



2017  
**GOOD NEIGHBOURS**  
My World Depends on Us

16 August 2017

## One World Week 2017

Some suggestions and resources for interpreting the 2017 Theme:

# GOOD NEIGHBOURS

## My World Depends on Us

Local OWW events can explore how we can be “Good Neighbours” in our globalised 21st century world.

Being a “Good neighbour” means much more than just being quiet and unobtrusive. It means (according to various faith traditions) actively looking out for our neighbours to ensure their needs are met. It applies at personal, local, national and international levels.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have identified the needs of our global neighbours. Governments around the world, including that of the UK, have pledged to address them. (See guide to UN website [here](#))

The strap line, “My World Depends on Us”, is the theme chosen for 2017 by the North South Centre's Global Education Week Network, of which OWW is a member. It draws attention to our responsibility for what is happening in the world, our home, and why we need to raise awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals. OWW will explore how we can become better neighbours using the theme to help us pursue:

- active citizenship;
- media literacy and critical thinking to:
  - o counter populism/extremism and hate speech;
  - o hold our government to account by promoting awareness of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### Why “GOOD NEIGHBOURS”?

“Good Neighbours” is a fundamental and familiar concept at the heart of human relations and communities and part of the ‘Golden Rule’ of most faiths and non-faith ethics: to treat others with the same consideration and respect that you wish to be extended to yourself. It has applications at the personal, local, national and international level. This theme will involve discussion about who our neighbours are in a globalised world – good for inter faith discussion and comparisons. We shall also need to ask: “What do we need to do to be a good neighbour in a globalised world?”

“Who is our neighbour?” - Here are a few ideas to set you thinking:

The story of the Good Samaritan answers the question “Who is my neighbour?” for Christians; Islam and all the major faiths have very strong guidance about the treatment of neighbours too.

*(A good summary, with quotations from many faiths can be found [here](#).)*

## **What is a “Good Neighbour”?**

In our 21<sup>st</sup> century world of information we cannot claim not to know what is happening to our neighbours. The UN Sustainable Development Goals have identified the needs of our global neighbours. Governments around the world, including that of the UK, have pledged to address them. This has far reaching implications for what we as individuals and nations should be doing about the Sustainable Development Goals.

At least one of the SDGs, usually more, applies to the each of the issues addressed below:

## **Are we Good Neighbours?**

### **Some 21<sup>st</sup> Century examples**

#### **1. Climate Change - (SDG 13)**

A good neighbour would not dream of dumping her rubbish in her next-door neighbour's garden. So, surely, it must be equally unacceptable for us to burn fossil fuels that pollute the atmosphere and cause damaging climate change for our global neighbours. For example: climate changes which flood the fields of our Bangladeshi neighbours or raise temperatures so that our neighbours in Uganda, Peru and Nicaragua can no longer grow the coffee they depend on for their livelihoods.



*has some great materials: see for example ‘Taken By Storm: responding to the impacts of climate change’ (March 2014) [here](#) ; and a set of materials for use with children ‘Crazy Climate’ [here](#))*

#### **2. Shopping - (SDG 1, 2, 3, 8, 12,)**

We consume products grown and manufactured near and far away. Are the producers able to satisfy the needs of their families with the income derived from their trade with us? British dairy farmers? Colombian banana farmers? African tea growers? Indian cashew nut producers? Bangladeshi garment manufacturers? Are their human rights being recognised in their working and employment conditions? Or do we turn a blind eye to their needs and choose cheap prices over human lives.



*Fairtrade has lots of examples of how we can be good neighbours to the producers of many products we buy -*

*(See [Farmers and workers here](#))*



*also has case studies of how good global neighbours' choices can change lives [here](#); and examples of how good neighbours can*

*Take Action [here](#)*

### 3. Small farmers. (SDGs 6, 12, 13, 15.)

Clean water to drink and water and land to grow food crops are needed by small farmers around the world. But the water they need and even their land is often being taken by large multinational corporations (MNCs) to grow export crops for wealthy consumers: fruit, animal feed, sugar for ethanol, grain for alcoholic drinks. Farmers deprived of the water and land they need cannot grow enough food to feed their families. They are often inadequately compensated (if at all) and end up unemployed and hungry in rapidly growing urban areas. What can we, as good neighbours, do to uphold the rights of our neighbours deprived of their livelihoods so MNCs can supply our needs for fruit and vegetables out of season, meat and dairy produce, fuel and alcohol?

Can a new United Nations Treaty hold corporations accountable for their human rights abuses? Do we need a new international law of 'Ecocide' to criminalise activities that damage the resources needed to sustain life on the planet? '**My world depends on us**' - what can we as global neighbours do to support these initiatives?



*has been researching the impact of Multi-National Corporations on small farmers and their power over people and governments. Find out more [here](#)*



*is working for justice for people affected by the activities of British companies around the world.*

*Learn more [here](#)*



*Ecocide law is a legal route that could significantly abate sea-level rises, protect millions of lives and prevent serious harm to our planetary boundaries by imposing state and corporate responsibility for dangerous industrial and climate activity.*

*Be inspired! Watch Polly Higgins's TED talk [here](#):*

*<https://www.youtube.com/embed/8EuxYzQ65H4>*

*Choose what to do [here](#):*

*<http://eradicatingecocide.com/catalyst/what-you-can-do/>*

#### 4. Trade and Aid – post Brexit (SDGs - all of them!)

Extending the concept of Good Neighbours beyond the local to the world scale challenges us to explore how post-Brexit Britain can relate to neighbours in Europe and around the world through trade:

Is the much vaunted “Free trade” the answer or would “Fair trade” meet people’s needs better?

Overseas aid is one way that taxpayers would hope to meet our global neighbours needs by helping to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. But does the emphasis on addressing the commercial needs of British companies and security issues mean that the needs of poor people locally are not given priority? How can we as active citizens hold our governments to account?

Post-Brexit trade deals are being conducted behind the scenes in secret so how can we choose to be good neighbours if we have no information about or ability to influence our representatives about what is being negotiated on our behalf? This challenges our democratic rights as citizens.



*has been exploring these issues.*

*Learn more from - [here](#)*



*wants to make sure that Brexit works for everyone including our global neighbour producers in the world’s poorest countries.*

*They offer an entertaining cartoon video and ideas for action - [here](#)*

*and,*



*together with the Fairtrade Foundation, a very informative report: ‘Brexit -Let’s change trade for good’(17pp) - [here](#)*

### Good Neighbours in our local communities

How does the concept of good neighbours apply to refugees and asylum seekers at the global and local levels? What can we do to help meet the needs of these neighbours to live in peace and security in our local communities, accepted and celebrated, free from harassment and hate crimes? Our theme last year, Including You, addressed many of these issues and the guidelines and resources produced for that can be found by entering “2016 Including You” in the search box on the new OWW website. NB: [www.oneworldweek.org](http://www.oneworldweek.org) is the correct URL