

# Calling letter



Yearly Meeting of the  
Religious Society of Friends  
(Quakers) in Britain

20 November 2020

## To members of Meeting for Sufferings

Dear Friends,

I am writing to invite you to our next Meeting for Sufferings, to be held on Saturday 5th December by Zoom.

Every meeting in 2020 has been an experiment and this one is no exception. We will be joined for parts of it by the young people attending the annual participation day, and this year their theme is 'A Quaker response to racism'.

Mindful of the feedback we have received after previous meetings, Arrangements Group has planned a longer meeting this time. In the morning, after some routine business, we expect to:

- hear a report from Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, with the Budget and operational plan for 2021
- consider minutes sent to us by three AMs (two on governance and discernment in decision making and one on pension funds and divestment from fossil fuels)
- make a start on the business delegated to us by Yearly Meeting at its meeting on 15th November.

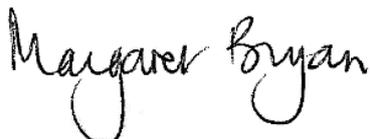
After lunch and any further delegated business, Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC) will present its annual report; we would normally receive news of European Yearly Meetings attended on our behalf but there have been several cancellations in 2020 and we are holding this item over until 2021.

Following the precedent set by Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations (QCCIR) before our October meeting QWRC will offer an introductory evening session on the full range of their work on 30th November. Details will be sent separately.

Our day's final session, entitled Action on Racism, will be introduced by Edwina Peart, BYM's Diversity and Inclusion Officer. Please follow the links in the agenda papers in preparation for this item.

The young people will share the activities of their day with us before we bring what I am sure will be an exciting and enriching day to a close in worship together.

In peace and friendship,



Margaret Bryan  
Clerk

### **Papers enclosed with this mailing**

Agenda

MfS Arrangements Group October and November 2020 meeting minutes

MfS 2020 12 Record of minutes received

MfS 2020 12 06 Prison and Court Register

MfS 2020 12 07 Appointments

MfS 2020 12 08 BYM Trustees

MfS 2020 12 09 Minutes from Area Meetings

MfS 2020 12 10 Delegated business from Yearly Meeting

MfS 2020 12 11 Yearly Meeting 2021

MfS 2020 12 12 Report from Quaker World Relations Committee

MfS 2020 12 13 Action on racism

### **A reminder of how you can prepare for the meeting**

- Register
- Register for the informal session to meet QWRC committee members
- Read the agenda and papers in good time
- Contact the other representative/alternate from your area meeting or body
- Send any comments or questions to the clerks, before the meeting



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## Agenda

### Meeting for Sufferings – 5 December 2020

By video conference, open for arrivals from 9.30am

	Item	Paper Number
<b>10am</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Opening worship</b> We will be joined for opening and closing worship by members of the Young People's Participation Day	
<b>2</b>	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Getting to know you</b> Led by members of the Young People's Participation Day	
<b>4</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>MfS 2020 12 04</b> (To note)
<b>5</b>	<b>Agenda</b> Adoption and acceptance of the agenda	
<b>6</b>	<b>Prison and Court Register</b>	<b>MfS 2020 12 06</b> (For decision)
<b>7</b>	<b>Appointments</b>	<b>MfS 2020 12 07</b> (For approval)
<b>8</b>	<b>BYM Trustees</b> To hear from the Clerk of BYM Trustees and Yearly Meeting Treasurer including a report on Trustee meeting in November and the 2021 Budget and operational plan	<b>MfS 2020 12 08</b> (For reflection)
<b>9</b>	<b>Minutes from Area Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minute from Surrey and Hampshire Borders Area 'Governance and discernment in decision making'</li> <li>• Minute from Devon Area Meeting 'Pension funds and divestment from fossil fuels'</li> </ul>	<b>MfS 2020 12 09</b> (For consideration)  (For information)

	Item	Paper Number
10	Delegated business from Yearly Meeting	MfS 2020 12 10 (For approval)
12.30pm	End of Session 1	

**Lunch break 12:30pm to 1.30pm**

1.30pm	Session 2	
10	Delegated business from Yearly Meeting (continued)	
11	<b>Yearly Meeting 2021</b> To hear from Clerk of Yearly Meeting and receive a minute from Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee	MfS 2020 12 11 (For decision)
12	<b>Annual report from Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC)</b> Introduced by Ann Floyd, clerk of QWRC	MfS 2020 12 12 (For information)
13	<b>Action on racism</b> To receive a report from Edwina Peart, the BYM inclusion and diversity co-ordinator	MfS 2020 12 13 (For information and reflection)
14	<b>Closing worship</b> We will be re-joined by members of the Young People's Participation Day who will share feedback from their day before closing worship	
4pm	End of Meeting	



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At a meeting of

## **Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group**

Held online from 14–15:30 on 20 October 2020

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Margaret Bryan, Robert Card, Gill Greenfield, Mark Lilley

**In attendance:** Neil Jarvis, Sherry-Ann Mitchell, Juliet Prager

**Prevented:** Karen Draycott

#### **1. Review of Meeting for Sufferings held October 2020**

We have received the minutes of meeting for Sufferings held 02-04 October 2020. We note particularly minutes 10, 14, and 18. We have also received the report of the Meeting for Sufferings Support Group, and notes of deliberations of Brighthouse West Yorkshire Area Meeting on the holding of Meeting for Sufferings more generally.

We have heard a strong steer to avoid crowding the agenda and to take opportunities for additional sessions for information and threshing. We have also heard the importance of Meeting for Sufferings offering opportunities for discernment and the need for us to understand this as a whole process of informing ourselves, discussing issues, and prayerful consideration. We note that a concern has been expressed about continuity of representation, but we do not anticipate that this will be a major problem.

We anticipate that there will be a session for Friends to discuss the reports of BYM Trustees and MfS in addition to Yearly Meeting in session.

#### **2. Gold minutes**

We have not discerned any gold minutes on this occasion.

#### **3. Outline plan for next Meeting for Sufferings**

We have received a paper (MfSAG20201002) outlining the business likely to come to our next meeting. We propose that QWRC and the European YM

representatives should hold a joint special interest group in advance of the meeting.

We are minded to arrange a threshing session in January 2021 to follow up the issue of assisted dying.

We have asked how the Young People's Participation Day consideration of racism could fit within the agenda.

#### **4. Agenda for Yearly Meeting 2021 : response to Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee**

Further to minute 6 of our meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020, our response has been sent to the Committee.

#### **5. Future Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group meetings**

We look to meet next on 9<sup>th</sup> November at 17:30-19:00 via Zoom. For further meetings, we ask that we receive a table showing when we might hold meetings after and prior to Meeting for Sufferings at our next meeting.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

Robert Card, Clerk



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At a meeting of

## **Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group**

Held online from 17.30 – 19.00 on 09 November 2020

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Margaret Bryan, Robert Card, Gill Greenfield, Mark Lilley

**In attendance:** Jane Mace, Cat Waithaka, Neil Jarvis, Sherry-Ann Mitchell, Juliet Prager

**Prevented:** Karen Draycott

### **6. Update and review of Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group**

We have heard from Jane Mace, convenor of the group appointed to review Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group. They have identified some administrative issues and some issues of principle. No final recommendations have yet been agreed.

### **7. Meetings attended by the clerks and others**

We have heard of meetings attended: Juliet and Margaret have met with Kingston & Wandsworth AM in pursuit of their concern. Margaret has additionally attended a meeting on simplification of structures.

### **8. Forward agenda**

We have considered our forward agenda (MfSAG 2020 11 01), which informs our planning.

### **9. Agenda planning for December meeting**

Further to minute 3 of our meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020, we have discussed and planned the agenda for our December meeting.

## **10. Future Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group meetings**

We have agreed the pattern of dates of future meetings in 2021, the specifics to be determined by poll.

## **11. Annual report**

We have received an update to the text of the annual report of meeting for Sufferings submitted to Yearly Meeting.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

Robert Card, Clerk

## Record of minutes received by Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group since October

This is a record of all minutes received by Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group since the last Meeting for Sufferings with information about any decisions that have been taken. If representatives wish to see a copy of a minute, or wish to contact the Clerks, please email [sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk).

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
Devon AM	4/2020 Divestment from fossil fuels (public service pension funds)	<b>4/10/20 Minute received</b>  <b>9/11/20 Tabled at MfSAG</b> MfSAG agreed to share this minute for information.		To be shared for information at MfS in December.
Hardshaw and Mann AM	41/2020 Use of the term 'overseer'	<b>12/9/20 Minute received</b>  <b>9/11/20 Tabled at MfSAG</b> MfS has previously sent this matter to QLCC, so Hardshaw and Mann AM's minute will also be made available to QLCC.		Sent to QLCC.
Surrey and Hampshire Boarder AM	20/09/20 Governance and Discernment Working Party	<b>22/9/20 Minute received</b>  <b>9/11/20 Tabled at MfSAG</b> MfSAG agreed for this minute to be taken at next MfS.		To MfS in December.
Gloucestershire AM	2020/50 Ecocide	<b>21/9/20 Minute received</b>  <b>9/11/20 Tabled at MfSAG</b> The minute acknowledges further discernment to follow		To contact Area Meeting.

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
	[support for Stop Ecocide Campaign]	at AM. MfSAG agreed to contact AM for further information.		
Quaker Life Central Committee	20.33 Use of the term 'overseer'	<b>27/9/20 Minute received</b>  <b>9/11/20 Tabled at MfSAG</b> Minute is for information and no action required. QLCC give progress on its intention to conduct a national survey.		Complete.
Mid-Thames AM	20/10/11 Change the name of Overseer to Pastoral Friend	<b>21/10/20 Minute received</b>  <b>9/11/20 Tabled at MfSAG</b> MfS has previously sent this matter to QLCC, so Mid-Thames AM's minute will also been made available to QLCC.		Sent to QLCC.
North East Thames AM	20.102 A request for MfS to consider the effects of the health pandemic	<b>19/10/20 Minute received</b>  <b>9/11/20 Tabled at MfSAG</b> MfSAG to respond to AM.		To contact Area Meeting.



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## Prison and Court Register

### Introduction

Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) was established in 1676, to consider the sufferings experienced by Quakers for their faith. Gradually the practice of recording Friends' names in the 'Great book of Sufferings' lapsed; but in 1997 MfS decided to maintain a register of Friends before the courts or imprisoned for matters of conscience. This enables us to record events, as well as to uphold the Friends concerned and to share information about their witness.

The purposes of recording an entry in the register are:

1. To enter the details of the matter into the permanent records of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), acknowledging Friends' witness and their willingness to face its consequences;
2. To remind ourselves that being a Quaker does not come without cost;
3. To record the Society's prayerful upholding of Friends who are suffering for their faith;
4. To serve as a record of the actions of the State in restricting our freedom to worship and witness.

Normally, AMs are responsible for establishing the facts, and that Friends are or were acting under concern and wish the matter to be recorded. Including information in the register doesn't imply that MfS itself has tested the Friend's concern and necessarily agrees with or condones their action.

The clerk of **Luton & Leighton AM** has sent relevant information which is set out in this draft minute:

#### MfS 2020/12/XX Prison and Court Register

Sue Hampton, a member of Luton & Leighton Area Meeting, was arrested on 1 September and 4 September 2020, following nonviolent direct action with Extinction Rebellion (XR). She appeared in court in St. Albans in early October, and pleaded not guilty. A trial has been scheduled for mid-June 2021. We agree to include this in the Prison and Court Register, and hold Sue Hampton in the Light.



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## **Appointments**

### **Nominations from Central Nominations Committee**

Central Nominations Committee brings forward to following names for service or release as indicated:

#### **Book of Discipline Revision Committee**

To serve from appointment until the work of the committee is complete:

Nominate:

Alastair Reid, West Scotland AM

Finola O'Sullivan, Cambridgeshire AM

#### **Church Government Advisory Group**

To serve from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023:

Renominate:

Finn Pollard, Lincolnshire AM (currently serving 1st term)

Nominate:

Pennie Quinton, London West AM

#### **Friends World Committee for Consultation – Quaker World Relations Committee**

To serve from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023:

Renominate:

Ian Marshall, Lancashire Central & North AM (currently serving 1st term)

Nominate:

Nim Njuguna, London West AM

## **Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations**

To serve from 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2024:

Nominate:

Joyce Robertson, North Wales AM (nominated by Meeting of Friends in Wales)

## **Quaker Housing Trust**

To serve from Annual Retirement Meeting 2021 to Annual Retirement Meeting 2024:

Renominate:

Martin Appleton, Mid Thames AM (currently serving 1st term)

Robin Fishwick, Leeds AM (currently serving 1st term)

## **Quaker Life Central Committee**

To serve from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023:

Nominate:

Zélie Gross, South Wales AM

## **Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee**

To serve from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023:

Nominate:

Abigail Darton, York AM

Ann Davison, Southern Marches AM

Jonathan Lingham, London West AM

## **Quaker United Nations Committee**

To serve from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023:

Renominate:

Colin Hall, Luton & Leighton AM (currently serving 1st term)

## **Pendle Hill Friends in Residence**

Release from service in 2020:

Peter Ullathorne      Central England AM

Anne Ullathorne      Central England AM



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## **BYM Trustees Minutes**

### **Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees**

Friday 13 November 2020, by video conference

**Present:** Georgina Bailey, Linda Batten (Treasurer), Alison Breadon, Jenny Brierley, Sarah Donaldson, Nick Eyre, Kate Gulliver, Ellie Harding, Carolyn Hayman, Caroline Nursey (Clerk), Graham Torr (Assistant Clerk), Frances Voelcker, Danielle Walker Palmour, Chris Willmore.

**Prevented:** Kit Fotheringham

**In attendance:** Paul Henderson Grey, Head of Operations; Paul Parker, Recording Clerk; Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk; Oliver Robertson, Head of Witness and Worship, Maureen Sebanakitta, Head of Finance and Resources.

**Visitors:** Emma Roberts, Clerk of Quaker Life Central Committee; and Robert Almond and Jeff Beatty, Co-Clerks of Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (minutes BYMT-2020-11-08 to 13).

### **BYMT-2020-11-01 Decision to hold a virtual meeting, welcome and introductions, agenda check, conflicts of interest check**

We record our decision to hold this meeting by video conference. We follow Charity Commission guidance on running charities during the Covid-19 outbreak published on 19 March 2020 that allows video conferencing where there is no such clause in a charity's governing document. The Charity Commission asks us to record this decision.

There are no unrecorded conflicts of interest.

We confirm our agenda.

During our opening worship, we have heard paragraph 19.61 from Quaker faith & practice.

### **BYMT-2020-11-02 Recording Clerk's report**

We receive an update from the Recording Clerk (paper BYMT-2020-11-02) reporting on staffing and employment; Covid-19-related matters; operations; facilities including maintenance work on Friends House; long-term planning including thinking about the

best uses of Drayton House and Friends House; health and safety; integrated strategy for supporting Quaker communities; safeguarding; sustainability monitoring; QPSW strategy and activity; Yearly Meeting; library development; communications and fundraising; Leeds hub; being a dispersed organisation; diversity and inclusion.

Under staffing and employment, new terms for BYM's redundancy policy were agreed in September after a careful and constructive process with the Unite union representatives. These have enabled us to offer voluntary redundancy on terms which are affordable to BYM and fair to staff. We have accepted thirty-one applications for voluntary redundancy to date – twenty-six from Quiet Company staff and five from charity programme staff. A 0% pay increase has been agreed with the union for 2021.

We are grateful to staff and to the union for their understanding as we have taken these difficult steps in the circumstances of the pandemic. We thank them for their continuing commitment to BYM and Quakers in Britain.

We record our thanks to staff who have already left or are leaving for their service and wish them well for the future.

### **BYMT-2020-11-03 Health and safety annual report**

We receive the annual report from the Safety and Environmental Committee (paper BYMT-2020-11-03a). This year, in addition to the usual remit of the Committee, we note the activities the Committee has overseen to help ensure a safe working environment during the Covid-19 pandemic. We thank everyone who has been involved in dealing so professionally with this new challenge.

### **BYMT-2020-11-04 Finance report**

We receive minutes from Finance & Property Committee's meeting on 25 October 2020 (paper BYMT-2020-11-03b) and the Quarterly Finance report for the period to 30 September (paper BYMT-2020-11-03c). We note that both income and expenditure are below budget and that the deficit for the year is likely to be in the region of £2.8m. The balance sheet position is strong thanks to a large surplus in 2019.

We also receive the minutes of Employment Committee held on 24 September 2020 (paper BYMT-2020-11-03g).

The projected level of unrestricted reserves as at 31 December is £11.5m, equivalent to 10 months' running costs which is comfortably above the minimum in our reserves policy. We reaffirm our decision to draw down on reserves as we move towards a balanced budget for 2023 despite the higher level of risk on income during this time of Covid-19.

### **BYMT-2020-11-05 Budget for 2021 and operational plan**

We have considered the budget for 2021 including the capital budget for 2021-23 (paper BYMT-2020-11-03d) and the operational plan for 2021-23 (paper BYMT-2020-11-03e) though we note that we have yet to make the detailed plans for 2022 and 2023 that will allow us to deliver the necessary balanced budget in 2023.

At our meeting in September we endorsed the basis for setting the budget and we note it has been prepared in line with the strategic 2023 vision we agreed – though we will have to reduce costs further, guided by Quaker Life and QPSW's strategic planning (minute 2020-09-10). The budget has been recommended to trustees by Finance & Property Committee (minute FP20/64).

We agree:

- the operational budget for 2021 noting that it anticipates a £2m deficit for the year
- the capital budget for 2021-23
- the operational plan 2021-23.

We welcome the new approach to planning (focussed on the strategic priorities) that has been used in the operational plan. We recognise that it is essential that staff constantly review and adapt work and also that the thinking on simplification must ensure that appropriate oversight is undertaken. We will make suggestions about specific work that should be evaluated.

### **BYMT-2020-11-06 George Knipe Charity and Swarthmoor (South-West Cumbria) Area Meeting**

We are asked to consent to replace Yearly Meeting with Swarthmoor (South-West Cumbria) Area Meeting as the recipient of any surplus yearly income from the George Knipe Charity after all other beneficiaries have been satisfied. Custom and practice in the Area Meeting for many years has been to apply the surplus income from this trust (which is in the order of £18k per year) to the Area Meeting's own expenses. As this will make no difference to BYM's income and there are no significant associated risks, we agree to this.

### **BYMT-2020-11-07 Emerging risks arising from the health pandemic**

We receive a paper from the Recording Clerk (paper BYMT-2020-11-04). It describes some of the ways that the health pandemic has affected BYM and Quaker communities.

We note that Management Meeting has started to discuss the risks outlined in the paper and to explore options to respond to them. It will continue this work in coming months.

We have discussed the risks and agreed which worry us most, how the risks should be monitored and whether or not we want work done on them at this stage.

We have reminded ourselves that change has happened and will always happen, and that it offers opportunities too.

### **BYMT-2020-11-08 Quaker Life Central Committee and Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee**

We have been joined by Emma Roberts, Clerk of Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC) and Robert Almond and Jeff Beatty, Co-Clerks of Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC).

They have updated us on the work of our central committees since they last joined us at our June meeting, and we have discussed current challenges.

Quaker Life values all the areas of work that it oversees and is increasingly conscious that it is the work – and not the specific staff – that are its responsibility. We have heard from QPSW on its strategic planning that is giving greater clarity.

We recognise the challenge of moving to a balanced budget by 2023 which means not only being clear what fits best with our strategic priorities but also focussing staff time on the actual work as far as possible. Decisions can only be made by close working between both central committees, BYM trustees and Management Meeting and we are grateful to central committee clerks for their key role in this.

### **BYMT-2020-11-09 Climate Crisis: spiritual nurture and learning project**

At our meeting in November 2019 we agreed to go ahead with this project on the basis that Management Meeting would work with Woodbrooke to firm up the outcomes, and ensure that impact measurement is in place and that communication and project management is carried out well. We asked for regular updates. (Minute BYMT-2019-11-10).

We note the recent developments and the current priorities.

### **BYMT-2020-11-10 BYM's relationship with Woodbrooke**

We receive a paper from Paul Parker and Sandra Berry, Director of Woodbrooke (BYMT-2020-11-07). We note it is time to review the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between our two organisations, particularly in light of the new ways in which we are collaborating and our future plans.

We ask staff to prepare a revised draft MoU for approval by both BYM trustees and Woodbrooke trustees. We hope that the MoU can be worded in a way that works for trustees as well as staff. It should be realistic, release energy, and identify how the two organisations can work together on our strategic priorities. We agree to appoint a trustee to act as a reference point for this work, and to link directly with trustees of Woodbrooke as it progresses. We ask our Nominations Group to bring a name this afternoon.

## **BYMT-2020-11-11 The relationship between trustees of BYM and trustees of area meetings**

We note evolving thinking in some area meetings, and consideration in Quaker Stewardship Committee and elsewhere that has led to the idea of a standard Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between BYM trustees and each body of Area Meeting trustees. The intention of such an agreement would be to clarify the interaction of respective 'worldly' responsibilities of each trustee body in our many charities as charity compliance becomes increasingly complex. This might simplify processes for trustees everywhere and for all Friends in the Yearly Meeting.

We note that we have five BYM trustees who are also a trustee of their own area meeting (as are two of the three central committee clerks who are with us for this item). This is useful in understanding relationships.

We have considered the paper and think it worth exploring further whether an MoU would be helpful to various parts of the Yearly Meeting or if there are other ways to address the challenges that we face. We need also to agree how any such MoU could work.

We agree to:

- Consult Meeting for Sufferings and convene a group of area meeting trustees to explore whether or not – and how – an MoU might be helpful to Friends.
- Appoint one or two trustees to work with staff on this matter.
- Continue to engage with Quaker Stewardship Committee and Quaker Life Central Committee about the underlying principles of the MoU.

## **BYMT-2020-11-12 Responding to racism: next steps**

Racism exists within the Religious Society of Friends in Britain and we must tackle it. This is a hard thing to admit, but recognising the problem is an important step in addressing it. We need to speak to each other lovingly about these issues. And we already have tools to help us. It is time for trustees to show visible leadership on this issue – within BYM and more widely – and to be publicly accountable for what we do.

Friends have been responding to the call from Yearly Meeting in 2017 to examine our own diversity: Meeting for Sufferings has been leading this work. This summer, issues of racism have come to the fore through public protests and the Black Lives Matter movement. We receive two papers: one setting out how BYM is already responding to racism (BYMT-2020-11-10), and one suggesting some possible next steps for the charity and trustees (BYMT-2020-11-10i).

We recognise that there are many kinds of discrimination in our society of which racism is only one. Some people are multiply disadvantaged by the interplay of gender, class and disability prejudices as well as race. Nevertheless, a focus on racism is needed now.

We need to work on racism within us as individuals and as a body of trustees and will read, think and arrange training to educate ourselves.

We ask our committees to have these conversations too and challenge themselves as individuals and committee members.

We commit to becoming an anti-racist employer, and to making the resources available to make this a reality. We ask Management Meeting to bring us a plan of the steps that will be needed.

We commit to ensuring that anti-racism is built into the design of all BYM's programmes and activities, and to working with committees to monitor this.

We agree that continuing to support work with Quaker meetings and communities on diversity and inclusion, including anti-racism work, is a priority and we are pleased that the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator post is continuing. We ask Quaker Life Central Committee to oversee this work.

We agree to appoint a trustee to serve as a diversity and anti-racism champion to help plan and monitor this change including working with Management Meeting to develop a set of clear performance objectives for BYM's work on racism so that we can monitor its progress. We ask Nominations Group to find a name to bring to Clerks.

We agree to return to this matter at our next meeting.

We send this minute to Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee to supplement the paper we have already sent to them.

We send this minute to Employment Committee.

We send this minute to Quaker Life and QPSW Central Committees, to Quaker World Relations Committee and Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations and to Meeting for Sufferings.

### **BYMT-2020-11-13 Simplification working group**

At our meeting in August, we endorsed a proposal for a set of four exploratory meetings (now to be five) with Friends from key bodies to continue conversations on simplifying our structures.

We are pleased to hear from Ellie Harding and Carolyn Hayman of the productive conversation at the two recent meetings and future plans for the group's work.

We agree to arrange a time to hear the group's proposals ahead of Meeting for Sufferings in February.

### **BYMT-2020-11-14 Minutes received**

We receive the following minutes:

- Quaker World Relations Committee 18-20 September (BYMT-2020-11-11a)

- Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee 25 September (BYMT-2020-11-11b)
- Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations 9-11 October (BYMT-2020-11-11c)

## **BYMT-2020-11-15 Nominations and appointments**

The BYMT Nominations Group brings forward the following names for appointment:

### **Audit Committee**

- John Ashton (Sussex East AM) to serve between 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2023

### **Lead trustee for safeguarding**

- Danielle Walker Palmour to serve until 31 December 2022

### **Employment Committee**

- Jenny Brierley to serve as Clerk between 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021
- Danielle Walker Palmour to serve between 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2022

### **BYMT Elder**

- Frances Voelcker to serve between 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2022 (subject to re-appointment as BYM Trustee by Meeting for Sufferings)

### **Senior Staff Disciplinary Group**

- Graham Torr to serve a 2nd term from between 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2023) (subject to re-appointment as BYM Trustee by Meeting for Sufferings)

### **Property Development Steering Group**

We agree to amend the terms of reference for the Property Development Steering Group to increase the membership from five to six members; the sixth member to be 'one additional Friend'. Point 2.1 of the terms of reference agreed by trustees in September 2018 (minute BYMT-2018-09-02(e)) will be amended accordingly.

- Frances Voelcker to serve for the lifetime of the project (subject to re-appointment as BYM trustee by Meeting for Sufferings)
- Graham Torr to serve for the lifetime of the project (subject to re-appointment as BYM trustee by Meeting for Sufferings)
- Sandy Horsfall (London West AM) to serve for the lifetime of the project

### **Board of Quiet Company**

- Jane Stephenson (West Wiltshire & East Somerset AM) to serve between 1 September 2021 – 31 December 2023
- Joe Warren (Luton and Leighton AM) to serve between 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2023

### **Reference point for developing an MoU with Woodbrooke trustees**

- Alison Breadon (subject to re-appointment as BYM trustee by Meeting for Sufferings)

### **Reference points for developing an MoU with area meetings**

- Chris Willmore and Kate Gulliver

### **Nominations Group**

- Georgina Bailey to serve between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2022 (subject to re-appointment as BYM trustee by Yearly Meeting 2021)
- Alison Breadon to serve between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2022 (subject to re-appointment as BYM trustee by Meeting for Sufferings)

We agree to these appointments.

### **BYMT-2020-11-16 Trustees' news**

We receive a report of the recent activities of trustees (BYMT-2020-11-13).

### **BYMT-2020-11-17 Preparing for Meeting for Sufferings and Yearly Meeting**

We have discussed our participation at Yearly Meeting to be held on 15 November 2020 and Meeting for Sufferings to be held on 5 December 2020.

### **BYMT-2020-11-18 Communicating trustees' work**

We have considered how to communicate our work to others.

### **BYMT-2020-11-19 Reviewing the meeting**

We have reviewed our meeting.

### **BYMT-2020-11-20 Time with Recording Clerk**

We have spent time with the Recording Clerk.

### **BYMT-2020-11-21 Time without staff**

We have spent time without staff.

Caroline Nursey  
Clerk



Yearly Meeting of the  
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## **MfS December 2020 Area Meeting minutes received**

At this meeting, Meeting for Sufferings receives minutes on:

- Governance and discernment
- Divestment from fossil fuels

## **(i) Governance and discernment**

### **Introduction**

Surrey and Hampshire Borders AM has asked for a review of the relationships and terms of reference of the different 'central' bodies including BYM Trustees and Meeting for Sufferings.

South London Area Meeting's minute is about 'transparency of process between central committees and Area Meeting'. Given that the Friends are raising questions about the practice of BYMT and central committees rather than Sufferings, Arrangements Committee suggests that South London Area Meeting's minute is sent to BYM Trustees for consideration.

There are some background notes below the two minutes.

### **Surrey and Hampshire Borders AM held on 20th September 2020 20/09/02 Minute from our Governance and Discernment Working Party**

We have considered the minute from our Working Party on Governance and Discernment (Attached).

The Working Party was set up as agreed by AM minute 20/05/03. This minute was a result of AM considering the minutes from our local meetings on the subject. The local meeting minutes were in response to a minute from Farnborough local meeting where the concern originated.

We find the issues raised by our Working Party are of concern to us and ask our clerk to forward their minute to Meeting for Suffering for them to consider the issues and the recommendations that it raises.

#### **Attachment – Governance and Discernment in the Decision Making of our Quaker Community**

In 2006 Quakers changed from having Meeting for Sufferings as Trustees to having a separate small body of Trustees. This meant there had to be a change in the relationships between the various Quaker bodies and, as this was a new venture, it could not be totally clear at the time precisely how the relationships would work out in practice.

A review in 2011 indicated that some adjustments still needed to be made. More recently some Friends have expressed concern that they do not understand, in spite of having made every effort to do so, how the central Quaker decision making works and are not always clear about where decisions have been made or where initiatives have come from. This lack of clarity among Quakers who are prepared to put in time and effort to understand is disquieting.

We are concerned that this imprecision of roles can result in decisions being delayed. The structural relationship between the various committees of BYM should directly facilitate discernment at both strategic and operational

levels. This requires simplicity and precision in defining the areas of responsibility and roles of the different bodies.

It seems to us that the relationships and terms of reference of the different bodies, BYM, Meeting for Sufferings, Trustees, Management Meeting and the Recording Clerk's role/roles all need careful re-examination with a view to ensuring they are sufficiently clear and precise to be readily intelligible to all members of BYM. Part of this review should involve cross-referencing the Terms of Reference of the various bodies in order to ensure that, for each body, its purpose (i.e. what it is responsible for) and its duties/functions are absolutely clear, and that any possible overlaps of the terms of reference of these bodies are avoided.

Meeting for Sufferings has, as is set out in Quaker Faith and Practice, significant responsibilities, being entrusted with the general care of matters affecting Britain Yearly Meeting, exercising discernment on priorities, receiving interim reports from the Trustees "for information and consultation". *We are concerned that Sufferings has not been able adequately to carry out its role in setting priorities on Quaker work between Yearly Meetings.* In recent years, the number of representatives on Meeting for Sufferings has been reduced and the number of times it meets has also been reduced. We think, as part of a review of Terms of Reference, consideration should be given to the arrangements for Meeting for Sufferings to ensure they are such as to give it the best possible chance of fulfilling its functions.

We ask AM to consider this concern and forward to Meeting for Sufferings.

Working party set up by SHBAM May 2020 to consider Quaker Governance and Discernment

Stephen Crouch, Margaret Doubell, Debbie Flatt, Ivan Hutnik, Brian John, Keith Scott, Eoin Stephenson

5th September 2020

## **South London Area Meeting held on 20 September 2020**

### **Minute 5) Governance**

Bob Rogers, our Meeting for Sufferings representative, has sent us a note on Quaker governance.

This had to change when, due to an update of charity law, there was a move from all Members acting as trustees to there being a group of fifteen Britain Yearly Meeting trustees. He gives examples showing his concerns that central groups' responsibilities, communication and approaches to discernment and decision-making have been affected by this shift and so raises several core questions:

*'How are we managed?*

*To what purpose?*

*How do the Quaker structures work together? and*

*How should our unique Quaker working model be shaped for the future?'*

The issues he raises gave us the opportunity to consider these questions and think about how best we, as an Area Meeting, can continue to involve ourselves in issues which most concern us. We were very fortunate to have Juliet Prager, the Deputy Recording Clerk, with us, to help us in this.

Following her presentation, a range of views were expressed, in particular those concerning trust and involvement between central committees and Area Meetings. We ask Meeting for Sufferings and BYM Trustees to consider the issue that transparency of process between central committees and Area Meetings is not sufficiently acknowledged centrally.

We also need to acknowledge that our Area Meeting has not come together as a whole in pursuit of particular areas of concern and that we need to devote time at each Area Meeting to discerning what are the concerns which unite us. We thank everyone involved in this discussion, especially Juliet.

### **Additional/background information**

Surrey and Hampshire Borders AM is asking for a review of the terms of reference and the relationships between parts of our centrally-managed work. They have named five bodies:

- BYM – Yearly Meeting – [Qfp Chapter 6](#)
- Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) – [Qfp Chapter 7](#) – MfS does not have terms of reference; the constitution is set out in chapter 7
- BYM Trustees (BYMT) – Qfp sections [8.17](#)-[8.20](#) – Trustees' terms of reference are the responsibility of Yearly Meeting
- Management Meeting (MtM) – Qfp section [8.22](#) – the terms of reference for MtM are adopted and reviewed by BYM Trustees
- The Recording Clerk – Qfp section [8.21](#) – the Recording Clerk is overseen by BYM Trustees and line-managed by the clerk of Trustees; there is a job description for the role.

Careful re-examining and cross-referencing might usefully include the central and standing committees, which are accountable to the Yearly Meeting via BYM Trustees. Although BYM Trustees are responsible for the Terms of Reference of these committees, the responsibilities of the central and standing committees, as set out in Quaker faith and practice, have been delegated by the Yearly Meeting. The work overseen by QLCC and QPSWCC in particular is made possible by significant financial and staff resources, the allocation of which is agreed by BYM Trustees. The responsibilities of these committees are set out in Qfp chapter 8:

- Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC) and QL Representative Council

- Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC)
- Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations
- Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC)

## Previous and current reviews

The last time there was a wholesale review of the structures in our Yearly Meeting, it was co-ordinated by the Working Group on Representation, Communication and Accountability in our Structures (**RECAST**) which reported to YM in 2005.

That said, reviews are built in to our structures and processes. Terms of reference are time-limited (usually 3–5 years), with review periods included.

A review of **MfS and BYM Trustees** began in 2009, and reported in 2011; the recommendations were acted on by Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings. Quaker Communications Committee was laid down (and its work spread across other committees).

Following that, BYMT reviewed the terms of reference for the four central and standing committees (**QLCC, QPSWCC, QWRC, QCCIR**). BYM Trustees are currently reviewing the terms of reference for QWRC and QCCIR.

**BYM Trustees** have been reviewed regularly – most recently by a small group which reported to Quaker Stewardship Committee in 2020 (this is a yearly meeting matter, but the review group's final report was included in Meeting for Sufferings' October 2020 papers (paper 10)).

In 2019, Yearly Meeting (minute 6) asked Meeting for Sufferings to carry out a review of the purpose and function of **Yearly Meeting** and **YM Gatherings**. MfS approved terms of reference last December; the process has been delayed by Covid, but MfS can expect to appoint the Review Group shortly.

Although the Book of Discipline Revision Committee is not tasked with re-shaping our central structures, it is aiming to ensure that the *principles* of how we work are described well. This work should underpin the future shape of our governance arrangements.

## Seeking input from Friends

When reviews are undertaken by Trustees, information is shared with Friends via Meeting for Sufferings. The Group which reviewed QSC and BYM Trustees recently told Friends what it was doing, and invited input, through the MfS follow-up letter; in the Area Meeting (AM) clerks email list and a letter in *The Friend*.

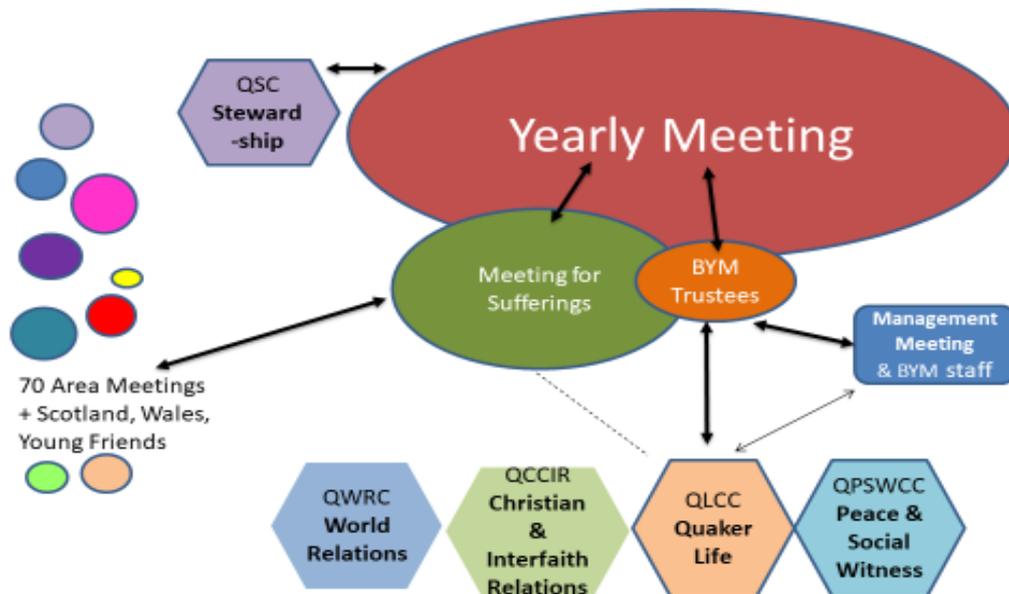
## Simplification

Last year, Meeting for Sufferings agreed with BYM Trustees that one of the strategic priorities for 2019–24 is to simplify our structures and practices. The clerks of our governance committees meet together every year, and the gathering this July led to the setting up of a small group to explore what this might mean. Two Trustees are working with a group from all central committees (and including the MfS clerk). The group is looking for ways of simplifying the committee structure and improving

relationships between the different bodies. This work was reported to MfS in October, and MfS will be asked to consider any recommendations in due course.

## Current relationships

Quaker faith and practice section [8.05](#) includes a diagram showing the governance and committee structure. The diagram below is a simplified adapted version.



## Questions for Meeting for Sufferings

As the notes above explain, considerable effort (on the part of review group members and committee members, supported by staff) is being allocated to a rolling programme of national committee reviews. Until recently there's been little or no appetite for another 'RECAST'. The 'simplification' process may be a way to draw all of this together; simplification is a relatively new priority, but the work's gathering pace – and any recommendations will come to MfS at an early stage. Whether Meeting for Sufferings initiates a review, or hears about reviews undertaken by other committees, all representatives have the opportunity to comment and to share information about them with their AMs.

Bearing this in mind, Meeting for Sufferings is asked:

1. Are there ways that review processes can connect more effectively with, and draw on the insights of, Friends from all parts of the Yearly Meeting?
2. Do members of MfS wish to see changes to the current review framework, and if so what might these be?
3. What advice would MfS offer to BYMT in their ongoing work of reviewing and simplifying structures and processes?

## **(ii) Divestment from fossil fuels**

### **Devon Area Meeting held on 8th March 2020**

#### **Minute 4/2020 Sustainability Support Committee – divestment from fossil fuels**

Our Sustainability Support Committee (SSC) asks us to support a campaign to get Devon public service pension funds divested from fossil fuels by:

- Alerting anyone they know who has a Devon pension and letting them know about the campaign
- Supporting a public meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February to help people with campaigning for divestment of fossil fuels and also a public meeting in March with a representative of 'Fossil Free Oxfordshire'. (After four years, they finally got their pension fund committee to a workshop with Green Investment Fund managers and an agreement to overhaul their investment policy.)
- Writing to their county councillor about the campaign – The Sustainability Support Committee will supply a draft letter.
- We ask our Clerk to forward this minute to Devon Area Meeting inviting support for this campaign.

We agree with the views expressed in the minute from Exeter Meeting. We express our support for Devon Quakers who are lobbying their pension fund providers, especially the Devon Pension Fund, to disinvest from companies engaged in the production and distribution of fossil fuels. A template letter will be made available. We encourage Quakers to attend the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30 pm at the Friends meeting house in Exeter

We forward this minute to Meeting for Sufferings and ask them to encourage Quakers throughout the UK to take similar action.

#### **Additional notes**

Friends who are led to take similar action may find the [Ethical Finance](#) guidance published by QPSW helpful.



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## Delegated business from Yearly Meeting

Yearly Meeting 2020 (Minute 11) asked Meeting for Sufferings to act on behalf of Yearly Meeting on a number of matters– including receipt of reports from nominating bodies to make appointments and the receipt of reports normally received by Yearly Meeting.

At this Meeting, the following matters are brought to Meeting for Sufferings:

- Paper 10a. Nominations and appointments. Reports from Central Nominations Committee and Yearly Meeting Nominating Group with nominations for appointment
- Paper 10b. Record of membership of Meeting for Sufferings
- Paper 10c. Receipt of Tabular Statement [\*Patterns of membership\*](#) (this paper is available on [quaker.org.uk](http://quaker.org.uk) and is not included here)
- Paper 10d. Receipt of annual report from Central Nominations Committee
- Paper 10e. Receipt of annual report from Quaker Housing Trust
- Paper 10f. Receipt of annual report from Quaker Stewardship Committee

Please note: during 2020 Meeting for Sufferings has already received reports from Quaker Housing Trust and the review group of Quaker Stewardship Committee. At this meeting, Meeting for Sufferings is simply asked to receive the routine annual reports sent to Yearly Meeting.

## **Paper 10a**

### **Nominations and appointments**

Appointments to committees and groups. Committee on Clerks and Yearly Meeting Nominating Group nominations were taken in the Yearly Meeting business.

#### **(i) Report of Central Nominations Committee**

##### **Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees**

To serve from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023:

Renominate:

Kit Fotheringham, Bristol AM (1<sup>st</sup> term from August 2020 – YM 2020)

Frances Voelcker, North Wales AM (1<sup>st</sup> term from 1 January 2018-31 December 2020)

Graham Torr, York AM (1<sup>st</sup> term from 1 January 2018-31 December 2020)

Alison Breadon, Wirral & Chester AM (1<sup>st</sup> term from 1 January 2018-31 December 2020)

##### **Quaker Stewardship Committee**

a) To serve on in the roles given below:

Nominate as clerk, to serve from Yearly Meeting 2020 to Yearly Meeting 2021:

Yvonne Dickson, Wirral & Chester AM

Nominate as assistant clerk, to serve from Yearly Meeting 2020 to Yearly Meeting 2021: Paul Gibson, Sussex West AM

b) To serve from Yearly Meeting 2020 to Yearly Meeting 2023:

Nominate:

Beverley Goddard, West Wiltshire & East Somerset AM

Renominate:

Malcolm Sterratt, Wirral & Chester AM

Alan Robinson, Sheffield & Balby AM

c) To serve from Yearly Meeting 2020 to Yearly Meeting 2022 (note: this is a shorter interim term to fill an existing vacancy caused by the nomination of the new clerk):

Nominate:

James Eddington, Lancashire Central & North AM

## **Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee**

To serve from Yearly Meeting 2020 to Yearly Meeting 2023:

Renominate:

Josephine (Jo) Rado, Mid Thames AM (1<sup>st</sup> term from YMG 2017)

Fred Langridge, Sheffield & Balby AM (1<sup>st</sup> term from YMG 2017)

Elizabeth (Liz) Brooks, Sussex East AM (1<sup>st</sup> term from YMG 2017)

Nominate:

Andrew Rendle, London West AM

Martin Ward, South East Scotland AM

For information

We record the following appointments made in the interim period before Yearly Meeting by Meeting for Sufferings and thank the Friends for their work during this unprecedented time:

Appointed by Meeting for Sufferings held in July 2019 on behalf of Yearly Meeting to serve until Yearly Meeting 2020:

Robert Wilson, North Scotland AM

Appointed by Meeting for Sufferings held in January 2020 on behalf of Yearly Meeting to serve until Yearly Meeting 2020:

Judi Brill, Bristol AM

Heather Rowlands, Central England AM

Appointed by Meeting for Sufferings held in October 2020 on behalf of Yearly Meeting to serve for an interim period until Yearly Meeting 2020:

Andrew Rendle, London West AM

Martin Ward, South East Scotland AM

## **Yearly Meeting Pastoral Care Group**

To serve from Yearly Meeting 2020 to Yearly Meeting 2023:

Renominate:

Jean Scott-Barr, Mid Thames AM

## **Yearly Meeting Publications Group for *Quaker faith & practice***

To serve from Yearly Meeting 2020 to Yearly Meeting 2023:

Renominate:

Helen Rowlands, Central England AM

For information

We record the following appointment of:

**Central Nominations Committee co-clerks**

Appointed by Central Nominations Committee to serve as co-clerks from the end of Yearly Meeting 2020 until the end of Yearly Meeting 2021:

Hannah Brock Womack, Sheffield & Balby AM (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

Lucy Parker, Norfolk & Waveney AM (1<sup>st</sup> term)

**(ii) Report of the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group**

For information:

We record the following appointments made in the interim period before Yearly Meeting by Meeting for Sufferings and thank the Friends for their work during this unprecedented time:

Appointed by Meeting for Sufferings held in February 2020 on behalf of Yearly Meeting to serve until Yearly Meeting 2020:

Ethel Livermore, South London AM

Appointed by a between meetings decision of the clerks of Meeting for Sufferings on behalf of Yearly Meeting to serve until Yearly Meeting 2020:

Martin Ford, Leeds AM

Yearly Meeting Nominating Group brings forward the following nominations to Yearly Meeting 2020:

**Central Nominations Committee**

a) To serve from 6 December 2020 until the end of Yearly Meeting 2023:

Re-nominate to serve for a second term:

Angela Arnold, North Wales AM / CCR Gogledd Cymru

Meg Forrest, York AM

Martin Hughes, North Wales AM / CCR Gogledd Cymru

Ethel Livermore, South London AM

Martin Ford, Leeds AM

Nominate to serve for a first term:

Ade Couper, Worcestershire & Shropshire AM

b) To serve from 6 December 2020 until the end of Yearly Meeting 2022:

Alan Pearmain, Oxford and Swindon AM

Lucy Parker, Norfolk & Waveney AM

c) To serve from 6 December 2020 until the end of Yearly Meeting 2021:

Meri Goad, East Scotland AM

Margaret Calvert, Manchester and Warrington AM

David Lewis, Hampshire and Islands AM

For information

Released in the interim by Meeting for Sufferings held in October 2019 on behalf of Yearly Meeting:

Beryl Milner, Leeds AM

Helen Percy, Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire AM

d) We ask Meeting for Sufferings to release:

Bronwen Harwood, Sussex East AM

**If you would like to raise any problem with the service of any of the Friends nominated please contact:**

Zoe Prosser

Events & Committee Services Officer

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

Tel: 020 7663 1115 Email: [nominations@quaker.org.uk](mailto:nominations@quaker.org.uk)

## Paper 10b

### Meeting for Sufferings: interim membership changes since Yearly Meeting 2019

For information we record here the membership of Meeting for Sufferings, excluding those who serve ex officio, as advised to the Recording Clerk's Office and appointed by Meeting for Sufferings as at its final meeting on 3 October 2020.

<b>Area Meeting/Committee</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Alternate</b>
Banbury & Evesham AM	Susie Tombs	Lynne Richardson
Bournemouth Coastal AM	Anthony Woolhouse	Kate Mellor
Brighouse West Yorkshire AM	Rosemary Daley	Ann Banks
Bristol AM	Heather Lister	Helen Chambers
Cambridgeshire AM	Sue Brock-Hollinshead	Hannah Morrow
Central England AM	Cathy Khurana	Claire Bowman
Central Nominations Committee	Hannah Brock Womack	David Beale
Central Yorkshire AM	Ruth McTighe	Jane Pinder
Chilterns AM	Jane Edmonds	Anthony Philpott
Cornwall AM	Glynis Davies	Leslie Hereward
Craven & Keighley AM	Richard Vesey	Keith Reeves
Cumberland AM	Bob Pritchard	David Day
Devon AM	Jacqui Poole	Sally Hartog
Dorset & South Wiltshire AM	Jane Fowles	Rachel Celia
East Cheshire AM	Jacqui Moore	Brenda Crothers
East Kent AM	Danny Chesterman	Caroline Howden
East Scotland AM	Alyson Buchan	Robert Thompson
General Meeting for Scotland	Ann Kerr	Mike Shilson
Gloucestershire AM	Jane Mace	Pat Beard
Hampshire & Islands AM	sarah coote	Jane Wilde
Hardshaw and Mann AM	Richard Melling	Diana Jeater
Hertford & Hitchin AM	Kathy Hindle	Katey Earle
Ipswich & Diss AM	Elaine Green	Avril Dawson
Kendal & Sedbergh AM	Chris Bullard	Pamela Coren
Kingston & Wandsworth AM	Keith Walton	Kim Boyd
Lancashire Central & North AM	Liz Eddington	Elizabeth Gruar
Leeds AM	Martin Ford	Richard Levitt
Leicester AM	Fiona Cownie	Chris Myers
Lincolnshire AM	Mark Lilley	David Howard
London West AM	Simon Risley	Sandy Horsfall
Luton & Leighton AM	Simon Colbeck	Neil Morgan
Manchester & Warrington AM	Hilary Tucker	Steven Johnson
Meeting of Friends in Wales	Gethin Evans	
Mid Essex AM	Deirdre Haslam	Brian Wardrop
Mid Wales AM	David Jones	Carol Satterthwaite

Mid-Somerset AM	Gill Greenfield	Andy Hall
Mid-Thames AM	Jenny Gordon	Jean Scott-Barr
Norfolk & Waveney AM	Jenny Routledge	Silas Price
North East Thames AM	Anne Smith	Jane Natai
North London AM	Anna Sharman	Arthur Charlton
North Scotland AM	Sue Horne	Mary Dower
North Somerset AM	Shella Parry	Shena Deuchars
North Wales AM	Helen Still	Ros Morley
North West London AM	Ruth Hawthorn	Emily Milner
Northamptonshire AM	Karen Draycott	Sally Lewis
Northumbria AM	Barbara Adshead	Faith Goodfellow
Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire AM	Maggie Lightowler Cook	Judith Green
Oxford & Swindon AM	Bridget Walker	Tina Leonard
Pendle Hill AM	Gordon Benson	Pip Swancott
Pickering & Hull AM	Sam McNair	Christine Fellowes
Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations	Stephanie Grant	Judith Mason
Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee	Trevor Evans	Ruth Tod and Ann Bettys
Quaker Life Central Committee	Jeffrey Dean	Alan Pearmain
Quaker World Relations Committee	Liz Scurfield	Ann Floyd
Sheffield & Balby AM	Craig Barnett	Emma Norminton
South East London AM	Rowena Loverance	Jo-Anne Fraser
South East Scotland AM	Henry Thompson	Kate Arnot
South London AM	Bob Rogers	Eva Kalmus
South Wales AM	Julia Lim	Carole Rakodi
Southern East Anglia AM	Robert Parkes	
Southern Marches AM	Maggie Taylor- Sanders	Jan Arriens
Staffordshire AM	Win Sutton	Rosemary Barnett
Surrey & Hampshire Border AM	Ivan Hutnik	Gregory Valatin
Sussex East AM	Peter Bolwell	Peter Aviss
Sussex West AM	Colin Holliday	Neil MacDonald
Swarthmoor (SW Cumbria) AM	Robert Straughton	William Shaw
Teesdale & Cleveland AM	Mary Wilkinson	Gaynor Hemming
Thaxted AM	Sue Moloney	Margaret Somerville
Wensleydale & Swaledale AM	Edna Rossiter	Ian Hunter Smart
West Kent AM	Jill Clarke	Janet Ferguson
West Scotland AM	Barbara Robinson	Ed Tyler
West Somerset AM	Fran Hicks	Kathy Gollin
West Weald AM	Mariu Hurriaga	Rosemary Elias
West Wiltshire & East Somerset AM	Jane Stephenson	Ruth Cook
Wirral & Chester AM	Alan Vernon	Sheila Houldin
Worcestershire & Shropshire AM	Andrew Jameson	David Bowgett

York AM	Barbara Penny	Sarah Allen
Young Friends General Meeting	Alexandra Boliver-Brown	Rachael Booth
Young Adults	Sophie Bevan	
	Joseph Fuller	
	Stephen Lonsdale	
	Jenny Orme	
	Bianca Rawlinson	
	Ellen Setterfield	

## **Paper 10c**

### **Tabular Statement Patterns of membership**

This paper is published on [quaker.org.uk](https://www.quaker.org.uk) on this page:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/ym/preparing-for-yearly-meeting-1/documents-3>

To open the paper, following the link [here](#).

## **Paper 10d**

### **Annual Report of Central Nominations Committee**

#### **The Year**

2019 has been a very busy and exciting year for Central Nominations Committee (CNC). In January there was a two day meeting devoted almost entirely to the final discernment of nominations for the Book of Discipline Revision Committee. This resulted in those names being brought to Meeting for Sufferings in February. It had been a huge task, just 8 months to establish what the committee should look like, what our search criteria should be and then sift through the submissions of over 200 hundred Friends who had expressed interest and also seek others to finally come up with 24 names. CNC learnt a lot from the process, including: the importance of giving the spirit time to guide; the use of Search Groups dedicated to finding Friends with particular skills and qualities; the value of asking Friends to express interest in particular work and how to manage that. We feel that all these have yielded fruit in the shape and diversity of the committee and we intend to carry that learning on into our ongoing processes.

There was very little time to draw breath after that as Meeting for Sufferings had already asked CNC to review its terms of reference and consider ways in which it might be able to take on the nomination of Clerks for Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) from the Committee on Clerks (CoC). Initially seen as separate issues, it quickly became clear that both these needed to run together. Over the summer a lot of work was devoted to this, culminating with the agreement between the clerks of CoC and CNC and the Recording Clerk that the way forward was not for CNC just to take over the work from CoC, but for the two committees to merge. The new combined committee would draw on the best practices and experiences of each. The resulting proposal and accompanying Terms of Reference for the new committee was brought to Meeting for Sufferings in December 2019 who agreed that it should be forwarded to Yearly Meeting Gathering in August 2020.

Alongside all this CNC continued to do its normal work of finding and bringing nominations for central committees and other roles. In total 95 nominations for 20 committees and other bodies have been brought forward. Included in this total are 7 requests for early release from committees, requiring new nominees to be found. CNC itself was briefly up to its full strength of 15 member and 2 clerks, but two members have since been released and not replaced, so we have reduced numbers but the same work-load!

Over the year the clerks have continually examined CNC's processes and the way that data is handled and have tried to make the whole nominations process more secure. This is an ongoing process. Additionally a strategy for a simpler nominations

procedure is currently being developed by staff and the clerks of all the central nominating bodies and we are enjoying engaging in that.

Not everything has gone right, nor as we would have wished. Where this has happened, we have tried to take time to look at the processes involved and make changes or tease out learning points so that we hope the same mistakes will not be made in future.

### **Working on Central Nominations Committee – the Positives!**

Over the past few years CNC clerks have rightly stressed how hard everyone has to work on Central Nominations Committee. This year we wanted to outline briefly some of the things that we gain from our work and make it all worthwhile.

- Interest. It is always very interesting work, especially if you are interested in people, their gifts, and the work of the Society.
- Friendships. Working closely with other Friends is a very good way of getting to know them and new friendships are often forged.
- Talking to potential Nominees. Discovering what motivates Friends. Sometimes these discussions can be quite deep and the CNC member can gain just as much or more from them than the potential nominee.
- Being part of guiding RSoF into the future. Every nomination will have an effect on this, for example by increasing diversity on committees. Sometimes we also work more directly on processes, structures and working practices within the Society. This can be exciting and stimulating, but sometimes rather scary as well!
- Seeing at close quarters how the work of the Society is run and managed. In particular the clerks work very closely with the staff in Friends House which is both enjoyable and interesting.
- The buzz of achievement! Every CNC member will at some time have that feeling of elation from knowing that they have been instrumental in finding exactly the right Friend for exactly the right role.

### **Making Space for the Spirit**

Most of us spend much of our lives in secular settings and are used to those working practices. When workloads are heavy, it is only too easy to slip towards that way of working in Nominations, skipping or shortening silent worship to save time. But our whole approach should be different for we are trying not only to find the right people for the right jobs but be guided in this by the spirit. This guidance can sometimes take us in unexpected directions, thereby enriching our committees and the outcomes for our Society.

This only happens if we give the spirit a chance to speak. Over the last year we have been trying to concentrate more on this. Like every committee we start with worship. We try to give sufficient space for this and not let it be squeezed because we have a

busy agenda ahead. We also have shorter periods of worship after every break: lunch, shuffle breaks, tea. Only a few minutes, but enough to settle ourselves and open our minds to the spirit. Every time we receive a report from a Search Group bringing forward names for discernment, we hear the report and then have a few minutes of worship before hearing reflections or comments on the report and making a decision about nominees.

We feel that these changes have helped us a lot in our discernment. Some committee members have told us that it makes the meetings more satisfying. There is another very interesting side to this. Our meetings are invariably very busy, starting at 9.30am and often working through to 17.00. Initially we wondered if the extra time for worship would mean we over-ran or didn't complete our work. In fact the opposite has been true. It seems that inserting short passages of silent worship throughout our day settles people's minds and make the contributions fewer, but more precise, focused and discerned. We do feel we are getting closer to our ideal of Meeting for Worship for Business. Quaker practices really do work and need not take any longer!

## **The Future**

This year for the first time we have experimented with a weekend residential meeting. This enable much more time for search group discernment in person, much of which we usually do remotely. [Will add in more once the residential has taken place!] We really value the time we spend together, nurturing our committee as a worshipping community, and a longer time spent together should do this more effectively.

A major change that is coming is the initiation of 'standing' Search Groups (moving away from our current system of Search Groups being set up and laid down for each search, usually existing for six months or so up until the appointment deadline. This we hope will make a significant difference in a number of ways: a) Friends on the committee really more expert and knowledgeable about the committee they are helping to nominate to, because they focus on a small number of the same committees year-on-year b) closer relationships between the clerks and secretaries of the committees they appoint to, because the search group will remain the same; c) the development of a 'pool of names' in relation to each committee, so that information about potential Friends interested in that work is not lost in between searches (this is very much borrowing from the Committee on Clerks, and adopting one of their ways of working).

This change, and some others, will be written down in a new 'ways of working' document which we are putting together in early 2020. It augments our new terms of reference and is written by and for the committee. We're hoping it will be a 'living' document which we come back to regularly, rather than just at each new induction after Yearly Meeting each year!

After Yearly Meeting this year, should the merger with Committee on Clerks be agreed, we will have a new, larger intake of Friends, as well as a lot of new work. We are aware that the more stretched you feel, the harder it can be to live adventurously and spend time looking at what you need to do to improve. We're trying to give over time to be self-reflective in a number of ways, including holding a forum with young adult Friends about how the way central work as it is currently organised prevents them from participating more. We want to make it easier for all who are currently under-represented in our central committees to contribute, because in missing these voices we lack perspectives of the Spirit, and will make mistakes.

## **Paper 10e**

### **Annual Report of Quaker Housing Trust 2019**

Over the past ten years nearly 60,000 social housing homes have been lost to sales or demolition, 17,000 in the last year alone. Yet over a million households remain on social housing waiting lists. This decline in social housing stock, along with the gap between actual rents and housing benefit, is linked to an increase in homelessness and councils using temporary accommodation.

It is against this backdrop that Quaker Housing Trust seeks to use its limited resources to redress the balance. We specialise in offering grants and interest-free loans to small, local housing projects meeting a wide range of housing needs, particularly those overlooked by other funders. Such projects can transform the lives of people who would otherwise be badly housed or homeless.

It's not just about houses. The projects we support work with individuals who are vulnerable at points of transition in their lives. These may be people who are moving from one place or stage of life to another, or who can be helped to move from the margins of society into the community.

Friends are strong advocates for actions that improve environmental sustainability. We prefer to fund work which meets current best practice and standards for energy efficiency, carbon emission reduction and other environmentally sustainable options for the property.

One of the key elements to making a home is having the right space in which to live comfortably. We prefer to fund work which meets current best practice and standards for the space available to the occupants of a housing project.

Finally, we are keen on projects that contribute to well-balanced and sustainable communities. For example, in Mull and Iona funding from Quaker Housing Trust to build two family homes brought more young children into the area. This meant that the nearby primary school was able to stay open.

Here are brief details in alphabetical order of the projects to whom we gave or offered funding in 2019:

#### **BIG HELP PROJECT, HUYTON, MERSEYSIDE**

Capital costs loan of £35,000 to refurbish and furnish ten leased properties in which to house ex-offenders to reduce the risk of homelessness and re-offending.

#### **CALDER VALLEY COMMUNITY LAND TRUST, HEBDEN BRIDGE**

Capital Costs loan of £25,000 for help in meeting the shortfall in money needed to complete the building of four new dwellings for people aged 60 and upwards,

currently living in the Calder Valley, with a defined housing need and limited financial means.

**CHARITY OF AMY TEMPLE, ST. MARGARET'S AT CLIFFE, KENT**

Capital costs grant of £20,000 towards the extension and renovation of the final two almshouse cottages providing independent homes for older women of limited means in the immediate area.

**CITY OF EXETER YMCA, DEVON**

Capital costs grant of £20,000 towards the cost of furnishing four new two-bedroom properties as homes for eight previously homeless people.

**EAST CLEVELAND YOUTH HOUSING TRUST, NORTH YORKSHIRE**

Capital Costs of £15,000 loan and £15,000 grant to buy and renovate a property, using apprentices and volunteers alongside builders, to create homes for vulnerable young people in housing need. (Application made in 2018 and paid in 2019.)

**GLENURQUHART CARE PROJECT, DRUMNADROCHIT, SCOTLAND**

Capital Costs grant of £40,000 towards building four blocks of three two-bedroom self-contained units in a courtyard setting, designed to adapt to the changing needs of the residents, who will be elderly members of the local community. Payable when building work completed. Offered in 2018 and paid in 2019.

**HANDCRAFTED PROJECTS, DURHAM**

Capital Costs grant of £10,000 and loan of £32,500 to buy and renovate a property to house two people with multiple and complex needs in supported accommodation. Offer made and accepted. Loan paid in 2019; grant paid in 2019 on completion of renovation work.

**HOPE PROJECTS (WEST MIDLANDS), BIRMINGHAM**

Capital costs grant of £16,800 for the cost of implementing recommendations made by the environmental assessment resulting from our Environmental Assessment Grant in 2018. These will reduce the environmental impact and running costs of the property and increase the sustainability of the charity.

“We are a Quaker body giving Quaker money, on behalf of Quakers, to social housing projects we believe Friends would want to support.”

*Quaker Housing Trust is Yearly Meeting in Britain's own housing charity, funded by donations, loans and legacies from Friends: a unique national channel for practical Quaker witness in social housing since 1967. [Quaker faith & practice 8.15.] Registered company no. 00924311. Registered charity no. 254704. It operates throughout the Britain Yearly Meeting area of England, Scotland, Wales, Channel Islands and Isle of Man. The QHT trustees are appointed by Meeting for Sufferings. The 2.5 days/week staff time to administer it is provided by QPSW and paid for by*

*Britain Yearly Meeting as a reflection of the Yearly Meeting's concern for housing issues in its corporate work. QHT receives no money from BYM funds. Audited accounts, more information about QHT and copies of all our materials are freely available from our secretary at Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ | [involvme@qht.org.uk](mailto:involvme@qht.org.uk) | 020 7663 1036 | [www.qht.org.uk](http://www.qht.org.uk)*

## **Paper 10f**

### **Annual Report of Quaker Stewardship Committee 2019 (including compliance report)**

#### **Role and purpose**

Quaker Stewardship Committee is a standing committee of Yearly Meeting.

The purpose of Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) is to support area meetings in their stewardship and co-ordinate the relationship between (all parts of) the yearly meeting and those administering charity law (*Quaker faith & practice* 14.36). It exists to give help and guidance to meetings to enable them to meet the requirements of charity law in the stewardship of their finance and property; encouraging openness, accountability, transparency and integrity in all our affairs (*Quaker faith & practice* 14.38).

QSC is responsible for the provision of advice on property matters and for the provision of conferences for treasurers and for trustees through Quaker Stewardship Annual Conference Committee (QSACC).

The Committee has met five times during the year; once by telephone conference and four times at Friends House.

The Responsibilities of Quaker Stewardship Committee are given in *Quaker faith & practice* 14.39. These responsibilities have been undertaken as follows:

#### **Sustainability**

During the year, we presented our annual report to Meeting for Sufferings on sustainability work in area meetings. This was positively received and provided Sufferings representatives with material to support them as they continue to raise awareness among members.

#### **Support for trustees**

QSC has spent time considering the relationship between stewardship within our church and the stewardship of our charities. There is a tension between Quaker business method, where we are all involved in discernment, and the secular expectation that trustees will set the strategic direction of the charity. The need for stewardship work to be rooted in its spiritual basis, and the importance of ensuring that area meetings in session and area meeting trustees work together, formed the focus of our report to Meeting for Sufferings last October.

Our area meetings are adopting increasingly diverse charitable structures. Currently 3 area meetings are companies limited by guarantee, 8 are charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs), 39 are registered charities and the rest are unregistered. Each type has different reporting requirements and can own property in different ways.

This is adding complexity even as we seek to simplify our church. QSC is currently developing guidance on property ownership for area meetings that are CIOs

Fewer than half of area meetings are currently 'excepted charities', meaning that they do not have to report to the Charity Commission annually. This status is due to end in March 2021 and QSC has started to scope the work needed to help excepted area meetings to register by the deadline.

Quaker Life Central Committee are responsible for the *Simpler Meetings* project. QSC has worked with the project officer throughout the year and also liaises with QLCC in an annual meeting of clerks.

### **Provide property advice and guidance**

The property advice webpages were updated as part of the property advice project. QSC found it very encouraging to work with this project, which ended during the year. The email property advice network is increasingly being used to share experience and disseminate good practice.

### **Support for treasurers**

To help ensure every part of Britain Yearly Meeting is producing proper annual reports and property registers, the Committee has continued to review the reports and accounts of area meetings and has offered guidance and support to meetings in their production.

The Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT) has upgraded access to its online materials and now emails its newsletter directly to individuals. This makes it easier for all Quaker treasurers and clerks to trustees to receive updates and information on the short courses that ACAT runs in locations across the country.

### **Ensure education and training are available**

The committee continues to work with Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre to provide relevant and accessible training for Friends involved in finance and property matters. During 2019 training was available on trusteeship, treasurership, writing trustees annual reports and property.

QSC identified that clerks to area meetings face challenges particular to their role. It worked with Woodbrooke to develop an online course for them that ran for the first time in Spring 2019.

### **Enable meetings to act within the law**

The committee has updated and expanded the agreed checklist for trustees' annual reports and accounts to bring it into line with current Charity Commission and Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator requirements.

## **Disseminate good practice**

*Trustees & Treasurers News* continues to be published on a regular basis to provide news of changes in the regulatory framework and to share good practice.

The committee have responded to queries from meetings on a variety of topics, including the right use of funds, meeting house hirings and appointment of trustees.

## **Future work**

Over the coming year the committee will continue its regular ongoing work of providing support for trustees and treasurers and monitoring compliance. In particular, it will

- Revise the trustees' handbook;
- Work on the provision of model policies and procedures;
- Support area meetings preparing to move from excepted to registered charity status.

## **Compliance report**

As a standing committee of Britain Yearly Meeting QSC reports to Yearly Meeting in session (*Quaker faith & practice* 14.37). QSC are asked to certify that every part of Britain Yearly Meeting is producing proper financial accounts and property registers that have been professionally audited or examined as defined in *Quaker faith & practice* 14.39e. This task is carried out using an agreed checklist that has been sent to all area meetings.

The 2018 reports mainly met the basic requirements of the checklist, but the quality was variable.

All registered area meeting charities have submitted their accounts to the Charity Commission or Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.



Yearly Meeting of the  
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## Yearly Meeting 2021

### Minute from Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee

#### 2020/10/07 – How to hold a Yearly Meeting in 2021

*1 To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: 2 A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted; 3 A time to kill, And a time to heal; A time to break down, And a time to build up; 4 A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance; 5 A time to cast away stones, And a time to gather stones; A time to embrace, And a time to refrain from embracing;*

Ecclesiastes 3, verses 1-5

We have received paper 6, and Paul Parker, Recording Clerk of BYM, has introduced it. Agenda Committee is asked to discern the right way to hold a Yearly Meeting in 2021.

We agree that it is not possible to plan for and hold a physical gathering in August 2021 at Bath University. We therefore recommend to Meeting for Sufferings that Yearly Meeting in 2021 is held as a digital event.

We have spent time reflecting on what this decision means for Britain Yearly Meeting. We are keenly aware that the event we are planning for next year needs to be an opportunity for Friends to come together as a worshipping community, to see each others faces, to seek divine guidance, to strengthen our witness as a society, and to encourage us in our living of the testimonies. We mourn the loss of a chance to have a physical gathering, even as we are excited by the possibilities of a digital gathering.

In particular we are excited to work with JYM, YPP Arrangements Committees, and children's programme key facilitators to deliver a digital gathering.

#### **Format of the gathering**

We have started to consider how we could hold a digital gathering, and what shape it might have. We warm to the idea of a gathering which takes place over a longer

period than our usual yearly meeting. We are freed from the need to find physical space, and we see the possibilities in a longer preparatory and learning phase, culminating in a period of more intense discernment.

We are conscious that discernment in a large group via video call is a new form of business method for Quakers, and we will need to think carefully about how we support friends and prepare ourselves for that discernment. We will need patience, kindness, and the acknowledgment that we are living through a time of upheaval and trauma.

### **Moving forward**

As we continue our planning, we need to consider a variety of questions:

1. Can we find ways to be more inclusive of those who couldn't have come to a physical YMG?
2. How can we deliver a Yearly Meeting in ways which reinforce our commitment to being an inclusive, diverse and all-age community?
3. Other groups are building successful digital conferences and communities – what can we learn from them?

### **Next steps**

We forward this minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

We ask our clerks to liaise with:

- JYM Arrangements Committee
- YPP Arrangements Committee
- YM elders
- pastoral care group
- BYM staff; and
- BYM Trustees

About our recommendation, and the impact that it has on the planning and work of those groups.

**Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee  
held 24-25 October 2020**



Yearly Meeting of the  
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## Quaker World Relations Committee report to Meeting for Sufferings

QWRC's work is within and across the world family of Quakers. We are charged with a dual remit:

- Enriching understanding between British Friends and Friends worldwide.
- Engaging Quakers in Britain in Quaker issues and concerns around the globe.

### Overview

2020 has been a year of radical change for QWRC, bringing new constraints but also new opportunities.

We began the year with a set of plans that were profoundly affected by lockdown, so we had to find new ways of fulfilling our remit as best we could.

We end the year with a strong and very positive sense of deeper and richer connections within the world family of Friends, catalysed by the widespread adoption of Zoom. We are excited by the opportunities this presents for mutual learning, fellowship, and collaboration between Friends in Britain and Friends worldwide and look forward to facilitating this further in 2021 and beyond. So many of the challenges before us are inherently global, and we can do more together.

### QWRC in 2020

We were able to go ahead with some of our plans, including:

#### **(a) Liaison with the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)**

As well as ongoing interaction, here are three key events each year, all of which took place, though via Zoom instead of in-person.

The first was the two-day meeting of representatives from most of the YMs and worship groups in the Europe and Middle East Section (EMES), to which BYM belongs. It was to have been in Paris but had to be held online. It was the largest

online meeting most of us had ever attended, and the organisers were feeling their way, but it worked remarkably well.

The other two events were all-day meetings with FWCC. One of these focused on the world family, exploring worldwide Quaker concerns and updating us on the work of the other three FWCC sections (the Americas, Asia West Pacific and Africa). Gretchen Castle, the FWCC General Secretary, and Faith Biddle, Communications officer joined us for this. The other meeting focused on our own EMES Section, and we were joined by Michael Eccles, the Section Secretary.

### **(b) Hosting the annual QWRC Consultative Forum**

This brings together representatives of BYM committees and groups to explore themes of common concern to Friends worldwide. The 2020 theme was 'climate change and our privilege', reflecting the theme of YMG. This was an in-person meeting, in February, and at the time we expected YMG to be going ahead in August.

### **(c) Preparing a sustainability policy for QWRC**

We continue to affirm the deep spiritual and religious value of intervisitation among Friends; of seeing each other in person, in each other's homes, meetings, churches and contexts – hosting and being hosted. However, we recognise that our concern for sustainability and environmental justice requires us to ask hard questions of ourselves, to challenge our habits and ways of working, and have drafted a policy to guide us.

### **(d) One of our two planned residential weekends**

Significant activities for the last three years have been two residential weekend meetings, hosted by Friends in different parts of the UK. These meetings have helped us learn about our hosts' experiences with the world family and its concerns, and to share our understanding with them. We were able to go ahead with the first of these, hosted by Lewes Friends, the weekend before lockdown began.

We were not able to go ahead with the following plans:

### **(e) The second residential weekend, hosted by Bangor Friends, and arranged for September**

We hope very much that this will be possible at a future date.

### **(f) Hosting QWRC guests**

Beginning at YMG 2017 in Warwick, a major component of our work each year has been bringing Friends here from other parts of the Quaker world and arranging for them to interact with as many British Friends as possible. Each year our guests have participated in YM/YMG and spoken in workshops we have arranged. All our guests

have also had a programme of visits to Meetings in different parts of the UK, hosted by local Friends and organised by QWRC. In 2017 our guests were from Bolivia, South Africa, Rwanda and India. In 2018 from the US and Kenya, and in 2019 from the Czech Republic and the Philippines.

QWRC has always seen this work as an important way of fulfilling both strands of our remit, and feedback from those who met our guests has confirmed this. We therefore invited four guests from Germany, The Netherlands, Uganda and Rwanda to visit in 2020 and began arranging their visits and their input into YMG in Bath.

Clearly the pandemic eventually made hosting guests impossible.

### **New opportunities in 2020**

The pandemic affected Friends everywhere. In person meetings were suddenly not possible and had to be cancelled. Online options began to be sought across the Quaker world and Zoom became the tool of choice. Soon it wasn't a matter of simply replicating what had been done in person before, but of finding new possibilities.

Among these have been:

#### Originated by FWCC

- Quaker Conversations: speakers from round the Quaker world, followed by discussion
- interviews with representatives of the four sections about modes of worship.
- interviews with section secretaries about the impact of Covid-19
- Young Friends webinar series about the climate emergency
- Information about online meetings in different countries, and how to contact them

#### Originating in the UK

- QPSW's Summer Series
- Woodbrooke's online meetings for worship
- Woodbrooke's expanding menu of online courses
- Communication via Quake!

#### In all parts of the Quaker world

- Online business meetings, meetings for worship, committees, project meetings ...

Friends from around the world joined in many of the above events. Kenyan Friends played a leading role in one of the QPSW summer series, talking about Turning the Tide in Kenya. Furthermore, most of the FWCC sessions were recorded, and are available for re-use, so there are new and rich resources from around the Quaker world to draw upon.

## **QWRC response to these online opportunities**

QWRC members held two additional (online) meetings in the summer to reflect on the implications for our work. We see considerable scope for facilitating wider and deeper interaction across the world family than we have been able to achieve hitherto.

We continue to think that meeting international Friends in person is very valuable for those who are fortunate enough to have that opportunity. But we also realise that international 'intervisitation' can now happen online to a much greater extent than before, and we have begun to experiment with some new approaches.

One of these is an online intervisitation event for African and British Friends to meet and talk in small groups about:

- 'What is important in your life right now?'
- 'How is your Quaker community surviving and thriving in these times?'

Unfortunately, the event has had to be scheduled on the morning of MfS's meeting, so MfS members won't be able to take part this time. But there will be other opportunities, next year and beyond.

## **Queries for MfS**

- What opportunities do you see for online interaction with the world family?
- What would be of particular interest to you?

Ann Floyd, Clerk QWRC  
November 2020



Yearly Meeting of the  
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## Action on racism

*'We are inspired, but we are also disquieted. How do our actions sit alongside our faith, how does our 'being' move into 'doing'? What is for individual activity and what will we do corporately? If we are inspired and upheld and supported in our identity and work as Quakers, is that enough? Or are we called to be more radical?'* (Extract from YM 2017 minute 38)

### Background

Quakers in Britain are exploring inclusion and diversity in our structures and practices. This continuing journey was strengthened in 2017, when Yearly Meeting asked Meeting for Sufferings to look at how we can remove barriers and actively seek wider participation in the full life of our meetings, paying particular attention to race and age diversity.

In October, Meeting for Sufferings received four minutes:

- Two Area Meetings (Central Yorkshire and Manchester & Warrington) responded to the killing of George Floyd, including asking questions about racism in Britain
- Mid Thames AM asked for discernment on whether BYM as a body should make an apology for Quakers' historic involvement in the slave trade
- BYM Trustees asked for guidance on the naming of the William Penn room at Friends House

### At this meeting

In October we spent time reflecting in small groups. In December, Meeting for Sufferings will have some time to continue this discernment.

Edwina Peart, our Inclusion and Diversity Officer, will introduce the item.

### Preparation

The following may help Friends to prepare:

- BYM Trustees' Minute BYMT-2020-11-12 Responding to racism: next steps which is copied elsewhere in this agenda
- [Reflections published this year by the Church of England](#), on General Synod's decision in 2006 to apologise for its role in the slave trade
- [Reflections published this year](#) by the Baptists on the Joint Baptist Assembly apology in 2007

- Ann Morgan and Phil Chandler discussing the historic involvement of [Lancaster Quakers in the slave trade](#).
- Friends General Conference [Epistle of the 2020 Virtual Pre-Gathering of Friends of Color and their Families](#)