

AGM September 14th 2008 Chagford, Devon

Apologies: Guy, Sally, Phil, Claire, Melissa and Megan

Present : Joyce (Chair) Kaspas, Ken, Keith, Paul, Sheila, Shantiprabha, Brigid, Modgala, Roselle, Maitrisara (Minutes), Martin

1. Minutes of Chagford correct.
2. a) Item 20 Future discussion on non payment of taxes
b) item 7 The shortfall for Chagford 2007 was donated by Ken.
3. Spring Gathering minutes are noted.
4. Membership – 188. 10 in arrears from 2006. 38 in arrears from 2007. NEBSangha 206 members.
5. Finance – We have committed to £600 website revamping: £300 for redesigning in process. We agreed to delegate powers to Claire to use a savings account. Loss on this retreat of £153.59. Costs are probably close to £100 per person next year.

Ideas for minimising deficit on the summer retreat in future include:

- Make deposits firmer – and return only if we fill the place.
- Have 3 rates – top subsidise the bottom Concession rate too low.
- Remember that it is a trustees meeting too so good value
- Bursary concession is still possible but out of a fixed pot
- Publicity needs to be out much earlier
- Make sure that the food budget is communicated – it was £13 per head this time.

There was discussion about whether Chagford remains the best venue for the retreat. A sub group of Paul, Shantiprabha, Roselle and Modgala to think about it and report back. Vote of thanks to the hosts.

Indra's Net

Agreed to go to A5 with a changing coloured paper cover. Print £1 where sold on the front.

NBO

Don't have a report. Phil gave excellent talk at NBO conference.

European Buddhist Union

Idea of the EBU is to bring together different Buddhist groups in Europe. Its young and in development. Have ideas for twinning up different groups. One area for example is action with youth etc. Subscription is £60. Need constitutions before they

allow groups to join and to be elected. Modgala could on our behalf as well as going for Amida. Agreed.

Faith In Action

Maitrisara proposed that NEB apply for £12000 to the Faith in Action fund which is to run a project to support engagement (through day and weekend retreats) drawing on Quaker and Buddhist approaches. Suggested that we build on Muslim involvement too. Agreed subject to Claire's agreement to handle the extra work involved in administering the money.

Logo Design

Thanks to all concerned in redesigning the logo. Proposal to make a second banner – in fabric. Joyce to investigate and report to the exec. Maitrisara to email files to Joyce.

Voice

The first trialling of the Voice project was discussed. This was an attempt to gather ideas from members of NEBSangha on climate change and then post to the triple gem website. We discussed extending the project to a second question which was suggested as "How is your practice contributing to your engaged practice?" We agreed to put it to NEBSangha members if they want to carry on and suggest this question as a theme. Maitrisara to ask Guy to initiate.

Buddhafield

We agreed that for Buddhafield 2009, we will pay for an extra team member. Maitrisara has bought a suitable tent as a display and chill out space and NEB will lease it for the duration of Buddhafield.

Big Green Gathering

Paul asked if we would like a NEB presence on a theme of "transforming anger together" We wouldn't overtly name NEB. Paul will put the idea out on NEB Sangha for people to help with this. Comments and feedback to Paul directly. Could link to NVC and Quakers Alternatives to Violence project.

Kings North Climate Camp

Had an Amida/NEB base at Climate Camp and a presence on the march with a home made banner. Concerns about the us/them feel with the police but good for us to be involved. Important to be there given worrying trends on our civil liberties. We were welcomed by camp organisers. Attended a Faith and religion workshop. It seems that camp organisers are wary of religion but not worried by Buddhists. We organised meditation and that could be developed further.

Climate Conference

Paul and Joyce went. Muslim and Jewish input interesting. Joyce spoke at Interfaith Day at Worth Abbey.

Other events

Climate March in December 8th. Go with NEB banner.

Spring Gathering 2009

Ask Phil to organise.

Chagford 2009

Martin to let Ken and Phil to know dates. We need to have the blurb ready by 30 January 2009 and sort prices by end of October. Next year put Chaford further up the AGM's agenda so it gets enough time for discussion. Ken to kick off Exec emails on Chagford.

What is EB booklet

Continue as a PDF on website.

Supporting of AFAT

Keith presented the work of an interfaith group on terrorism. Suggested that Keith feed into NEBSangha about the project and keep NEB up to date the progress to see to what extent we can support it. NEB asked that our message to AFAT is conveyed as follows: "We consider it a valuable initiative and a Buddhist presence would be a valuable addition"