

QUAKER CONCERN OVER POPULATION

NEWSLETTER 1

1 MARCH 2017

QCOP at Woodbrooke

Over the weekend of 24th to 26th November 2017, there is a workshop at Woodbrooke (the Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham) at which QCOP will play a significant part by providing a presentation on the population issue.

The weekend course is titled '**Costing not less than Everything: The Swarthmore Lecture Revisited**'. The course details are... "Six year ago Pam Lunn delivered us *Costing not Less than Everything*: a lecture that inspired and affirmed many feelings about how we live in the world and the footprint we leave behind. Six years on, what is the story today? During our time together we will create a safe space to consider some of the difficult and challenging areas; international travel, the food we eat, the global population. Join us as we listen and learn from one another."

If this is of interest to you, go to: <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses.php?action=course&id=11454>

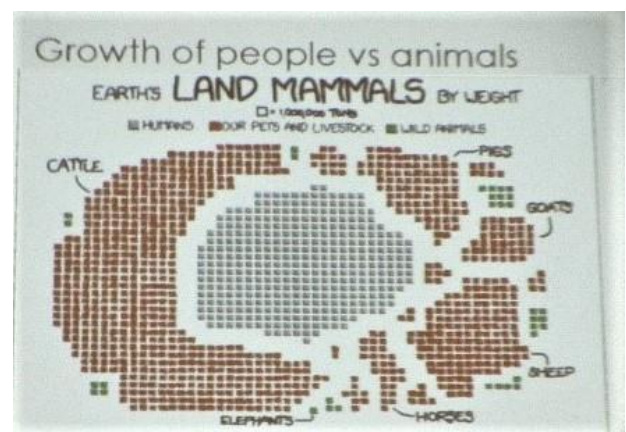
(Woodbrooke is the former family home of the local chocolate maker, George Cadbury, himself a Quaker, and has, since 1903, provided education for those of any faith or none from around the world. Their

educational initiatives have always been based around exploring Quakerism and the themes of interest to Quakers, such as Peace and Reconciliation, Quaker History and Spiritual Journeys.)

Take a Jam jar

(Hampshire, South East Dorset and the Islands Quaker Gathering in Southampton)

On 29th October over 25 Friends from two Area Meetings attended the Regional Gathering Day led by Roger Plenty on *Quaker Concern Over Population*.



This slide compares the world total weight of humans, their pets and livestock with that of wild animals (in green). There are very few green squares

This was the first time QCOP had addressed a Regional Gathering so there was some trepidation from Roger Plenty (from Nailsworth Meeting) on how the day would work out.

Roger began by illustrating his Concern. The ever rising levels of human population were the main issues to be addressed in achieving a sustainable world.



Friends working in small groups to consider some of the questions raised

This was followed by a question and answer session. In the afternoon Cherry Foster (also from Nailsworth Meeting) talked about why discussing Population appears to be a taboo with many people. She gave some examples from around the world where countries and societies had addressed the issue with some success. Friends then broke into small groups to discuss these issues and report back to the whole meeting.

Was the day successful? Only time will tell but I hope that it inspired and encouraged Friends to begin discussing the issue back in their Meetings, at home, with friends and at work.

Jonathan Riddell

Meeting at Friends House

In late January, 3 QCOP steering group members and Thomas Bonneville, met with Sunniva Taylor (QPSW) and Michael Booth (Church Governance) at Friends House,

London. Our aim was to raise our profile, to explain what we have been doing so far and to discuss the relationship between population issues and the drive for sustainability. The visit was in many ways revealing, as it became clear that they cannot justify helping us until we have established a better way to measure concern on the topic among Friends. We know the concern is there, felt by many more than those who want to have emails and more information on the subject. All suggestions for how to register this concern more effectively will be warmly received!

One easy thing you can do to help us!

Please print off the attached A4 poster and display it in your Meeting House? The more that people know about what we do, the more will join us in our Concern.

Annual voluntary donations.

When we started we had no need for funds but now that QCOP is growing and becoming more active, we need money for publicity, website fees, etc. At a meeting of the QCOP steering group in Birmingham on 8th February we decided to adopt a voluntary donation system instead of a membership fee. So, if you are able, we would like to ask for an annual voluntary membership donation - say between £5 and £20 per year per member. 100% of our funds are used in pursuance of our objectives. We want to emphasise that this is a voluntary system – you are not under any pressure to donate. However, if you would like to contribute, donations can be sent by cheque made out to QCOP to: *Cherry Foster, 334 Westward Road, Ebley, Stroud, GL5 4TU.*

QCOP – How we operate

Quaker Concern Over Population grew out of the Canterbury Commitment and was formally established following on from the successful lecture that we held at Yearly Meeting Gathering in Bath three years ago.

We currently have almost 50 supporters signed up, mainly from Friends in Britain but also from Europe and the USA.

Although we are still quite a small group, we have been very active since we were established and are proud to have produced a very informative website <http://qcop.org.uk> and have led one Regional Gathering Day on the topic of Overpopulation. We will be holding a lecture at Yearly Meeting Gathering in Warwick and, as detailed above, will be playing a significant part by providing a presentation on the population issue at Woodbrooke in November.

We have applied for Listed Informal Group. We hope that we will be granted this but our application has been caught up in the review of the whole process of Listed Informal Groups which in future will be known as Quaker Recognised Bodies.

QCOP is run by a small committee of around 6 Friends. As we are a geographically diverse group most of our committee meetings are done by Skype but we do also hold 2 face to face meetings a year which we have called our General Meetings and these are open to all interested Friends. We currently have a Treasurer/Secretary and a Convenor but we are in need of a membership secretary.

Until now we have been funded by our committee members but now that we are becoming more established we hope to apply for funds from other sources.



Friends at QCOP General Meeting at Edgbaston Meeting House on the 8th February

STOP PRESS

QCOP at Yearly Meeting Gathering

We have just heard that we now the go ahead to hold a lecture and participate in the Ideas' Fair at the Yearly Meeting Gathering at Warwick. As soon as we have dates and timings we will let our supporters know and also publish them on our website. If you are at YMG it would be good if you come to our events and even better if you could help us run them.

Why have a Small Family?

In a 2009 paper, Paul Murtaugh and Michael Schlax, both professors at the Oregon State University, attempted to calculate the emissions of having a child. Their question was: if parents are responsible for even some of their offspring's emissions, what might a total accounting of the environmental impact of procreation look like? Their findings are staggering.

They chose six common praiseworthy 'green' activities and calculated their lifetime emissions savings. These activities were: increase one's car's fuel economy from 20 to 30 mpg; reduce miles driven weekly from 231 to 155; replace traditional windows with energy efficient models; replace ten 75W incandescent bulbs with 25W energy efficient ones; replace one's old refrigerator with an energy efficient model; recycle all of their domestic waste.

They compared those savings with the savings arising from refraining to have a child. Other things being equal, the lifetime savings of choosing not to have a child is *more than twenty times* that of the six measures stated.

The fact that one's children will not only emit on their account, but may procreate themselves, has the implication that having a child raises one's lifetime CO² emissions by *several times*. Each child that an individual has adds about 9441 metric tons to one's carbon footprint, which is 5.7 times the average emissions of an American's non-procreative activities (based on an American lifestyle)

In terms of carbon emissions, having a child is in a class of its own. Procreating swamps all of our other efforts to be green, and in our personal lives, clearly *the greenest thing anyone can do, by a long chalk, is to have smaller families.*

(This article leans rather heavily on 'Toward a Small Family Ethic', by Travis N Reider)

Roger Plenty

Committee

Jonathan Riddell – Convenor (Alton Meeting)

Cherry Foster – Secretary /Treasurer
(Nailsworth Meeting)

Roger Plenty (Nailsworth Meeting)

Nick Chetwood (Brigflatts Meeting)

June New (Jesus Lane Meeting - Cambridge)

Norman Marsh (Birkenhead Meeting)

<http://qcop.org.uk/>