

1. Climate Justice



Quakers believe that the climate and environmental crisis we are facing is a justice issue.

Those who are and will be most affected by rising temperatures, water shortages, erratic weather we will see as the earth

warms have done the least to cause climate change

In 2011 Quakers in Britain committed to become a low carbon community. Part of our minute read: "The environmental crisis is enmeshed with global economic injustice and we must face our responsibility as one of the nations which has unfairly benefited at others' expense..."

Quakers are working on climate justice at different levels – from our United Nations office, through Quakers in Britain, through to our local Central England Quaker level.

The common thread is building an economy that puts equality, peace and our living planet before the pursuit of profit for its own sake.

2. Link between Quaker Testimonies



In 2011 we set up our own Central England Quaker Low Carbon Commitment forum to support local meetings in their journey to become a low carbon community and to learn from each other.

At an early meeting we explored how our sustainability and climate

work is inextricably linked to all four of our Testimonies that Hilary has already mentioned.

Links friends made during this activity included how a sustainable life style involves living simply

but living simply today is different from 17th Century – now we have technology.

Strong links were made between sustainability and the peace testimony and how water, food and land shortages cause wars.

Early part of our journey in Central England



At first on our journey to become a low carbon community we concentrated on reducing our own carbon footprint

This reflects our testimony to integrity – we should not ask others to do what we are not doing ourselves.

So, for example, Cotteridge Quakers, my own meeting, was one of the first community buildings in the country to generate solar electricity.

Insulating the meeting house and replacing storage heaters with heat pumps has reduced electricity consumption by about 90%.

Cotteridge and other local meetings joined the ecumenical Eco Church project and are one of the very few Gold award holders in the country.

3. Link with natural world



Over a period of 18 months, Coventry Quakers cleaned up some neglected ground in front of their meeting house and planted a garden on forest garden principles.

It includes a wide range of tasty and nutritious plants for foraging.

Sutton Coldfield Quakers organised a community event with their MP, Andrew Mitchell, and former Overseas Development Minister,

Andrew Mitchell began by giving examples from West Indies, Sudan, Rwanda, and Bangladesh of how the world's poor are paying the immediate cost of climate change.

Interfaith - Footsteps - Faiths for a Low Carbon Future



There was intense interfaith climate activity in November 2015 in the run up to the Paris Climate summit.

Forum members organised an Interfaith Exhibitions and Conversations event where members of the

different faith communities presented a view of the environment from their faith perspective, learning from one another and building connections to work together in future.

The international commitment then made at the Paris summit to keep global temperatures below 2 degrees centigrade and to aim for 1.5 degrees exceeded expectations.

4. Quaker support for Footsteps



Working with others is a characteristic of many areas of Quaker work and especially in the area of climate and environmental action where the concerns of Quakers are shared by other faith communities as well as by many people of no particular faith.

In 2019 Central England Quakers corporately joined with others to call on Birmingham City Council to declare a climate emergency and become a net zero carbon by 2030 or as soon after as a just transition permits.

On behalf of Footsteps, I am the faith community representative on the city's climate emergency taskforce.

The city is finding it much easier to declare a climate emergency than to make all the radical changes needed to become a net zero carbon city.

One particular initiative has been Central England Quakers, the Peace Hub, also a Quaker Project, JaiJagat and Friends of the Earth coming together to petition the city council to find a better way of dealing with waste than burning it in an incinerator.