

FARINGDON PEACE GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 5th October 2022

PRESENT

Phil and Jennie Chesterton, Karen and Sjoerd Vogt (chair), Steve Braithwaite, Dave Headey, Ian and Josephine Wright, Jane Youngs, Sand Cooper

1) **AGENDA** - Adopted

2) APOLOGIES

Marge Crosby, Helen Harris, Jenny Braithwaite, Bruce and Carol Garfield, Dave Couzins, Hazel Townsend, Richard Orren (in Aberdeen), Janie and John Cottis, Arthur Lockett (in Birmingham)

3) **2021 AGM MINUTES** - Read and approved.

4) **MATTERS ARISING** - None

5) CORRESPONDENCE

Jennie read out a lovely card with a photo of Bruce Kent that she had received from his wife, Valerie Flessati, thanking FPG for the condolence card we sent following Bruce's death on 8th June. She said he was especially close to FPG through the Fete.



DATES FOR DIARY

- Sat 29th October – Oxford CND Day School on 'War and Climate Change' at West Oxford Community Centre, Botley Road. More details from Jennie when available. On S6 bus route, stop outside.
- Remembrance Sunday Nov. 13th – FPG will lay its wreath containing white poppies as usual.
- Dec 6th or 13th Women in Black vigil for Bethlehem in Market Place. TBC

FPG Meetings

- Weds 2nd Nov, 7.30 - FPG Monthly Meeting. Invited speaker from CND to talk about nuclear weapons. TBC
- Weds. 7th December, 7.30 TBC

- 4th Jan 2023, 7.00pm - New Year's Social at Karen and Sjoerd's, covid permitting. Bring and share food and drink.

6) REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

a) FPG Meetings – Jennie

Until our last 3 meetings all were zoomed, even the New Years social, which allowed friends of the Peace Group from far afield to join us.

3 meetings were devoted to **climate change**: Pete Dilly, a local XR activist; member Helen Holly who kindly stepped in to talk about COP 26 and how we should build on it and our MP David Johnston who gave us his analysis of COP26 and the government's response.

Other speakers covered the background to the war in **Ukraine**, the **Otmoor riots** and their legacy, **Black Lives Matter**, **Militarism** in our schools and streets, the work of '**Liberation**' and **Oxford medical teaching in Gaza**.

Thanks to Jennie for finding excellent speakers on such a wide range of peace-related topics.

It was agreed that we would continue to have a mixture of zoomed and in-person meetings for the foreseeable future.

Other Activities and Events – Jennie

In **October** FPG had a stall at the town's Big Green Day, members attended USAF Croughton rally, Jenny B organised climate change exhibition.

November was busy, with 'Carbon Footprint of the Military' stall, silent vigil with white poppies on Armistice Day followed by wreath laying on Remembrance Sunday, COP26 vigil, visit to Greenham Control Tower exhibition.

In **December** we held our usual Women in Black vigil for Peace in Bethlehem and attended a zoomed PSC lobby of parliament.

From the beginning of **March** till Easter we had weekly 'No War in Ukraine' rallies in the Market Place, attended the Oxford Women's Festival and a vigil at USAF Fairford's main gate.

In **May** members enjoyed Levellers Day, the FPG bollard was unveiled in the Market Place and Faringdon declared its support for the TPNW.

June saw the sad death of our friend Bruce Kent and in **July** we enjoyed the 'Peace Picnic'.

b) Faringdon Advertiser and posters round town - Karen

Most meetings have been zoomed so posters only needed for live meetings.

Hit and miss as to whether we get into the Advertiser. Will try the new Faringdon magazine.

c) Treasurer – Steve

Steve presented the Income and Expenditure account for the year ending 31st August 2022, which showed a balance of £2519.15, much the same as last year.

Our Peace Picnic in July raised a good total of £514 through teas and donations.

Subscriptions were reduced – continued to Network for Peace, Peace News and CND, through which we get our insurance. Donations of £50 each went to Campaign against Arms Trade and Stop the War.

We had 4 'live' speakers who were each given £50.

Friends Meeting House hire costs have gone up to £15 an evening.

Thanks to Steve for doing the finances and to John Cecil for auditing the accounts.

d) Peace Picnic – Sjoerd

Sadly we are no longer able to hold our Grand Peace Fete at Coleshill but have started a new tradition of the annual Peace Picnic, which may or may not develop into something bigger.

Many thanks to Braithwaites for offering their garden for a bring and share lunch, teas and musical entertainment, thankfully all under cover! Great atmosphere, all very much enjoyed it.

Coleshill Eco-summit organised by Boxed-up events for National Trust. Huge space in Coleshill yards, Ainslie suggested maybe FPG could have own event in conjunction with it. Parking provided. Could we do teas?

e) Resources – Pete, Phil, Karen

FPG gazebos and other equipment now being stored in a NT barn in Coleshill. Need to give warning if we want access. Gazebos and tables need to go back to store after picnic. Steve will accompany Sjoerd to see where the store is.

f) Artistic Projects – Karen

Peace Plaque

Karen will meet the Town Clerk and Vale Arts Officer next week to take it forward with planning etc. Sue Drew suggested making at end of October in half term.

‘Green Faringdon’ bollard in Market Place

Painted by Karen on behalf of FPG. CND symbol, rainbow flag and climate change banner feature if you look closely enough!

g) Monthly Meetings help

With most meetings zoomed no speaker transport or hospitality was needed.

Jennie, as always, would welcome suggestions for meetings – topics and speakers.

She would also like others to take responsibility for organising a speaker meeting, following her strict criteria that you have heard them speak, or someone whose opinion you value has!

Helen and Jill have offered help, Jennie will ask them about organising vigils.

h) Press Reports – Sand None

i) Other reports - None

7) ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Pete has moved away and Phil no longer feels able to help with resources, but Ian kindly offered to take his place. All other officers were willing to stand again but extra help was welcomed with different tasks.

All were thanked for their hard work during the past year.

Chairs: Sjoerd, Phil, Dave H, Adam, only needed once or twice a year

Secretary for meetings and activities – Jennie, but with help from Helen, Jill et al

Secretary for minutes, reports and posters – Karen

Treasurer – Steve

Artistic Co-ordinator – Karen with help from Marge

Picnic/Fete Organiser – Sjoerd

Website/computer lists – Sjoerd (active list) and Dave/Jennie (very active list)

Resources – Karen, Ian

Publicity, Fete and press releases – Sand

Refugee Link – Sjoerd

8) FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Remembrance Sunday, 13th November

White Poppy wreath laying

Women in Black Vigil for Bethlehem

December 6th or 15th. Date/time TBC. Men welcome in support

40th Anniversary booklet (carried over from 2021, not discussed in 2022)

Jennie and Phil suggested publishing a little booklet and asking all to contribute. 40 pages? Chris suggested asking all to contribute memories in various forms to create a miscellany rather than a year by year account.

Dave happy to put it together, Sand happy to co-ordinate content. Should we pursue it or have we missed chance now?

9) DONATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

We had ring-fenced £1000 for the Peace Plaque, £500 for potential XR expenses and £500 for 40th Anniversary celebrations. No XR expenses and no 40th celebrations, so that releases £1000.

We agreed to continue with subscriptions and to make £50 donations to Medical Aid for Palestine, Stop the War and Movement for the Abolition of War, in memory of Bruce Kent who was one of the founders.

10) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Jennie updated us on peace friends.

Denny has been very ill in hospital with covid but is now home.

Pete had a very successful eye operation and far from losing his sight, he can now see without his glasses!

Jill Cecil has been very ill and recently underwent heart surgery.

Dave Watson has been in touch and all is well with him and the family in West Wales.

TPNW – How should we take it forward and build on our success? Ask Rosalind as shes on Town Council. Dave H will register Faringdon on ICAN website.

The meeting ended at 21.00ish, with drinks and lemon drizzle, courtesy of Karen's Mum!

Thanks to all who attended and to Sjoerd for facilitating.