



# QVA NEWS

QUAKER VOLUNTARY ACTION

www.qva.org.uk

2018

## Clerk's welcome

Welcome to the spring newsletter of QVA including our 2018 programme so far. This year we have also produced this in poster format – as the year progresses we will be sending out further information about planned retreats. We hope you will find this of interest. – if any Friends would like to go onto our database for updates and information, please let us know.

Thanks to the continuing support we have received from Friends, we continue to have a varied programme of activities. We welcome our new worker Hannah Brock and she will be seeking out new opportunities for projects. In the autumn, we will again be visiting Ramallah Friends Meeting – a retreat which Friends have found both inspiring and eye opening.

We need to keep our database of participants and supporters updated. Please contact us (mail@qva.org.uk) if you have any change of details to report, if we have any details wrong, or if you no longer wish to receive emails. We post out many copies of the newsletter and programme to individuals. We hope you find this of interest.

If any Friends would be willing to receive this by email instead of by post, please do let me know as this will save a considerable expense.

Finally, I feel all our Trustees deserve thanks for the work they do to keep our programme functioning and to those Friends who help with the production and distribution of publicity. Thanks are especially due to Jasmine Piercy our worker who has now left us after ten years' service, and the team of facilitators who have maintained the programme and, in the case of Ramallah, have contended with rising tensions in the area. We will always welcome more volunteers to share out the work and who may be able to bring new perspectives to our group.

But most of all thank you to all the local Meetings who have supported our work financially and prayerfully over the last year.

In Friendship  
**Jane Robinson**  
*Clerk to QVA Trustees*

## Hello from Hannah



Hi everyone, I'm Hannah, and I'm really excited about being part of Quaker Voluntary Action! I'll tell you a little about myself. I live in Sheffield and am part of Nether Edge Quaker Meeting. I also work part-time for War Resisters' International (an international pacifist network), where I support conscientious objectors to military service. I'm really looking forward to being Working Retreats Coordinator at QVA, and bringing my experience of planning meetings and retreats to help build a great programme of events. I want to help Quakers and others come together to create a brief though beautiful working communities! I look forward to meeting you at a working retreat soon.

## Please donate to QVA

Donations keep us going and enable us to do new things. Please send donations and/or a standing order mandate to:

Geoff Braithwaite, QVA Donations,  
102 Oakwood Drive, St Albans,  
Herts AL4 0XA

For taxpayers, we would gain extra income if you also complete and send the gift aid declaration (set out below) to the above address.

### GIFT AID DECLARATION

*(please sign if you pay tax)*

Please treat all donations I make to QVA from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations.

Signed .....

Date .....

*(Please sign if you pay tax and remember to notify us if you no longer pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations).*

### STANDING ORDER FORM

Please return to Geoff Braithwaite,  
QVA Donations, 102 Oakwood Drive,  
St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0XA,  
not to your bank.

Your name .....

Address .....

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Postcode .....

Tel No .....

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Your bank name .....

Bank Address .....

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Postcode .....

A/c No .....

Sort Code.....

Amount: (£) .....

First Payment Date...../...../.....

*Immediately if blank*

And then *(please circle)*: Monthly / Quarterly / Yearly

### INSTRUCTION TO THE BANK

Please pay the above to **Triodos Bank**  
**16-58-10** for the credit of  
**Quaker Voluntary Action a/c 03269501.**

Signed .....

Date.....

Would you like a receipt? Yes / No *(Please circle)*

If so, may we use your email? Yes / No *(Please circle)*

# Join a working retreat in 2018

Working retreats combine practical work with reflection, free time, fellowship and fun. Our events are open to Quakers and to those who wish to learn more about the Quaker way.

Here are our confirmed working retreats this year!

## LANCUT, POLAND 21-28 July

We'll stay on a small ecofarm in Rakszawa in the beautiful south east of Poland. The farm is run with the goal of promoting wellbeing and community-based, sustainable traditions.

## THE PALES, UK 3-6 August

Summer in Powys! Join QVA's first working retreat at the oldest Quaker Meeting House in continuous use in Wales. Now being renovated and opened to the public, work will be in the organic vegetable garden or 17th-century Quaker burial ground.

## SWARTHMOOR, UK 10-14 September

Enjoy autumn in Swarthmoor's beautiful grounds. Project work will be in the gardens and grounds, or in the historic house.

## ISRAEL-PALESTINE 15-26 October

A study tour and encounter programme in and around Ramallah, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv supporting community activities including the olive harvest, planned in collaboration with Ramallah Friends Meeting. A unique opportunity to learn about the region.

For more info and to apply visit [www.qva.org.uk](http://www.qva.org.uk), or email [hannah@qva.org.uk](mailto:hannah@qva.org.uk)



# Host a QVA working retreat

We are always open to proposals for new projects! Does your Meeting House or Centre needs some volunteer effort to help with a practical project? This could be a site for a working retreat. Please note, it doesn't need to be a Quaker project

Please write to [hannah@qva.org.uk](mailto:hannah@qva.org.uk) with your ideas!

## Our work in the future

This year, we are also looking at our work, and asking what we might do in the future. We would love to have your views-whether you have been on many QVA working retreats, or none at all!

You will find the survey here: [tiny.cc/qva](http://tiny.cc/qva)

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey by the middle of May, if you can!



## Farewell from Jasmine

In celebrating 10 years of the QVA working retreats programme, 2017 felt like a timely moment to lay down my role as coordinator and thus open the way for somebody new to take on the mantle. The post has provided a wealth of opportunities for me over the past decade on a personal, professional, practical and spiritual level. I've been given the freedom to develop and create responsive programmes, thereby ensuring that each project is meaningful, relevant and fruitful. Any challenges that have arisen are discussed honestly amongst facilitators and trustees who have provided a generous and steady hand in steering our little organisation.

The connections and networks that have grown during my years as coordinator have provided mutual support and learning for which I am extremely grateful. Many volunteers return to do further projects and their enthusiasm and feedback are major factors in deciding future programmes. All in all we've had over 300 volunteers from at least 12 different countries engaging in the working retreats programme and getting to know each other beyond the borders in that which is eternal.

I have found the balance of communication, administration, reflection on retreat themes and the physical facilitation of projects both stimulating and grounding. It has been an exceptionally rewarding 10 years service which has helped shaped my life, outlook and faith journey. I hope I have been able to give of myself adequately and I will treasure the warm memories of people, places and experiences that have enriched and touched me deeply.

As to the future, I have no clear direction but will allow time to explore openings in my new homeland and space for interests that have been put on the back burner, after which I'll see what direction the wind blows and set my sails accordingly – the spirit will guide!

Wishing every blessing for the continued unfolding of QVA's contribution and purpose in the world.

In peace and gratitude, Jasmine