



# Brighton Friends News

A Monthly Publication of Brighton Quaker Meeting

August 2021

[www.brightonquakers.net](http://www.brightonquakers.net)

Issue 321

## Children's Meeting



Friends will know that Brighton Children's Meeting has been holding Zoom meetings regularly throughout the Covid lockdown. Our two most recent meetings have considered the theme of migration across national borders and we have looked at the reasons people move country (the "push and pull factors"). We have been learning about how hunger and war can make life very difficult, and how people will seek refuge and safety elsewhere. Quakers have a long history of helping those affected by hunger, and displaced by persecution and war. We have built on our considerations of diversity and welcome in previous meetings, and we acknowledged that several of the children involved in our meeting have themselves moved country for various reasons.

A month ago we started following the progress of Little Amal, a 3.5 metre-tall puppet which is walking across Europe, and two weeks ago we started making an artwork of the phrase "REFUGEES ARE WELCOME", with the intention that we would post it on the [Brighton Quakers website](http://www.brightonquakers.net) and on the noticeboard in the lecture room of the Meeting House.

If you want to learn more about Refugees there are many useful resources here <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/>. If you want to read some accounts of child refugees, why and how they reached this country, you will find some here <https://separatedchild.org/our-work/child-refugee-stories/> <https://www.walkwithamal.org/about-us/little-amal/> <https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/social-justice/migration>

*Brighton Children's Meeting*

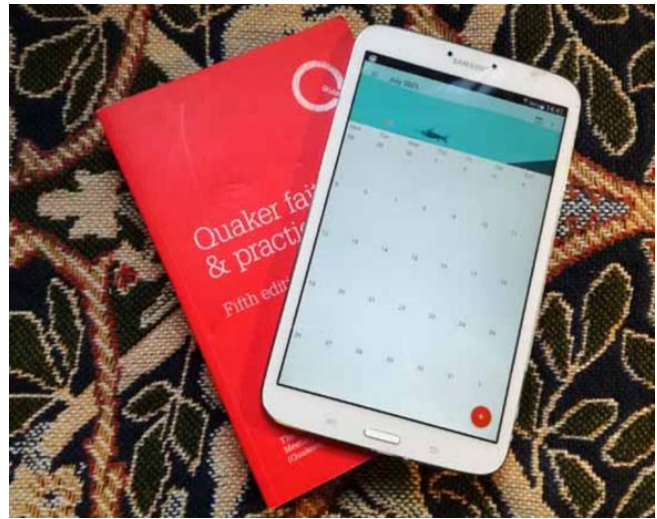
# Epistle from Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering 2021

**Held online from 19 July to 8 August 2021**

We send loving greetings to Friends everywhere.

## **We have no time but this present time.**

Friends in Britain have gathered online at this time of great upheaval, amid the pandemic, climate and environmental breakdown, and increasing social inequality and division. We are grateful for technology, and the hard work of Britain Yearly Meeting staff, Agenda and Arrangements Committees, the Woodbrooke team, and others in bringing us together.



At this Yearly Meeting Gathering Friends have considered the *theme* "For our comfort and discomfort: living equality and truth in a time of crisis". We have been wrestling with what it will mean to be truly committed to anti-racism and faith-based action for climate justice. We have thought about how to better affirm gender diversity in our meetings. We have discovered the challenges of attempting to make statements as a unified 'we' in a way that acknowledges the different experiences among us.

To read more go to: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/ymg-epistle-2021>

*Quaker worship feels to me like sitting still in the love of God, feeling that connection to the eternal that takes me out of time and place and into a sense of fullness, of completeness. Then I feel a flow of love that calms my spirit and awakens in me a sense of the universal. Feeling this love seems like only half the work: the rest is to bring it back to the world to fuel the ministry that brings my great joy to the needs of this imperfect world. The trick is to keep holding on to that love, that feeling of absolute peace and presence that comes when worship happens.*

*Prepared ministry at semi-programmed meeting for worship at YMG 2021  
Kate McNally of Belgium and Luxembourg Yearly Meeting.*

## **FOOD BANK -- Please Remember -- FOOD BANK --- FOOD BANK**

Please make donations to the foodbanks in your supermarkets. Alternatively, you can bring donations to Meeting House on Wednesday mornings 10 – 12.

## The Doran Lecture

I attended an event last month organised by "My Death, my Decision", which was very interesting. Polly Toynbee led a discussion between Dr Wendy Savage, the feminist obstetrician; Diane Munday, Secretary of the Abortion Law Reform Association; and Natika Halil, currently General Secretary of the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

They compared the opposition to legislation on assisted dying to the opposition to abortion law reform, showing how it came from the same sources i.e. strongly-held oppressive religious views; and using the same tactics, basically telling lies to hide the religious roots of their objections.

I do not agree with the totally rationalist stance of the organisation, but I found the debate - and the sharing of very painful experiences of being with dying loved ones, shared by both Wendy and Diane - very moving.

Now I have been told of this forthcoming event, which I thought Friends might be interested in. A talk by Sir Stephen Sedley on **October 11** entitled A Plea for Legislation Under Certain Conditions. For more information and to register please go to <https://www.mydeath-mydecision.org.uk/events/>.

*Penny Cloutte*

**Do you work gladly with other religious groups in the pursuit of common goals? While remaining faithful to Quaker insights, try to enter imaginatively into the life and witness of other communities of faith, creating together the bonds of friendship.**

*Quaker Faith & Practice, Advices & Queries No. 6*

## Our Back Garden

We are slowly working to transform the back garden at the Meeting House into a place of peace and beauty. The photograph shows what we are starting with.

We are having great fun with this and have come up with the idea of having a few Quaker-ish garden gnomes. Does anyone have any suggestions as to what these could be or how we could go about creating them?

We are also looking for scented plants - herbs, lavender, etc to put in, but we're not sure how well such plants will survive; (the light is a bit limited), so would welcome cuttings, etc to try out. Largish pots (not plastic) also welcome.



Send either of us an email or come and find us; we are there most Wednesdays 10-12 - do feel free to join in as well! Alternatively, write to us at [brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com)

*Michelle Roberts and Kate Mackrell*

# Get Strong, Support the Meeting House

## Pilates at Meeting House

It is looking as if I will be able to start face to face teaching at the Meeting House from Wednesday, September 8th. I will run three classes, the details of which are below. If people wish to indicate an interest or simply find out more you can get in touch with me via my website [www.exercise-for-all.com](http://www.exercise-for-all.com). The classes are drop-in so no long-term commitment is expected and anyone who is Pilates-curious is welcome to come once in order to see if it is for them. I shall also be using Zoom for anyone who does not wish to participate in a face to face class.

If you would like to improve your physical fitness but are anxious about classes, I work hard to teach with a light touch and have a lot of experience teaching people who are neither keen nor confident about their capacity to exercise. There is also a cohort of Friends who have been coming to my classes throughout lockdown who I am sure would be willing to let you know what the classes are like from their point of view.

As all the proceeds will be going to the Meeting House funds I am not going to specify a fee; participants can make a donation at the end of the class. Details of the classes are as follows:

**Seated:** This class is for beginners and those who do not wish to exercise standing up. It is exclusively seated and involves a variety of exercises designed to build strength, increase flexibility and improve coordination without causing undue fatigue.

**Wednesdays  
11.00-11.55**

**Chair-based:** This is a class for those happy to work standing up and sitting down. It includes additional exercises that involve standing and working on balance.

**Wednesdays  
12.00-12.55**

**Mat:** This is a class for anyone interested in a more conventional Pilates session. Whilst gentle in content, you do need to be confident about getting down on to the floor (and up again!). You will need to bring your own mat or towel to lie on for this class.

**Wednesdays  
13.00-13.55**

*John Rignell*

**How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.**

*Quaker Faith & Practice, Advices & Queries No. 18*

**FOOD BANK -- Please Remember -- FOOD BANK --- FOOD BANK**



## Voices in Exile

Voices in Exile works with refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in East and West Sussex and Surrey who have no recourse to public funds. We are well known as an organisation that provides a safe, friendly and welcoming environment for refugees and migrants to find the help and support they need, and that provides a high-quality free advice service including specialist immigration advice and casework. We are known particularly for our work on destitution issues.

Our ethos is multi-faith and human rights-based, and our approach is collaborative and holistic. We aim to work with, rather than for, people who migrate. We offer practical support including a weekly food and toiletries bank for those who are destitute; and also advocate for, accompany, and enable people to access services, build community, and develop their own potential through a programme of learning and creative activities.

Over the course of the past 18 months we have moved many of our services online but have been able to continue some services in person, including two weekly peer support groups which have been able to meet outside over the past few months. These groups have been fantastic for reducing isolation, providing people with essential life and social skills, and building up confidence in navigating Brighton and local systems. Activities include art groups, cooking classes, storytelling, English lessons, and mini golf! Lately the groups have been visiting the organic veg growers Common Ground based in Stanmer Park. They have been amazingly welcoming and have helped members explore new skills such as woodwork, outdoors cooking, veg planting and plant growing. Common Ground have also regularly been providing fresh vegetables for our weekly migrant food bank.

Our food bank provides food for, on average, 115 family members every week. We provide substantial food parcels tailored to people's cultural and dietary needs – as well as providing essential toiletries, nappies and period products.

Planned refurbishment works of our Kemp Town base mean that we will now have to relocate our food bank temporarily, at considerable expense. In order to continue running this vital service for destitute families we have just launched a crowdfunder – please donate and share! We rely on the generosity and commitment of our community to sustain our organisation and the services we provide to migrants across Sussex, <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/migrant-foodbank>.

Please also see our [website](#) for information about our current services and for updates on current campaigning and advocacy work, including work to push back against the draconian and inhumane proposals of Priti Patel's new Nationality and Borders Bill.

Thank you for all your ongoing support. We simply could not survive without the support of the community around us. Please visit our Donate page to find out more about how you can help: [www.voicesinexile.org/donate](http://www.voicesinexile.org/donate). Also, we often update our Facebook page when clients have specific needs, so keep an eye out there too!

*Voices in Exile*

## Portraits of the Selfless

A photography exhibition focused on faces and stories of NHS staff and key workers during the Coronavirus pandemic

In the summer of 2020 Holly Stone, a photographer from Hove, photographed sixteen NHS staff and key workers who worked selflessly throughout the Coronavirus pandemic.

They spoke of their struggle, the working conditions, the government's lack of understanding, and the trauma of their experiences.

Holly said 'It felt like these people were being talked about as 'heroes' but not being properly acknowledged. I also felt the key workers in particular were not given half of the exposure in the news as they deserved so I decided I wanted to help provide a platform by presenting their portraits.'



One of the subjects of the project, Alice May, a care worker (*photo above*), recounted her experience. "My biggest achievement was nursing an 85 year old woman through Covid as no one else would, due to the fear of catching it. I just wore extras PPE as I didn't want her to feel as though something was wrong. She has dementia so wasn't aware of Covid and the dangers. I would have taken the risks of infection just to make sure she was OK, but I guess it's just part of it. I was happy I made a difference and will always continue to do so."

An exhibition of the portraits will be held in the reception and corridor of Meeting House **September 1 – 31**.

*Tony Tree*

## Inter Faith Contact Group

### **Monthly Interfaith Prayers**

There will be no prayer hour in **August**. It is hoped that from **September** the prayer hour will continue in person. Details to follow.

### **Fostering Friendships**

There will be no Fostering Friendships meeting in **August**. We hope to recommence on Wednesday September 15.

[www.interfaithcontactgroup.com](http://www.interfaithcontactgroup.com)

For more information please contact Sheila at [secretaryifcgbrighton@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryifcgbrighton@gmail.com)

*Sheila Boyer and Helen Ledger IFCG representatives*



The Brighton & Hove  
Interfaith Contact Group

## Fair Trade

If you haven't been to our Fair Trade Shop at Brighton Marina – 8 Boardwalk, first floor, behind Cafe Rouge BN2 5WA, then please come and see our range of goods. Opening Hours: Thursdays to Sundays, 11 am – 5 pm.

Fair Trade, as you probably know, follows many of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which are, broadly, to help reduce poverty and inequality, and provide a reasonable standard of living without trashing the environment.

Focussing on Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production is one of Lovethatstuff's key themes. We all have to buy some things, so three sustainable routes for clothing, for example, 1) are to buy nothing; 2) buy second-hand, swap, upcycle etc; or 3) to buy handmade and Fair Trade. The first two mainly focus on mitigating our over-consumption – we've bought too many things in the first place and are either wearing them out (a good option), or sending them to a charity shop for resale (better than throwing them away but may be solving large companies' excess production, and in the case of certain companies masking their poor production practices in terms of low wages, poor working conditions and democratic working rights). The third option will help marginalised workers, such as handloom weavers, in our case in Bihar, India, the poorest state, to maintain their way of life, earn a living and respect the environment. It also uses 100% natural fibres either cotton or cotton/linen mix, which don't pollute the water system with micro-plastics when you wash them, biodegrade at the end of their life, are long lasting, and feel very good to wear.



The tailors who cut and stitch the garments are also based in India. They are training up some women to sew various items as their traditional craft is cotton crochet. We have various gift items they make as well, such as purses, toys and flower brooches. This Fair Trade producer group was set up in Andhra Pradesh to support widows, who can be thrown out of the family home when their husbands die and they have to earn their own living.

Fair Trade encourages you to buy less, so in the case of clothing, buy things that you will wear and will last a long time, and wash them less frequently to save on water usage. We also now have some non-polluting soap nuts from India which you can use in the washing machine. They last for several washes and don't come wrapped in plastic or in a plastic bottle. These come from a different company and aren't Fair Trade but we like the non-polluting aspect.

We sell many more ranges than clothing but this is an example of how to shop more sustainably, reduce poverty, and help many marginalised workers.

*Barbara Wilson* [www.lovethatstuff.co.uk](http://www.lovethatstuff.co.uk)

## The Craftivism group formed as part of QPSWE

We have decided to support two campaigns over the summer and autumn. They are both working towards the United Nations COP-26 meeting in Glasgow in November. They are Stitches for Survival, and the Canary Campaign. For the first, we are knitting 100x60 cm panels to be sewn together to be part of a scarf 1.5 miles long that is symbolic of the 1.5 degrees increase in temperature. For the second, we are making small canaries to highlight the issue of having clean air. Canaries can only thrive when the air is not toxic. We are having a sitting and crafting picnic this month at Preston Park to publicise the campaign.

If you would like to join us or for more information, please contact me or write to [brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com)

*Susan White*

## Brighton Migrant Solidarity cafe is back



Each week different migrant groups cook delicious, simple meals. They'd love to welcome you to Jollof Café now that they are back after a break of 18 months, and are in a new home at West Hill Hall in Compton Road, not far from the Seven Dials. The number 7 bus stops very close by. They are open every Wednesday from 1 to 3 pm and the meals are reasonably priced.

Yesterday I had wonderful Syrian food and a tasty piece of cake made by my Egyptian friend Norma. Please do support our Refugee community and meet many of them there and chat over lunch.

*Helen Ledger*

## Mantlepiece Observations

Newsletter readers may like to visit the exhibition of ceramics by Richard Slee entitled 'Mantlepiece Observations'. It is on at [Hove Museum](#) until January 25 next year.

The show is inspired by the [Mass Observation project](#), which began in 1937 to record everyday life in this country. One of the tasks for the observers was to memorise the things people had on their mantle pieces. Richard Slee has recreated objects from 1937 in a shiny colourful way. We are treated, among other things, to toby jugs, clocks, vases, and an oversized ashtray with a giant ceramic cigarette and ceramic ash that I found especially memorable. The exhibits are accompanied by fascinating photos of Bolton taken during the Mass Observation including, one of an advertising hoarding for a new housing estate where a semi-detached house was for sale for £385.

I highly recommend this entertaining insight into another era. And it is free!

*Dave Hamilton*



## Appeals

In these strange times we cannot put donations in our Appeal Box. Our chosen charities could lose out on much needed donations. If you can, please make your donation through the appeal's website <http://www.quakermhfund.uk/> and click on the Donate button or use the information below to pay by BACS or cheque.

## Appeal for Quaker Mental Health Fund

This month's appeal is **Quaker Mental Health Fund** – a Quaker charity that was, until recently, called The Retreat York Benevolent Fund. The new name explains things much better! It's a mental health charity which gives grants to individual Quakers to enable them to access counselling or other support. There is currently a scheme to give Quakers access to six sessions of therapy with The Retreat. It also gives grants to Quaker-led mental health projects and it supports conferences, workshops and courses to increase Quaker awareness of mental health.



A donation will be used to give people access to individual support, or to help to develop projects. Current projects include:

- counselling for unaccompanied refugee young people;
- helping young people in Belfast to explore their community and values;
- helping people with long term mental health problems to train in agricultural work;
- developing a garden in a secure psychiatric unit in Great Yarmouth;
- helping teachers in Newcastle to lead their classes in mindfulness
- and many other projects. To find out more information please go to their website <http://www.quakermhfund.uk/>

On the website there is a Donate button that you can use to make a donation online. Alternatively, you can make a bank transfer to Quaker Mental Health Fund, sort code 16-58-10 A/C 20994362 or send a cheque payable to Quaker Mental Health Fund, to Office 102, 51 Pinfold street, Birmingham, B2 4AY.

*Vivienne Ross*

## Coronavirus - Staying in Touch with each other

### Message from Overseers

During this period of Covid-19 we are trying to keep in touch with each other in our Meeting. Some people may feel more isolated than others. If you do need help or would just like Friends to hold you in the Light, please contact the Overseers. If finances are a problem we may be able to help as we have access to grants.

**Overseers** - Jane Rosenberg, Terry Byrne, Alan Stratford, Barbara Barber, Annie Lieberman and Kate Mackrell [bqoverseers@outlook.com](mailto:bqoverseers@outlook.com)

## Community in Action

**Coffee Mornings** via Zoom on Fridays at 11.00 am. If you would like to join please email the clerk at [brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com)

### **Being Friends Together**

Being Friends Together is a good opportunity to get to know Friends better, learn more about Quakerism and share spiritual journeys. Three groups continue to get together regularly via Zoom. If you would like to join please contact the elders via [bgelders@outlook.com](mailto:bgelders@outlook.com)

**Clerk's mailing list** - if you are not on the list and would like to be, please contact The Clerk at [brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com)

## Brighton Meeting diary

### Meetings for Worship

#### **Regular Meeting for Worship**

Meeting for Worship is held on Sundays at 10.30 as a blended meeting.

In order to maintain social distancing the numbers in the Meeting Room are limited to 25. If you wish to attend in person you must book your place by phoning or emailing the office at 01273-770258 or [admin@brightonquakers.net](mailto:admin@brightonquakers.net).

Masks must be worn in the Meeting House.

If you are not on the clerk's mailing list and wish to join online please email [bgelders@outlook.com](mailto:bgelders@outlook.com).

#### **Children's Meetings**

**August** - no meeting

September's meeting will most probably be on Zoom on Sunday **September 19**.

The Meetings will be led by Mike Coote, Christine Habgood and Helen Ledger.

If you would like to join please contact Helen Ledger or

[brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com)

### Workshops and community events

#### **Open Meeting**

At the moment we cannot have Open Meeting in the Quiet Room. However, after Blended Meeting for Worship on Sundays those online have the opportunity to go into 'breakout rooms' with 3 or 4 other people to have an informal chat about the Meeting before going back to the main Meeting for final goodbyes. Those attending in person in the Meeting House can meet and chat in the garden, without masks.

## Meetings for Quaker business

The next MWB is on **Thursday September 2** at 6.30 pm. Items for MWB must be sent to the Clerk at least one week before the meeting, i.e. **Thursday August 26**. The only exceptions are emergencies that arise during the week before MWB. Please email [brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakerclerk@gmail.com) or write to clerks c/o The Meeting House.

If you are a newcomer or attender and would like to join MWB, please contact the Clerk, who will be able to explain the procedures. If you are not comfortable with Zoom please contact the Elders at [bqelders@outlook.com](mailto:bqelders@outlook.com)

### **Area Meetings for Worship for Business in 2021**

**August 21** on Zoom (delayed from July)

September 18 on Zoom

November 20 at Brighton

Area Meetings start at 10.30

### **Sussex and Surrey Regional Meetings 2021**

**Saturday September 25** - 'We are all Quakers: a non-theist, a Christian and a Buddhist-Quaker explore what each can offer Quakerism' 10.30 -15.30 at Eastbourne Quaker Meeting House

Saturday November 27 - 'How do we reach and welcome people to Quakers in the C21st?' 10.30 -15.30 at Woking Friends Meeting House

All members and attenders are very welcome!

We hope to meet in person soon, public health situation permitting.

For more information email: [sussexandsurreyrmquakerclerk@outlook.com](mailto:sussexandsurreyrmquakerclerk@outlook.com)

All Regional Meetings start at 10.30 and those held in a Meeting House include a bring-and-share lunch.

## Notices

Notices to be read out after Meeting for Worship should be sent to [brightonquakernotices@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakernotices@gmail.com). The deadline for notices is Friday evening. Notices are still read out at the end of the Zoom and Blended Meeting for Worship on Sundays.

## Newsletter Contributions

The editor wants the newsletter to reflect the diversity of thinking and experience of members and attenders. If this is to be your newsletter, we need your input: thoughts on the meeting, a passage that has inspired you, a book review, a drawing, something to share with others that might help us grow in community and spirit. Please send your contributions to the editor, Jackie Robinson at [brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com)

The deadline for the **September** newsletter is **Tuesday August 31**. The editor has the right to edit contributions or hold them over until the next issue, particularly where this is necessary in order to avoid blank pages.

It is the responsibility of contributors to decide how much of their personal details should be given.

To receive the newsletter by email please write to [brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com). This is necessary to comply with GDPR laws.

# BREAKING THE MYTHS

 <p style="text-align: right;"><b>1</b></p> <p>It's <b>NOT</b> illegal to cross the Channel</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>2</b></p> <p>Refugees are neither migrants nor illegal nor invaders.</p>
<p>Under International law, <b>anyone</b> has the right to apply for asylum in <b>any</b> country that signed 1951 Convention - to remain there until the authorities have assessed their claim.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>3</b></p>	 <p style="text-align: right;"><b>4</b></p> <p>Last year approx <b>79.5</b> million refugees were forced to flee their homes.</p> <p>For its share, the UK took <b>20,339</b> refugees - just <b>0.026 %</b> of the world's refugees.</p>