

Calling letter



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

22 May 2020

To members of Meeting for Sufferings

Dear Friends,

I hope this letter finds you well.

As you are already aware our first virtual meeting of 2020 will take place on Saturday 6 June, by Zoom.

I am sure that, like me, many of you will know more about Zoom now than you ever imagined necessary. Some of you will be experienced in virtual meetings from your workplaces, others will be engaging with the technology for the first time.

There will be many challenges for us all in participating in such a meeting of just under 100 Friends and to help this run smoothly staff are arranging two induction sessions, one in the morning and one in the evening, in the week beginning 1 June. Details of the induction sessions will be sent to representatives and alternates next week and you are both encouraged to take part. If another Friend in your area will be attending Meeting for Sufferings on your behalf please share information of the induction sessions with them too.

You will see from the attached agenda that Arrangements Group has decided to focus on a small amount of required business only.

- The main item in the first session is a report from **Trustees**, who have met three times since our February meeting. They and the staff who work for BYM on our behalf are shouldering a considerable burden in these challenging times.
- A weblink to the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts and the Annual Review for 2019 has previously been circulated and is repeated here: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/our-structures/britain-yearly-meeting-trustees>
- After a break for refreshment, our second session, **How is the truth prospering in our meetings**, gives Friends an opportunity to share, first in small breakout groups and then in a plenary session, news of what is going on in their areas. Questions serving as prompts for this session are in paper 11.
- **Minutes from Area Meetings:** A list of minutes received is in the Arrangements Group minutes, for information. If you wish to see any of these please contact sufferings@quaker.org.uk
- Had we been in London we would have looked forward to the triennial report of the **Quaker Housing Trust**. This is not required business for Meeting for Sufferings, but QHT's report is always inspiring and is coming to you as part

of the attached papers. Please let Friends in your local area know about this work.

As always the Meeting for Sufferings Support Group will provide eldership for the meeting, and staff will be on hand for technical support throughout.

I look forward to seeing your faces, albeit on a screen, in the near future.

In peace and friendship,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Bryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Margaret Bryan
Clerk

Papers enclosed with this mailing

Agenda

MfS Arrangements Group May 2020 meeting minutes

MfS 2020 06 Record of minutes received

MfS 2020 06 05 Appointments

MfS 2020 06 06 Prison and court register

MfS 2020 06 07 BYM Trustees

MfS 2020 06 09 Dates of Meeting for Sufferings in next triennium

MfS 2020 06 10 Yearly Meeting

MfS 2020 06 11 How is the truth prospering in our meetings?

Quaker Housing Trust Triennial Report 2017-2020

A reminder of how you can prepare for the meeting

- Register
- Register for an induction session for online meetings (details to be circulated shortly)
- Read the agenda 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



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

Agenda

Meeting for Sufferings – 6 June 2020

By video conference

Time / item #	Item	Paper Number
09:30	Arrivals	
10:00	Session 1: 1 hour	
1	Opening worship	
2	Welcome and introductions	
3	Membership	MfS 2020 06 03 (To note)
4	Agenda Adoption and acceptance of the agenda	
5	Appointments	MfS 2020 06 05 (For approval)
6	Prison and Court Register	MfS 2020 06 06 (For decision)
7	BYM Trustees To hear from the Clerk of BYM Trustees	MfS 2020 06 07 (For reflection)
8	Yearly Meeting Treasurer's report To receive a report from the Yearly Meeting Treasurer	
9	Meeting dates for next Triennium To approve the proposed MfS meeting dates for the new Triennium 2021-24	MfS 2020 06 09 (For approval)
10	Yearly Meeting To approve the dates for Yearly Meeting 2020 and 2021	MfS 2020 06 10 (For approval)
	Break A 30-minute break	

c.11.30	Session 2: 1 hour <i>Exact start time to be advised by clerks at end of Session 1</i>	
11	How is the truth prospering in our meetings? An opportunity to share with each other how the consequences of the health pandemic have changed our local and area meetings. We will start the session together before breaking into small groups and then returning for a final worship-sharing session.	MfS 2020 06 11 (For discussion)
	Closing worship	
c12.30	End	



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

At a meeting of

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group

Held online from 19:15 – 21:15 on 11 May 2020

Minutes

Present: Margaret Bryan, Robert Card, Gill Greenfield, Karen Draycott, Mark Lilley

In attendance: Sherry-Ann Mitchell, Juliet Prager, Neil Jarvis, Paul Parker (minutes 4-5)

1. Decisions on April and June Meeting for Sufferings

The coronavirus pandemic and the resulting closure of buildings and restrictions on travel and gatherings has impacted on the holding of Meeting for Sufferings. A decision was reached on 16 March by the clerks in consultation with staff to cancel Meeting for Sufferings due to be held on 4 April.

We have agreed to hold our June Meeting for Sufferings as an online meeting.

2. Correspondence from representatives

We have reviewed correspondence from representatives, most in response to a set of documents circulated in April for information.

We ask staff to respond as we have discussed.

3. Holding an online Meeting for Sufferings

We have discussed how to hold an online Meeting for Sufferings, considering the structure of the meeting as well as some practical matters.

We have agreed to limit any particular session to a maximum of 90 minutes. We will ask the Support Group to uphold the meeting prayerfully rather than to assist with technical issues.

We ask staff to make arrangements in line with our discussion.

4. Forward agenda

We have reviewed our forward agenda which informs our planning noting the additional challenges we now face with meeting online and not knowing when we will resume meeting in person.

We have reflected on our original plans for meetings for the rest of the year.

5. Agenda planning: June 2020

We have started to plan the agenda for our June meeting. We ask that this be finalised by the clerks in consultation with staff.

Robert Card
Clerk

Record of minutes received by Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group in 2020

This is a record of all minutes received by Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group in 2020 with information about 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.

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
Teesdale & Cleveland AM	135/19 Churches Together in England	<p>19/12/19 Minute received</p> <p>20/12/19 Acknowledged</p> <p>21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. Noted minute already shared with QCCIR. Agreed to take to April MfS for information.</p>	<p>Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith relations (QCCIR) met in January and had sight of minutes sent by then. QCCIR appreciated having sight of the minutes that had been sent at that time and noted that Local Friends had been generally supportive of the BYM position. Part of the minute noted: <i>'There have been themes: we should not remain silent or withdraw; there is an opportunity in this tension to act creatively in relation to ecumenism to promote healing and encourage flourishing of long-standing relationships.'</i> QCCIR continues to engage actively with CTE on these issues.</p>	Originally planned for MfS in April for information.
Worcestershire & Shropshire AM	19.73 Minute from Shrewsbury LM (subject: Churches	<p>30/12/19 Minute received</p> <p>7/1/20 Acknowledged</p> <p>21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. Noted minute already shared</p>	As above	Originally planned for MfS in April for information.

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
	Together in England)	with QCCIR. Agreed to take to April MfS for information.		
Northamptonshire AM	20/11 Meeting for Sufferings report (subject: Churches Together in England)	13/1/20 Minute received 14/1/20 Acknowledged 21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. MfSAG noted minute already shared with QCCIR. Agreed to take to April MfS for information.	As above	Originally planned for MfS in April for information.
Sheffield & Balby AM	10. Statement of support for Hannah Brock Womack	21/1/20 Minute received 21/1/20 Acknowledged 21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. MfSAG noted minute already shared with QCCIR. Agreed to take to April MfS for information.	As above	Originally planned for MfS in April for information.
York AM	Use of the term 'overseer'	Minute received and acknowledged 21/02 Tabled at MfSAG. Agreed to include minute for information to MfS for information.	MfS had sent this matter to QLCC, so York AM's minute has also been made available to QLCC.	Originally planned for MfS in April for information.
Luton & Leighton AM	20.01.11 Concern for the Right to	Minute received and acknowledged		Minute on hold for future meeting.

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
	Compassionate Assistance to Die	21/02 Tabled at MfSAG. In October 2019 MfS considered assisted dying and asked AMs to explore this issue further. MfSAG holding minutes until a reasonable number have arrived to return to MfS.		
Cumberland AM	20/08 Assisted dying	20/1/20 Minute received 20/1/20 Acknowledged 21/02 Tabled at MfSAG. In October 2019 MfS considered assisted dying and asked AMs to explore this issue further. MfSAG holding minutes until a reasonable number have arrived to return to MfS.		Minute on hold for future meeting.
Cumberland AM	20/06 C. Tabular Statement	20/1/20 Minute received 20/1/20 Acknowledged 21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. AM clerk acknowledged another recipient may be best placed to reply. MfSAG noted the preparation of tabular statement is responsibility of	25/1/20 Email from Recording Clerk to AM to respond to concerns raised.	Reply has been sent to AM.

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
		Recording Clerk and that the minute had been forwarded to Paul Parker for initial response.		
Lancashire Central & North AM	20.1.8 (subject: mental health of those who work for the Society of Friends)	<p>15/1/20 Minute received</p> <p>15/1/20 Acknowledged</p> <p>21/02 Tabled at MfSAG. MfSAG noted: the concerns about BYM staff are under the responsibility of BYM Trustees' Employment Committee; and, the concerns about the Employers Resource were better addressed by Quaker Life staff who maintained it. MfSAG agreed to forward the minute to the Employment Committee and Quaker Life staff in the first instance. Clerks agreed to write to the AM.</p>		<p>Forwarded to Employment Committee and Quaker Life staff.</p> <p>Reply has been sent to AM.</p>
Quaker Life CC	20.05 Gender diversity	<p>5/2/20 Minute received</p> <p>21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. MfSAG agreed to take to MfS in April for information to</p>		Originally planned for MfS in April for information.

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
		encourage further AMs to contribute minutes to QLCC.		
Quaker Life CC	20.09 Integrated Strategy for Supporting Quaker Communities	5/2/20 Minute received 21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. MfSAG agreed to ask QLCC to present the strategy at the meeting in April.		To MfS in April – circulated with April documents.
Quaker Life CC	20.16 Use of the term ‘overseer’	5/2/20 Minute received 21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. MfSAG agreed to draft a brief from MfS Clerks for QLCC on taking this matter forward.		MfS Clerks to respond to QLCC.
Quaker Life CC	20.15 Conflict in Meetings review	5/2/20 Minute received 21/2/20 Tabled at MfSAG. MfSAG agreed to include an update on this matter for MfS in April. Following April cancellation, will now be taken at a future meeting.		Originally planned for MfS in April but held.
Bristol AM	20.26 Stop Ecocide Campaign	24/2/20 Minute received 2/4/20. MfS Clerk agreed to circulate with documents in April to members of MfS	After the paper was made available, a member of Bristol AM wrote with further comments, which were sent to representatives on 29/4/20.	To MfS in April – circulated with April documents.
Lincolnshire AM	20.3.11 The Quaker Tapestry	16/3/20 Minute received		Sent to Recording Clerk.

Body sending minute	Minute	Initial steps and decisions	Subsequent steps (if any)	Status
		<p>11/5/20 Tabled at MfSAG. This concerns funding under remit of BYMT and will initially be forwarded to Recording Clerk.</p>		
Surrey & Hampshire Border AM	<p>20/03/05 Meeting for Sufferings Report (subject: funding of QCEA)</p>	<p>20/3/20 Minute received 11/5/20 Tabled at MfSAG. This concerns funding under remit of BYMT and will initially be forwarded to Recording Clerk.</p>		Sent to Recording Clerk.
Central Yorkshire AM	Minute 8 Gender diversity	<p>10/3/20 Minute received 11/5/20 Tabled at MfSAG. AMs have been encouraged to send minutes to QLCC. This minute copied to MfS.</p>		With QLCC.
BYM Trustees	BYMT-2020-04-04 Coronavirus impact and risks c. Yearly Meeting Gathering	<p>4/4/20 Minute received 11/5/20 Tabled at MfSAG. Revised timing of Yearly Meeting to be considered by MfS when ready.</p>		To come to MfS when ready.



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

Appointments

Central Nominations Committee

Brings forward the following names for service or release as indicated:

Friends Trusts Limited

For reappointment:

To serve as soon as possible until 31 May 2021

Janet Slade – Manchester & Warrington AM

The following Friends were appointed by a between-meetings decision of the clerks of Meeting for Sufferings, to serve from 1 June 2020 to 31 May 2023:

Nick Perks – York AM

Stephen Wright – London West AM

Quaker Council for European Affairs

For appointment:

To serve from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023

Luzie Wingen – Norfolk & Waveney AM

Quaker Housing Trust

The following Friend was appointed by a between-meetings decision of the clerks of Meeting for Sufferings, to serve from Annual Retirement Meeting 2020 to Annual Retirement Meeting 2023:

David Hickok – North West London AM

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group (MfSAG) Terms of Reference Review Group

For appointment:

To serve as soon as possible until the work is complete.

Jane Mace – Gloucestershire AM

Elize Sakamoto – North West London AM

Helen Rowlands – Central England AM

Representatives to European Yearly Meetings

The following Friends were appointed by a between-meetings decision of the clerks of Meeting for Sufferings, to serve for the following terms:

- **Netherlands Yearly Meeting**

(Although the meeting due to take place 15-17 May was cancelled, the appointment enables BYM to keep in touch with the Yearly Meeting)

Ed Bruce – West Scotland AM

- **Belgium and Luxembourg Yearly Meeting (9-11 October 2020)**

Lizz Roe – Cardiff AM/CC Caerdydd



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

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, area meetings 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 prison and court register doesn't imply that MfS itself has tested the Friend's concern and necessarily agrees with or condones their action.

The clerk of North West London Area Meetings have sent information about relevant prison and court proceedings. The information is set out in this draft minute:

MfS 2020/02/XX Prison and Court Register

Kim Harrison, a member of Muswell Hill Local Meeting (North West London Area Meeting) was arrested on 5 February 2020 at Greenpeace climate emergency action at BP headquarters (London) on the new CEO's first day. On 5 March 2020 she was found guilty of watching and besetting (section 241(1)(d) and (2) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992) and received a conditional discharge of 12 months.

We agree to include this information in the Prison and Court Register. We hold Kim Harrison in the Light.



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

Update from the Clerk of BYM Trustees

Dear Friends,

Much has happened since I wrote to you in early April and even more since Meeting for Sufferings last met in February. During that time, trustees have met several times and been engaged in more active oversight of the work of BYM than would normally be necessary. You have already received minutes from our scheduled face-to-face meeting in February and are now receiving the minutes from additional meetings held (virtually) in April and May. Trustees meet again in June for what would have been our annual weekend meeting and plan to hold a series of zoom sessions over the weekend. At Meeting for Sufferings I will be seeking your thoughts on many of the matters that we will consider.

These are extraordinary times affecting every organisation and every individual. I am very grateful to Management Meeting and all the staff of BYM for the speed with which they have transformed their ways of working to provide support to meetings across the country and to protect the finances of the organisation – while at the same time keeping staff safe.

Our April and May meetings focussed on the implications of Covid-19 – hearing from staff what is being done, discerning what level of risk is manageable (financial, health and safety etc.) to give a steer to staff, and beginning to look at longer term implications for the charity and for Friends.

The decision to close Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall had to be taken quickly as the government announced restrictions. Planning for working from home had already started, but staff had to adapt fast and trustees have been impressed by how well they have done so.

The nature of some posts means some staff cannot work in current circumstances, so it has helped our financial position considerably to avail of the government's furlough scheme. 80% of staff of the Quiet Company and around 50% of staff who deliver our charitable work are furloughed. This means that the government pays 80% of their salaries up to £2,500 per month. BYM is topping that up to full pay for anyone earning less than £2,500 per month. Those staff on higher salaries who are

furloughed are being paid only £2,500 per month and this is obviously hard for some, but all staff appreciate the difficult situation that BYM faces.

Staff who are still working have worked hard to provide strong support to meetings and it will be helpful to hear from Sufferings whether their area meetings and local meetings are getting the support that they need at this time.

The financial implications for BYM of loss of income from the Quiet Company are significant. Our Treasurer will say something about this at Meeting for Sufferings as she introduces the 2019 accounts. It is now more important than ever that BYM adapts quickly to become a 'simple church supported by a simple charity to reinvigorate Quakerism' – working towards thriving Quaker communities, with simple structures and practices, and towards a sustainable and peaceful world.

Staff working closely with the local development workers are seeing the benefits of understanding better what meetings actually need and this has left us in no doubt that change must include a closer locally-based relationship between BYM and area and local meetings. We planned for a deficit anyway – but knew that was manageable for several years while changes were introduced. But with reduced reserves because of Covid the need is more urgent.

Caroline Nursey
Clerk of Trustees

At a meeting of

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees

Friday 3 April 2020, video conference, convened at 10am and re-convened at 7pm

Minutes

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.

In attendance: Paul Grey, Head of Operations; Lisa Kiew, Head of Finance & Resources; Paul Parker, Recording Clerk; Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk; Oliver Robertson, Head of Witness and Worship.

Visitors: Judith Miller, Sayer Vincent (external auditors), (minutes BYMT-2020-04-01 to05).

BYMT-2020-04-01 Opening worship

During our worship, we held Sam Challis and his family in the Light. We have heard paragraph 30 from *Advices and queries*.

We record the death of Sam Challis, a Trustee of Britain Yearly Meeting, on 24 March.

BYMT-2020-04-02 Decision to hold a virtual meeting, welcome and introductions, agenda check, conflicts of interest check, minutes of last meeting

We record our decision to hold this meeting by video conference. The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has resulted in restrictions on travel and gatherings in person. 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 and that we meet to enable good governance of our charity.

We welcome Judith Miller from our external auditors, Sayer Vincent.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2020 have been signed by the clerk.

There are no unrecorded conflicts of interest.

We confirm our agenda.

BYMT-2020-04-03 Appointments

We note the appointment of Amanda Veale and Eleni Burgess to the Engaging Young Adult Quakers Grants Group to serve until the end of the two-year pilot stage of the scheme. These nominations were brought forward from the BYMT Nominations Group and appointed by our Clerks as a between meetings decision on 9 March.

BYMT-2020-04-04 Coronavirus impact and risks

We receive paper BYMT-2020-04-05 prepared for us by staff which provides an overview of the impact to date of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, sets out financial implications and risks, and offers a range of options for mitigation.

Actions so far and risks that we face

We record and support the actions so far taken by Management Meeting to:

- Establish a contingency team and begin timely contingency planning
- Cancel events in March & April and move committee meetings online where possible
- Close Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall from 19 March to 20 April in the first instance
- Ensure that staff continue to be paid during this period
- Put in place arrangements for staff to work from home wherever possible.

We thank staff for their loyalty and commitment to BYM through this time and Management Meeting for their timely and careful management of an extraordinary process of change. We recognise that it may be difficult for some staff who have no work they can undertake from home.

We thank staff for issuing timely guidance to Quaker meetings, and for their ongoing efforts to support meetings during a period when Friends are unable to meet face-to-face.

We recognise that there has been a significant – and inevitable – impact on the ability of the charity to deliver its planned programme of activity on behalf of Friends in this period and for the foreseeable future. And we have heard that Management Meeting is assessing the impact of various public health scenarios on planned activity for the remainder of this year.

As of 19 March, BYM closed operations at Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall. This has precipitated an immediate and material drop in trading, which had started to fall from earlier in March. There has been a significant drop in investment value of around £5m since the start of the year. With activities largely on hold, the main financial liability relates to staff costs.

A cashflow forecast based on our deposits (excluding cash held in our investment portfolio) and the current reduced level of expenditure shows that BYM has sufficient immediately accessible funds to cover operating cashflow until the end of September. Beyond that the forecast indicates that BYM will have to draw down funds from its investment portfolio or other sources to meet commitments.

While we anticipate that total group income over 2020 will be £3.4-5.3m less than budgeted, the group remains a going concern. However, modelling indicates that in a range of foreseeable scenarios, expenditure would lead to a reduction in reserves which would bring us close to our agreed minimum threshold of three months' operating expenditure plus planned capital expenditure for the next twelve months. We therefore recognise the need to act now in order to conserve a safe level of reserves to be able to deliver on planned activities during and after the pandemic.

Mitigations

We have considered a range of options for mitigation of risks to the organisation.

a) Staff costs

Given that 60% of BYM's expenditure is on staff costs, it is imperative that we take full advantage of the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This permits us to recover 80% of any furloughed employee's salary up to a monthly maximum of £2500, allowing us to conserve our own resources and continue to employ our staff. The scheme currently extends to 31 May 2020.

This means taking decisions about the level of work to maintain, and what to lay aside during this period.

Much of the vital work of the Quiet Company cannot be carried out under current conditions and we ask the Quiet Company to continue to manage this as well as they can. Within the charity, we wish to prioritise the work that is most needed at this time, as well as work that will suffer in the long-term if laid aside now. We should also prioritise work which will enable us to make a swift recovery once the pandemic is over, or work that is better done now.

We ask Management Meeting to implement plans promptly to furlough staff whose work cannot be undertaken at this time, or which does not fall within these priorities. We recognise that treating staff equitably may not mean that all staff are treated equally; we ask Management Meeting to have particular regard for the needs of lower-paid employees when deciding whether to top-up the furloughed salary to a higher proportion of the employee's usual income. We understand that it may, in practice, be attractive to some staff to be furloughed, and we hope that where possible the preference of individual staff members may be taken into account.

We are clear that the decision to furlough staff does not reflect on the quality or importance of their work, but is forced upon us by exceptional circumstances and is necessary to protect the ability of the organisation to recover well and deliver its objectives in the longer term.

We further ask Management Meeting to pause all non-essential recruitment (not including the Head of Finance & Resources).

b. Capital expenditure

We ask Management Meeting to review the planned programme of capital expenditure, and to bring back to us a revised plan deferring most non-time-critical work to a future date, having first assessed the risk of so doing.

c. Yearly Meeting Gathering

We receive a Minute of a meeting between the clerks of Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and BYM Trustees held virtually on 1 April 2020, which reads as follows:

“We have met today as clerks of Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and BYM Trustees, together with the Recording Clerk, in light of the ongoing public health situation with the COVID-19 pandemic.

“With sorrow, we are united that the Yearly Meeting Gathering planned for 1-7 August 2020 cannot be held.

“We recall the words of Yearly Meeting in 1668:

We did conclude among ourselves to settle a meeting, to see one another’s faces, and open our hearts one to another in the Truth of God once a year, as formerly it used to be.

“We have met uninterruptedly in this spirit since then, through times of war and pestilence. However, we find ourselves now in unprecedented times. We understand as never before the risks of transmission of disease; we also have access as never before to technologies which enable us to remain connected one with another as Friends in ways which early Friends might have envied.

“We are clear that the ongoing public health restrictions in place in the UK are likely to make it inadvisable to hold the Gathering on public health grounds, and that our ability to deliver the event would be compromised.

“We have heard from staff that the University of Bath will allow us to transfer our booking to 31 July – 6 August 2021 without significant financial loss, and agree to pursue the possibility of holding a Yearly Meeting Gathering on those dates. This will in due course require agreement by Meeting for Sufferings and Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee.

“We ask staff to undertake further exploration of possibilities for conducting the required business which was to be brought before the YM at YMG. We expect that Meeting for Sufferings will deal with certain matters between meetings, and that others might be deferred. We ask also that possibilities for holding a virtual or other short YM business session on an alternative date be considered.

“We expect Trustees, at their meeting on 3 April, to put in train the necessary arrangements for the postponement of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020.

“We send this minute to BYM Trustees, to Meeting for Sufferings and to Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee & Arrangements Committee.

Clare Scott Booth (YM Clerk)
Margaret Bryan (Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings)
Caroline Nursey (Clerk, BYM Trustees)
Paul Parker (Recording Clerk).”

With sadness we accept the recommendation that the Yearly Meeting Gathering planned for 1-7 August 2020 at the University of Bath be postponed until 31 July – 6 August 2021 and ask staff to take forward the various steps set out in the 1 April minute.

We send this part minute to Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee and to Meeting for Sufferings.

d. Regional hub and local development worker rollout

We ask Management Meeting to delay the rollout of the regional hub and Local

Development Worker scheme until such time as practicalities are no longer limited by public health restrictions.

e. Finance & Property Committee

We ask our Finance & Property Committee to keep the financial risks under regular review, and to consider the possibility of a bank loan to allow for any necessary drawdown of investments to be done at a more favourable time.

f. Employment Committee

We ask our Employment Committee to keep the employment risks under regular review.

In conclusion

We remind ourselves of our strategic priorities – Thriving Quaker communities, A sustainable and peaceful world, and Simple structures and practices – and ask staff to hold to these as far as possible in these tumultuous times although many of the planned activities are no longer possible or appropriate.

We hold all our staff in the Light. We know that the work of BYM now and in the future will be more valuable than ever to Friends and others and we look forward to a time when staff can return to more normal operation, bringing with them new learning from the experiences of this difficult period.

In light of the extraordinary context in which we operate, we agree to meet again – virtually – in early May.

We send this minute to the board of the Quiet Company.

BYMT-2020-04-05 Trustees' report and financial statements

We receive the draft Trustees' annual report and financial statements for 2019, the Letter of Representation and BYMT Finance & Property Committee minute FP20/13. We note the need to add some post audit information and commentary in light of the current Covid-19 pandemic. We approve the annual report and financial statements and authorise the Clerk and Treasurer to sign them on our behalf with these additions and subject to proof reading amendments. We have reviewed the accounts in light of Covid-19 and we are satisfied that the charity is a going concern through 2020. We send them to Meeting for Sufferings for information, and to Yearly Meeting. They will be filed with the Charity Commission.

We authorise the Treasurer to sign the Letter of Representation to the auditors.

We thank staff and others for their work in producing these documents.

BYMT-2020-04-06 Plans for regional hub and local development rollout

We receive paper BYMT-2020-04-03. At our meeting in February we appointed two trustees to work with staff to oversee a process to make a final decision on the location of a hub and the rollout of the second cohort of local development workers (minute BYMT-2020-02-08). We note the decision reached in this process and minuted by Management Meeting on 11 March (minute MtM-2020-03-06). We have

discussed the timescale for the implementation of this decision noting that it will be affected by the impact of Covid-19.

BYMT-2020-04-07 Recruitment of Head of Finance and Resources

We receive paper BYMT-2020-04-04 from the Recording Clerk, setting out the need to recruit a Head of Finance and Resources following the resignation of Lisa Kiew. We are grateful to Lisa for her significant contribution to Management Meeting and in transforming BYM's finance, IT and HR functions.

We authorise recruitment to this Management Meeting position as set out in the paper and delegate responsibility for finalising the job description, conducting the selection process and making the final appointment to the Recording Clerk, the Yearly Meeting Treasurer and one other Trustee to be chosen by the Clerk.

Caroline Nursey
Clerk

At a meeting of

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees

Friday 15 May 2020, video conference, convened at 11am and re-convened at 7pm

Minutes

Present: Georgina Bailey (minutes BYMT-2020-05-01 to 03), 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.

In attendance: Paul Grey, Head of Operations (except minute BYMT-2020-05-09); Lisa Kiew (except minute BYMT-2020-05-09), Head of Finance & Resources; Paul Parker, Recording Clerk (except part minute BYMT-2020-05-09); Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk (except minute BYMT-2020-05-09); Oliver Robertson, Head of Witness and Worship (except minute BYMT-2020-05-09).

BYMT-2020-05-01 Decision to hold a virtual meeting, welcome and introductions, agenda check, conflicts of interest check, minutes of last meeting

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 25.04 from *Quaker faith & practice*.

BYMT-2020-05-02 Financial reports

We receive Finance and Property Committee minutes from 13 March (BYMT-2020-05-02a) and the finance report for the first quarter of this year (BYMT-2020-05-02b).

BYMT-2020-05-03 Coronavirus impact and risks

We receive Finance and Property Committee minutes from 7 May (BYMT-2020-05-03a) and Quiet Company minutes from 9 April (BYMT-2020-05-03b) and thank them for their work in support of the organisation during the current crisis.

a) Current position

We have considered paper 'Covid-19 update and next steps' (BYMT-2020-05-03c).

We note and endorse the actions taken by Management Meeting since the April meeting (and described in section 1 of the paper). We are impressed by the speed and effectiveness of adopting new ways of working, made possible by the work of finance, HR and IT teams and everyone's flexibility. We recognise the impact of the

furlough scheme on staff – whether furloughed themselves or working – and on work programmes and thank all staff for their understanding and loyalty at this time.

We have noted the risks identified, principally relating to health and safety, thriving Quaker communities, income and governance.

We note Quiet Company's minute H20/16 responding to our minute BYMT-2020-04-04. We acknowledge that – because of the nature of their roles – 80% of staff working for our hospitality company are furloughed and roughly 50% of those working on charitable activities, and we echo the Board's view that all of our furloughed staff are valued as individuals and for what they do for the Quiet Company and BYM.

We note that staff working closely with the Local Development Workers are seeing the benefits of understanding better what meetings actually need.

b) Moving to a 'new normal'

We note the planning and work, detailed in section 2 of the paper, to prepare the company, charity and church to transition out of the current situation.

We affirm the importance being placed on staff well-being and health and safety in our planning, and ask Management Meeting to continue to pay close attention to this. We are conscious that health and safety concerns go far beyond protecting staff from catching Covid-19 for those who work from Friends House or Swarthmore Hall, and include mental health and managing the pressures of working from home.

We recognise that a decision to reopen premises is complex and will need to balance safety and cost considerations including whether there is a sufficient level of bookings to cover the cost of reopening.

c) Looking ahead

We note the points raised in section 3 of the paper, and that no decisions are required at this stage. We will return to consider the longer-term impact of the current situation at our meeting in June.

We receive minute FP20/22 from Finance and Property Committee and note the committee's assessment that 2021 and 2022 will be difficult years in financial terms, and that the rollout of the Local Development Workers, regional hub, Yearly Meeting Gathering and various other costs have been deferred from 2020.

We note that F&P Committee has considered the financial risks and has asked the finance team to secure an overdraft facility and explore the possibilities for a bank loan. This would provide an option to defer any sale of investments required to a time when their value is less depressed.

We have discussed additional information that would be helpful for our June meeting (in addition to updated financial modelling taking into account the latest furloughing information). We would like to understand the latest thinking of the educational institutions in the Bloomsbury area that might affect medium and long term usage of space in our premises.

More fundamentally, we want to understand how the pandemic and its economic and social consequences are affecting AMs across the country and the implications of this both for the nature of support that BYM the charity will need to provide to meetings, and for the donations that AMs are able to make to help fund that work. We are pleased to hear that QLCC members and staff hope to have direct contact with meetings and we will both feed in to the questions that they are asking and volunteer to help with the calls.

We recognise that the Covid-19 crisis makes the fundamental challenges facing BYM more acute and forces Friends to consider and respond to them much more quickly than would otherwise have been necessary.

Previously, we had thought that we could afford to incur a planned annual deficit for five or six years while we invested in the best ways of working towards 'A simple church supported by a simple charity to reinvigorate Quakerism'. Because of reduced income and the need to draw down on reserves during the Covid crisis, and following the advice of our Finance and Property Committee, we now think it is prudent to plan for the worst case scenario and to bring about change within two years and be able to deliver a balanced budget the following year.

We are pleased to hear that there will be time for consideration at Meeting for Sufferings in June and at future meetings. We recognise that Quaker Life and QPSW Central Committees also have an important part to play as we map the way forward. We hope that it would be helpful for a trustee to join part of relevant meetings of central committees in the coming months to take forward these conversations.

Some of the work that is necessary will be carried out by Employment Committee and F&P Committee and we will form additional small groups as necessary. We ask Employment Committee to ensure that those employment policies that need revision are updated.

We as trustees are responsible for the financial sustainability of the charity and for ensuring that the priorities discerned in partnership with MfS are delivered. In terms of Quaker decision making, two years is a very short time and it will be a challenge to make changes fast enough while engaging various bodies and Friends across BYM.

BYMT-2020-05-04 Minutes received

We have received the following minutes:

- Book of Discipline Revision Committee separated minute BDRC 2020-04-5 (BYMT-2020-05-04a) and note the requirements on us for our planning for 2021.
- Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee 21-23ii20 (BYMT-2020-05-04c).

BYMT-2020-05-05 Items taken on draft minute

(a) Audit Committee

We receive minutes 13iii20 (BYMT-2020-05-04b) and the annual report of the Committee (BYMT-2020-05-05a). We note the Committee's plan for 2020-22.

We note the Committee has reviewed its terms of reference as required in 2020. We accept the two proposed changes:

- The word 'may' to be changed to 'shall' in the following clause: "The Recording Clerk and Head of Finance & Resources and other staff members may attend meetings when invited."
- A new clause to allow meetings to take place virtually to read: 'Such meetings may take place virtually at the Committee's discretion.'

(b) Annual review of continuing minutes

We receive and note the annual review of continuing minutes (BYMT-2020-05-05b).

(c) Data protection and BYM Trustees

We receive paper BYMT-2020-05-05c 'Care of data by committees' reminding us of our responsibilities for any personal data we have access to in our role as trustees.

BYMT-2020-05-06 Trustees' news

We receive a report of the activities of trustees since our last meeting (BYMT-2020-05-06).

BYMT-2020-05-07 Preparing for the June Meeting for Sufferings

We have reflected on our relationship with MfS and how we can discern together the way to support Friends in their meetings and to communicate best with them. We are pleased to have half an hour at the next MfS at this critical time as we are aware that much has happened since MfS last met.

BYMT-2020-05-08 Head of Finance & Resources

This is the last meeting when Lisa Kiew will be with us as Head of Finance & Resources, before she leaves BYM for a post elsewhere on 29 May. We thank Lisa for all the work that she has done in helping us address the current challenges and throughout her tenure as Head of Finance & Resources. She has transformed the way that the finance function operates and understanding of financial management within the charity as well as playing a critical role within Management Meeting. We have greatly valued her advice and guidance and wish her well in her new role as she leaves BYM.

BYMT-2020-05-09 Time without staff

We have had time with the Recording Clerk without other staff, and time for only trustees.

Caroline Nursey
Clerk



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

Dates of Meeting for Sufferings in next triennium

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group is proposing to hold four meetings a year in the next triennium (reduced from five meetings this triennium). The Arrangements Group took into account the time we need for our business, the impact of our meetings on the environment and the financial cost of our meetings.

Friends will find it helpful to know that the cost for each meeting held in London (travel, accommodation and refreshments) is almost £10,000. The meeting held in Manchester in late 2017 cost nearly £13,000. Each residential weekend (for instance at Woodbrooke), costs just under £30,000. Bearing in mind that costs of travel are rising, moving from five to four meetings a year will save at least £10,000 a year and reduce Meeting for Sufferings' carbon footprint by 20%.

We're learning from the current crisis: online meetings are more difficult in many ways, but also demand less of a time commitment from representatives, and save money and carbon emissions. There is potential for meeting online more often in future, and we will need to review this in the coming months. There may be more creative ways for Meeting for Sufferings to gather and conduct business. For the time being the Arrangements Group is proposing face-to-face gatherings.

To ensure we provide sufficient time for our routine business, to receive our regular reports, and to discern concerns from Area Meetings and other committees, we will maintain two residential meetings in the three-year plan of meetings.

The Arrangements Group considered holding some of our non-residential meetings outside of London possibly with an invitation to local Friends. This will be actively considered when making final arrangements.

To help welcome new members, the first meeting of the triennium will be open to both representatives and alternates and the second meeting will be a residential gathering to help us build our community.

The proposed dates are given on the next page. The date ahead of Yearly Meeting in 2024 (1 June 2024) is provisional on confirmation of the date of Yearly Meeting and so may change.

Meeting for Sufferings (proposed dates for next triennium in bold)

2021	2022	2023	2024
<i>Current triennium: 6 February</i>	5 March	4 March	2 March
<i>10 April</i>	May: Yearly Meeting in session, London	May: Yearly Meeting in session, London	1 June (provisional)
Yearly Meeting in session: 31 July–6 August, Bath	2 July	1 July	August (gathering): Yearly Meeting in session
2 October	1 October	6–8 October (residential)	<i>Following triennium</i> ↓
3–5 December (residential)	3 December	2 December	

Notes: Final meetings of this triennium (in 2021 and marked in italic) already agreed by Meeting for Sufferings.

Yearly Meetings are to be agreed.



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

Yearly Meeting

One of the responsibilities of Meeting for Sufferings is to confirm the dates and venue of Yearly Meeting, based on the recommendation of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (*Quaker faith and practice 6.16 and 7.02.f*).

MfS agreed in February 2018 that Yearly Meeting Gathering would take place in August 2020, at Bath University. Sadly, the gathering has had to be postponed due to Coronavirus epidemic. The University of Bath has agreed to transfer the booking to summer 2021.

If at all possible, it will be helpful for a small amount of required business to be addressed during 2020. The Yearly Meeting clerks and Recording Clerk are preparing options for the holding of a Yearly Meeting session at some point before the end of the year.

By the time MfS gathers, we hope to receive a recommendation about how to deal with the required business of Yearly Meeting 2020; along with proposed dates and venue for the Yearly Meeting Gathering in 2021.



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

How is the truth prospering in our meetings?

In 1682 Yearly Meeting asked representatives from each quarterly meeting to reply to three questions orally, one being 'How the Truth has prospered amongst them since the last yearly meeting, and how Friends are in peace and unity?' The questions were intended to produce factual information from Friends with local knowledge, so that the progress of the Society throughout the country could be seen and help given in the areas where it was most needed. (*Quaker faith and practice*, 1.04.)

Faced with the extraordinary circumstances of the Covid-19 global health pandemic, Meeting for Sufferings representatives are invited to bring news from their areas of how meetings are responding.

Some of the following questions may be helpful prompts for representatives to prepare:

Online worship:

- How many local meetings in your area are worshipping online?
- Have you found ways to involve different age groups, and those who are economically disadvantaged or digitally marginalised?
- What have been the challenges and unexpected benefits to forming online communities?

The future of our meetings:

- What challenges are meetings encountering in maintaining their communities?
- What are some of the concerns for meetings facing an uncertain future?

Responding to the crisis:

- How have Friends been able to support one another and others in their communities?
- What has been the impact on the spiritual life of meetings in your area?

Quaker Housing Trust

TRIENNIAL REPORT: February 2017 – February 2020

Introduction

Quaker Housing Trust is a committee of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. The QHT trustees are appointed by Meeting for Sufferings [Quaker faith & practice 8.15]. QHT is a separately registered charity [no. 254704] and a company limited by guarantee registered in England [no. 00924311]. It operates throughout the Britain Yearly Meeting area of England, Scotland, Wales, Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

The work of QHT is serviced on a part-time basis by a member of Britain Yearly Meeting staff based in Quaker Peace & Social Witness, who acts as secretary and administrator. The cost of this is paid by Britain Yearly Meeting as a reflection of the Yearly Meeting's concern for housing issues in its corporate work. There is more information about QHT on its website www.qht.org.uk. QHT generally reports to BYM via Meeting for Sufferings every three years. Mary Hammond, the Clerk, will be speaking to this report.

Practical witness

*A Quaker body giving Quaker money, on behalf of Quakers,
to local housing projects we believe Friends would want to support.*

Quakers have been actively engaged in promoting social housing for over a hundred years. Friends were early supporters of the new 'garden cities', and are long-term advocates of good quality and affordable housing for all.

Quaker Housing Trust (QHT) was created by Yearly Meeting as a channel through which "every Friend who feels able may give or lend as much as can be spared to those who are particularly vulnerable in their efforts to secure housing". It turns Friends' money and activity into practical help for social housing projects which can transform lives by creating a safe place to live – **homes** – for people in housing need.

We make grants and interest-free loans to charitable organisations meeting a real housing need. We support good quality, appropriate accommodation at a rent which low income occupants can genuinely afford. This is a very practical expression of Friends' longstanding and continuing concern about the needs of badly housed, homeless and vulnerable people in Britain – a concern most recently tested again during Yearly Meeting 2015.

Context

External changes – financial, government policy and social attitudes – are pushing and keeping more people further to the margins of society by shrinking their housing choices and even denying access to housing at all. This affects all our lives, in our towns, cities, villages and rural areas.

The National Housing Federation (NHF) estimate that 8.4 million people in England are living in an unaffordable, insecure or unsuitable home, with up to 400,000 homeless or at

risk of homelessness - including people sleeping rough, living in homeless shelters, temporary accommodation or sofa-surfing¹. According to Shelter, there has been a net loss of almost 60,000 social homes through sales and demolitions not replaced over the past decade with 17,000 fewer social homes than last year. All this despite a social housing waiting list of 1.16 million people a four percent increase on last year.²

While often felt most in urban areas like London where only 534 new social rent homes were provided in 2018-19³. The housing crisis is not confined to urban areas. Alongside problems of the availability of social housing, rural areas can experience additional challenges in their housing markets: shortages in affordable homes and appropriate tenure options; high prevalence of second and holiday homes; and decline in local authority-owned housing stock. In response to this we have seen an increase in applications from rural areas, particularly in Scotland.

However, the discourse should not be on numbers, but people: Quakers have long been clear about the importance of a home to the personal and spiritual development of individuals and thus the health of wider community. In the context of the Quaker housing concern Quaker Housing Trust itself continues to advocate for and witness to Friends' linked concerns about social justice, right use of resources, care for the environment and care for one another. Never has this been more relevant following the tragic events at Grenfell Tower housing block.

Our work

When creating QHT, Yearly Meeting saw a particular need to assist housing projects which were focused on meeting the needs of "the most vulnerable groups in our population" not being met by the government. Today we are still helping this kind of projects that support people who are vulnerable at points of transition in their lives. These projects are often meeting either a local or a very specific personal need, and finding it difficult to attract funding from other sources.

Over this triennial these have included projects supporting people who have been victims of human trafficking; survivors of domestic abuse; people with an experience of homelessness; young carers leaving the family home; older people; and migrants fleeing destitution and war.

We support small charities, those with an annual turnover of no more than £1 million. These projects can be more innovative in seeking solutions and, like Quakers, are often making a positive difference disproportionate to their size. We aim always to be open to new ideas, looking to the future as well as today. Specialising in helping small projects

¹ Housing crisis affects estimated 8.4 million in England, BBC News (2019). Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49787913>

² Social housing lettings in England, April 2018 to March 2019, National Statistics (2020). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/social-housing-lettings-in-england-april-2018-to-march-2019>

³ A Capital in Crisis, Shelter (2020), available at: https://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1906876/A_Capital_in_Crisis_-_Briefing.pdf

allows us, as a small charity, to use our very limited resources where they can make a genuine and positive difference. Generally this is through helping a project to enhance the quality of their housing provision or to create new homes.

Our grants and loans have been used to buy or lease properties, convert and renovate existing buildings, refurbish and furnish rooms and communal spaces to create quality homes. Funds have been used to improve energy efficiency of buildings and to make accommodation more accessible to those with physical health needs.

In July 2019, QHT's secretary, Paula Harvey retired after an outstanding 32 years' service. We thank her for her hard work and dedication. In the same month we appointed Simon Phillips as our new secretary.

Disbursing and gathering the funds

Independent of the Britain Yearly Meeting central funds, our funding work relies on donations and legacies from individual Friends and meetings. In addition, our programme of interest-free loans allows funds to be recycled over periods of ten to twenty years and over the reporting period we had total new income to disperse of £315,120.

It is part of QHT's ethos that we seek to disburse whatever funds are currently available to us at our Council meetings, and there is a considerable degree of flexibility and imagination in how we can respond to applicant projects. Every application is dealt with individually and on its own merits, which lets us respond appropriately to the project's needs, whilst enabling us to make what we feel is best use of our funds. As Trustees we welcome this ability to combine living adventurously with good stewardship.

In the period from February 2017 to February 2020, Quaker Housing Trust supported 28 projects. These were from widespread locations both rural and urban including London, the Scottish Islands, Devon, Newcastle and the North West. The full list is included from page four below. In the period, QHT awarded £429,104 in grants and £215,000 in interest-free loans.

Relationship with projects

Our personal contact with the projects we fund has long been important to us, not least because it generates good relationships and trust, helping to keep our processes simple and open. We achieve this by appointing one of ourselves as 'Trustee-in-Touch' for projects. This can be done as part of the application process when a conversation is mutually helpful to our decision-making, or after a loan or large grant has been given.

Housing is not always the sole element of an applicant organisation's work: sometimes it is only one element in a wide range of activities meeting the needs of individuals and communities. What we learn from our Trustee-in-Touch visits helps to broaden our own personal experience, and to root our collective work as QHT trustees in the context of Friends' wider concerns. Trustee-in-Touch contact also provides us with an effective form of monitoring a project's progress and use of our funding.

Looking to the future

We are clear that QHT's work is rooted not only in the long-standing spiritual concern for housing but also in wider Quaker concerns, most notably about the environment.

We recognise the consequences of climate change will have an impact on housing, and those in housing need are likely to be more affected. Our application pack encourages applicants to aim for higher standards in insulation of properties, improvements in ventilation, and reduced reliance on fossil fuels for heating and hot water. In new builds we are expecting projects to meet higher than standards than are set through building regulations. Furthermore, the standards we encourage directly benefit the people being housed through lower running costs.

In Yearly Meeting and in the future revision of the Book of Discipline we would like to see reference to the desire expressed at Yearly Meeting 2015 by Friends to be more active and creative in challenging today's attitude towards housing as a financial asset rather than a home; and in using our own, personal and collective, Quaker resources – including and beyond land, building, money, homes – to change these attitudes.

Although outside of the time period covered by this report, it would be impossible to finish without acknowledging the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the short term we are expecting that some of the projects we support may have financial difficulties. To this end, we have contacted all projects with outstanding loan repayments to ask that they let us know should such difficulties arise. In the longer term the downturn in the economy and the diversion of funds towards dealing with the crisis, will have an ongoing effect on charities' incomes, including our own. Moreover, it will no doubt have a serious impact on the vulnerable groups supported by the projects we fund.

How this will play out is still uncertain. We continue to meet to consider applications and may need to be prepared for a drop in our income and an increase in the number of applications being made. This will require some tricky and difficult decisions to be made. With its strong history and thorough processes we are confident, however, that QHT is well-placed to see through this period.

In offering this Triennial Report to Meeting for Sufferings, our governing body within the structure of the Yearly Meeting, we ask for your continued prayerful and practical support for the work we do as trustees of the Yearly Meeting's own housing charity.

Grants and loans made and offered: Feb 2017 to Feb 2020

We have a particular preference for supporting projects which are:

- **Helping individuals who are vulnerable at points of transition in their lives:** These may be people who may be moving literally from one place or stage of life to another and/or who can be helped to move from the margins of society into the community, and/or whose needs are often overlooked by other housing providers.

- **Contributing to well-balanced and sustainable communities:** Which can be within the housing project itself and/or the geographical area in which it sits, perhaps by an innovative approach, or meeting a small but locally significant housing need.
- **Providing good quality homes:** We encourage applicants to show they are thinking carefully about how the size, shape and style of their accommodation best meets the needs of their occupants.
- **Seeking to achieve the highest standards for energy efficiency:** Including carbon emission reduction and/or other environmentally sustainable options which are possible in the circumstances – and ideally where this will also contribute to a reduction in costs for the occupants.

These are the 28 projects we have supported this triennial in alphabetical order:

1. Action Foundation, Newcastle

Grant of £21,700 for the refurbishment and furnishing of a property to increase Action Foundation's provision of safe housing for newly granted refugees in Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland. 2017

2. Afghan Association Paiwand, London

Grant of £12,763 to upgrade and furnish two properties to house 12 unaccompanied refugee minors aged between 16-21 who have come from a variety of countries, escaping war and/or persecution. 2017

3. BACA Charity, Loughborough

£19,000 grant to convert a house into a new arrivals house for 16-18 year old separated young people seeking asylum and victims of human trafficking, making it HMO compliant and homely. 2018

4. The Big Help Project, Merseyside

Loan of £35,000 to fund the furnishing and refurbishing ten leased properties to house ex-offenders

5. The Boaz Trust, Manchester

Grant of £13,500 for essential maintenance and renovation work to seven of the properties leased by The Boaz Trust in order to give safe accommodation to destitute asylum seekers and refugees. 2018

6. Calder Valley Community Land Trust, Yorkshire

Grant of £20,000 and a loan of £25,000 towards the costs of building four new dwellings for people aged 60 upwards, currently living in the Calder Valley, with a defined housing need and limited financial means. 2017

7. The Canopy Housing Project, Leeds

£10,000 loan to help buy and renovate four properties to increase their provision of decent affordable homes for people in housing need. 2018

8. The Charity of Amy Temple, Dover

Grant of £20,000 to improve two 1960s bungalow almshouses to house elderly people. 2019

9. City of Exeter YMCA

Grant of £20,000 for the furnishing costs for four new, two-bed, social housing properties, in which to accommodate eight previously homeless tenants. 2019

10. Coventry Migrant Women's Houses

Grant of £7,100 to install 14 photovoltaic panels at this group house for homeless forced migrant women with no income and in need of support. 2017

11. Dundee Friends Property Trust

- Grant of £7,638.00 to upgrade a three-bedroom flat to give a home to a Syrian refugee family at present in a refugee camp. 2017
- Environmental Assessment Grant to help with the professional fees associated with helping Dundee Friends Property Trust identify environmentally friendly and energy efficient options in two new flats to provide accommodation for refugee families. 2019

12. East Cleveland Youth Housing Trust

£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. 2018

13. Emmaus North East, Newcastle

Grant of £8,000 towards the setting up of a laundry and utility room, plus common room and office, for service supporting homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. 2017

14. Glenurquhart Care Project, Highland

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. 2018

15. Handcrafted Projects, Durham

£32,500 loan and £10,000 grant to buy and renovate a property to provide supported accommodation for two tenants with multiple and complex needs. 2017

16. Hope Projects (West Midlands)

- Environmental Assessment Grant of up to £5,000 to assess Hope Projects' nine Birmingham-based properties accommodating asylum seekers in order to provide a list of costed recommendations for reducing the environmental impact and running costs of the houses. 2017
- Grant of £16,800 for the cost of implementing recommendations made by the environmental assessment report. 2019

17. Independence Initiative Limited, Merseyside

Grant of £10,000 to convert an existing non-residential space into an eighth en-suite bedroom at their premises for people experiencing severe and multiple forms of disadvantage including homelessness and health issues. 2018

18. Lighthouse Homes, South Yorkshire

Grant of £22,800 for redecorating and furnishing 20 flats and installing CCTV in a newly acquired property which will provide accommodation for 38 vulnerable homeless men and women needing intermediate homes when moving from the organisation's community housing. 2017

19. Norman Almshouses, Norfolk

£25,000 grant and £25,000 loan for converting five bed-sits into four one-bedroom dwellings for single people with a limited income. 2017

20. Open Door (North East), Middlesbrough

Grant of £39,500 to help with renovation, decoration and furnishing of two terraced houses in Middlesbrough to provide housing for refugees and destitute asylum seekers. 2017

21. Pairc Trust, Isle of Lewis

Grant of £20,000 and a loan of £14,000 for additional energy efficiency measures in a property being purchased to provide suitable housing for a family with a disabled child who would otherwise be unable to stay in the community. 2017

22. Quaker Social Action, London

Grant of £20,000 to help them to turn four houses providing accommodation for young carers into real homes, with good quality furniture, fixtures and fittings, decoration, and high quality and energy efficient appliances. 2017

23. Rural Urban Synthesis Society, London

Feasibility Study grant of £4,100 to undertake a viability study into the proportion of social housing units they can realistically provide in future accommodation schemes. 2020

24. SAHWR

Grant of £10,000 and an interest-free loan of £10,000 towards the costs of buying and refurbishing a flat to provide move-on accommodation for clients leaving a domestic violence refuge. 2020

25. South Ayrshire Women's Aid

£50,000 grant for help towards the costs of converting a property from a shared space into self-contained flats at the South Ayrshire Women's Aid refuge for women, children and young people with experience of domestic abuse. 2018

26. St Hilda's Almshouses Trust, Yorkshire

Loan of £20,000 to provide two new affordable dwellings for local people on low incomes. 2017

27. Street Connect, Glasgow

- Grant of £20,000 and loan of £20,000 as help with the costs of buying a second two-bedroom flat for individuals in recovery from alcohol and substance use who have successfully completed residential rehabilitation and are moving to independent living. 2018
- Grant of £15,000 and an interest-free loan of £15,000 to help with the costs of purchasing a one-bedroom flat for individuals affected by drug and alcohol addictions who are moving to independent living. 2020

28. Swarthmoor Area Quaker Meeting

Grant of £9,200 to cover the costs of meeting requirements following recommendations from a fire report on accommodation for adults with learning difficulties. 2020