

Why a Living Wage Campaign?

Since the July 2015 budget statement more people in the country have been aware that there is something called The Living Wage. George Osborne's 'national living wage' falls far short of what the Living Wage Foundation calculates to be a wage sufficient for people to make ends meet. This is the product of research carried out annually by Loughborough University's Centre for Research in Social Policy, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Research looks at what households need for a minimum acceptable standard of living.

Decisions about what to include are made by groups including members of the public. It is therefore rooted in social consensus about what people need to make ends meet.



The uprating of The Living Wage takes account rises in living costs and general wage rise trends. In 2017/18 outside London the hourly rate is £8.75, The London Living Wage is £10.20. These rates were paid to all over 18yrs not just those over 25yrs. By November 2017 3,500 accredited Living Wage employers were voluntarily paying this basic wage.

Lancaster Meeting has been engaged in raising awareness about The Living Wage since one of our Members attended the Food Banks Are Not Enough Quaker Conference in November 2014. We have produced posters and leaflets and distributed these in our town prior to Christmas, during Quaker Equality Week and before the General Election. Being in town for an hour at a time, engaging with passers-by about those who do not pay The Living Wage and celebrating those who do, highlighted for us just how much support our campaign had. We were heartened and challenged in our encounters and encouraged by many who simply said thank you.

In June 2015 at a meeting with the Manchester and Warrington Social Justice Group 'Quaker Equality Week - What Next?' we shared our experiences and were invited to lead a national Quaker campaign. We have produced a pack of materials to support Meetings who join in available on our webpage:
www.lancsquakers.org.uk/livingwagecampaign.php

Even as the deeper welfare cuts bite and the least well off in society are further burdened this will be just one thread in the tapestry of inequality we are highlighting.

How Can You Get Involved?

- Ask your Area Meeting Trustees to work to become an accredited Living Wage Employer.

- Witness in your town or city centre to the fact that retailers, hospitality/catering outlets and care businesses do not pay The Living Wage.
- Write letters to businesses like the Co-op and other mutual societies to which you belong encouraging them to pay The Living Wage.
- Embroider messages on handkerchiefs and send to Board members
- Check if your local council pays the Living Wage and is seeking accreditation.
- Are you a Living Wage Employer?
- Is your place of work accredited?