

## HARPENDEN UNA Event



*High Street Methodist Church was quite full for the Harpenden UNA Concert / Service for the UN's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

"Having been to several UNA Church Services over the years, my expectations of this one on a wet Sunday afternoon in Harpenden were not high. How wrong I was! It was – by some distance – the best UNA event I have ever been to: the boys choir sang beautifully; the short introduction to what the UN has achieved in its first 75 years inspired my son to want to find out more – and the question and answer between Sir Richard Jolly and the children – younger and older – was riveting. THANK YOU – Harpenden UNA for bringing us such an imaginative event. And THANK YOU Mark Hammond, the wonderful rector of High Street Methodist, for hosting it so beautifully and sensitively in your church."

*An appreciation by a UNA member ( - not from Harpenden - ) who would prefer to remain anonymous*

The only additional THANK YOU must be to Aldwickbury School, its Headmaster, Vernon Hales, its excellent head of Music, Jonathan Bungard, and its wonderful Chamber Choir for providing the musical leadership + the searching questions for the first intergenerational dialogue. Also THANK YOU to James Ellis who secured the 3 x young students whose questions led the second intergenerational dialogue. Finally, a big THANK YOU to Richard Jolly for coming all the way up from Brighton to bring his experience and sparkle to the debates. Both resulted in what I felt were pretty strong agreements on the following priorities for the Next 75 Years of the UN (*to be forwarded to Harpenden Town Council*):

1. A World totally free of Single-use plastic as soon as possible and – certainly! – a Plastic-Free Harpenden by 2030 [For guidance, see [Surfers against Sewage Guide](#)]
2. Better role models for children – from political, business and church leaders; (Suggestion: create your own Role Models – from history and from other disciplines. Just because political leaders right now are rather under-whelming, doesn't mean good role models don't exist: check out Sir Richard's three names:
  - [Jacinda Ardern](#), Prime Minister of New Zealand;
  - [Carlos Alvarado Quesada](#), President of Costa Rica – and –
  - [Greta Thunberg](#), 17-year old Swedish environmental activist
3. Reduce military spending: let's reduce it by a third by 2030;
4. Increase peace-building / human security budgets: it employs more people

5. Let's have more countries with no armies: there are 22 at the moment. Can we double that number by 2030? ([Learn how Costa Rica did it](#))
6. Votes at 16 – in the UK by 2030 & every UN member state by 2050. It already is 16 in big countries like Brazil and Argentina, also some European countries like Austria and Malta. Make it the norm;
7. More women like Jacinda Aherne (New Zealand) in leadership roles; check her out;
8. An end the [scandal](#) of subsidies on Fossil Fuel mining and prospecting: the world spends [\\$400 Billion](#) propping up the oil companies; the EU gives them €55 billion – with the UK the biggest subsidiser! [STOP IT!!](#)
9. Give subsidies and levy Green taxes to encourage the growth of [green economies](#) everywhere. Like in Costa Rica, Germany and New Zealand;
10. Support for countries like Russia and Nigeria to cease oil production and transition investment and jobs to Green / renewable economies. (They really need it!)
11. Legislate to encourage electric car travel – and make SUVs NOT cost-effective; check out the comparative pollution from them.
12. Encourage and celebrate local initiatives – like those pioneered by [Lewes, Sussex](#), and [Totnes](#) in Devon. (read: [From What is to What If?](#) By Rob Hopkins, founder of [Transition Towns](#)). Get some of those initiatives happening in Harpenden



*Sir Richard Jolly with students from St George's School, Harpenden in an Intergenerational Dialogue about Climate Change*

**Major Learning for Peace Child Intl.:** This was the first time we'd heard any one talk about the concept of 3 x United Nations. Sir Richard's analysis was highly instructive:

1. The official UN of Member States: owned and operated by sovereign governments
2. The UN Secretariat Staff:– UN Staff / Civil Servants have much more freedom and power to create and shape the global agenda than civil servants who serve national elected governments because they are required to implement the elected government's manifesto programme;
3. The "We the Peoples..." UN: - NGOs, Civil Society – all of us have the power to lobby and pressurize the UN and its member states – just as Greta Thunberg has done!
4. The Digital UN: We feel that, for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, it is time to add a 4<sup>th</sup> UN – the one that exists in the virtual world, online: we need to expand and strengthen the UN that is able to reach tens of millions of people instantly over the internet.

Read Richard Jolly's [UN Ideas that Saved the World](#) – published by Indiana University Press

Do your own Celebration of the UN's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: see all the Peace Child UN 75 materials at:  
[www.peacechildthemusical.com/un75](http://www.peacechildthemusical.com/un75)