

Quaker News



An update on Quaker work in the care of Britain Yearly Meeting



Diversity: how do we stack up?

No. 100 – Summer 2018

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Cover photo: Coloured Pencil by Ulleo on Pixabay

Editorial

“We have heard the call to examine our own diversity, particularly in our committee and organisational structure, locally and nationally. Diversity has several key dimensions and more may emerge in the future. We ask 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.”

From minute 38,
Yearly Meeting 2017

Quakers in Britain aspire to be a loving, inclusive and all-age community. That means looking at every aspect of our lives together, and working hard not just at removing obstacles but at encouraging and welcoming diversity wherever and however it comes (p.8). Quakerism is for everyone, not just those already here or already a bit like us. We have to be ready to change, to learn, and to cast aside old ways that have stopped working (p.4).

Quaker women have always been a powerful force in our Society, and we rightly celebrate their work on prison reform, women’s suffrage (p.11) and equality. But it still took until 1896 for Yearly Meeting to recognise the equal part they played in our business meetings (p.6). Being open to new light means recognising everyone’s

contributions. Whose insights are we missing out on today (p.9)? And what should we be doing about it?

As a Friend remarked in ministry at Yearly Meeting Gathering in Warwick last summer, we are at our best when we work on something in our own community and outside it at the same time. Just as we work on equality among ourselves as Friends, we continue to work on it in the wider society of which we are part. How can we celebrate diversity without working on making Britain a place of sanctuary for refugees (p.8) or engaging with the wide multicultural, multifaith community around us (p.3)? We must be an outward-looking people, as well as putting our own meeting houses in order.

I am continually inspired by the breadth, depth and conviction of Quakers’ work. If you read only one page of this *Quaker News*, let it be page 14. There, in a nutshell, you have a year of Quaker witness. If you read that, I hope you too will feel inspired that you are part of this community, and to support the work however you can, through prayer, service or financial giving. Our *Annual review* is available at www.quaker.org.uk/annualreview or in every meeting house in the country if you want to read more.

Paul Parker
Recording Clerk

Quaker News

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Britain Yearly Meeting works on behalf of Quakers in Britain, supporting the Quaker faith and putting Quaker values to work in the world. It is a registered charity, number 1127633.

Quakers try to live simply and sustainably, promoting peace, equality and truth. Putting faith into action is central to their way of life and they gather weekly for quiet worship, usually on a Sunday, in around 480 locations across Britain.

You are welcome to any Quaker meeting for worship. Find your local meeting, and more information about us, at www.quaker.org.uk.

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Pilot project encourages new opportunities for young Quakers

Quaker meetings in two parts of Britain will each be receiving the support of a dedicated youth worker thanks to a new pilot project looking to improve engagement with Quakers aged 11 to 18.

Taking place over three years, the legacy-funded project will see workers deployed in Bristol and Sheffield, with the aim that over time they may support neighbouring regions as well. In total there were 17 expressions of interest to host the project, showing a great appetite for further engagement in this area.

The project emerged from in-depth research, including face-to-face interviews with young and adult Quakers, that looked at changing numbers of young Quakers and how more

can be encouraged to participate. Hoped-for outcomes include an increase in opportunities available to young Quakers, more getting involved in local or national initiatives, and more being engaged in the life of meetings.

The workers aren't there to impose anything on meetings, rather the aim is to provide support and inspiration as well as seeking out and developing new opportunities. Involving young people in the decision-making will be a key part of the project, and workers will take time to listen to the needs of the community.

The project will be closely monitored by an external evaluator, NCVO Charities Evaluation Services, to examine how it works within existing Quaker structures,

whether the worker has the support they need, and whether it is having a positive impact on meetings. The workers will be in post in June.

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Photo: Lucy Sam for BYM

The changing face of faith: insights and responses

How might Quakers respond to the changing religious landscape we currently find ourselves in? This was the question explored through new research into the changing face of faith.

Commissioned from Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre by the Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations, it provides an insight not only into how Quakerism fits into the contemporary religious picture, but also into how we can reach new Quakers.



Photo: Eoin Stephenson for BYM

The report was launched in March at a conference attended by Friends from across Britain and has three sections. The first looks at statistics showing the dramatic change in people's recorded faiths in recent decades, which could be understood as a shift from strictly Christian Protestant models to a more multidimensional conception of religion. The second investigates the spirituality of new Quakers, and reveals that the majority are from a Christian background who are seeking a new religious environment. The third charts Quaker ecumenical and interfaith involvement, and describes the wide range of groups Quakers work with. A fourth part, looking at which groups Quakers might work with in future, is also being considered as an additional part of the research.

The conference featured a range of guest speakers and enabled participants to explore issues

raised by the report.

They also had a chance to compare their experiences of interchurch and interfaith work. As Eddy Knasel, serving in Churches Together in Greater Bristol, said: "Over the years I have learned more about my own faith by presenting it to others, and have found my understanding of how other churches work has helped me to grow as a Friend."

Overall the picture of faith in Britain is large, complex and potentially very exciting. It was clear that Friends feel we have much to offer and to gain from engaging at every level open to us.

Read the report online at
www.quaker.org.uk/qccir

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Simpler meetings

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A new project will support growing Quaker efforts to make our meetings simpler to run.

Helen Drewery, Head of Witness and Worship

Peace, truth, equality and simplicity – the words trip off Quaker tongues very readily. But if we are so committed to simplicity, why can it seem so complicated to run our ‘simple’ Quaker meetings? Clerks, treasurers and trustees know all about the administrative burden of maintaining Quakerism. One Friend told me that he’d calculated there were 2.7 jobs per Quaker in his meeting.

It’s fair to say that Quaker processes and structures were shaped by a more time-rich way of life. Quakers, on average, have less time and energy these days to give to their Quaker communities. People are retiring later, parents have to juggle work and family responsibilities in more challenging ways, work environments make heavier demands on employees. Even if you have a reasonable amount of disposable time, you are less likely than in the past to devote large amounts of it to Quaker activities, particularly if your family

and friends aren’t also interested. There’s also a growing additional layer of regulation to comply with: data safety, annual reports, criminal record checks... It’s not surprising that quite a few meetings struggle to fill the more administratively demanding roles.

So what do we do about it? How can we achieve a flexible simplicity – living by the essence of the Quaker approach but not treating old habits as sacrosanct? Early Quakers saw simplicity as stripping out of their lives the superfluous activities and things – John Woolman called them ‘cumber’ – so that they could more fully follow the leadings of the Spirit.

Increasingly, Friends see a need to make Quaker meetings simpler to run, so that we free up time and energy to do the really important things. The things that nourish us, that change the world for the better and that offer Quakerism to those who would be enriched by it.

Some meetings are already

finding creative ways forward. They are rethinking roles and processes, experimenting, looking at what tasks could be done by paid staff and what complexities can be shed altogether. Daring to tackle these things can be energising. Sharing your experiences can inspire change elsewhere. One Friend wrote recently: “In our meeting we have reduced a couple of committees and the tasks are being done differently. The social events part of the community has become more varied as a result.” I would love to hear and share the stories of more meetings.

At Friends House we are about to start a three-year project called Simpler Meetings. It will, we very much hope, quietly make the lives of clerks, trustees and treasurers a bit easier, providing more straightforward guidance and templates that are easy to find when you need them. We will work on how we communicate. And we will offer some individual support to meetings which lack the energy, skills or knowledge to tackle something big, like merging two area meetings or laying down an old separate charity. We are recruiting a new member of staff to run this project.

We hope the Friends who currently feel burdened and stressed will increasingly be freed to be part of the hospitable, spiritually nurtured, outward-focused communities which we all want our meetings to be.

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Will simpler meetings lighten the load for role-holders? Photo: Mike Pinches for BYM

Make poppies, not war

How a Quaker project is using people's creativity to promote a peaceful future during this World War I centenary year.

Linda Murgatroyd, the Collateral Damage project

November 2018 marks 100 years since the end of World War I, a conflict that killed and injured tens of millions around the world. Sadly this was not the 'war to end all wars', and armed conflicts have continued ever since. A high proportion of the casualties are civilians – often known as 'collateral damage' by the military.

The Collateral Damage project is commemorating these victims by inviting people to create a unique white textile or fabric poppy in their memory. We hope that the process of creating them will prompt people to think about how we can build a more peaceful future together. They can also then send their poppies to be part of a national exhibition taking place in November.

Collateral Damage began in July 2017 when I and another Friend met over a cup of tea and agreed it would be good to find a way for people to join protests against the upcoming international arms fair in London, even if they couldn't be there in person. Yearly Meeting

Gathering (YMG) was a week away, with movement-building as one of its themes. We decided to ask participants to make white poppies to commemorate victims of the arms trade, and then display them as part of the Art the Arms Fair exhibition in September 2017.

There was an amazing response, and we received over 400 poppies. Many came with poems and prayers, and we were told that making them had been a moving experience for many. Such was the project's success, we were encouraged to develop it further to mark the WWI centenary and hopefully open it up to a wider range of people and groups.

We've had plenty of support so far, including from Kingston & Wandsworth Area Meeting, the Quaker Arts Network, Swarthmoor Hall and Friends World Committee for Consultation. Britain Yearly Meeting is producing a related lesson plan for schools and an edition of *Journeys in the Spirit* for adult Quakers working with

Inspiring peace in 2018

Quakers in Britain are working with hundreds of schools as part of the INSPIRE project to make remembrance about peacebuilding in 2018.

We'd love Quaker meetings to reach out to local schools and youth groups to explore peace and engage them with INSPIRE (www.oasisinspire.org.uk). Events are taking place across Britain as part of the initiative, culminating in simultaneous high-profile gatherings on 9 November 2018.

To find out more about getting involved, or about our resources on peace education in general, contact Ellis Brooks at ellisb@quaker.org.uk.

children. Other organisations showing their support range from the Peace Pledge Union to Lush.

To get involved, have a look at our leaflet on our website. It contains instructions on how to sew or knit poppies, but any textile poppies between 4 and 8cm across are welcome and imagination is encouraged. It also says where to send them for the upcoming national installation.

In this troubled centenary year I hope the Collateral Damage project will offer a golden opportunity for creative healing, helping to renew our resolve to build a more peaceful future.

See <http://ppu.org.uk/collateral-damage> or @whitepoppies2018 on Facebook for the leaflet and latest updates, or email collateraldamage2018@gmail.com.



Poppies made to promote peace as part of the Collateral Damage project. Photo: BYM

Quakers and business: then and now

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How grant funding enabled one academic to tell the story of Quaker business across the country, and why the Quaker approach is still so relevant today.

Nicholas Burton, Northumbria University and Quakers and Business Research Group

In 1918 Quakers were as well-known for honesty and integrity in business as they are today for peace and humanitarian work.

As well as their involvement in the chocolate industry, via the Cadbury and Rowntree families, they were also involved in the development of a wide range of new industries and products ranging from retail banking to biscuits. This innovative entrepreneurship also went hand in hand with a dedication to bringing Quaker values to business. Champions of developments like fixed prices for goods and employee welfare provisions, they were deeply concerned with the wider role of business in society.

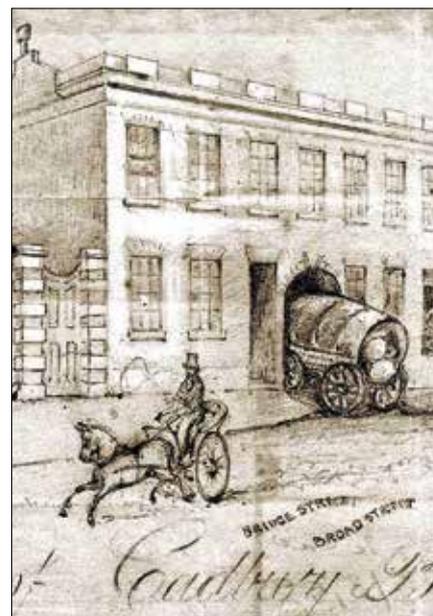
It was a subject discussed in detail at the first ever Quaker

Employers Conference, held at Woodbrooke, Birmingham, in 1918. This was a pivotal event in shaping the way Quaker businesses contributed to social outcomes, and covered many aspects of what is now termed corporate responsibility.

A hundred years later, Quaker businesses are far fewer, but many of the themes covered in the conference remain central to a Quaker understanding of business and commerce today. So to celebrate the anniversary and its continued importance, I decided to put together a talk on the subject. With the support of Northumbria University and funding from Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) and Quakers and Business Group (www.qandb.org), I delivered it in nine locations around Britain during 2018 to a varied audience including not only Quakers but also members of professional bodies, and business leaders from industry.

We had mixed numbers but quite an impact: the Royal Society of Arts invited me to present to around 100 people in Norwich, the Quaker Centres Gathering held a session on the presentation in February, and I'm writing a book, *Quakers and Corporate Responsibility*, due out later this year. This year is also proving good for Quaker business as the Quaker Studies Research Association is holding a conference on this theme, while Woodbrooke is running a course on 'Quakers, Values & Business Ethics' in May.

One of the most exciting things about the talks for me was hearing the connections many attendees made between Quaker principles and recent ethical and



Sketch of Cadbury's first cocoa and chocolate factory, Birmingham, 1847. Image: BYM

sustainability-related initiatives in business such as common-ownership and accreditation for social and environmental impact. Obviously there is more work to do in this area, and these themes are still advocated by Quakers. QPSW's New Economy initiative is one excellent project that continues to communicate our future vision based on these principles.

In the meantime, I look forward to hearing about your stories of Quaker business. Contact me at n.burton@northumbria.ac.uk.

Does your meeting have an idea for a community-based project that builds sustainability or works towards the new economy? Do you need some money to help make it happen? QPSW can help you to develop your idea, and support you to apply for a grant. See www.quaker.org.uk/sustainabilitygrants.

Supported projects

QPSW Sustainability and New Economy Grants also supported these initiatives in 2017, listed here with the nominating meeting:

- An interfaith environmental summer school for 30 young people – Central England Area Meeting (AM)
- Training in facilitating community sessions on action to reduce carbon emissions – Gloucestershire AM
- Communication to the Quaker community about credit unions – North Wales AM
- Community engagement for a local community owned energy initiative – Airton Local Meeting.

Connecting meetings to support people seeking sanctuary

How the Sanctuary Everywhere programme is working to create a culture of welcome for refugees and migrants.

Tatiana Garavito, Sanctuary Everywhere Programme Manager

The conviction that there is something of God in every person underpins Quaker work for peace and equality. One of the latest manifestations of this is the Sanctuary Everywhere programme, which is challenging the current government's 'hostile environment' for people from refugee and migrant backgrounds by helping Quakers create a culture of welcome and hospitality for those who come to Britain seeking sanctuary.

One way to get involved with the programme is by signing up to become a Sanctuary Meeting – and so far 60 meetings across Britain have done this. That's over 10 per cent, which is an amazing amount, especially as the initiative only launched last year. We also have three Sanctuary Action Groups currently operational – these are groups of Quakers who are not necessarily affiliated to a meeting, but who want to work together to take action on this issue and be part of the wider Sanctuary movement.

A Sanctuary Meeting is a Quaker meeting that commits to the following three actions: to join local initiatives to build a culture of welcome, to build alliances with groups opposing racism, and to work with others to change the laws on destitution, detention and deportations.

Of course, many Quakers have long been involved in these areas, doing excellent work around Britain and beyond. The benefit of coming under the Sanctuary Meeting umbrella is to access coordinated support. Friends are invited to attend retreats and training courses to share practices and knowledge



Chelmsford Quaker Meeting helped organise protests supporting anti-deportation activists dubbed the 'Stansted 15'. Photo: Peter Arkell

and to learn to use our manifesto for change in their work. We also offer regular calls and resources to educate each other about the experiences of people facing the weight of the immigration system and to explore any upcoming opportunities to influence government policy.

Even if there are no people from migrant or refugee backgrounds living in your area, you could still get involved. We also offer training on how to have difficult conversations about immigration, and to lobby your MPs about the issues outlined in our manifesto. It's really important to take action at a national level, as government immigration policy is threatening to establish what are effectively border controls in schools, universities, GP surgeries, and many other institutions we all access in our everyday lives.

Sanctuary Meetings and Sanctuary Action Groups are part of a racial justice movement that is growing across the UK and Europe. It is a movement that Quakers have been deeply involved with. Acts range from hosting refugees and migrants in their homes and fasting in solidarity with hunger strikers at the Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre to supporting defendants facing charges for allegedly blocking a charter flight that was due to deport asylum seekers and other migrants.

It is inspiring to work with Friends who are taking action in so many ways. If you or your meeting would like to get involved, do get in touch.

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A question of diversity

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What do we know about diversity within our religious society, and how can we get to where we want to be?

Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk

Last August Yearly Meeting gave Quakers in Britain an exciting challenge – to explore how all our Quaker communities can be both more diverse and really inclusive. As a first step, meetings and groups have been asked to consider three questions: how diverse are you now? How diverse could you be? And, what would it take to get there?

For most Quaker groups this journey is starting in local meetings. Initial conversations are leading to more discussions, and some meetings are holding workshops. One area meeting is planning to consider different aspects of diversity at each of its gatherings this year. Two have invited non-Quaker organisations to help them understand the issues and to make changes.

It's early days, but here are some messages we can take from the feedback so far.



Friends worship at Skipton Quaker Meeting. Photo: Mike Pinches for BYM

Are we diverse?

Meetings usually (but not always) have a balance of men and women; and LGBT+ members feel part of the meeting. But there are worries about age: some meetings have no families or children – and in some most people are retired. Many meetings have noticed they're predominantly white and/or middle class. These meetings can worry that they don't reflect their local communities. As one

Having different sorts of people in our meetings – and for everyone to be really involved, sharing their gifts – enriches us all.

person put it to me, "Quakers are comfortably inward-looking".

Although several meetings report that they provide facilities for people with disabilities, people with disabilities reflect that they don't always feel fully included.

Our meetings are definitely diverse in their beliefs: Quakers have different views on theology; follow different spiritual paths; take different positions on issues such as pacifism; and don't all vote the same way.

Thanks to the efforts of nominating groups, our national committees have a good geographical spread and include people living in all parts of the yearly meeting, but there are not many younger members.

What do we need to change?

Already, there are lots of suggestions. Practical ideas include linking with local college chaplaincies, sharing news on

social media, or simply placing a big 'Welcome!' notice outside the meeting room. There could also be changes in how we work, such as asking people what would work for them in terms of allocating roles, and letting them know what those roles consist of in practice, rather than making assumptions.

Meetings are recognising that there's a lot more to do. They're noticing it's useful to think about ways in which they don't reflect their local communities. And this exploration is raising intriguing questions that need further thought. For example: are we putting off new Quakers by seeming to be 'against' problems in the world, rather than being well-known for what we're glad about?

Meetings are also reminding themselves that the Quaker way is exciting, transformational and worth sharing. And that, whenever we meet someone, we meet God. Having different sorts of people in our meetings – and for everyone to be really involved, sharing their gifts – enriches us all.

What next?

We are recruiting for an Inclusion and Diversity Project Officer to run a scoping and development project that will form the basis of future work in this area. Our national representative body, Meeting for Sufferings, will be thinking about diversity again later this year, and in 2019. We'll keep collecting reflections, ideas and suggestions, so please keep in touch.

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Opening access to our committees: Q&A with Kellie Turner

The work of Quakers in Britain is steered by those who take on roles in our committees and groups. There are 154 positions to be filled this year, concerned with everything from sustainability to prison chaplains. For Quakerism to be more inclusive, it's vital that these roles are filled by a diverse cross-section of our society. We spoke to Kellie Turner, convener of trustees for Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM), about how she thinks this could happen.

Q: Why do we need diversity on our central committees?

A: Seeing younger, disabled, LGBT+ people from a wide range of ethnicities and social classes on our committees means that members looking at the central structures will feel that it is a place they can inhabit themselves.

We live in an unequal society. Quakerism must swim against the tide of the mainstream and live out how we wish the world to be. This could mean that more resources need to be spent becoming more accessible to a diverse membership. In exchange, we will be more in touch with issues that affect our local communities, so when we take action it will hopefully be more effective.

Q: What would you like to see at a local level to encourage diversity?

A: I would like local meetings to see that changes are not necessarily scary. That experimenting with new ways of doing things can result in things getting better. Listening more to young people's experiences will help to draw out what structures aren't working, and allow us to work together to make positive changes.

I'm interested in developing new opportunities for all-age worship – something that has happened very successfully in my local meeting. Also, the assistance that local meetings can provide young attenders and members should be actively promoted and given without young people having to jump through hoops to receive it.

Q: What would you like to see at a national level to encourage diversity on committees?

A: I would like to see more flexibility being introduced to job roles. A lot of young people don't know where they are going to be in two months, never mind being able to commit three years to a central role. We could introduce job sharing or shorter roles when people are called to act on a concern.

It would also be good for several



Kellie Turner. Photo: BYM

young people to be appointed to a central committee, rather than just one per role. To be the only young person on a committee can be very intimidating. Several young people joining together could support each other and help bring a new voice to that committee.

There is a beauty in what the method of Quaker nominations does, and we need people to think "that could be for me".

Q: What success stories have you encountered so far?

A: I am very proud of how YFGM has developed. Over the past few years the whole community has worked hard to increase the number that are attending our gatherings and build a community that people want to be a part of.

I was at Manchester Pride Festival last year and attended the candlelit vigil for Aids victims. There were people who were talking about the progress that the LGBT+ community has made over the past few decades. It made me think that, had that progress not been made, I may not be in the position I am now: a young lesbian disabled woman who is the convener of trustees for YFGM – the national organisation for young adult Quakers in Britain.

To offer committee service, go to www.quaker.org.uk/givetime.



Cooking a communal dinner at a Young Friends General Meeting social weekend in Lancaster. Photo: BYM

Vibrancy in meetings: fizz or fizzle?

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We're halfway through a three-year pilot programme testing whether local workers can help Quaker meetings thrive. What have we learned so far?

Rachel Matthews, Vibrancy in Meetings National Coordinator

Vibrancy in Meetings is a three-year pilot programme that aims to help Quaker meetings thrive. It's being run by Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, is supported by a central steering group, and consists of four development workers located in four regions across Britain, plus a national coordinator.

The programme is being evaluated by an external evaluator that is investigating whether it is meeting its goals and how it is being managed and received. An interim report is now available that includes 12 recommendations that will inform the remaining year and a half of the pilot.

It has certainly been a learning experience. Our new workers needed to spend time identifying the needs of local meetings: often the most obvious request is not the real need. Informal, face-to-face engagement has been key to building individual relationships, and so has simply listening – which also helps to build confidence within meetings.

Here are some highlights from the programme so far, listed under our key themes and including quotations from the report and interviewees.

Confident “Area and local meeting role holders felt confident, supported and reassured...with several feeling better able to serve their meetings as a result.”

New initiatives in local meetings included fresh approaches to meeting for worship, instigating a shared lunch and meeting for learning, and distributing work so it feels less burdensome.



Vibrancy worker Carrie Comfort presents at an event on meeting houses. Photo: BYM

Strong “It’s the ongoing support and organic development, led by the Spirit and facilitated by the presence of a worker, that is different about Vibrancy.”

We identify and respond to common needs across different meetings, accessing appropriate central support – like an event on how to use our meeting houses.

Connected “It’s brought the bigger Quaker world into our little meeting.”

The team helps develop faith-based action and promotes participation in events. We also work with Woodbrooke to arrange their ‘On the Road’ events.

Sustainable “The idea that we can do new things without upsetting people’s basic values has made a difference.”

The team help meetings think about their long-term future. A meeting that is too big for its meeting house decided to experiment with renting rooms where everyone could fit.

Innovative? “I’m hoping to be a bit more radical. I’m hoping the worker’s presence will help. I don’t think radical changes happen in three years though.”

Being a vibrant meeting isn’t about being all singing, all dancing. It’s about taking appropriate, Spirit-led opportunities to experiment.

Disclaimer! “Would the changes have happened anyway? Probably some of them would. Would they be as smooth and effective? I don’t think so. The worker has played a decisive part.”

Often Vibrancy workers are a catalyst, or the extra capacity needed to get something off the ground.

Read the full interim report at www.woodbrooke.org.uk/vibrancy.

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Standing up for the right to vote

The centenary of the Representation of the People Act is a chance to reflect on how Quaker women played a part in the struggle for universal suffrage.

Maisa Monteiro, Grants and Contributions Support Officer

This year marks the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in Britain. It is a great opportunity to celebrate women's achievements in the area of social change, focusing on Quaker involvement in the British women's suffrage movement.

This movement built on the gradual improvement in women's rights during the 19th century. Arguably its crowning achievement was the passing of the law in 1918 that gave (some) women over the age of 30 the right to vote, followed ten years later by a second law opening it up to all women aged over 21. It was a monumental achievement that came from the hard work and hardships of women in the early 20th century.

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) was founded in 1897 by Millicent Fawcett, who believed the way to effect change was by working peacefully within the law. Six years later the suffrage movement had grown and gained momentum. Emmeline Pankhurst was particularly engaged with campaigning for women's right to vote and stand in elections. Fawcett had hoped for a peaceful movement. However, in 1912 things took a different turn. Some suffragettes chained themselves to railings and disturbed the peace. Their activism started to become more radical, growing into rowdy demonstrations, arson and window smashing campaigns.

So where were Quakers in all this? Women have played a decisive and visible role in the history of Quakerism, and the faith has a long history of strong women, such as Margaret Fell, the 'mother

of Quakerism', and Elizabeth Hooton, peer of George Fox and the first female Quaker minister.

This tradition coupled with the Quaker testimony to equality meant a natural affinity existed between the faith and the British suffrage movement during the 19th century and after. Here are just a few who played key roles at this time:

Helen Clark (1840–1927) gave speeches advocating for women's rights. She opposed her father (a Liberal MP) on a bill that would remove voting rights for disabled women.

Alice Clark (1874–1934) was the daughter of Helen Clark. In 1912 she founded the Friends League for Women's Suffrage, a Quaker group working across Britain in support of voting rights for women. Alice Clark was also a social historian and author. Her work was based on seeing women as economic and social actors rather than "a static factor in social developments".

Anna Maria (1828–1914) and Mary (1830–1914) Priestman were suffragists (a movement that avoided the violence associated with the suffragettes), and the first to protest by not paying their taxes.

The sisters moved beyond voting issues and also campaigned against the exclusion of women workers from skilled trades.

They were executive members of the Union of Practical Suffragists, a group whose objective was to encourage the Women's Liberal Federation (part of the Liberal Party which went on to become the Liberal Democrats) to avoid candidates that were against

women's suffrage.

The Priestmans went on to join the Women's Social and Political Union in their seventies, and carried on active support for suffrage activities in the Bristol area.

These women, and many more, saw injustice and dedicated their lives to fighting it. If their history has inspired you, the Library of the Society of Friends, based at Friends House in London, holds a wealth of information on Quaker women, suffrage and equality. It is open to all and free to use. Find out more or search the catalogue at www.quaker.org.uk/library. You can also read 'Eight things you may not know about the right to vote' on our blog: www.quaker.org.uk/wvote.



Design by Mary Lowndes, published by Brighton & Hove Women's Franchise Society, 1909. Image: BYM

News in brief

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Quaker Week 2018

Quaker Week 2018 will run from Saturday 29 September to Sunday 7 October. It offers a chance for Quaker meetings around the country to open their doors together, for Quakers to share their faith. Britain Yearly Meeting supports this activity with resources and central coordination.

The theme for Quaker Week 2018 is 'room for more'. Sharing food is the central metaphor for the campaign, but is also a useful practical approach to take in terms of outreach.

"As Quakers we offer a table rich with good things, but we recognise that it is incomplete," says Jon Martin, Ministry & Outreach Officer. "How can we let people know there's a space for them? And that their presence and contribution enhances that space? We want everyone to bring and share. There is room for more at the table, and we value everyone who might sit at it. Our gathering around that table enriches us all."

A range of resources will be sent to all meetings including posters, digital images, a set of recipe cards full of outreach ideas (pictured below) and more. If you would like help planning and advertising your event, or you wish to receive printed copies of these resources, email outreach@quaker.org.uk.



New email updates

Quaker Peace & Social Witness is combining its email updates *Educate & Disarm*, *Turning the Tide* and *Earth and Economy* into one monthly e-newsletter: *Quaker Faith in Action*. Subscribers will receive briefings, stories and actions about Quaker work on the economy, the environment, the peace movement and the Sanctuary Everywhere movement. Some international peacebuilding news will also be included. Recipients of the emails mentioned above won't need to do anything to get *Quaker Faith in Action*. New subscribers can sign up at www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-faith-in-action.

Two other e-newsletters have also launched this year. *Quake!* is the monthly email update on the work of Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) and Quakers in Britain. It brings together some of the best of our digital content in one handy digest and includes discussion of Quaker life and worship, insights into Quaker activism, and links to new resources as well as news and events: www.quaker.org.uk/quake.

For updates and opportunities by and for young adults from across British Quakerism, there's *Rising Up!*, a newsletter produced by BYM's Engaging Young Adult Quakers project. Sign up at <http://eepurl.com/diz6Pn>.

These Walls Must Fall

Quakers in Britain are co-organising an evening of spoken word, music and resistance on the evening of Saturday 23 June as part of Refugee Week 2018.

Taking place in Friends House, Euston, *These Walls Must Fall* will feature poets and musicians who are forging creative responses to global economic inequality, climate change, and militarisation. There will also be the chance to hear from grassroots organisations at the heart of building a culture of welcome, and to find out more about how you can get involved in the growing racial justice movement.

"It is an increasingly dangerous time for people from migrant and refugee communities – or those perceived as being so," said co-organiser Tatiana Garavito, Sanctuary Everywhere Programme Manager.

"We will be celebrating people's resistance and creating a space that strengthens our collective capacity to overcome fear and mistrust. We hope to transform our communities to become beacons of welcome and hospitality."

Organisations Right to Remain and Detention Action are also supporting the event. Book tickets at <http://bit.ly/twmf2018>.

New peace resource

Quaker Council for European Affairs has released a hands-on manual called *Building Peace Together*. It makes the case for peacebuilding and offers practical tools that can be used by everyone from professional peacebuilders and policy-makers to individuals who would like to see more peaceful societies.

The pack includes advice and guidance on peacebuilding principles, finding the issues that cause conflict, and steps to avoiding future conflict. Read it at <http://bit.ly/qceabt>.

Advice for meetings letting rooms to the public

The freedom to gather is an important principle for Quakers. It leads many local meetings to be hospitable and to offer rooms to let. Occasionally that creates difficulties.

Staff can offer support to meetings who let their rooms and offer some guidelines to bear in mind to avoid customers being in conflict with Quaker principles. These include:

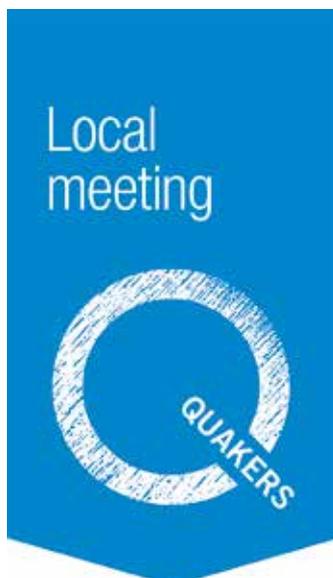
- The importance of having a policy giving terms and conditions for customers to agree before a booking is confirmed.
- Knowing who customers are – and all their speakers.
- Having a process in place, outlining what to do when there's a risk to reputation.
- Handling the print/broadcast media and social media when there's a risk to reputation.

For advice email enquiries@quaker.org.uk.

New logos available

A range of new logos is available for meetings to download and apply to their work and property, together with guidance on how to use them.

The new 'badge' style logos are for local meetings, area meetings and Quaker recognised bodies, and each is in a range of styles and colours: www.quaker.org.uk/logo.



Reclaiming the sky for peace

Many Quakers were among those flying kites during Persian New Year to highlight the human rights issues caused by armed drones. Kites were flown in locations including Edinburgh, Harrogate, Galway, Wisconsin and of course Afghanistan.

Read our blog to find out more about the initiative at www.quaker.org.uk/rtskies. Should the wind take you, you don't have to wait another year – just check out www.flykitesnotdrones.org.



Photo: Afghan Peace Volunteers / Voices for Creative Nonviolence UK

Meeting for worship podcast makes the news

The team behind the monthly Young Quaker Podcast caused a stir with their fourth episode, a 30-minute meeting for worship recorded at Nottingham Friends Meeting House. Titled the 'Silence Special', the podcast caught the imagination of reporters at BBC Local Radio, and was soon featured in articles in *The Guardian*, *Metro*, and other mainstream news outlets.

Jessica Hubbard-Bailey from Nottingham Young Quakers recorded the podcast. She told *The Guardian* that the podcast had been played around 400 times and had received a good reception, with some listeners saying that it had inspired them to go to a Quaker meeting for the first time – though others weren't so immediately convinced by this example of stillness in action.

The podcast began last year, with its basic editing costs and a high-quality microphone paid for by Britain Yearly Meeting's Engaging Young Adult Quakers project.

Taking steps to build an all-age community

If you would like advice on how to make your meeting more friendly to all ages, help is at hand in the form of a range of workshops and guided sessions coordinated by the Children and Young People's (CYP) team.

The new *Growing an all-age community* leaflet outlines what is on offer to meetings. The first option is to book a workshop to provide at least six participants with the opportunity to learn, reflect, and practise a particular subject. The workshop requested can be selected from a range of topics, exploring everything from having babies and toddlers in Quaker meetings to exploring the spiritual with young people.

There is also the option of booking two sessions: 'growing as an all-age community' and 'exploring the new *All are welcome* resource'.

A joint project with Woodbrooke and Bristol Quaker Helen Chambers, *All are welcome* contains nine new advices and queries to help meetings develop as an all-age worshipping community. It launched last year at two lively and well-attended days in London and Lancaster, and the CYP team is currently following up with attendees to find out what they have done since and what difference working with the resource has made to their meeting.

These opportunities are offered by the CYP Work Training Team – a part of the Quaker Life Network – supported by CYP staff. They are Quakers with experience in this work, and are also skilled at facilitating groups of adults. For further information see www.quaker.org.uk/cyptraining.



Our faith, our work – a look back at 2017

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January

We became the first major UK religious body to be awarded the Pay Compare Mark for disclosing the gap between our highest- and lowest-paid workers. We have two pay scales, both with a maximum ratio of 1:4, making 1:4.7 overall.

February

We made a public call for a ban on new forms of intensive fossil fuel extraction, saying “The UK needs to be investing in efficient and renewable energy, and reducing demand, not in additional fossil fuels. Fracked gas is incompatible with tackling the climate crisis. It is destructive of the environment, land and communities.”

March

We responded to a consultation on fracking in Scotland, calling for a ban and increased support for renewable energy. In October the Scottish government effectively banned fracking. As our hospitality company celebrated its tenth year, it revealed that it had reduced the carbon footprint of Friends House by 29 per cent since 2009.

April

Young people aged 13–17 gathered in Devon for ‘Living out our faith in the world’ – five days of sustainable living that, for many, was a life-changing experience. They camped in yurts and helped plant crops, chop wood and light fires. They met daily for worship and found it powerful and moving. Each day they reflected on a different Quaker testimony and how to live it out.

May

More than 1,000 people visited our stand at the Hay Festival of Literature & the Arts. Over 700 people bought tickets to see three Quaker writers talk about their spiritual journey. At least four people have started attending meeting as a result. Our library

loaned eight objects to the Imperial War Museum London for its exhibition ‘People Power: Fighting for Peace’. This was a significant public reminder of the Quaker role in the British peace movement.

June

We launched ‘Engaging Young Adult Quakers’, a three-year project that will ensure our yearly meeting is truly open and welcoming to young adults aged 18–35. We also launched a new blog offering Friends and the public a way to find out more about our faith, our work and the issues that matter to us. By the end of 2017, the 30 blogs posted had received 12,750 views.

July

Staff member Tim Wallis made substantial contributions to the negotiation of the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty at the United Nations in New York. He spent time encouraging the positive engagement of diplomats and helping to coordinate civil society contributions. The treaty was eventually agreed by 122 states.

August

More than 1,700 people attended Yearly Meeting Gathering. It was a joy to come together as an all-age community to worship, make decisions and of course have fun. In Kenya, peacebuilders trained by our Turning the Tide programme ran a national campaign to prepare citizens for the general elections. They organised 124 events, reaching thousands of people.

September

Quakers joined other faith groups to stage seven days of nonviolent action that disrupted preparations for the DSEI arms fair. As truckloads of equipment arrived, Friends from across Britain were among those peacefully protesting against war profiteering. Staff helped plan a week of action and provided

meeting space at Friends House for the coalition that coordinated it.

October

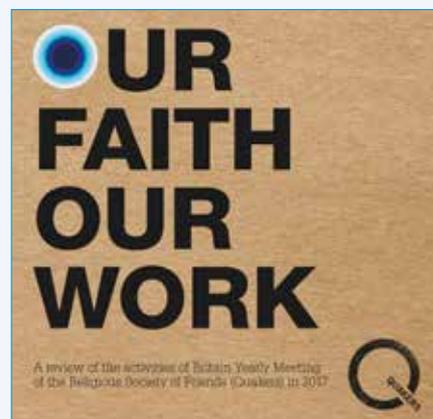
Our outreach team helped coordinate more than 160 events during Quaker Week 2017. These events engaged local communities with shared meals, speakers and craft activities, from Shetland to Devon. Almost a quarter of Quaker meetings in Britain were involved.

November

During Living Wage Week we celebrated the fact that 13 Quaker organisations had become Living Wage employers – including Britain Yearly Meeting, Woodbrooke, and several area meetings. The Quaker Living Wage campaign, run by Lancaster Meeting, supports meetings to make the change.

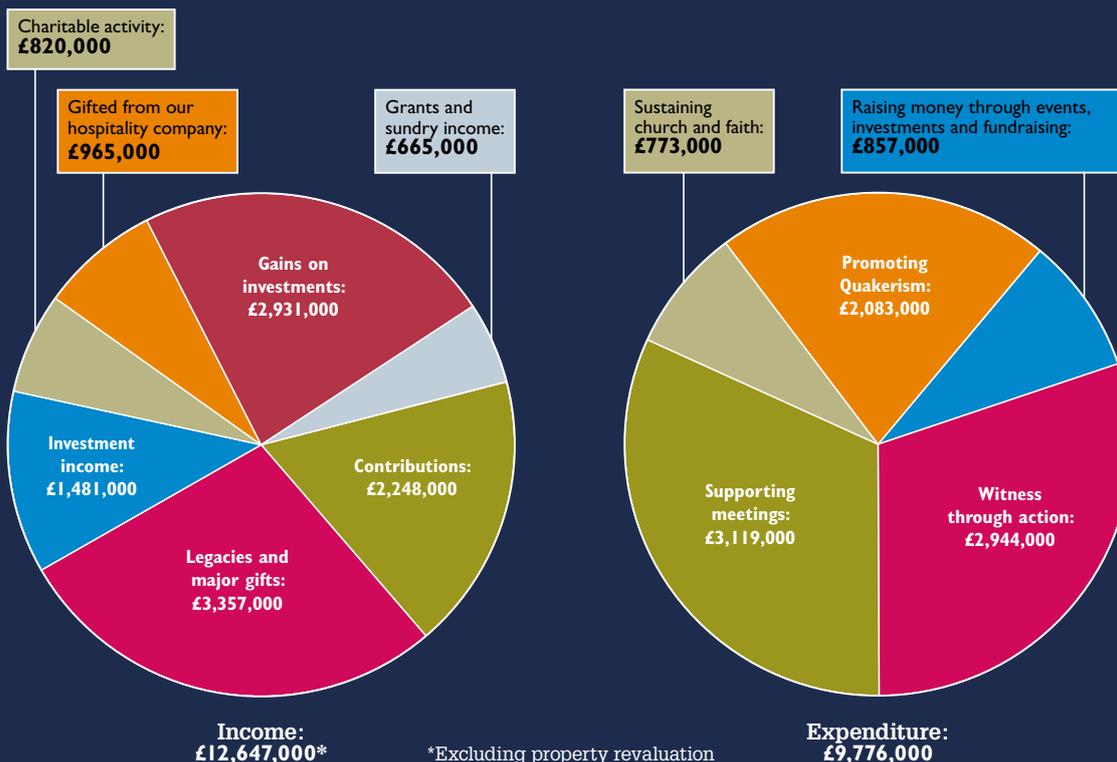
December

We marked the 70th anniversary of receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for Quaker relief work during and after the two world wars. We also congratulated the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on being awarded the 2017 prize. ICAN is a global coalition of non-governmental organisations that includes Quaker Peace & Social Witness.



You can watch videos and read more about Quaker work in 2017 in the annual review – available at www.quaker.org.uk/annualreview.

2017 financials at a glance



Our finances

In 2017 the hospitality company gifted almost £1m to Quaker work, as well as covering most of the running costs of Friends House. Some of the companies we invest in performed well due to the weak pound increasing the value of their overseas profits – yet to realise this gain on investments would mean selling them off and foregoing future income. Legacies are critical for us but hard to predict, so we set part of this income aside for time-limited projects. These generous gifts from Friends who have passed away will enable us to explore exciting new directions in future. As costs rise with inflation the Yearly Meeting Treasurer has called on Friends to increase their giving. Friends have a vision of our yearly meeting as a bold, diverse, vibrant and growing community: in the coming years we will use some of our reserves to help make this a reality. But spending reserves is not sustainable: we need to raise more money to fund the work we have been called to do.

A year in numbers

- 7 days of nonviolent action to disrupt the DSEI arms fair
- 20 people trained as human rights observers based in Israel–Palestine
- 50 meetings committed to welcoming forced migrants
- 183 people trained in nonviolent direct action techniques in Rwanda
- 200 Friends at an anti-fracking meeting for worship on Pendle Hill
- 720 people experienced Quaker worship at the Hay Festival
- 1,587 copies of ‘Quakers: a guide for young people’ sent out
- 2,415 information packs given away
- 133,720 visits to the ‘About us’ pages on our website
- 877,500 people saw our Quaker Week adverts in magazines
- 2,944,000 pounds spent working for peace, justice and sustainability

Get involved

Keep in touch – connect to the work done in your name
Sign up to *Quake!*, the new monthly e-newsletter for all Quakers in Britain, at www.quaker.org.uk/quake.

Give money – increase Quakers’ impact in the world
Our central organisation gives us the means and the profile to make a difference – visit www.quaker.org.uk/give or phone 020 7663 1015 to support it with a gift.

Give time – meet people and make a difference
Join with Friends from across Britain to help govern Quaker work – visit www.quaker.org.uk/give or phone 020 7663 1115 to find out more.

Leave a legacy – give Quaker work a bright future
Your gift can help Quakers take action on the key issues of tomorrow – visit www.quaker.org.uk/legacy or phone 020 7663 1019.

Quakers: committed to caring for peace and planet

Quakers share a way of life, not a set of beliefs. Their unity is based on shared understanding and a shared practice of silent worship, where they seek a communal stillness.

Quakers seek to experience God directly, within themselves and in their relationships with others and the world around them. They meet together for worship in local meetings, which are open to all who wish to attend.

Quakers try to live with honesty and integrity. This means speaking truth to all, including people in positions of power.

The Quaker commitment to peace arises from the conviction that love is at the heart of existence and that all human beings are unique and equal.

This leads Quakers to put their faith into action by working locally and globally to change the systems that cause injustice and violence.

Quakers try to live simply. They are concerned about the excesses and unfairness of our consumer society and the unsustainable use of natural resources.

To find out more about the Quaker way visit www.quaker.org.uk or request a free information pack using the form below.



Request a free information pack:

Name _____
Address _____

Postcode _____
Email _____

Please send completed form to:
Quaker Outreach (QN)
FREEPOST QUAKERS

FREEPHONE: 0808 109 1651
E: outreach@quaker.org.uk

Meet Liz Anderton



Liz Anderton is a member of West Scotland Area Meeting. She has served in a wide variety of roles, including elder and overseer, and is now co-clerk of the Quaker Disability Engagement Group.

I first joined the Quaker Disability Engagement Group (QDEG) in 2012. We are working towards the full inclusion of people with disabilities, and their carers, in all aspects of Quaker life. We see this as part of the Quaker testimony to equality.

I have partial sight and am registered blind. I was born in Scotland with albinism, and went to a mainstream school in the 1950s. Later I attended the North London School of Physiotherapists: a unique institution which trained visually impaired students from all over the world. I went on to work in a number of hospitals in London, Surrey and Amsterdam before returning to Scotland.

I came to Quakerism through my husband Jim, who I married in my late 30s. In 1988 he set up the charity Talking Friends (www.talkingfriends.org), which creates and distributes audio versions of Quaker publications and books, including *Quaker News*, to visually impaired Quakers.

Over the years I've taken on many Quaker roles, including work in outreach and nominations. Jim and I also spent a year in Australia as resident Friends at Melbourne Meeting – it was wonderful to work with Friends from all over the

world, sharing our faith customs and way of life.

I have found committee service very rewarding, and encourage more people with disabilities to apply for roles. Greater diversity enriches us all – and I think that people with disabilities can make a unique and valuable contribution. Often the things that people see first are the things that 'don't work': the glasses, the walking stick. People need to choose to be brave and look behind the disability to see the gifts that can be brought.

I'm now co-clerk of QDEG (<http://quakerdisabilitygroup.org.uk>). I'm really pleased about our successful work with Woodbrooke, Yearly Meeting and Friends House to increase accessibility and inclusion, but there is still lots more to do. We are conscious that in future we need to be working more with children and young people who are disabled, and also raising awareness about buildings accessibility.

If you would like to find out more about serving on a national Quaker committee, please phone 020 7663 1121, email nominations@quaker.org.uk or visit www.quaker.org.uk/service.