# **New economy reading group programme**

# **Session plan: Booklet 6 – ownership in the new economy**

*A note on how to use these session plans:*

This plan is written for session facilitator(s) rather than for the whole group.

Facilitators are the people hosting and running the meeting. They do not need any expertise whatsoever on economics. They will also take part in all meeting activities where possible.

This plan is intended as a guide to help you run useful sessions. If parts of the plan are not relevant to your group, then feel free to discard or change them! Do whatever works best for your group.

**Agenda outline**

*This plan contains different options for how to structure the session. There are some recommended introductory and closing activities. You can pick and mix activities from the middle ‘exploratory’ section. There are also optional ‘reflection on action’ activities if you think your group wishes to explore the practical steps that they can take out in the world to build the new economy in relation to markets and public/private provisioning.*

*Below are two example ‘agendas’ which contain difficult combinations of the activities listed. You can take inspiration from these agendas, or compile a different agenda which best suits your group.*

**Example 1:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Activity** | **Timings** |
| Introduction | 1. Welcome | 5 mins |
| 2. Introductions | 5 mins |
| 3. Check in | 10 mins |
| 4. Recap from last session | 5 mins |
| Exploration | 5. Worship sharing | 30 mins |
| *Tea break* | 10 mins |
| 6. Questions for discussion | 10 mins |
| 7. Examples and inspiration | 15 mins |
| Action | 8. Our power – the role for Quakers | 20 mins |
| Closing | 9. Closing | 10 mins |

Total time: 2 hours

**Example 2:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Activity** | **Timings** |
| Introduction | 1. Welcome | 5 mins |
| 2. Introductions | 5 mins |
| 3. Check in | 15 mins |
| 4. Recap from last session | 5 mins |
| Exploration | 5. Worship sharing | 30 mins |
| *Tea break* | 10 mins |
| 6. Protecting our commons | 30 mins |
| Action | 7. Our power – the role for Quakers | 15 mins |
| Closing | 8. Closing | 5 mins |

Total time: 2 hours

## Materials needed

Tea, coffee / refreshments (if you decide you want them)

Paper copies of Booklet 6: *Ownership in the new economy*

Paper copies of *Principles for a new economy* (optional)

## Session plan

**Introductory activities**

1. **Welcome (3 minutes – not including worship time)**

You may want to offer people tea and coffee as they arrive. Make sure everyone has a comfortable place to sit. Chairs should be arranged in a single circle.

***Silence / worship (optional)***

At the start, thank everyone for coming, introduce yourself if anyone doesn’t know you and begin the silence / worship.

1. **Introduction to the session and housekeeping (5 minutes)**

Welcome everyone, and thank all those involved in organising the session. If there is anyone new in the room (who wasn’t at the first session), suggest that everyone in the room goes round the circle and introduces themselves briefly (saying their name and one brief detail, such as where they’re from).

Once this is done, outline the agenda for today (see agenda outline above). Explain that the aim of the session is to have a chance to discuss some of the ideas in the sixth new economy booklet, *Ownership in the new economy.*

It is assumed that people will have this booklet in advance.

If there is anyone new in the room (who wasn’t at the previous sessions), emphasise again that no prior economic knowledge whatsoever is necessary and that you want everyone to feel welcome, even if they don’t have experience of discussing subjects like this. You can suggest that if anyone thinks they might have practical difficulty reading the booklets they can talk to you after the session to think of ways to work around this. Large print copies of the booklet are available from Friends House (email [neweconomy@quaker.org.uk](mailto:neweconomy@quaker.org.uk)).

***A record of discussion***

Some meetings have decided to keep notes of their discussion, in order to record their responses to the ideas in the booklets, and add ideas of their own. If your group has found examples of case studies related to equitable and sustainable use of the Earth’s resources at a local level, we’d love to hear about these. You can share examples by sending them to us at [neweconomy@quaker.org.uk](mailto:neweconomy@quaker.org.uk) or share them on our private online new economy forum on Loomio: https://www.loomio.org/invitations/adfc4d5c2f5c9b416cf2

You may want to propose to the group that your reading group could also keep records or produce some kind of response to the session. If so, you could arrange at this point for someone to take notes or write up the session.

**Exploratory activities**

1. **Check in (10 – 20 minutes)**

Ask everyone to go round and feedback briefly on how they found the booklet, including any questions they have relating to its content. You could add these questions to notes about the session (if you’re keeping them). You may wish to ask participants to limit their feedback to one or two minutes each (see facilitation tips).

1. **Reflection on last session (5 – 15 mins)**

* Recap briefly what you discussed in the last session (5 mins max – don’t get in to discussion about any of the specific issues)
* If anyone committed to specific action from the last session (e.g asking your meeting clerk how to open up your meeting house to other members of the community) invite them to feedback what they did and how it went.
* Ask if anyone else has made changes or taken any action around privatisation of services in your local area, or encouraging support for public services since the last session.

1. **Worship sharing (optional) (30 – 60 minutes)**

See accompanying guide to worship sharing in the email.

Prompts for contemplation could be:

* Share your responses to the booklet
* Share your response to the subject in light of Quaker testimony

But feel free to choose your own prompts or ways of framing the worship.

**Meeting for Sufferings Statement –**

“*So we have long been aware that our behaviour impoverishes the earth and that it is our responsibility both to conserve the earth’s resources and to share them more equitably. Our long-standing commitment to peace and justice arises in part from our understanding of the detrimental effect of war and conflicts, in damaging communities and squandering the earth’s resources*.”

If possible, ensure there are a few copies of the statement for participants to read through.

This statement was adopted by Yearly Meeting Gathering in 2011 as part of the Canterbury commitment.

Does this feel applicable today? More or less so?

Spend a few moments considering the final sentence.

Share thoughts on how to ‘witness to a different way of living’

1. **Questions for discussion (optional) (15 – 90 minutes)**

Read out the questions that are included in the blue boxes in the booklet (see list in appendix) or distribute print outs of the appendix to participants. Ask participants to identify any questions that they would like to discuss.

Participants could break into pairs or small groups to discuss questions and then feed back to the wider group.

Or you can work through the questions identified as a whole group. In this case, ask that Friends be mindful of the balance of participation (see facilitation tips also included in the email).

1. **Examples for inspiration (optional)**

A chance for participants to share examples of ownership models that challenge unequitable and unstainable practices or ways of distributing resources that they know about and reflect on the examples in the booklet.

Question: Which real-life examples from the booklet most inspired Friends? Do people know of other organisations locally who are trying to support sustainable and equitable us of earths of resources?

**Protecting our commons (optional)**

This section is a chance to ask friends about their personal experience protecting the commons in a sustainable and equitable way.

1. Do you have ownership of land or waterways? What is the ownership model?
2. How do you distribute the responsibilities for conserving the
3. How are decisions made between those who have rights over the resource you share?
4. Does everyone has equitable access to the resource?
5. How do you feel you can improve the ownership model to better make decisions about sustainable use?

These questions are a chance to reflect on a potential actions that friends can take in their local community and can be explored further below.

**Reflections on action**

1. **Our power – the role for Quakers**

This exercise focuses particularly on the discussion point ‘What role could Quaker meetings and meeting houses (if applicable) play in equitably and sustainably sharing the earth’s resources?

This works best as a whole group exercise.

Use a large sheet of paper, such as a flip chart paper.

Encourage the group to contribute responses to the questions in these categories.

**Energy** – do you have existing projects/initiatives, or unfulfilled ideas?

**Assets** – think creatively about your financial resources, meeting house, community assets, businesses, reputation etc..

**Skills** – who do you have in your meeting? What skills do you have?

**Relationships** – what relationships do you have in your local community? Amongst other faith groups and likeminded organisations? How can you use these?

**Closing activities**

**9. Closing (5 – 10 minutes)**

Thank everyone for coming.

Announce who will be facilitating the next session (or arrange someone to facilitate if it hasn’t yet been arranged).

Remind everyone / confirm / arrange the date for the next session.

Remind everyone to download a copy of the next new economy booklet 7 How to change a system. It will be made available on the website early October. Copies are available from www.quaker.org.uk/neweconomy. If you need to order paper copies of the booklets, you can do so by emailing neweconomy@quaker.org.uk.

Invite group members to join the online discussion space, available at:

www.bit.ly/new-economy-discussion. Emphasise that it is not compulsory! The contact person can send the link to those people who are interested.

*Optional evaluation:* go round the circle and ask each participant to say one thing they will be taking away from the session and one thing they will be leaving behind.

**Closing reflection**

*Optional:* Closing reading. Read something related to economics and/or social change that inspires you (see some suggestions particularly related to public services below).

## Sheet to accompany activity 6

**Discussion questions from booklet 6:**

1. What drives our consumption choices? Think about your own and those of people around you.
2. Do you find the ‘doughnut’ a helpful way to think about resource use?
3. Which ownership model do you feel can best deliver equity and sustainability
4. What is needed from us, as individuals, to protect the commons in the new economy
5. Is a focus on taxation models a good approach for shifting ownership models
6. How can land reform ensure we move towards collective rather than public ownership?
7. What roles did the government and NGO’s play in this scenario to support the fishers
8. Other than livelihood, what dynamics must we be aware of when proposing sustainable practices
9. How do you think inequality within countries should be factored into the contraction and convergence framework
10. What other international mechanisms are needed to ensure the Global South is able to meet its poverty reduction goals
11. Can you think of any non-Quaker communities that exist/existed with a strong relationship to the earth? What are their practices for sustainability and equity? What can we learn from them today?
12. Do you see any political opportunities to help build an economy based on Quaker principles ? How might we capitalise on these opportunities?