



Charney Manor

conference and retreat centre



Programme 2026

Charney Bassett • Wantage • Oxfordshire • OX12 0EJ
01235 868206 • admin@charneymanor.com
www.charneymanor.com

2026 programme at a glance

20-22 February

Challenging times: sustaining Quaker community
Ben Pink Dandelion

6

25-29 May

Experiencing Shakespeare
John Lampen

6

29-31 May

Quakers and the afterlife
Rhonda Riachi

7

5-7 June

Unfolding and enfolding: a creative retreat
Philip and Zelig Gross

7

14-16 August

What does the Earth want?
Paul Hodgkin, supported by Alex Wildwood

8

2-3 September

What on Earth... are we doing with Quaker gardens?
Deb Arrowsmith

8

4-6 December

Healing stories of separation
Alex Wildwood, supported by Judy Roles

9



With its rural setting, spacious grounds and sense of history - parts of the Manor date back to the 13th Century - Charney Manor offers a supportive setting for relaxation, reflection, and renewal. We offer a warm welcome to all our guests, tempting home-cooked meals, and a unique atmosphere of peace and tranquillity.

Facilities at Charney Manor

Conference rooms

Charney Manor has two large conference rooms, both upstairs: the Solar in the Manor and the main meeting room in the Barn (accessible by lift). Also available in the Manor are a library and a sitting room.

Accommodation

Charney Manor can accommodate 35 guests in one double, eleven twin and eleven single rooms. All have ensuite bathrooms. Nine rooms are in the Manor house itself, ten are in the Vokins building and four are in the Barn. One single room and one twin room in the Barn, both on the ground floor, are adapted for wheelchair users.

The Gilletts, a cottage in the grounds, provides self-catering accommodation for groups of eight in five bedrooms, or additional accommodation for conferences (see page 11 for more detail).

Catering

Residential groups are fully catered for, with arrangements made for guests with special diets. Every bedroom has facilities for making hot drinks.

Library

We have a small well-stocked library mainly focused on Quakerism and contemporary spirituality. Guests are welcome to borrow books during their stay.

Internet access

Wi-fi internet access is available throughout.

Garden and walks

While staying with us you'll be able to enjoy three acres of beautiful, peaceful gardens, orchard and paddock largely maintained by volunteers. We are increasingly moving towards a more sustainable, organic management of our land, improving habitats and planting more trees. We are also restoring the Manor's kitchen garden to provide more produce for use in our kitchens.

There are good walks locally and many places of interest nearby, including the Uffington White Horse, Wayland's Smithy and the Ridgeway, and Kelmscott Manor: the country home of William Morris.



Programme useful information

The Charney Manor programme

This programme seeks to nourish the spirit through silence, discussion, listening deeply, and exploring chosen themes with both mind and heart. All are open to everyone, including those of other denominations and faiths or with no religious affiliation.

We also offer attendees an option to have a few extra days of relaxation on a bed-and-breakfast or fully catered basis.

Booking

To check availability and to request the specific booking form, call us on

01235 868206, or visit our website. To secure a place, we ask for a non-refundable deposit and completed booking form.

For a provisional booking, please contact the office: the booking will be confirmed on receipt of your deposit and booking form.

Payment

Ideally made via bank transfer, however, we do accept credit and debit cards.

Contact

Finance & Office Administrator: Sophie Hall.

Please contact us for further information: admin@charneymanor.com.



Programme in detail

20-22 February Challenging times: sustaining Quaker community Ben Pink Dandelion

In an increasingly secular world, how are Quaker communities to deal with the challenges facing us and flourish as vibrant spiritual communities? This course will chart our current context and offer a variety of ways to nurture the life of the Spirit in our Meetings.

Cost: £330 (deposit £170)

Ben Pink Dandelion has been part of the Woodbrooke team since the early 1990s and has written widely on the history, theology and sociology of British Quakerism. He gave the Swarthmore Lecture in 2014 and was one of the speakers at the Future of British Quakerism conference in 2024. He is a member of Pendle Hill Area Meeting, Lancashire.

25-29 May Experiencing Shakespeare John Lampen

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare revisits many of his favourite themes, notably the (mis)use of power and the need for forgiveness; he also explores new forms of staging and language. In this course we will contrast it with Brecht's treatment of political power in *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, discussing the issues raised by the two plays and seeing performances at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, where Kenneth Branagh plays Prospero and Mark Gatiss Arturo Ui.

Cost: £520 (deposit £260)

John teaches the creative handling of conflict in Britain and overseas. His books include 'Mending Hurts' and 'Findings: poets and the crisis of faith'.

Please note: the Experiencing Shakespeare retreat involves a certain amount of walking. If you are unsure as to your ability to participate, please contact Charney Manor at sales@charneymanor.com, or phone 01235 868206



Programme in detail

29-31 May Quakers and the afterlife Rhonda Riachi

For almost four centuries, Quakers have collected and shared evidence of what happens at death and before we arrive on earth. This course is for anyone genuinely curious about the afterlife. Through small group sharing and discussion in pairs, reflection and presentation, we'll explore personal testimonies and inspiring accounts.

NB: Participants will need a copy of the book, *The Life That Never Ends*, available from Fee Berry, Clerk of QFAS: caliandris@gmail.com

Cost: £330 (deposit £170)

Rhonda Riachi has followed developments in near-death experience and survival research for 24 years and is a member of the Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies.

5-7 June Unfolding and enfolding: a creative retreat Philip and Zelig Gross

A weekend to reflect on the constant change that underpins our life on Earth. Avoiding general statements and fixed positions, we will think with our hands, letting our instincts for creativity lead us, along with memory, imagination, association and other leaps of thought released by poetry.

The theme: unfolding and enfolding, two words so close in sound but complementary. In the height of summer, we'll think about the bedding down of Autumn and the openings of Spring.

Cost: £330 (deposit £170)

Zelig Gross brings her experience of facilitating visual art, Philip Gross brings more than forty years of work with poetry, in a weekend fed by two decades of their work together with Woodbrooke on courses like the long-running Voices of the Earth.

Programme in detail

14-16 August

What does the Earth want?

**Paul Hodgkin,
supported by Alex Wildwood**

What does it mean to move from answering that of god in every one, to answering that of god in every thing? We will explore how we might be led to live in these times of incipient collapse, how our Quakerism may be changing, and what a spirituality that is fully embodied in the Earth might look like in both witness and worship.

Cost: £330 (deposit £170)

Paul is a trustee of the Living Witness project and has contributed articles to 'The Friend' exploring radical worship and witness, particularly over the past year.

Alex gave the 1999 Swarthmore lecture and has written about Quaker spiritual diversity.



2-3 September

What on Earth...

...are we doing with Quaker gardens?

Deb Arrowsmith

For everyone interested in the gardens, burial grounds, and land of Meeting Houses and Quaker venues – gardener or not – we'll be sharing ideas of how 'our patches' show intent to cherish the Earth. We can develop their potential, manage maintenance and value their significance to our spiritual health by building partnerships with local communities.

Let their life speak.

Cost: £220 (deposit £110)

Deb trained in Fine Art, Design and Horticulture, and has been designing, planting and maintaining gardens for clients across the country since 1995. She has run the Quaker Garden Project and is one of the Trustees at Charney Manor.



Programme in detail

4-6 December

Healing stories of separation

**Alex Wildwood,
supported by Judy Roles**

Our winter retreat this year focuses on how we build the resilience we need to stay present in these turbulent times. Balancing inner practice with what calls us into engagement with the world, we will explore what Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone call 'active hope', nourished by the warm hospitality and unique atmosphere of Charney Manor.

Cost: £330 (deposit £170)

Alex Wildwood has been involved with running retreats at Charney Manor for over two decades.



Charney Manor garden redesign

Help us bring our garden redesign to life! Scan the QR code to make a donation and support our project.



**Charney Manor garden redesign
JustGiving page**

Our 2026 courses are only the beginning

At Charney we are keen to build back more meaningful in-person Quaker and interfaith experiences for all. You can help by suggesting themes or speakers you'd like us to include by donating to help fund our courses and provide bursaries to make them accessible for all. Please get in touch with the course programme team and help widen our scope by becoming a **Friend of Charney**.

Full course details and programme can be provided on request.

Deposits are required upon booking, with balances due three weeks before the event.

Conference facilities at Charney Manor

In addition to our Programme of Events, Charney Manor offers a variety of meeting rooms and a range of facilities in a peaceful and inspiring setting, making it the perfect venue for conferences, training events, and retreats. Whether you're hosting meetings, workshops, seminars, or significant events, we provide two large, beautiful, and historic rooms that offer both character and functionality to create an ideal atmosphere for your gathering.

For further information, prices and availability please visit our website at www.charneymanor.com, contact Louise Trinder on **01235 868206** or email on conferences@charneymanor.com.



Charney Manor accommodation

Self-catering: The Gilletts

This charming detached cottage in the grounds of Charney Manor provides a quiet space for rest and relaxation. It is available for use on a self-catering basis by families and groups of up to eight people.

The cottage consists of five bedrooms (one twin, two twin/double and two singles), a living room with TV and DVD player, games and books. There is a separate dining room, fully equipped kitchen, shower room, bathroom and downstairs toilet. There is also a lovely secure garden, newly landscaped and suitable for dogs.



Bed and breakfast

Escape the hustle and bustle of city life and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the countryside with a stay at Charney Manor. We offer comfortable en-suite accommodation with tea- and coffee-making facilities, TV and hairdryer.

If you would like to 'eat in', the lower barn is available to B&B guests and is equipped with tables, chairs, crockery, cutlery, fridge and microwave. Special dietary requirements can be catered for.

The library may be used by guests, if it is available, as can the three acres of peaceful gardens, orchard and paddock.

Includes a continental breakfast.

Single: £75 per room per night
Twin/double: £80 per room per night
Triple/family room: £95 per room per night



Special offer for Quaker Meetings

Quaker Meetings are invited to experience Charney Manor's excellent facilities. Groups of at least 20 adults (aged 14+) can enjoy a two-night weekend or mid-week stay.

£340 per person for a minimum of 20 guests. Additional guests: £300 per person. Children under 14 reduced rates apply based on age of child.

Offer available January-April. Ts & Cs apply.



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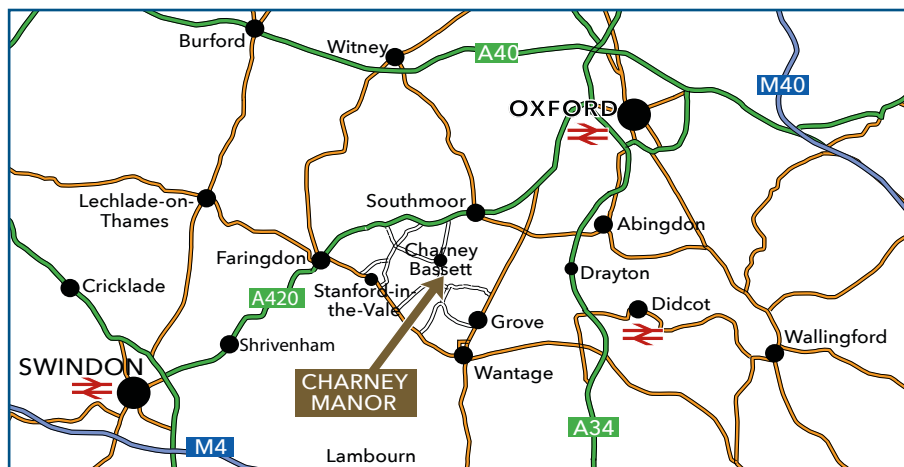
Charney Manor is used by a wide variety of organisations such as businesses, educators, charities and faith groups, who meet for conferences and training; by musicians, artists and writers, who seek a peaceful and inspiring place to work together; and by people involved in conflict resolution and international affairs, who need a quiet and private venue in which to talk.

To check rates and availability, please telephone or email

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Charney Manor is easily accessible by car from the M40 and the M4. It is 12 miles from Oxford and from Didcot railway stations. There are bus services from Oxford to Southmoor or Wantage. Taxis can be arranged to pick up from these destinations.

Charney Manor is a registered charity, owned by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). It is managed and run by a professional team of staff and supervised by an independent board of Trustees.

*Deb Arrowsmith - Burford Meeting
Tola Oyeadejo - Friends House
Susan Hall - Oxford Meeting*

*Kate Harris - Charlbury Meeting
Peter Wilkinson*