



Wall of Hope. The Great Green Wall (GGW) is an ambitious Africa led initiative, with a plan to grow and 8,000km natural wonder across the entire width of the continent to combat the effects of climate change, drought and desertification in the Sahara and the Sahel. One of the significant features of the project is that the people own it. Farmers plant, protect and nurture and in turn some of the trees provide an income. One particular tree is the baobab tree—known as the Tree of Life in Africa. It is resistant to drought, thrives in degraded land helps fight water and soil erosion and bears fruit rich in vitamin C and iron. What amazes me about this story is that nature serves up endless wonders and when we take notice and work with nature to create rather than destroy the possibilities are too, endless. This simple, gargantuan project will sustain this area for many years—it has instilled hope for those left in the region and a future.

This time last year our future looked a little bleak. Sadly, we closed a number of gardens and as we were not able to hold our Annual Gathering or hold Quiet Days there was always the question would the Charity survive? What we did have was faith and hope and love for a cause that has touched many in the last 30 years. Technology helped us to maintain contact with hosts who too have the same faith and hope and love as us and who were determined to carry on what may...

The Quiet Garden Movement nurtures access to outdoor space for prayer, reflection and rest in a variety of settings, such as private homes, churches, schools and hospitals, and creates opportunities for people to experience silence, restfulness and contemplative practises

Some engaged folk via Zoom or WhatsApp or by sharing materials on our website for folk to enjoy. The PAUSE Newsletter was digitalised and we held some well attended Quiet Evenings and talks via zoom. It of course doesn't suit all but in a way we had no choice—things had to change in order for us to continue and connect. The greatest achievement was engaging over 120 folk from all over the world at our Annual Gathering (online) - there is more about this on page 5. Through this engagement we have many new followers, friends and hosts. Our hope and faith in what we do and the passion we have for its purpose and value has been worth the wait .

Sarah Godson

Charity Administrator and Supporter Relations

We welcome

Pilgrim's Retreat@Hill Barn Farm in Dorset.

In the quiet and stillness guests may encounter hares, pheasant harems, red-legged grouse, nuthatches, tree-creepers, green and greater-spotted woodpeckers. Fieldfares flock down for lawn leather-jackets and mallard drakes squabble over the ladies while swallows swoop over the water from their three-brood-nests in the eaves.

The lavender garden is abuzz in summer and a collection of David Austin roses is nurtured, including most of the Thomas Hardy varieties.



And also...

Elmham House Quiet Garden in Norfolk.

Elmham House is set in Parkland with a more formal garden near the house, a shrubbery of azaleas, rhododendrons and many specimen trees leading into a recently cleared woodland area with wild flowers. The Game Larder has recently been restored and converted into a chapel always open to visitors. The recently opened Pilgrim Route (from Norwich to Walsingham) the Walsingham Way passes through the estate close to the chapel. Available for groups and individuals.



To find out more about our new gardens please visit our website

<https://quietgarden.org/>

“The ancient tradition of silent contemplation is as important to the modern mind as it was to those of our forebears – and the Quiet Garden Movement has been facilitating the practice of mindful contemplation for the past 25 years, in gardens across the world...”

Dr Rowan Williams

Connecting to the Spirit of Place

Redstone Wood Cottage was part of the Quiet Garden Movement for four years—until the closure of the garden last March. Here is a glimpse into their story..

In the beginning...

I first saw Redstone Wood Cottage on a cold wet day in February 2013. I was in my work shoes on my lunch break, negotiating my way through brambles, clambering over fallen branches, slithering down ivy covered banks following my husband. Thankfully, I was used to sudden drops and terraces of trees from my childhood home.

While Ian was talking to the estate agent, I didn't give any thought to living at the cottage as we had our next private rental lined up and this property was out of our price range. I remember saying to Ian, if you could live in the garden it would be idyllic, but there's a lot of maintenance work, trees to liberate and borders to be found. But this was the first property Ian wanted to live in. Something in the cottage and its location magnetised him. We'd go for a drive and find ourselves in the cemetery below, looking up at the grey stone walls at the front of the cottage. Once, walking around Redhill, the estate agent pulled her car over just to tell us she had shown another family round the cottage, but no one wanted it. Then, home working at the computer one afternoon, I had a sudden impulse about the cottage. I jumped up, rushed



into Ian's study, and told him to put in an offer. So, on August 13, 2013, we moved into Redstone Wood Cottage.

We always felt God was trying to tell us something through his creation!

Through our connection with Father Andrew from St Matthew's Redhill and my former lay Franciscan background with the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood and Sister Frances Hall, we had two recommendations for Redstone Wood Cottage to become part of the Quiet Garden Scheme. I was very privileged to be telephoned by Reverend Philip

Roderick and asked why I wanted to join the quiet garden scheme. I wanted to give back to other people the spiritual input I had received in the past.

The rainbow that I have put in the sky will be my sign to you and to every living creature on earth. It will remind you that I will keep this promise forever. When I send clouds over the earth, and a rainbow appears in the sky, I will remember my promise to you and to all other living creatures. Never again will I let floodwaters destroy all life. *Genesis 9:12-15*

Created by Suzanne and Ian Strong. Christmas 2020

If you love the ethos of The Quiet Garden Movement, support its vision and would like to be linked formally, but loosely, with the Movement, please become a Friend.

Visit our website for further information about how to join: <https://quietgarden.org/join/friends/>

Soulful Stitching

“My best, kindest and most creative self needs space to breathe and a little waste of time.” (Pete Greig, founder of 24/7 prayer)

In her book ‘Slow Stitch’, Claire Wellesley-Smith talks about stitching as a mindful and contemplative process. As someone who has always been happy with a needle and thread in my hand, I discovered a freedom in what I was reading; when so much creativity is project led, invoking a ‘what are you making?’ sort of response, here I was reading about the process itself being more important than the end product, something with which I could identify. It is well recognised that to keep our hands busy allows our heads to stop the voices, helping us to draw into stillness.

In the same book I read of ‘slow dyeing’, simply done on a sunny windowsill or in the greenhouse, and I was keen to give this a go. Dyeing fabric and threads using plants from my own garden (not just any plant, some are much more suited than others) then using them in this slow contemplative way brings a feeling of ‘presence’, being present in the moment, in the place I call home. I now offer these threads and fabric with other resources I put out on my ‘un-led’ Quiet Garden days; they invoke a mixed response!

Brian Draper talks of ‘Soulfulness’ as something going deeper than mindfulness; “We stand on the threshold of soul when we enter into silence” he says. In taking the time to stitch mindfully I find I reach deep into my soul. Soulful Stitching.



Gilly Morgan

We welcome to the Movement ... Five Oak Ranch. Austin Texas



<https://quietgarden.org/gardens/five-oak-ranch/>

Farewell

We are always sorry to say farewell to folk who feel that their time with us must come to a close.

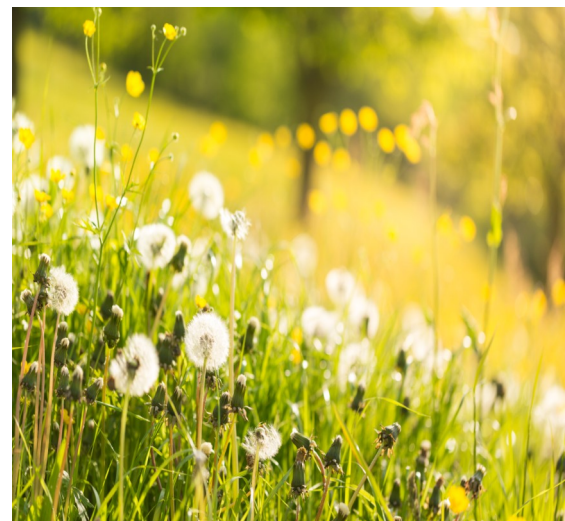
Goodbye and thank you to.....

Craig Lodge

Cefnfaes Cottage

The Emmaus Garden

Zen Sei Garden



“In our day the great danger to the spiritual life is distraction. May The Quiet Garden Movement lead us into new and creative ways to overcome this danger.”

Richard J Foster | Patron | Theologian and Writer

NEWS.....

An evening with Gilly Morgan

In February when it was still a little cold and dark Gilly engaged us for an hour talking with such animated enthusiasm about her journey to what is now Gilly's Quiet Garden in Cheshire. The theme lay around the blue Iris as depicted in the poem Prayer by Mary Oliver. What was especially good about this evening was that we engaged in small groups—exchanged ideas and encouraged new hosts who hadn't been with us for long. To listen to Gilly's talk follow the link [here](#) Gilly Morgan is host of Gilly's Quiet Garden

A Quiet Evening with Annie Henry Holland

Annie led an evening in March, taking us Back to the Garden with pictures, art, poetry and song.

Annie is a talented artist, poet and hosts Back to the Garden at Tremorran. The evening was a gentle reminder of the power of the outdoors to sooth the soul and give refreshment .

<https://quietgarden.org/gardens/tremorran-back-to-the-garden/>

Annual Gathering May 2021

We were delighted to welcome author, walking retreat leader, speaker and presenter Brian Draper to our first online Annual Gathering. We were also so pleased that folk from overseas were able to join us this time, as well as folk who had been part of the Movement at its conception.

Brian spoke of the value of nature and nurturing our souls in the outdoors; of the belief that a dose of nature is so very good for our mental wellbeing. He spoke of his love of trees and of the variety of experiences that can connect us with nature. Philip Roderick attended the event and closed the session with a body prayer and poem.

You can find out more information about Brian and his work [here](#).

Keep in touch

<https://quietgarden.org/>

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PATRONS ...

Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia | The Rt Revd John Pritchard | Margaret Magdalen Evening

Professor Sir Ghillean Prance | Richard Foster | Terry Hershey | The Revd Lucy Winkett | Shane Connolly

His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols | Founder Revd Philip Roderick

An overseas perspective from “Creciendo con Gracia – Growing with Grace” Quiet Garden in Spain at Fruitful Hills International Community.

We are recent Affiliates to the Quiet Garden Trust having emigrated to Andalucia, southern Spain from North Yorkshire two and a half years ago. I am writing this article to offer an overseas perspective on the development of a Quiet Garden abroad and welcoming people to experience it in the current context of both Brexit and Covid-19. **We are a small family: myself Andrew, my wife Hazel and our eight year old daughter Grace Joy.** We live in fertile hillsides between two towns, Alhaurin el Grande and Coin, just 30 minutes inland from the Costa del Sol beaches (at Fuengirola and Marbella) and Malaga city with its international airport. We also have excellent access inland to nearby mountains, the “*Caminito del Rey*”, Ronda and further afield to Granada, Seville & Cordoba.

The name of our local town “Alhaurin” was given by the Moors to signify “*The Garden of Allah*” - to us “*God’s Garden*”. What an encouraging name! The Guadalhorce valley below us is fed by springs from nearby mountain ranges and is home to many market gardens with abundant orange groves. The hillsides are planted with olives and almonds and in recent years with many avocado trees. We noticed a very different “real community feel” here compared to life on the coast. There is a settled local Spanish society here inland as well as a large, settled and varied international expat community with many British and Dutch especially and others from all over (our friends and neighbours include Russian, Iranian and Hong Kong Chinese people). We started our life in Spain on the coast and spent eighteen months visiting and researching places to fulfill our vision before we purchased the four acre



finca here. Although everything needed renovating, inside, outside and on the land, there were already many mature trees, vital for shade in the hot summer months. Being on two hillsides there are also many varied panoramic views and a summer hillside breeze for our Quiet Garden. The dry stream “storm” bed between our hillsides is an ideal space for us to create a natural water feature with stream, bridge and large nature pool – next year’s project!

Developing... among the first things we did on the estate here was to plough furrows along the contours of the hillsides to retain water in the soil from the rainfall which comes mainly in short heavy downpours. We also began taking deliveries of skip loads of horse manure from local stables, one every month, which we are spreading over the land to enrich the soil and increase it’s capacity to absorb and retain water. We have also started to use the horse manure with garden prunings / chippings to process our own “hot compost” for planting and growing vegetables. These ideas were largely inspired by Geoff Lawton’s videos from the Australian Institute of Permaculture. In our first year we have installed around 250m of automatic irrigation and planted over eighty new trees (including nectarine, mulberry, pomegranate, pecan, pistachio, moringa, papaya, avocado, mango, cherimoya, jujube, medlar, guava, cherry & plum, as well as olives, jacaranda, cypress & catalpa, to add to our existing orange and lemon groves, fig, olive and almond trees. We have also carved out 1,500m of nature trails for ourselves, our guests and visitors to be able to access and enjoy the whole estate. There are now so many and varied peaceful spaces to sit, contemplate and enjoy the surrounding views and natural beauty.

continued from page 6....

Welcoming... Covid-19 restrictions have limited visitors. Still, along with friends and family, we have welcomed two young families and two single guests of varied nationalities staying in our accommodation. And we have been encouraged by our guests' comments. *"The place and the people inspire a lot of peace which was what we were looking for."* **"The garden is a paradise."** **"Thank you so much for welcoming us.... its really a dream."** **"The house and the garden are just lovely. We really enjoyed it and relaxed!"** **"The gardens are beautiful and there is plenty of space to walk and enjoy the peace and quiet of the countryside"** **"The kids thoroughly enjoyed running around the garden and playing with Grace, with feeding the sheep and hens also being lovely activities for them."**

"Consider the lilies of the field"... our estate gardens are naturally rustic rather than polished formal! Spring here (from January onwards) is an ideal time to visit, beginning with almond tree blossom and then with an increasingly dazzling display of wildflowers. It's an abundant sensory experience with the sound of birds singing and bees buzzing and mingled scents including lavender, thyme, rosemary, fennel, eucalyptus, orange blossom and cypress', in skin-warming sunshine and energising blue skies. There are also different friendly (mainly rescued) animals here to enjoy meeting, including three young sheep, baby chicks now growing into Andalucian egg-laying hens, our Masteen dog Johnny, two cats and two rabbits. And the Andalucian Rescue Centre for Horses (ARCH) is just a ten minute walk down the lane, open to visitors on Sunday mornings.

Adapting & envisioning... along with Covid-19 restrictions, Brexit is also having an impact here with implications for who we are more likely to be welcoming to our Quiet Garden. One of these impacts is a changing demographic from older retirees to younger online and mobile workers choosing to move from northern Europe to enjoy the sunshine and all year round outdoor lifestyle here. We have noticed that the experience of Covid-19 lockdowns has also kindled a new hunger for community living. Responding to these changes, we envision welcoming more longer stay guests who live and work here within a community framework, with a balance of private and shared space, including common workspaces indoors and out. Our young daughter Grace helped devise our community name as: *"Fruitful Hills International Community"* which you can learn more about at www.FruitfulHillsInternationalCommunity.com. **Thank you...** for reading this and sharing our journey. We look forward to welcoming you to experience *"Growing with Grace"* Quiet Garden. <https://quietgarden.org/gardens/growing-with-grace-creciendo-con-gracia-quiet-garden/>



"A garden can be strong medicine to nurture and shape the soul. Gardens have a way of seeping in to your soul and you find yourself enjoying the air and watching for miracles. In a hurried and distracted world we need garden sanctuaries, places that ground us. We need Quiet Gardens."

Terry Hershey | Patron | Author and Speaker

Accompaniment, Community and Nature by Jonathan Herbert

Jonathan Herbert is a member of the Hilfield Friary Community in rural Dorset, which lives out in very practical ways its Franciscan spirituality. In particular it has a deep ecological ethos, living lightly on the land, encouraging biodiversity and being frugal with its use of the Earth's resources.

If one thinks that living in community, even a Franciscan one, is a soft option, then think again! This book is extraordinarily honest, and tells of the difficulties, often harrowing ones – as well as the joys – of living with others and in ministering to people on the margins of society. Jonathan is an Anglican priest and earlier in his life he worked in deprived inner city communities; he has also engaged in peace work in Palestine/Israel and Uganda. In recent years he has been (and remains) Chaplain to Gypsies and Travelling folk in Dorset and Wiltshire. Thus he brings to his writing, which flows elegantly over 220 pages, a wealth of knowledge and life experience.

The thread which runs through the book is 'accompanying', which is about being with, walking and working alongside others, rather than in a directing, leadership or counselling relationship. 'At heart' he writes 'it's a way of learning to live well with otherness and difference, whilst reminding us that we all belong together...' Accompanying seeks to build not independence nor dependence, but interdependence.

Learning to accompany was far from easy. Jonathan tells how 'I stopped trying to help people or change them; I began to let go of my need to be needed by others and to realise that the simple joy of being with others, accepting them for who they were and being as much aware of my own weaknesses as theirs brought to me a sense of real freedom, built community and fostered belonging'. The book shows great self awareness and Jonathan shows how the 'shadow side' is a place of deep learning. He doesn't hold back from expressing his anger about a number of societal injustices and he will take sides - but he also knows that it is vital not to close off the possibility of communication with those who you dislike and who take opposing views to us. I have found this particular theme very helpful – and calming - as I fume about those who have political views I find appalling!

In the penultimate chapter 'Living in relationship with the planet' Jonathan tells of how in the first 35 years of his life before he moved to rural Dorset, he lived a very urban existence, 'focused on people but with little thought for the planet'. When he moved to the Pilsdon Community in Dorset (where he spent several years as leader prior to coming to Hilfield) his 'world view began to change, and I became enchanted with the physical place as much as the idea and reality of living in community'. He leads us through his own ecological journey, the profound environmental commitment at Hilfield and to his own commitment to Extinction Rebellion .

There is much wisdom within the pages. As the book comes to a close; Jonathan writes 'I increasingly distrust people who preach certainty, particularly when it begins to exclude others. I think deeper truth is encountered when we're prepared to enter that place of emptiness, not knowing, as rather than close down space it creates space for the other'. Amen to that!

Chris Holmes, March 2021

Jessica Kingsley Publishers. ISBN 9781785925474.

In nature nothing is perfect and everything is perfect. Trees can be contorted, bent in weird ways , and they're still beautiful.

Alice Walker

Quiet Garden

Someone has put a cushion on the garden bench.

She leans back, listens to the click of the feeder
as blue tits and greenfinches come and go.

Everywhere a haze of green on green,
leaf-light shifting through oak and ash,

polishing the patterned shields of cyclamen,
fat Begonia leaves, tongue ferns and euphorbia.

Sheltering her, a low wall crusted with lichen,
crannied with toadflax, starred with celandine.

She takes off her shoes, steps barefoot
onto the lawn,
feels the shock of cold, tickle of damp grass,
lifts her face
to the light, curls her toes in the softness
of moss.

Tension slides like a shawl from her shoulders,
the garden gathers her in.

Jenna Plewes

“Mediation is such an important part of one’s Christian life and so I am delighted that Quiet Gardens now exists in so many places to encourage us towards a more prayerful and thoughtful faith.”

Professor Sir Gillian Prance—Patron

Former Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew,

Labyrinth

Today, I walked the labyrinth.

My feet made no sound

between the black, incised, deliberate lines,
limiting my steps,
slowing them to heart-beat pace.

The stone beneath glowed red,

formed in long- forgotten seas,
its surface cracked,
pounded
by the storms of millennia

And, as I traced the serpentine coils,

the twisting, stem-like spirals,
sounds dimmed.

Memories enter the maze with me

revolving with the paths
stretching and contracting with each turn.

Life itself, they say, is a journey ,
a pilgrimage,

and other feet walk with me on its way.

But amid them all, the ones that come and go,

tread those of One
whose feet walked once the roads of Galilee
and climbed that hard hill-path to Calvary -
unnoticed in the movement of the day,

but softly,
steadily,
so softly,

pacing the labyrinth roads of life
with me.

Composed by a Friend of the Movement

I LOVE MAY

I love May. Everything is here, new-born after winter's absence, fresh-green and glowing. The newly hatched leaves are translucent and are as perfect as a baby's toes, eliciting the same surge of awe. The trees swell to their full size and you can just catch them in their play days, unfurling fingers, learning the lure of the sun before they settle into the majesty of their maturity. The world is green again, and for a moment it is surprise, it is joy, it is balm, before we acclimatise ourselves and it becomes backdrop to our everyday occupations. I love the green, I drink it in deep breaths to water my parched heart.

And not just green. The hedgerows are bright with white, hawthorn flowers above, cow parsley below, not the cultured pink of cherry blossom but mile upon mile of the bounty of the wild. They shine as you drive past, they declare the winter dead and gone and celebrate the opening of the earth.

In May the sun can warm you mellow, playing remembered tunes on white skins. It calls you outside, out of the dark domain of buildings and into the open air, newly refurbished and ready for custom. And the air, the air is sweet, perfumed by the abundance of flowers so you don't even need to hold one close to smell it. The scents mingle with the sun to bathe you inside and outside with splendour. At my house there is a waterfall of wisteria blossom over my porch door, and a cascade of white clematis over the back so whenever I enter or leave I am filled with the smell of May.



Jane Upchurch

SOLITUDE

Solitude - SIMON PARKE

In Solitude: Recovering the power of alone,

Simon describes solitude as the active path to inner silence and takes us on an enthralling journey there. In a world of haste and distraction, he commends the way of stillness and withdrawal where we can 'recover the power of alone'.

Further information and other publications can be found here.

<http://simonparke.com/>

SIMON
PARKE

"The natural environment of gardens with their of tending, cultivating and sanctified neglect, are places that draw me into the heart of God. They are places where I can dwell deeply, through being in the slip-stream of prayer, contemplation and renewal, and I find life again in all of its abundance. Through the work of the Quiet Garden Movement I pray this will be true for many other people, and I remain grateful to those who open their gardens so that others can slow down and rest in God's abundant love in Jesus."

The Rat Revd Graham Usher—Patron