



**Canterbury Commitment:  
Transforming ourselves: transforming the system  
7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**Action Forum**

**Name** Maggie Taylor-Sanders – **Almeley Wootton LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

As the project for my Equipping for Ministry course at Woodbrooke I wrote a book called 'Gathering Our Senses'. The aim of the book was to look at: a) the damage we are doing, b) the faulty thinking that is behind our 'wrong' living on the planet, c) the signs that things are changing, and why, d) the value of the Universe Story to re-orientate our understanding of our right place in the natural world, e) a projection about how a society and an individual life might look if we lived by the Universe Story.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name** Ed Tyler – **Argyll LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Work on transformational change at bioregional scale. I am inspired by bioregional green economist Molly Scott Cato's work in England to reconfigure our economies to become truly sustainable in the long term. This involves spiritual awakening as well as practical measures such as forming social enterprises and keeping money cycling within the local area. I write a blog at [bioregioning.com](http://bioregioning.com) which seeks to co-create bioregions across the whole of Scotland.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Our meeting has done some work towards making us more sustainable as a widely scattered rural meeting (though it includes Glasgow we are scattered across Argyll, Ayrshire, Arran and Dumfries and Galloway). Our work has been particularly in relation to our physical meetings i.e. we have introduced telephone conferencing and have organised local gatherings at "hub" locations which has meant less driving.

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**Name** Graham Watts – **Bainbridge LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Research into a global zero-carbon way of life that will take into account the desire of huge populations in Africa, South America, Asia, India and China to attain a standard of living and affluence that they observe in much of Europe and North America. Bearing in mind that unless some drastic action is taken on this scale, starvation and war are inevitable. The survival of humanity, as well as much of organic life is in question. The planet will survive but not be inhabitable for a very long time.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Individuals are attempting to live as sustainably as possible and looking forward to our reports of concerns to be addressed at this Conference.

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**Name** Jeni Edwards – **Bakewell LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We are organising the Bakewell Green Festival (celebrating sustainable living in the Peak District)

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**Name** Adam Howard – **Balby (Doncaster) LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am involved in 2 projects encouraging a community approach to growing food - Grow Sheffield; and Growing a Greater Bentley - in Doncaster. I can say something about how these projects have developed, and how they are working to engage people in sharing skills, and increasing awareness of the underlying issues.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Balby meeting, in Doncaster, has made major changes to increase the energy efficiency of the Meeting House. I can speak briefly of this work, and the difference it has made.

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**Name** David Maxwell – **Bedford LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

DID 1) How do you structure a proposal to a small meeting to get them to plant 600 trees?  
How Bedford did!

DOING 2) Since “the system” depends on cultural approval by many, get carbon-free words replacing old words to cultural masterpieces performed and system transformation is emotionally motivated.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

A lively sustainability notice board at the meeting house – including non-Quaker pictures (open to new light?)

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**Name** Beryl & Roger Lankester – **Brentwood LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

For the past 30 years we have been working to promote the sustainable use of the marine environment which encompasses 95% of the living space of the earth and is the main life support system of the planet. Roger has been a delegate for 19 years at the International Maritime Organisation in London on behalf of Friends of the Earth International as well as doing local campaigning. We have both been members of the Green Party since the Falklands War in the 1980s together with CCND.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We have only been going to Maldon Meeting for the past year and a half and since that time the meeting has started a sustainability group to which we belong. The graveyard and grounds have been improved and incorporate an insect and bird hotel. Any alterations to our grade II listed meeting house have included input from us regarding sustainability. We hope to have Sustainability Open Day sometime in the future to encourage Outreach and perhaps act as a resource for the district.

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**Name** Paul Brandon – **Bridgwater LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I belong to an organisation called WWOOF - World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms. It puts people in touch with organic farms, small holdings etc. You work so many hours per week for food & lodging. I also know about LILI – Low Impact Living Initiative – who run training courses.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

West Somerset AM has a green advisory group that meets monthly.

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**Name** Lucy Smith – **Broadstairs LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I've bought solar panels, heat using log burners, share my home, grow my own fruit and veg.,etc etc. and have been doing so for thirty years. A paragon of solitary virtue? Far from it. I

am mostly tremendously disheartened by how little these changes have been taken up, and sometimes cheered by the younger generation, people in their thirties, with young children, who thankfully seem to be enthused by the possibilities of building a better world, perhaps influenced by schools ecology for children programmes, and by having children. I am also bewildered. In Today's news RBS is 6 billion in the red, yet is paying a half billion out in bonuses. I know it is naïve, but I think the question should be asked, "What are they paying this half billion with?" That last statement also implies a paradox...perhaps a true one..."the more you owe, the more you get". Other paradoxes include the climatologist Professor Katherine Heyhoe's statement "the past is no longer a guide to the future. We are going to be living in a totally different world from the one we grew up in, and we have to adapt to those changes", contrasted with my perception that the early Quakers were also struggling with a comparable global paradigm shift. So actually we have been here before. I ask, from this last perspective and most sincerely from my own need that we revive the practice of those Quakers in standing in the light together, as the basis for action, for however long it takes, not only in our local meetings, but daily, at an agreed time to gather strength from each other and from the light. Being relatively new to Quakers I don't know if this has been tried before. I know it has, by other spiritual paths. Even if only two sit "together".... Pam Lunn's closing words in her 2011 Swarthmore lecture resound with me still, "We must look to our spiritual disciplines in order to build the strength to face what is to come" I don't have the strength to face all that I encounter in daily life, which is destructive painful, or just plain stupid, and remain capable of loving. I need your support to even feel it might be possible. Thank you for your attention.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Our meeting has much in the way of thinking about greening the meeting, but general action and thinking remain entrenched in old habits, perhaps because of the high average age. How realistic is it to expect change in people over 70? Another reason I need help to remain loving!

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**Name Edwina Hughes – Bury St Edmunds LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am a textile student investigating clothes labels and how or if they help us to buy ethically and sustainably. My report is in the form of a Reportage. In other words I am writing an article for publication as part of the research with the objective of making Quakers aware of the choices they have as customers. Also to make them aware of the information that is available to them to make the best choice 'to be answerable to their creation'.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name June New – Cambridge Jesus Lane LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Overpopulation and Overconsumption – inextricably linked!

As individuals and Meetings we do what we can to reduce **consumption**. We cycle (easy in Cambridge), we use public transport where possible, insulate, double-glaze, install solar panels etc.

To address the problems of **overpopulation** we do some things but could do a great deal more. In fact the subject is often avoided “The moral & intellectual disconnect is startling” (Jonathon Porritt 2014) Some of us belong to Population Matters and campaign 1) to get public acknowledgement of the crucial relevance of population 2) to take the necessary steps to stabilize & gradually reduce the population. It could be possible to peak at 8.5 billion rather than the predicted 10 billion in 2050.

Some Friends have been concerned about overpopulation for considerable time and four Area Meetings (including my own) have asked to have **Population** put on the agenda for Yearly Meeting Gathering in Bath. We have been granted a Special Interest Meeting on the subject.

I should very much like to talk to anyone who is interested in progressing this.

PS Since arriving I have already met several like-minded Friends.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name** James Deane – **Central Bristol LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Been a part of utopias and dystopias book group. The value of which has been to draw out of myself clarity as to what a future I would wish for and give me skills of evaluating others proposals.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Changing the meeting house to be more environmental

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**Name** Donald Stubbings – **Central Edinburgh LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Between 2007-11 I was involved with the Living Witness Project in Central Edinburgh which had a wide variety of activities and projects. More recently I have facilitated a number of meetings for learning and have written an extensive policy on sustainability for the area meeting. I have been involved in SSSSS - Sharing Southeast Scotland's Sustainability Stories. It seems to me the enthusiasm that was around during the time I was involved with the LWP has been muted in the recent years. Friends have been increasing the sustainability of their life styles but communicating this at an individual, local meeting or area meeting level to one another has not been easy to develop.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

SSSSS - Sharing Southeast Scotland's Sustainability Stories was set-up as a response to Minute 36, Yearly Meeting Gathering at Canterbury. We have shown the Swathmore Lecture video (in part or in whole) on several occasions. We invited Friends who have made conscious effort to live more sustainably to write about their experience. We published these stories in the

area meeting newsletter and on the website. We participated in a Food and Sustainability Day at Kelso Meeting House, which amongst other things, we played the Carbon Conversations Food Game. We intend to try and 'roll out' the workshop idea, but that we have found it a little tough going to engage people.

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**Name Rici Marshall – Carlton Hill LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

With others on my PhD course we have put together a graphic novel (comic book) called 'Dreams of a Low Carbon Future'. We worked with school children to get ideas and drawings. We are trying to spread it far and wide to all who are interested as a different way to learn about the issues.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name Harriet Martin – Cotteridge LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Super insulate house & open to public twice yearly.

Produced booklet detailing analysis in full of energy uses in kWh (following David Mackay – Sustainability without the Hot Air)

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

AM is insulating a number of buildings.  
AM is running a Sustainability Forum

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**Name Rhiannon Rees – Croydon LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Our Local Meeting has a 'donations' table in the vestibule. We bring any unwanted goods, such as Christmas presents (small and not perishable) and any user of the Meeting House may take them. There is an 'honesty box' for donations, which are given to a different charity or cause that a member of the Meeting supports every two months. This has been popular, mainly for books.

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**Name Gerald Conyngham – Exeter LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

As chair of Sustainable Crediton, a Transition town, I helped organise two seminars for senior officers and councillors from Mid Devon District Council on issues of climate change and sustainability. In it we encouraged them to look ahead and vision how Mid Devon might look if it was more resilient and sustainable across key areas such as housing, transport, leisure, food and energy. I am confident that this had a big effect on their thinking and planning and we have a good dialogue with them now and are well respected. I am happy to share how we went about this and a bit more detail about the actual seminars which could be repeated elsewhere.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name Julie Taylor-Browne – Falmouth LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We are setting up a Quaker Community Farm to focus on building community whilst sharing and learning sustainability skills.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We have a sustainability notice board with relevant notices plus 'sustainability tips' where people dip in and take a tip. We are having an Area sustainability day with Laurie in May to raise awareness of how to build a distributed sustainable community in a rural setting.

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**Name John Gray– Friargate LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I'm thinking and doing some teaching - about leadership: a way of being leaderful which is relevant to and congruent with our Minute 36 commitment.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We have begun thinking about the community aspect e.g. M36, & we have ideas for taking this forward when our redevelopment work is done.

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**Name Alan Wright – Hastings LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

As part of premises committee at local meeting level, I am looking at secondary glazing currently, and may like to look at other practical measures, (if there are workshops on practical measures within meeting houses). I have been involved in a local anti-road a year ago in artistic way, (but have put involvement aside). My wife was involved in direct action, in this. Now we are looking at how we can find our way forward in environmental concerns, overcome fears to make steps, within our meeting, and in our own living situation.

### **What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Looking at reducing heat loss to meeting house. There is an active member of the Green Party in our meeting, who also was very actively involved in anti road protest and proposed a minute, (difficult for the Local Meeting to agree) to Area Meeting level in the subject of Bexhill to Hastings Link Road. (I am not party political myself, but would like to find more strength in making my/our lives speak in environmental concern, I am a bit shy of speaking in a large group)

Looking into secondary glazing for Meeting House as part of premises committee (have not got vent fan yet; Gasket Glazing perhaps most appropriate for the kind of windows in our building). I may like to hear about other practical measures Meetings are taking for Meeting House premises.

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### **Name Fiona Wright – Hastings LM**

#### **What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Widening & deepening forms of worship on a more regular basis. Interest in 'Sacred Activism' Andrew Harvey.

Linking with other groups locally & campaigning locally against road building & the road building programme proposed for Britain nationally.

#### **What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Some members participate in Non Violent Communications Study Group, a yearlong group, proposed in the USA & described in the Peace News (in Dec 2013), interfacing with the local community.

Opening the MH for occasional night shelter (Snowflake Project) for the homeless and working with local groups together on homelessness.

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### **Name Hannah Chambers – Heswall LM**

#### **What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Designing and developing a leisure vehicle which will run predominately on solar power. The 'engine' will detach from a living pod to be used as low emissions transport at home and while away. The design will encourage people to holiday in their home country and will be easy to use for people who would struggle with a caravan. Potential other uses include mobile clinics in sunny countries. The workforce will be based in Britain and will include people who find it difficult to find work in a conventional work environment in challenging economic times. It will be run as a social enterprise.

New – Now supported by 'Centre for Global Eco Innovation'. Exciting!

#### **What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**



Sadly, not a lot!

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**Name** Barbara Grundey – Hexam LM

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Supporting our local environmental group 'Transition Tynedale'. We are now a company Ltd by guarantee 'Transition Tynedale Ltd' hoping to attract funds for social enterprise and renewable energy projects for our community in partnership with local authority. E.g. £100,000 seed money for Hydro-electric Turbine, Co Wheel Hybrid Car Club. Changed to Qi car from Volvo V40. Love this little car. Cycle to go shopping, enjoy countryside, and keep fit low-cost carbon friendly leisure. Buy food in bulk from Suma Coop with group of friends.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Hexham Debates invited Mike Berniers-Lee to speak about his book 'The Burning Question' drawing an audience of about 200. Next speaker was Andrew Feinstein of Director of Corruption Watch UK who described how the global arms trade pours money into the pockets of corrupt dealers and governments allowing weapons to be spread throughout the globe and creating chaos and fuelling resources wars.

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**Name** Chris Herring – Huddersfield LM

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am co-director of a company, Green Building Store, which is building and promoting Passivhaus homes. I am also active in promoting Passivhaus nationally and internationally. Passivhaus is the leading international low energy building standard with over 40,000 buildings to the standard world-wide. It is the only standard which is proven through extensive monitoring to reliably deliver low energy buildings. With buildings contributing so much to our overall carbon footprint it is vital that we can build (and retrofit) truly low energy buildings which actually work. I see this as a really positive message, since Passivhaus homes are not only highly energy efficient, but also more comfortable than conventional approaches. We took the pioneering step in 2007 to focus on Passivhaus, and completed one of the first to be certified in the UK in 2010. We have since pioneered the Passivhaus approach to conversion of an historic barn. We continue to build Passivhaus homes, to promote and sell Passivhaus products and to support others to develop the necessary skills. I helped establish the UK Passivhaus Trust which supports and promotes Passivhaus in the UK, and am currently Chair, as well as chairing the International Passivhaus Association Affiliates Council.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name** Tom Cruyfft – Huntingdon LM

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Sharing news of exciting project with huge potential as detailed below.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We use a book 'offset' pledges to save carbon.

Involvement in Friends of Kitale (Kenya) project:

[dbale@tiscalico.uk](mailto:dbale@tiscalico.uk) (Elder, Huntingdon PM)

<http://sustainableglobalgardens.org.uk>

SGG contact Paul or Carol Keeley 01912 530 687

Money thus saved by Friends various ways pays for tree planting by Friends of Kitale (Kenya) Area Meeting.

Viable variculture from 25p sapling benefits community enormously while combating CO2 & supplying firewood for cooking.

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**Name Heather Bruce – Ipswich LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am working in and researching all aspects of earth building. Building with Earth is a way of constructing with the least amount of Carbon usage compared with any other building technique. The buildings are not built with materials that have toxins in them, thus giving health benefits. The main material used can be sourced very locally to include the earth that is found on the site. The interior of an earth structure is simply, calming warming due to the walls thermal mass; they retain heat during the day and naturally release it during the night, thus reducing carbon emissions with less of a need to heat or cool the buildings. The buildings can be built cheaply, the largest cost in putting up one of these structures is usually the 'man power' but the skills required to put the walls up are not difficult to learn and so almost anyone can help build.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Ipswich Meeting has held a 'Festival of Green Ideas from 2011 to 2013. The daylong event includes talks, documentaries, stalls, children's activities, children's animations, workshop run by participants and local /fair-trade/organic cafe'. Each year the day concludes with a discussion/question time debate with those who have given a talk on the day as the panel for this event. Councillors, politicians and political persons have been invited to attend. The day is intended to highlight grass roots green growth activities locally but to also address international aspects of how climate change effects all that lives on our planet.

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**Name Daniel Wimberley – Jersey LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Support the work of a Foundation "The Men who Planted Trees" "Repair the Earth" Kabarak Declaration.

Restoring degraded landscapes, re-building communities, capturing carbon, creating new space for living, bringing back water, offering a stable & ethical return on investment – all this at the same time.

Not a pipe-dream. Led by a guy with 12 years experience in IUCN, project assessment, ecology, multi-stakeholder process.

Initial target 150m hectares in the next 20 years.

Projects being scoped in 3 continents

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name Robert Hall – Jordans LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I'm involved in: Low Carbon Jordans - a village group that organises talks, films and events on low carbon issues. Low Carbon Chilterns - a cooperative formed by low carbon/transitions towns groups in Buckinghamshire. It advises managers of community buildings on how to reduce energy consumption or develop renewable energy in village halls, youth clubs, etc, and uses these measures to involve local communities in carrying improvements in their own homes.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name Sheila Mosley – Leicester LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Joined Left Unity – new political party.

I've bought/hired a bike on the Bike2Work scheme – haven't ridden a bike for about 40 years – so that I can go to work & back: hopefully good for me – the traffic is heavy so safety might be an issue, certainly good for the environment & the growing number of cyclists.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Any changes take into account environmental factors.

The garden now has something to represent the elements – earth, air, water, fire: the children organised this and as the final piece they made clay birds to stand on sticks. The children are learning to appreciate nature and build relationships with it – so are we.

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## **Name Anne Adams – Ludlow LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Reading the gas & electricity meters in the meeting house every month.

Joining with Ludlow Green Festival once a year.

Trying to organise a conference in the Area Meeting.

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## **Name Dan Fish – Lymington LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

It is now clear that the whole developed world must totally stop, and as soon as possible, relying on the oxidation of fossil carbon to CO<sub>2</sub> as its major source of energy. It follows that economising is no use we have to learn how to stop. When I retired some 15 years ago my wife and I realised that it was not fair to ask others to do this unless we were prepared to do it ourselves. Exactly how we do it is not really relevant. There will be many different ways depending on circumstances. While we are perfectly happy to describe what we have done and learnt the important thing is that we have found it is perfectly possible to lead a full and vivid life and still be virtually '100% carbon free'. I have written up what we do in a note for our local New Forest Transition group and New Forest National Park open house day.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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## **Name Robert Tucker – Middlesbrough LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

1) set up local Friends of the Earth group in 2009 2) screened several films in meeting houses and got council involvement 3) At home. 18C wear extra thermal layers, cycle, smaller/no car draft proofing, water hippos, plan to change to green energy provider 4) replaced old double glazing draft proofing v cheap upgrade

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

1) Have several Friends of the Earth groups who use meeting houses for free. Have gained a number of members from this arrangement. 2) Wildlife Trust volunteers completed wildlife & fauna assessment of Friends meeting grounds 3) Energy efficiency assessment and upgrade in Quinquennial Inspections 4) most/all meetings gone over to Quaker green energy consortium 5) lower temperatures in meeting house, heat only rooms needed and when 6) lots of notices close doors, turn off lights etc

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**Name** Ann Boater – **Muswell Hill LM****What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I live in the knowledge that Climate Change is real. This knowledge has a major impact on how I live my life and relate to the future and other people. My ambitions are less personal and preparing to accept and plan to reduce the negative impact of more strain on resources. It is quite liberating to focus on valuing what I have, but frustrating to have to work in a world that is competitively burning up energy.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We have a monthly Meeting for Sustainability when a small group meets after MfW to share thoughts and reflect on our personal and collective ways to live and promote Sustainable living

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**Name** Teresa Belton – **Norwich LM****What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Developed the habit of looking for clothes, household goods, building materials second-hand before purchasing new. Also other low-key day-to-day changes, e.g. with respect to travel. I have very recently completed a book with the working title "Embracing Tomorrow: finding the connections between personal wellbeing and environmental sustainability"

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Norwich LM has a Sustainability Group which is addressing a variety of issues, e.g. it has recently produced a Procurement Policy.

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**Name** Richard Eddleston – **Nottingham LM****What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am interested in the whole area of how we make use of the money we have as individuals. What we save, how we invest it, how we use it most productively. It is an area that Quakers tend not to talk about - a bit of a taboo subject. There is not a lot of information out there about investing/saving ethically (There is plenty about spending ethically). I am referring to things like Triodos, Ethex, Co-operatives, etc etc. It does though have a big impact on sustainability.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We are in process of having solar panels put on the roof, though I am not an expert about this.

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**Name Alan Allport – Oxford LM****What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

1. Starting up an “Oxfordshire Climate and flooding Alliance”
  - a) to link floods and climate change in people’s awareness
  - b) to lobby for changes in agricultural practices to reduce flooding
  - c) To lobby David Cameron on decarbonising UK power supplies
2. Local CAG

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

1. Eco-renovation of Oxford MH
  2. Active group on Environmental and Economic Justice: - informing ourselves; lobbying; letter writing to MPs, councillors, CEOs....
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**Name Frances Voelcker – Porthmadog LM****What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I have been trying to assess the carbon footprint of North Wales Area Meeting. At each AM, trustees, clerks etc meeting I ask individuals to fill in a form giving their mileage or train journey, bought food or materials. So far – 11 months – I have almost 8 tons of carbon and I reckon this is far below the actual, as I have not (yet) added in all the trips to Friends House & Woodbrooke by individual AM reps. (Hard work, and now robust data)

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We have been holding open meetings on how the capitalist economy works, trying to understand how and why it almost collapsed. (Toney Weekes in 2012, Susan Holden in 2013, the New Economics Foundation QPSW course in May-June (?) 2013). This has worked well as outreach: recently a vicar further south had asked a member of our meeting if we could help her congregation to get to grips with the economy and economic justice.

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**Name Stephen Mandel – Reading LM****What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

As an economist I am writing papers and giving talks about the need for a change in the current paradigm, since I believe that our theory of economics and our practice of finance and corporate governance have unsustainability built into them. As a member of the Economics, Sustainability & Peace subcommittee of QPSW I am (I hope) contributing to getting the message across both within BYM and to the wider public. On a personal level my wife and I are working through a plan to make our house as environmentally friendly as we can and to reduce our own carbon footprint. The largest element we have completed is to replace our oil-fired central heating with a wood-chip boiler.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

While I am not involved in premises committee, I am impressed with the care which Reading Meeting has put into planning to reduce its footprint.

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**Name** John Mayne – **Redland LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Of our six meeting houses, two have thatched roofs and are listed buildings so we have been limited in what we can do. But we have taken energy efficiency measures on the other four. These have included the fitting of 48 photovoltaic panels to the south-facing roof of Redland Meeting House, cavity wall insulation and roofing insulation, the fitting of thermostatic radiator valves, moving of radiators, boiler controls and secondary/double glazing. All four buildings are rented out quite intensely during the week and this means that our energy consumption is perhaps higher than other Meeting Houses. But this has provided a challenge to reduce consumption and for one building (Redland) this has resulted in a reduction of our electricity consumption by 336% and gas consumption by 191% over five years.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Please see above - I am a member of Redland Meeting.

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**Name** Michael Elstub – **Settle LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I have become involved with the Enough is Enough group at Leeds University, meetings are held monthly, led by members of the Earth Sciences dept.

I have bought my copy of the DVD of the same name (18 Minutes) if anyone wishes to see it. This is also on YouTube at Steady state/enough is enough

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name** Sue Hannam – **Spiceland (Uffculme) LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Moved to small smallholding, planted masses of trees, installed PV solar tunnel tubes etc. Set up local "food fare" in neighbourhood. Learned how unsustainable it is to live in the isolated countryside! Also how increasingly difficult it is as you get older!

When in Bristol started a "food for free" local (v small) initiative, mapping local area by fruit trees, collecting gluts of food from allotments etc (this sort of thing now happening all over the place)

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We have 2 acres land, an old burial ground and new burial ground. Now considering how best to use this – retreat space, camping..... In early stages, would welcome ideas, contacts etc.

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**Name** Rob Horton – **Stafford LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

**Summarising *Sacred Economics* by Charles Eisenstein**

After analysing the current economic and money systems in the context of their effect on people and planet, the author examines the roles of negative-interest currency, internalisation of social and environmental costs, economic and monetary localisation, a basic income for all, de-growth, gift economy and more as “agents of giving, of creation, of service, and of abundance” in the new sacred economy.

The concluding part “is devoted to the shift of consciousness and practice that goes along with the new money systems. As we heal the spirit-matter rupture, we discover that economics and spirituality are inseparable. On the personal level, economics is about how to give our gifts and meet our needs. It is about who we are in relation to the world. By changing our everyday economic thinking and practices, we not only prepare ourselves for the great changes ahead; we also set the stage for their emergence. By living the concepts of sacred economics, we ease its acceptance by all and welcome it into the world.”

Minute 23, about Economic Justice, of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2011 included ‘We need to ask the question whether the current economic system is so **broken** that we must urgently work with others of faith and good will to put in its place a different system in which our testimonies can flourish.’

This book, in my view, elucidates in large part that different system as it describes “a vision of a money system and an economy that is no longer separate, in fact or in perception, from the natural matrix that underlies them. They reunite the long-sundered realms of human and nature; they will be an extension of ecology which obey all of its laws and bear all of its beauty.”

We may feel that such a “metamorphosis” is impossible, “yet the knowledge of what is possible lives on inside each of us, in our hearts, inextinguishable.” Surely this is an aspect of the divine within? “Let us trust this knowing, hold each other in it, and organize our lives around it. Do we really have any choice, as the old world falls apart?”

“Are we so **broken** that we would aspire to anything less than a sacred world?”

I believe *Sacred Economics* can help us, individually and together, live out and work to create that different system pondered by Yearly Meeting Gathering 2½ years ago. The need is urgent.

Having been inspired by this optimistic book, I hope to summarise it and make the summary freely available as an aid to spreading the concepts of *Sacred Economics*. I hope though some will take the plunge to read the book’s 446 pages (not counting the appendix, bibliography and index). It stretched my grey cells in places, but sticking with it pays rich rewards of encouragement for these challenging times.

In the spirit of gift economy, the book can be read free online at <http://sacred-economics.com/read-online/> and can be freely shared for any non-commercial purpose. You



may give a voluntary gift “that expresses the gratitude or sense of value that you feel”. The printed version (Evolver Editions, 978-1-58394-397-7) cost me £15 last April from the Quaker Centre Bookshop.

Rob Horton. ([wrobw.horton@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wrobw.horton@yahoo.co.uk) 01889 881345)

(Words between double quote marks (“...”) are quotations from the book.)

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

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**Name** Phoebe Spence – **Stockport LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

With Northern Friends Peace Board have been exploring peace and sustainability issues with Scottish Friends, and we are engaged by the concept of Common Weal = an old Scots phrase meaning both ‘wealth shared in common’ and ‘for the wellbeing of all’. We use it to describe a society that rejects 40 years of grasping, me-first politics, a survival-of-the-richest, winner-takes-all mentality which left us all in second place. See <http://allofusfirst.org/what-is-common-weal/> See also [http://allofusfirst.org/commonweal/assets/File/No-Need-to-be-Afraid%20\(1\).pdf](http://allofusfirst.org/commonweal/assets/File/No-Need-to-be-Afraid%20(1).pdf)

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

New meeting house at Stockport will have mechanical ventilation with heat recovery - MVHR. Does anyone have experience of this please? Particularly in meeting houses!

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**Name** William Whiting – **Stourbridge LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am an active promoter and supporter of public transport. During my entire 26 years working at Sandwell Council I travelled by bus to work even if it meant waiting in the rain or cold. I am a member of Railfuture, a rail campaigning organisation and Chair the West Midlands branch. I am therefore able to attend stakeholder meetings of London Midland, operator of local trains in the West Midlands, I am a passenger advocate for CENTRO (passenger transport executive). I have placed on CENTRO website details of walks that I have researched and undertaken by using the local rail service as part of being a passenger advocate. I have completed surveys relating to proposed cuts in public transport particularly bus services in Worcestershire.. My name has appeared on bus shelters stating how easy it is to travel to Birmingham by bus again being a passenger advocate. I have e mailed members of the meeting where I have learnt of a fares offer, encouraging using trains locally. We rent an allotment and share produce with neighbours/members of the Meeting. My wife and I have stopped using the car to go to the shops. We have purchased trolley shopping baskets and walk to the nearest Aldi 1/2 mile down the road. Our two children went to local schools which were walkable from home and later at an FE College close to our home as opposed to going to another institution some distance. Son and daughter do not own a car and have shown little desire to do so as they have been

used to public transport when younger. That does reflect the trend that less young people now own a car

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We support Transition Stourbridge, part of the transition towns scheme. Work is being undertaken to clear up the local canals and river bank of rubbish which is harmful to wildlife. We organised a 6th form conference during Quaker week on the theme of Choices. Sunniva Taylor from Friends House came to speak at a Churches Together in Stourbridge event on sustainability which was held in our meeting house about two years ago. The other speaker was the Chair of the Birmingham District of the Methodist Church.

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**Name Roger Plenty – Stroud LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I have for many years been concerned (in the non-Quaker sense) about the growth of population, and have brought this to Meeting, who have now recognised this as a Concern (in the Quaker sense). AM have asked me and others to establish a Special Interest Group event at Yearly Meeting at Bath this year. We are of the opinion that whatever we do in the pursuit of sustainability cannot succeed unless population is taken into consideration. I have made this point in letters and articles in The Friend and in earthQuaker

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

My local meeting is very supportive of this Concern, and when it was brought to Area Meeting with the suggestion of going to YM at Bath, the Meeting accepted it without demur, only one Friend voicing a minor reservation. We (the group that LM had asked us to form) had been asked to prepare a draft minute: however the Meeting agreed to a minute that not only included our draft, but went some way beyond it.

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**Name Martin Wilson – Swansea LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Through my role as caretaker at Swansea Meeting House, I ensure that we recycle everything we can, run the central heating more efficiently, have taps and flushing systems that waste less water, etc. I have long been involved in Transition Swansea, and recently attended a Transition Network course on Inner Transition. I hope to strengthen the links between Swansea Meeting and Transition Swansea by developing the Meeting's Sustainability Group and Transition Swansea's Inner Transition group in tandem, with some joint meetings and workshops. For example, I intend to run a series of workshops on Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone's "Active Hope" -- I have already given a presentation on this to Swansea Friends.

## **What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

South Wales AM has made great progress in installing roof insulation and double glazing or secondary glazing in its buildings. We have held at least two workshops with a sustainability theme. Swansea Meeting has formed a Sustainability Group. Though progress on a practical front has been hampered by the fact that our Meeting structures have been in a state of flux, we have held a number of discussion meetings and film shows, including a public showing of the Bill McKibben film "Do the Math". Children's Meeting at Swansea frequently works on environmental topics, and has created a wildflower bed at the front of our lawn, just feet from a busy road bordering the city centre – a delight to all of us, and I hope to passers-by. Just seen this week, automatic LED lights installed in the hallways of Swansea Meeting House.

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## **Name Amanda Woolley – Totnes LM**

### **What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am part of Transition Town Totnes (TTT) – including having been on organising group of its "Heart & Soul" group now called Inner Transition. We hosted talks & discussions; held celebrations & rituals; offered mentoring support to those active in "TTT" and facilitated workshops such as those based on "The work that re-connects" (Joanna Macy). One held after Philippines Hurricane was a way to air our feelings and realise we were not alone in our doubts, anger, numbness, pain leading to a more grounded sense of our common humanity.

Also this year TTT "RECONOMY PROJECT" is holding its 3<sup>rd</sup> Local Entrepreneurs Forum. A community 'Dragons Den' offers gifts in kind as well as investment.

### **What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Totnes Local Meeting has studied the "Transition Together" pack (like Leicester's Footpath initiative

I think) in 2010 [Report available]. Our meeting sustainability group organised a Spirituality & Sustainability day for AM [Report available] and locally once a month have a sharing produce stall to which we recently added the idea of brining gardening tips one month, cookery tips the next, recycling opportunities etc.

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## **Name Geoff Fielding – Wakefield LM**

### **What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I have, over the past six years been researching and writing a book. At the last reckoning its title is likely to be "Understanding Humanity". This, I recognise, is a big title and not one that I've come to at all easily. This is, nevertheless, what I attempt to achieve. The first part of it sets out the two primary drivers that drive humanity forwards. These I identify as the two distinct hormonal systems of prolactin, progesterone and oxytocin on the one hand and testosterone and dopamine on the other. In many species these systems are sex specific, but not in humans. Both sexes are affected by both. Nevertheless people are generally affected more by one than the other. Interestingly these two systems give rise to two, quite distinct moral codes. Prolactin, progesterone and oxytocin are, under the right circumstances, said to "maternalise" the brains of both men and women promoting care and cooperation. Out of these come our

common moral values of kindness, compassion, generosity, integrity, fairness, moderation, patience, forgiveness, sexual fidelity and non-violence. Anthropological, and other research, is now coming to the conclusion that these cooperative values were pre-eminent prior to the Neolithic and had probably been so for hundreds of thousands of years, and potentially two million. On the other side testosterone and dopamine addiction, prompted by high status, wealth and the wielding of power, gives rise to what might be called aggrandiser morality. This is associated with beliefs such as “greed is good”, “the survival of the fittest”, “risk-taking is good”, “the winner takes all”, “compassion is weakness”, and “there is no such thing as society, only the individual”. These two sets of belief are incompatible. They may exist alongside each other, but always in opposition. These codes, although arising out of natural hormonal processes, are cognitive systems of attitude and behaviour that can be passed down the generations through systems of cultural transmission. It is these understandings that dictate the nature of the structures we build within our societies, whilst the structurings themselves preferentially trigger one or other hormonal system. If we build competitive systems these will prompt testosterone based reactions and we will become more accepting of aggrandiser norms, if we build cooperative systems these will prompt prolactin and progesterone based reactions and we will become more accepting of caring norms. The second part looks at how we understand, which primarily means how the human brain derives its models of understanding. Here I find that, just like our hunter-gatherer ancestors, we understand our world through our myths. The myths we believe are now, for the most part, those passed down to us through the hierarchies of power. They are consequently the myths created by aggrandisers to fulfil aggrandiser pretensions. All myths have moral systems embedded within them whilst dominant myths also dictate the limits of rationality we are prepared to believe. The myths I mainly explore are the myth of progress (economic and technological), the modern myth of neoliberalism, and the myth of inevitable aggression. The third part looks at where these systems of belief are, in practice, taking us. I explore two areas of potential crisis in some detail being energy and money/debt. Energy is analysed from the perspective of energy economics as opposed to money economics and I track the energy returns on energy invested for various energy sources. In so doing I attempt to maintain comparability by including, for instance, notional energy costs for global warming. I do this for transport fuels, for electricity generation and for food energy. I track the deteriorating situation for all fossil fuels, and indeed, also for food. For money and debt I identify the spiralling amounts of both money and debt in our money economy which is far, far beyond anything linked to the trade in real goods and real services. As such we live for the most part within a fantasy economy which is built upon “confidence”. This system only makes contact with reality at the point where confidence is lost and the system crashes. Consequently, if we wish to control our economy and avoid crashes that could potentially trigger collapse, the present system is, I suggest, unfit for purpose. However I also identify that, in the absence of such real world linking, trade on, for instance, the derivatives markets is a zero sum game, it is gambling pure and simple. There is, within any such system, a strong incentive for corruption. These norms then spread throughout the entire economic system. Again this provokes instability and heightens the risk of collapse. I then expand this perspective to recognise the prevalence of very many global systems under stress including for instance global warming, pollution, overfishing, ocean acidification, water shortages, our expanding human arrogation of biological resources and species extinction, and ask what do all these, when we put them together, mean? Here I call upon the insights of complex dynamic systems research and in particular a composite model of ecosystem change which incorporates adaptive cycles, panarchy and resilience. These insights suggest that our future is far from secure. I will then, although I've not yet written it, return to the drivers that are driving us down this road. I will suggest that, as happened prior to the Neolithic, we need to return to cooperative systems that encourage cooperative hormonal reactions and cooperative moral codes. We did this in the past, we could do it again.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We haven't got much further than the talking phase.

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**Name Oli Griffiths – Wandsworth LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Policy job in Hydropower industry.

On a personal level I: provide energy advice and help with upgrades and refurbishments of historic buildings such as Westminster Meeting House; have given up eating meat during the week and am a very moderate consumer at weekends; taken a job promoting renewable energy globally started using independent guesthouses not chain hotels when away on business; joined an 'ecocell' group which aimed to encourage and support each other to cut our own footprints (with mixed success); have found it all a difficult and counter-cultural furrow to plough.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Ecover Filling Station.

Our historic building was beautifully authentic but draughty, cold and lit by incandescent bulbs. We raised £7-8k from the Meeting and have insulated above, draught-proofed the old wooden floor and all windows and doors. Visual impact minimal but several degrees warmer and far more comfortable. The floors we did as a working party which was good for community-building. We are now starting re-glazing etc and all is looking good.

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**Name Ali Jeffery – Warwick LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Not replacing things that break and adapting how I do things to need fewer inputs: e.g.

- fridge – buying less that needs refrigerating, eating them quickly
- water heater (boiler) – heating water on wood burning stove when in use, or cooker when not; storing in large highly insulated flask for use up to 36-48 hours later
- composting toilet for last 1 ½ years

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

The meeting has agreed to sign up for the 'Eco – Congregation' programme through the A-Rocha Foundation. This will guide us through a process where we look at what we're currently doing and identify areas we can work on. A group of interested people met as a 'sustainability group' for a while and undertook 2 travel surveys a year apart. This hasn't met for a while now, but I hope to re-energise it.

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**Name Jill Weston – Welwyn Garden City LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Was Green Party local council candidate from 2004 -12. This enabled me to publish and deliver newsletters and campaign on green issues. I also stood as the Green Party Parliamentary candidate in 2010. I work as a part-time administrator in the community centre in the ward in which I was a Labour councillor and then stood as a Green candidate. This has enabled me to ensure there is a vibrant community facility for local people, including children and young people and a welcoming place of worship for the local Islamic Society.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

Using part of a legacy to adapt and refurbish the meeting house, making it more sustainable in the process. Our meeting's (Welwyn Garden City) Peace Committee is holding several events this year to spread the peace message as we approach the anniversary of the start of World War 1.

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**Name** Martin Smith – **Wooldale LM**

**What have you done or are doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

I am using a simple system for recording energy use in the home.

**What is your meeting doing that you think it would be helpful to share?**

We have held a 'make do and mend day' in our meeting.

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