weeden_poetry_prize_booklet_may_2024.pdf

Thank you for sharing these Jamie

A poem, of many, about the situation in Gaza

The Abys of Hate

When 'they' left the border unguarded
the World ended.
Death and injury
was the only life.
Movement, trauma, rubble;
blood covered rubble;
Everywhere.
There is hunger and thirst,
which will never be satisfied.
Annon

Book Revue

Elizabeth Hooton: A Mindful Consideration by David Morris

It is difficult to know where to begin in a description of the booklet. It was a good read. It was enthralling. It covered some ground about the beginnings of Quakerism that I already knew but gave me an insight into a lot that I did not know.

The booklet started from a play by the Journeymen Theatre called 'Lover of Souls' about the life of Elizabeth Hooton.

It looks at the journey George Fox took to find the revelations that led him to start this movement, which can explain much. The belief the revelation of finding 'God' was personal and that it did not come from knowledge or study but from inside, through stillness and the experience of the spirit. It was from the 'heart' not the 'head'. This was not very acceptable to the culture of Christianity at the time.

The story of the struggles so many Quakers have had, as the group, which grew into a stabilise community is very interesting.

Living in the Mystery: Between Head and Heart
By Jan Arriens

Jan, from Clun Meeting, is a highly respected Friend, highly intelligent and articulate. His book may raise some eyebrows but it is an honest and brave attempt to explain his experiences. Anyone who has had a psychic , or mysterious, experience in their lives will understand this book and, I think, get a lot from it. Those who haven't had these experiences could find it interesting to read Jan's descriptions and learn a bit more insight.

He starts by giving us a picture of himself, from his Dutch parents and secondary schooling in Australia where he was effected by the intensity of Methodists fundamentalists. After university, where his view was changed from an atheist to a much deeper understanding of the mysteries of life, he became an Australian diplomat.

Visiting a Quaker Meeting, just to see what it was like, changed everything. He had found a 'home', where ones inner experiences were the most important dimension of a religious life.

His work with prisoners, especially on death row in USA, taught Jan the resilience of humanity and how so much good can emanate from those who society has rejected. The depth of Jan's spiritual experience cascades out of this book.

Thankyou party by our Ukrainian friends

On Saturday 19th October the Ukrainian group, who have been using our Quaker Meeting House for over 2 years now, invited us to a Party to thank us for sharing our Meeting House with them.

They cooked us an amazing variety of Ukrainian dishes. Here are some photos of the afternoon.

Yum!

Time for a cup of tea.

Working in the kitchen

A chat in the garden.

We had a wonderful time and had some lovely conversations. The children have grown up so much in two years and we were told have settled in well. But there is great sadness still to see the suffering in Ukraine and feel hopeless for the future of Ukraine.

Environmental Issues

Work of the sustainability group with South Shropshire Climate Action Group.

The Sustainability group brought its last report arising from an Action Research project with SSCA for Retrofitting the Quaker Meeting House to Meeting for Worship for Business on 8th September. There was also a request to organise a Climate Fresk that has been organised for Wednesday 6th November (10.00 to 13.00). This will be an opportunity to share thoughts and ideas about changes.

Two surveys have been commissioned to better inform our thinking. A survey by Severn Wye Energy Agency produced a guide on how Ludlow Meeting House could become more sustainable with some costings and potential savings. The Quinquennial report from W.B.Morgan, also gave us costings so we now have a clearer view of the Meeting's choices.

As Area Meeting treasurers had requested a 5-year plan of spending it seemed a good time to look at a 5 year framework for what Ludlow Friends could do to improve the Meeting House and make the building more sustainable. This would be

part of our spending plans. A further benefit has been that AM treasurers have agreed that sustainability planning should be paid for from the AM property fund.

The expenditure could be small or large depending on the commitment of friends. At this moment no one is sure how much the new Charity, Crynwyr Cymru - Quakers in Wales (Cymar), will support sustainability work but SMAQM has recommended that it should be part of any planned work in line with Quaker concern for the environment. Meanwhile, every Local Meeting needs to look at its own funds and fund-raising abilities.

Here is the chart which was shared at MfWfB (with slight amendments).

Works to improve the building / increase accessibility	
Accessible toilet – conversion of existing outside toilet with entrance from old children's room. It has been suggested the garden side of this toilet would be a good location for the installation of a new ASHP that could be linked to the underfloor heating in the annex and also into the meeting house.	£15-20,000. Grants may be available to assist with this.
Front door. Move to old children's room. Replace current window with a door. Block up current door making it less draughty	£3-5000
Reconfigure Current Lobby / Old children's room Needs thought as to how this area might be used. Extend the Meeting room / have a separate space / Move Stairs. The accessible toilet could possibly go in this space	£5-10000
Meeting House • Repair crack on garden wall • Install new access doors into garden	 £1000 £3000
No cost / low cost energy saving • Replace fluorescent tube lights with LED bulbs • Circulate air around the meeting house using destratification devices • Ensure thermostats are set correctly / replace thermostat • All users to turn lights / heating off when not needed • Insulate pipework	 £200 Repay in 5 years £200 repay in 4 years £150 repay 3 years Save 5% energy £120 repay 2 years

Sustainability Major expenditure	
Heating / electricity generation	
Boiler replacement can possibly be delayed for a couple of years. May be able to get a grant towards installation	£10000
Heating upgrade replacing radiators and connecting to underfloor heating in annex	£3000
Solar panels potentially mounted on annex roof. Would eliminate the need to reinforce meeting house roof to support panels. Orientation of roof is poor (North West)	£4500
Battery Storage to maximise the use at times when needed rather than exporting to national grid	£3000
Insulation	
Meeting Room	
Roof Several different options 1. Replace roof light and add extra support to the cross beams 2. At AM it was suggested we could block off the mezza-nine floor to reduce heat loss 3. Insulate whole roof 4. Replace whole roof	 £500-£3000 £1000 £5000 £40,000
• Insulate walls put insulation inside the building • Insulate Cellar	£12000 £10000

Earth is 4,600 million years old

If we condense this inconceivable time-span into an understandable concept, we can liken Earth to a person of 46 years of age

Nothing is known about the first 7 years of this person's life, only scattered information exists about the middle years, yet we know that at the age of 42, Earth began to flower.

Dinosaurs and the great reptiles did not appear until one year ago, when the planet was 45.

Mammals arrived only 8 months ago; in the middle of last week apes evolved into ape-like men, and at the weekend the last ice age enveloped the Earth.

Modern man has been around for 4 hours. During the last hour man has discovered agriculture.

The industrial revolution began a minute ago.

During those 60 seconds of biological time, modern man has made a rubbish tip of Paradise.

He has multiplied his numbers to plague proportions, caused the extinction of more than 500 species of animals, ransacked the planet for fuels and now stands on the brink of climate catastrophe and of effectively destroying this oasis of life in the solar system.

Credited to Greenpeace.

CARING FOR GOD'S ACRE

Caring for God's Acre

The Beauty of Lichens

Have you noticed the intricate patterns decorating the stonework in churchyards and cemeteries? These are lichens (generally pronounced 'likens'). Of the 2,000 UK lichen

species, over 700 have been found in burial grounds, many of which are seldom found elsewhere. Lichens are particularly striking in winter when other wildlife fades into the background.
Churchyards and cemeteries are rich in lichens for several reasons.
First, they contain old, exposed stone, often dating back to the 1700s. These ancient stones, including gravestones and boundary walls, are ideal for lichen growth.
Second, the variety of stone types, from local sandstone to imported marble, provides diverse habitats for different lichen species. The stone's texture, water retention, and pH all influence which lichens thrive.
Lastly, the positioning of stones affects lichen distribution; lichens on shaded stones differ from those in sunny spots, creating a diverse lichen community.
The identification of lichen species can be quite tricky. The colour of many lichens can change depending on whether they are wet or dry, in the sun or shade, or the surface they are growing on! Lichens produce a wide range of pigments, giving them their vibrant colors including greens, yellows, oranges, and blues. These pigments can protect them from UV radiation and have been used to make wool and fabric dyes since ancient times and are still used today.
Lichens are found in many different habitats, including temperate and tropical rainforests, deserts, mountains, the tundra, snowy and icy areas, and along coastlines.
Next time you walk through a churchyard or cemetery, have a look for these fascinating organisms.

The night sky

The night sky is a vital, shared resource for all life on Earth, yet the increasing spread of artificial lighting has obscured the stars and altered how we experience the night. For most of human history, people lived under a vast, star-filled sky—one that inspired countless advances in science, shaped religious beliefs, and fueled the imagination of artists, philosophers, and writers.

Today, the natural darkness of the sky, once a universal experience, is fading from memory, and many of the youngest generations may never fully know its wonder.

Evidence shows that artificial light at night has negative effects on wildlife including amphibians, birds, mammals, insects and even plants. Wildlife, such as birds, bats, and moths, rely on darkness for migration, navigation, and feeding. Light pollution can disorient these species, leading to population declines and disturbed ecosystems.

Sixty percent of insects are active at night, and it's estimated that one-third of those drawn to artificial light die as a consequence. Each year, millions of birds lose their lives during migration after becoming disoriented and fatigued from circling and colliding with brightly lit buildings.

A recent study by biologists, conducted over two decades in Chicago, revealed the significant impact of light pollution on birds and how reducing it can make a difference. By dimming half the windows in a building during nighttime, the researchers observed a remarkable reduction in bird collisions—11 times fewer during spring migration and six times fewer in the autumn. In total, the study estimates that this simple change lowered bird fatalities by 60%

For humans, exposure to excessive artificial light can disrupt circadian rhythms, impacting sleep quality and contributing to health issues like insomnia and stress.

In the UK, efforts to combat light pollution are gaining momentum. Practical solutions, such as shielded, energy-efficient lighting that reduces sky glow are being put in place along with the obvious solution of turning lights off.

By safeguarding our dark skies, we can support wildlife and ensure that we can all stand beneath a canopy of stars, undimmed by modern life.

For more information visit The Commission for Dark Skies https://britastro.org/

Andrea

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

From South Shropshire Climate Action Newsletter.

If you were to sign up for the South Shropshire Climate Action newsletter you will get the sort of news which is here on October's newsletter.

Welcome to our joint newsletter for October!

In this month's newsletter read all about:

- This month's feature: Going Wild in Bishop's Castle takes flight
- This month's spotlight: Oswestry Climate Action Hub
- News from our local networks: local lobbying on pensions, NWRR update, award winning cycle delivery service, Hereford Diocese Environment Conference and Green Libraries Week
- Make a difference: Green Open Homes, CPRE's hedges project and the campaigns for clean water
- Local events in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
- Culture & Lifestyle: what does a carbon neutral home look like and composting tips

Here is one of their articles

Check out SSCA's website to find out more about:

- how to make compost from your food and garden waste at home

how to share your knowledge and skills by becoming a Master Composter.

Shropshire Wildlife Newsletter for September

If you sign up for this, here is what you will see.

September 2024 Newsletter

In this issue…

Have Your Say on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Moth Release Morning – Saturday 7th September

Cramer Gutter – Update and Photos

Upcoming Event: Bear Hunt & Lantern Walk

Sidney Road Meadow: Survey by Restoring Shropshire Verges

St Leonard's Churchyard Update

Henley Road Helpers – September Session

Save the Date: Bird Watching in the Western

A National March in London on 3rd November about clean water
web site www.marchforcleanwater.org

From the Marches / Herefordshire

The Save the Wye coalition are organising three coaches. Return tickets are £27,8, discounts are available.

Coach #01: Leominster - Hereford - Ross on Wye - London

Coach #02: Hay on Wye - Abergavenny - London

Coach #03: Lydney - Chepstow - London

From Stourport, Bewdley and Kidderminster

XR Wyre Forest is organising a coach with a return fare of £25 (£15 for under 18 and unwaged). It will depart at 7:15am from Stourport, with pick-ups in Bewdley (7:25am) and Kidderminster (7:45am). On the way back, the coach will leave London at 3:45pm, with final drop-off in Stourport at 7:35pm.

To book a coach ticket or join the train travel group, please email dandvwhiting@gmail.com