

Hoddesdon Options Group Report to Area Meeting – March 2026

Overview:

Peace Cottage is waking up after the winter break! Plans are coming together for the year and we are hosting our first community gardening session of the season on Sunday 22 March. For the rest of 2026 we hope to do more gardening, arts programming, climate cafes and community building.

As the project develops this year, we will need to spend some time clarifying the emerging relationship between the community project ("Peace Cottage"), the Quaker meeting, and the site owners (Hertford & Hitchin Area meeting). These discussions will help us to meet the needs of all involved, and support the long-term stability and viability of the site.

Resident Site Managers:

Our resident site managers, B and H, joined us in April 2025 and they have made great progress settling in, caring for our site and developing our community project. Our original agreement with them was for 12 months and after a very positive annual review meeting with the project coordinator and line manager in February, they have asked to renew the agreement for another 12 months. The coordinator is delighted to support this request, which has been shared with trustees and we hope will be ratified at the next trustees meeting in April.

In the annual review meeting, we discussed H's background in safeguarding; she has offered to be listed as the safeguarding lead for Hoddesdon, and she is happy to participate in any relevant meetings or training as required.

Meetings for Worship:

After holding 5 successful meetings for worship last year, plans are in place to hold more meetings this year. We're sticking with our all-ages format, but moving the timings slightly to accommodate the needs of those attending. We'll be meeting on the second Sunday of the month; arrive from 2.30pm, with MfW at 3pm, followed by tea and cake. The meetings will be accessible for all ages, with a relaxed atmosphere and semi-programmed. All welcome!

We also have an idea to try a mid-week evening meeting for worship too; any volunteers who would be interested in facilitating this, please let us know!

Building Works:

The site is being well-maintained by B and H. In the coming months we hope to focus on:

- Fundraising for a new heating system; we will need to raise at least £12,000 to get started, and overall it may cost £30-40k to install an appropriate low-carbon system with insulation.
- A repair to the community hall roof where there is a small, occasional leak.
- Making some interim improvements to wheelchair access.
- Look into necessary repairs to the community hall window frames.
- Re-decorating the Quaker hall toilets which were renovated and deep cleaned last year.

Area Meeting at Hoddesdon - 2026:

We are happy to host Area Meeting at Hoddesdon on Saturday 19 September. Our usual format will be 1pm picnic in the garden (weather permitting) followed by the meeting at 2pm.

Coming Up at Peace Cottage this spring...:

- Sunday 22 March, 2-5pm: wake up the garden! Spring gardening, willow dome maintenance, tea and cake. All welcome!
- Sunday Meetings for Worship: 12 April and 10 May, arrive from 2.30pm for MfW at 3pm, followed by tea and cake.

Please share with your meetings!

As always, any questions or feedback, please contact Zoe on:

peacecottagehub@gmail.com

Enquiries relating to use/hire of the building can go direct to B and H on:

hellopeacecottage@gmail.com