

Harborough Action for Justice and Peace

- in association with Churches Together in Harborough

Annual Report 2016 -17

The Group continues to meet 3 or 4 times a year. During this year Janet Smith has chaired our meetings, while Maureen Douglas has been our link with the National Justice and Peace Network. This latter work is now being continued by new arrivals Maria and Peter Malson.

Our concern regarding poverty and need in our community means we continue to raise awareness about the damage caused by the Government's policies. The time in the Square on Good Friday in 2016 enabled many useful conversations. We were able to give out more booklets and leaflets on Benefit Rulings and many other issues relating to continuing lethal cuts in all benefits. The ecumenical Joint Public Issues Team keeps us up to date with the facts (since the Government cannot be relied on for the truth) particularly about the recent decisions which will leave thousands more children in poverty. The Team is also currently offering a fascinating discussion document about what Brexit will really mean on the website at <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/eu-referendum/conversationwelcome/>

At the Candlelit Peace Vigil in January we gave out even more cards and felt that our slightly later time was a very good idea. We will keep reviewing this event, and want to thank CTH for the important help with publicity this year.

We have continued to be involved in the various events regarding Climate Change. The Methodist congregation has received the Bronze award as an Eco-congregation, and both the Baptist and the Congregational congregation are well on their way.

Child Labour and Related Issues

We are kept up to date with all the global issues relating to children; children (and adults) mining for cobalt in the Congo and elsewhere continue to be suffering criminally abusive conditions; world-wide child labour; forced marriages; education issues – particularly for girls; sexual violence; trafficking and modern slavery; lack of schooling for Syrian and other refugee children; and abduction and abuse. Our thanks go to Janet Smith for all this information and for reminding us of possible action in these areas, as well as of local events.

Clockwise Credit Union

This work now continues in the Library and needs both volunteers and continuing publicity among those in need.

Fairtrade Town

There continues to be a great deal of work done by the relevant group within the town, and we are very glad to support it, especially their exciting events. We have also continued to support both the Food Forum and the Food Bank, but find it distressing that there are so many in need, so that 30 or more vouchers are used each month.

New Project

We have learnt more about the Traveller Community, and are waiting to support our local Council in the housing of refugee families – or to discuss with the Churches what action we might take if the Council do not take that on.

Alison Tomlin
April 12th 2017