

Fairtrade Plymouth and local churches



Meeting on Wed 7 June 2017 at St Mark's, Sanctuary Close, Plymouth

Present:

APPLEBY Dave, Mission Community of Plymstock and Hooe, BURKE Elizabeth, Crownhill Church of the Ascension, ELPHINSTONE Mary, St. Boniface and Traidcraft, EVANS Sheila, Plymouth Unitarian Church 'Green Team' and Fairtrade Steering Group, FARRANT Sally, Church and Society, Exeter Diocese FORSTER Chris Transforming Plymouth Together, GOSS Martyn, Church and Society, Exeter Diocese, MARMAN Mary, St. Michael's and St. Barnabas, Devonport, McKINNEL Nick, Bishop of Plymouth, PEZZEY Wendy, Stoke Damerel Church, RAMAGE Alan, Fairtrade Plymouth and Shared Interest, SMITH Ian Food Plymouth CIC, TURNER Ian, Churches Together in Plymouth and St. Jude's Church, YOUNG Jackie Fairtrade Plymouth Steering Group Co-ordinator.

Aims of the meeting:

- a) to learn more about Plymouth City's Fairtrade action plan (attached) and how local churches can support this
- b) to hear from churches in Plymouth who wish to raise awareness about Fairtrade and trade justice

Presentation

Jackie Young, co-ordinator of the new Fairtrade Plymouth Steering Group gave us an overview of Fairtrade Plymouth in the last 10 years and introduced the new Steering Group and Action Plan.

Fairtrade products are already in many of the shops and the Steering Group is part of a city-wide sustainability focus.

The challenge now is to raise awareness and get products in more workplaces and to find a flagship employer.

Plymouth University is Fairtrade and the sustainability officer there is hoping to encourage the city's other colleges to take part to reach the city's 33,000 students.

Currently have a Facebook page but plan to increase the media profile and possibly develop a website? (Martyn suggests some possible funding)

There is some confusion over Fairtrade and 'Fairly traded': the Fairtrade Mark is mainly found on food produce from communities in developing countries. Fairtrade tea and coffee have gone some way to developing and supporting a factory process. Fairtrade cotton and Fairtrade gold are new developments. Otherwise there are no guarantees yet for 'fairly-traded' clothing, crafts or manufactured products, we have to take them on trust.

Jackie reflected that a particular interest for churches might be on good stewardship – as care for both the environment and for people

Discussion

Frustrations

In our churches there may be groups of people quietly committed to Fairtrade but there are also many others who remain unconvinced. For example, Fairtrade certifies a raw product but doesn't necessarily improve the working conditions in factories that use that raw product (tea and coffee co-operatives are the exception). So for some such tragedies as in Bangladesh clothing factories demonstrate Fairtrade as unsuccessful in addressing broader injustices.

It's difficult to move a whole church towards becoming a Fairtrade Church when there are so many differing views and strongly held opinions within the congregation.

How can we raise awareness of the achievements of the Fairtrade Mark as part of a trade justice movement and widen awareness of other possible actions towards trade justice? How can we tell some convincing, helpful stories?

Positives

Traidcraft has a long history in trade development and has the experience and evidence to show the difference Fairtrade can make. Traidcraft was one of the founding members of the Fairtrade Foundation and continues to campaign on wider trade issues, as well as nurture development projects in poor communities and provide a good range of products – a much better range than in supermarkets. Traidcraft is sold via their website and through volunteer Fairtraders but this takes

some capital.

<http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/brexit-trade-campaign>

<http://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/>

<http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/development-work>

A Fairtrade service celebrated Plymouth's 10th anniversary as a Fairtrade City in February 2015 (but it wasn't as well-attended as we hoped.)

There are Fairtrade Churches in Plymouth, and many others routinely serving Fairtrade refreshments at their activities and services and displaying posters about their commitment to Fairtrade in their kitchens and halls.

9 of the 27 Anglican parishes in Plymouth City Deanery are registered as Fairtrade Church. These are:

St Boniface, Devonport

St Andrew's The Minster Church, also St Paul's

St Paul, Stonehouse Emmanuel, Mannamead, with St Paul, Efford

Church of the Holy Spirit, Southway

St Barnabas, Devonport

St Michael, Devonport

St Budeaux, Devonport

St Mary's and All Saints, Plymstock

Church of the Holy Family, Staddiscombe

Ideas

(Includes some links but these aren't exhaustive)

A Pre-Christmas focus on Traidcraft and Fairtrade stalls? Mary might be able to offer to supply stalls in other churches. Link up with other Fairtraders in the area?

<http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/buy-fair-trade-for-church>

Raise awareness among youth chaplains and church youth workers and ask for their help?

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/sofa-sessions-trade.pdf>

<https://cafod.org.uk/Media/Files/Resources/Secondary/resource-pages/Food-films-for-youth>

Promote Shared Interest and ethical investment opportunities as part of our response to trade injustice <http://www.shared-interest.com/>

Fairtrade is linked with Plymouth Food initiatives

<http://www.foodplymouth.org/>

Promote Fairtrade and raise trade justice as a sustainability issue among Green Churches?

<https://www.fairtrade.net/programmes/climate-change.html>

<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/media-centre/blog/2014/march/climate-change>

Can Church schools be linked into our activities? Fairtrade is on the school curriculum

<http://www.westyorkshiredales.anglican.org/fairtrade/churches-schools>

<http://schools.fairtrade.org.uk/>

<http://www.traidcraftschools.co.uk/schools-activities-and-games>

How can we use churches to encourage workplaces to take part

<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Get-Involved/In-your-community/Your-workplace>

Theological reflection can be encouraged: eg it's about loving our neighbour – can we encourage some preaching/teaching on this?

<http://www.exeter.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Trade-Justice-A-Christian-Reponse-to-Global-Poverty.pdf>

Inform and educate about implications for Exeter Diocese's links with Thika Diocese, Kenya and Melanesia

How can we prepare for Fairtrade Fortnight next year?

Is there a focus and activity that can promote a positive message from Fairtrade and greater understanding of Fairtrade as part of our Christian discipleship? What would encourage more active involvement and help convince the doubters? And support Fairtrade Plymouth?

Arrange something for a Saturday or Sunday to involved more working age people?

Jackie Young is happy to offer presentations to church groups and is keen to help with a city-wide Fairtrade Service next year.

Fairtrade Fortnight is February 26th and March 12th 2018

<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Get-Involved>