

Cotteridge Meeting Newsletter

Meeting for Worship every Sunday 10.30am

Children's Meeting in term time

Diary Dates - June/July 2018

16 June, Reflections in the Garden, 10.00 - 12.00

16 June, Area Meeting, Solihull WI, 2.00pm

17 June, Shared Lunch

24 June, Meeting for Worship, Northfield Meeting House, 6.00 - 7.00 pm

24 June, Singing in the Spirit

28 June, Coffee Morning, 10.30 - 12 noon, Sarah J's house, all welcome

1 July, Local Business Meeting, 12 noon: *Quaker Week*

7 July, Creative Day, Northfield Meeting House, 10.00 - 4.00, all welcome, details from Tina: 07802 413 143

8 July, Mindful Gardening, 8.30 - 10.00am

8 July, Enquirers' Gathering, 12.00-12.30

15 July, Shared Lunch

19 July, Area Meeting, Warwick Meeting House, 6.00pm

Quaker Voluntary Action (QVA) AGM

Sunday 8 July

Cotteridge MH

see page 2

Quaker week

see page 2

responses needed
before **20 June**
please in order to
bring it to LBM on

1 July

Our Work and Witness: celebrating Quakers in Central England

30 June 2018, 9.30-4.30,
Woodbrooke

Coffee Mornings

Can *anyone* host the 26 July coffee morning please?
Please speak to Anne A if you are able to or would like to
host a coffee morning

A Future for all: Implementing the Christian imperative to care for our World

July 14 10am - 4pm, The Priory
Rooms

to register:: [http://
centralenglandquakers.org.uk/events/
a-future-for-all/](http://centralenglandquakers.org.uk/events/a-future-for-all/)

Quaker Week 2018

29 September - 7 October

Friends, this year the annual national outreach event: Quaker Week, falls between 29 September and 7 October.

We discussed what we would like to do at this month's business meeting and were enthusiastic about a number of possible events. Ideas included:

- a focus on food poverty: invite a speaker or organise a workshop from the Foodbank to talk to interested people about the work going on there, write to decision makers, eat together, be a food bank collection point for the day.
- organise a tea party and invite people to enjoy our garden.
- hold a table top sale in the car park.

- link with ideas connected to the Harvest Home event selling own grown produce and wares.

- host a panel discussion with a focus on Our Community inviting speakers from local groups such as the friends of Cotteridge park, Masefield allotment project, community local house build initiatives, community energy schemes.

Cotteridge history and the links to Quakers.

We could do any or all of the above (or even other things not yet thought of!).

We would like to form a small group of people to organise the various events. **If you are interested in joining this group or have ideas you'd like to share please let Heather know by 20 June.**

QVA AGM and Presentation

Cotteridge Friends Meeting House

Sunday 8th July - 12.30 onwards

After *Meeting for Worship* and tea/coffee on Sunday 8 July, *Quaker Voluntary Action* (QVA) will be holding their AGM at Cotteridge Friends Meeting House. As Friends involved with *Quaker Voluntary Action* will also be joining us for worship, they have offered to give a presentation on some of the work QVA are currently involved with. Michel Gerard will talk about her experiences in Ramallah. We are delighted to be able to host this opportunity and all Friends are warmly invited.

Friends may wish to bring contributions towards a **Shared Lunch** which will be available just before the Presentation.

The **Enquirers Group** will run from 12.00 – 12.30 and participating Friends will still be able to join Shared Lunch and the QVA Presentation.

Sue and Elaine

Spoken ministry for the hard-of-hearing (or '*Beyond the Loop*')

Our shared concern is about Friends who have difficulties in hearing some, or much, of spoken ministry during Meeting for Worship. One of us has long-standing hearing difficulties and has talked informally with many Friends who experience similar difficulties; the other has worked for years with profoundly deaf people. We offer some information, reflections and practical recommendations for Cotteridge Meeting.

Hearing Loss

Overall, one in six people experience hearing impairment, more prevalent with age, though there are many variations in the type and range of hearing problems. These can affect, not simply the overall level of hearing but particular ranges of frequency for the reception of speech (for example, high-frequency consonants: *f, s, t, p, k*, or lower frequency vowel sounds, which can lead to different kinds of 'mis-hearing'). In addition, a person may experience some *distortion* of sounds and/or *tinnitus* (various kinds of distracting, internally-generated sounds which persist in the ear; this is fairly common). Depending on background noise and acoustic properties of the particular listening environment, for some, *listening to the spoken word* can be a highly frustrating and tiring activity, sometimes resulting in a person 'switching off'. Some people may become resigned to experiencing hearing difficulties as inevitable; perhaps, to 'put up with it', not to 'make a fuss'.

Hearing Aids & the 'Hearing Loop'

Not everyone with a hearing loss can benefit from a hearing aid - it depends on the nature of the hearing loss. Of those who could benefit, not everyone finds a hearing aid that works well for their particular hearing loss and lifestyle. Some aids are just too fiddly - the tiniest of buttons and batteries. For some they are simply intolerable as they amplify everything... alarms, coughs, sneezes, doors, traffic, footsteps - *as well as speech*. Hearing Aid technology is advanced but the devices vary enormously and it would seem to be a case of 'buyer-beware'. Private hearing aids are often smaller and more discreet but may not deliver all functions such as being able to connect to Hearing Loop systems such as the one at Cotteridge Meeting House. If a Friend uses hearing aids which are *compatible* with the Hearing Loop (for example those provided free-of-charge by the NHS and highly recommended), it is important to sit within the effective radius of the Loop's radio signal. This usually means avoiding sitting around the perimeter of the room but it is best to determine this experimentally. But the 'Loop', alone, is certainly not the answer to the question: How can we assist *everyone* to hear spoken ministry? In our Meeting, there are only a few Friends who actually make use of the Loop. Usually, the system works satisfactorily and, when a hearing-aid user is 'switched in' to the Loop, it can assist in hearing spoken ministry. Loop systems, however (including the Cotteridge one) are not without transient

technical problems. On occasion, in our Meeting, it has been necessary to switch from the 'Loop' to 'general' setting on hearing-aids in order to avoid an unpleasant 'booming' sound of speech or persistent crackles. Premises Committee have been asked to consider arranging for the Cotteridge Loop system to be regularly serviced and reviewed, preferably on an annual basis. Fortunately, current NHS hearing-aids allow the user to switch to a general setting if the Loop is causing problems.

Other Technical Options

So, what can we do to help (a) those with a hearing loss, without a hearing aid, (b) those who have a hearing aid which is incompatible with the Loop or (c) when the Loop is not working well? Some investigations have taken place into setting up a supplementary amplification system in our Meeting Room. Attempts have been made to use the existing Loop system's microphones (one on the central table, one on the window-ledge above the piano) to link with *external*, wall-mounted, speakers in order to amplify spoken ministry for *non-hearing aid users*. This was not a success due to irresolvable problems of 'feedback' (where the act of amplification feeds back into the microphones with resulting unpleasant noise). Further consultations with our local audio technician and with *Action on Hearing Loss* (formerly the R.N.I.D) indicated that supplementary external speakers would be feasible but would necessitate mobile, wireless-free, hand-held microphones

(probably 4) suitably positioned around the room. Although such a system would be entirely for *optional* use, there would be inevitable issues of movement around the room, correct microphone usage and, not least, the likely disruptive effect on the ambient silence of our Meeting for Worship which is so cherished by us all. In view of this we are not minded, at present, to recommend going further down this path.

The Impact on the hard-of-hearing

In informal conversation, we often rush words, cover our mouth, drop our voice, frequently at the end of a sentence. This typically happens when a final, amusing remark is about to be made. Extraneous (especially sudden) noises can have a similarly disastrous effect on meaning and these, of course, are *amplified* by the Loop or hearing aid, if either is used. Imagine trying to hear someone when your mobile phone signal is poor. It cuts in and out, causing you to lose key words. There may be a drop in overall volume or in speech sounds you cannot easily hear. There may be background noise(s) obscuring the bits that you can hear. You may be experiencing tinnitus. *All of your energy and focus is on trying to hear.* This is so, most of the time, for the hard-of-hearing. The loss of one, or more, 'high information-carrying' or *key words* renders the overall meaning of the sentence incomprehensible - *despite the rest of the sentence having been*

heard. In Meeting for Worship, where it is so problematic to ask for things to be repeated, these problems, cumulatively, can lead to a Friend completely 'losing the thread' of spoken ministry. This is a matter which we should continue to be aware of and to address in our Meeting.

What can speakers do?

1) When standing to minister, it is helpful to pause before beginning. This allows time for a hearing-aid user to switch on or to switch to the most appropriate setting on their hearing-aid (or for anyone using ear-plugs to take them out).
2) Most importantly - *'Try to speak audibly and distinctly, with sensitivity to the needs of your fellow worshippers'* (QF&P; 2.55). We might add: *as if to the furthest-placed Friends in the room.* This is not just a question of loudness. One doesn't just shout at the hearing-impaired person (however frustrating it may be for the speaker). It is a question of *consistently adequate volume plus clarity of speech.* Allowing *lip movements* to be visible can also be a help.

What can listeners do?

1) Whilst there is a known Quaker expression to indicate a difficulty in hearing spoken ministry ('*Our Friend is not heard*'), concern has been expressed that this could interrupt a speaker's ministry and sometimes be inappropriate. This problem continues to need our discernment. We would propose (analogous to the established Quaker tradition of raising hands when requiring 'quiet') that, in our

Meeting for Worship, anyone not adequately hearing spoken ministry might simply raise their hand. Elders and Overseers may wish to consider this.

2) It would be helpful if - *during spoken ministry* - Friends could try to refrain from: coughing, nose-blowing, moving feet, rustling paper, rummaging in paper bags, opening and closing doors. These can affect *all* hard-of-hearing people to some extent (and, of course - these noises are *amplified* when using the Loop or other settings on hearing-aids).

In brief:

- Pause before giving ministry
- Speak with a clear and consistently audible voice, as if to the furthest person in the room
- Bring stillness in every way possible when spoken ministry is being given

We thankfully acknowledge that Friends at Cotteridge Meeting have already shown an increasing awareness of other Friends' likely hearing difficulties. Many, when ministering, have made special efforts to stand in a position to address everyone and to speak audibly and clearly across the room. Our hope is that, as a Meeting, we can continue to enable a sympathetic hearing environment for *everyone* who experiences hearing difficulties, coupled with a clearer appreciation of the issues.

Ted & Kate June 2018

Restore

Thursday 12 July

St Martin in the Bullring

Annual Celebration to celebrate the work of Restore during the past year

All Welcome

A chance to meet volunteers and refugees

Earth Overshoot Day

- the day on which we (all of humanity) have used more from nature than our planet can renew in the entire year -

falls on 1 August this year

See overshootday.org for ideas and resources and

Take a step to #MoveTheDate

Asylum Seekers Coffee-Afternoon Project

at Edgbaston Friends Meeting House

In July Edgbaston Friends Meeting will begin its support of *The Children's Society's* Asylum Seeker Coffee-Afternoon Project at Edgbaston Meeting House. This is a 3-month trial project in the first instance. If any Friends from Cotteridge would like to support this project by donating toys/books (approx. ages 1-5 years) or in any other way, please contact Sue or Elaine.

Refugee Week 2018

18 - 24 June

Various events in the West Midlands - see refugeeweek.org.uk and birminghamchurchestogether.org.uk

Staying Friends

We shall meet again on Wednesday 20 June at 7.30 at Northfield MH, back room

We shall continue to read and discuss Gerard Hughes' book 'God of surprises'.

The line which stood out for me in the first session was: 'We don't have to invent God; we just have to search'.

All are welcome, hope to see you there.

Alan

Door/Flower Rota

Friends - Joe and I are asking you to look in your diaries; when can you offer for Door/Flower Rota? As always if you only want to do door or only flowers that's fine - just indicate.

The Sundays needed are - July 8, 15, 22 and 29 : August 5, 12, 19 and 26; September 2.

The list will be in Meeting on 24 June - but you can always e-mail Liz with offers.

Exploring the Quaker Testimonies

11 July 2018
10.30 - 11.30am
Bournville Quaker Meeting House

Advance Notices

Richard Holloway will be the 2018 lecturer in the radical lectures' series at The Church at Carrs Lane
Saturday, 6 October, 10am – 4pm

'Believing, Forgiving, Dying: Our Walk Across The Stage'

Tickets cost **£20** and are available from the church office: 0121 643 6151 or office@carrslane.co.uk

Everything is connected: a lively discussion about identity, climate change, justice, and peace

14 September 2018, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

at: *The Church at Carrs Lane*

with Ruth Wilde and Peterson Toscano

This will be an engaging, entertaining and thought-provoking evening. We are expecting this to be a popular event, so please [book your tickets](#) asap.

Current Appeal: Christian Aid

Open Air Meeting for Worship at Moseley Festival

Saturday 23 June, 2.30 - 3.30pm

Join us for a silent Meeting for Worship at the side of St. Mary's Church in Moseley, by the Remembrance Garden.

Join us for a silent Meeting for Worship as part of the Moseley Festival. Open to all, drop in for as short or long a time as you want: it's an opportunity to experience the Quaker way of worshipping for anyone who's interested.

This is the day of the Moseley Festival Street Fair and CEQ will also have a stall throughout the day. If you could help hold the Meeting for Worship as an elder, welcome people or spend some time on the stall, contact Val.

Film Night at Selly Oak FMH Friday 22 June, 6.30pm

'The Artist' (PG)

'a moving and witty homage to the silent movie era shot in black and white'

The film starts at 6.30pm but you are welcome to come at 6.00pm to share in some soup and bread.

Tea Rota

17 June	Helen M
24 June	Cathy and Richard
1 July	Andria
8 July	Pat B
15 July	Anne U

22 July Gill

No Newsletter in August so please let me have any notices for August/early September for inclusion in July's Newsletter.

Carolyn

Next Newsletter: 22 July 2018

Contributions by Wednesday 18 July please

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