

## From '*the Friend*' of 28 August 2009

### Comment

Coverage of Yearly Meeting Gathering in '*the Friend*' has focused on the momentous changes in the way the Society deals with committed relationships, and this was the main topic discussed in the plenary sessions. However climate change and how we deal with it was the focus of over 10 workshops, although sadly there was only about ten minutes left to devote to it at the final plenary since so much time had been spent on agreeing a minute on committed relationships.

Some workshops such as those organised by Living Witness focused on what could be done by local meetings. Others looked at how we could lobby MPs in the run up to the next general election by asking questions at hustings type events. In the workshop that I ran, we looked at how we could prepare for Copenhagen, either by attending in person, lobbying MPs, or going on the march on December 5<sup>th</sup> organised by Stop Climate Chaos. Quakers will be represented at a meeting in November set up by the Alliance for Religions and Conservation, at which different religions will be setting out their plans for responding to climate change. Quakers in the UK have agreed a statement outlining their commitment to 'lead the simpler lives of a low-carbon society', However this is only a first step, and we now need to find ways in which all the Quaker bodies concerned with climate change, as well as local meetings, can turn that statement into a document setting out the action we need to take both as individuals and as a Religious Society of Friends. To achieve this, we need to find better ways of co-ordinating our efforts. Meeting for Sufferings has a key role to play but we also need to find ways of bringing together all the bodies within the Society who are active in this field, to give this topic much higher priority.

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