

## Follow up letter



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

12 June 2020

To members of Meeting for Sufferings

### Meeting for Sufferings 6 June 2020

Dear Friends

Thank you all for your presence and your prayerful engagement with the process of holding an online Meeting for Sufferings last Saturday. I am aware that it requires a different sort of concentration and commitment – also sometimes a measure of patience – but I hope that the experience was mainly positive for you all. I look forward to receiving any comments you might have, as we will probably be holding meetings in this way for the rest of 2020. Please email [sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk) or complete a short online [questionnaire](#).

We are living in exceptional times. The report from Trustees showed us just how much work has been going on to keep abreast of the moving landscape of covid-19. I'm sure you would all wish to uphold them and the staff as they shoulder these responsibilities on our behalf at the present time.

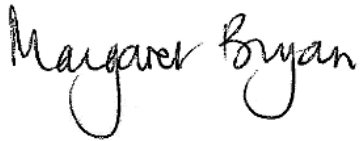
You will remember that we agreed in principle the dates for MfS in the 2021-24 triennium, securing a place in the Yearly Meeting diary for four meetings in each year. Arrangements Group, as requested, will look again at the number of meetings in the light of the amount of business we seek to cover. So – please contact [sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk) if you have any suggestions or observations to help their discernment.

Our last session – How does the truth prosper amongst you? – was held in small groups, and I hope you all found this a fulfilling experience. I would be glad to hear your reflections. Again, please send them via [sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk). We plan to gather all the responses and will circulate a report in due course.

Our closing worship brought together a small number of contributions, ending with this quotation from Quaker Faith and Practice (26.04):

'Live up to the light thou hast, and more will be granted thee.'  
(Caroline Fox, 1841)

In peace

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret Bryan". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop on the 'y'.

Margaret Bryan  
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

The following papers are included in this mailing:

- Functions checklist
- MfS minutes June 2020

**Meeting for Sufferings: Functions Checklist (*Quaker faith & practice* Chapter 7.02)**

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>June 20</b>	<b>Comments</b>
A	To set the priorities for the centrally managed work		
B	To issue public statements in the name of BYM		
C	To receive regular interim reports from BYM trustees	7	
D	To receive the BYM trustees' annual report & accounts for information	7	
E	To make a report on its own activities to YM		
F	To determine the dates of YM	9	
G	To deliberate on how best to support the spiritual life of the yearly meeting and to further the development of its visionary and prophetic role		
H	To keep under review and to test as appropriate the existing and new concerns referred to it by AMs and others		
I	To foster communication throughout the yearly meeting	10	
J	To receive minutes from area meetings		
K	To make appropriate entries in the prison and court register	6	
I	To appoint representatives to attend other Yearly Meetings	5	
M	To receive information about changes in the composition or status of general meetings and gatherings		
N	To make changes in the composition of area meetings		
O	To give assistance to area meetings in the amicable settlement of disputes		
P	To hear appeals against area meeting decisions		
Q	To give guidance on policy matters referred to it by the BYM trustees from time to time		
R	To authorise action and minute as required under other sections of Quaker Faith and Practice		
S	To set up an arrangements group and support and working groups to assist its own work as it sees fit	6	Appointment of group to review arrangements group



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

At a meeting of

## **Meeting for Sufferings**

Held online on Saturday 6 June 2020 by video conference

## **Minutes**

### **MfS/20/06/01 Opening Worship**

We meet in exceptional circumstances, unable to gather or worship together in person. As a consequence, Meeting for Sufferings is held today for the first time by video conference.

During opening worship we have heard 19:61 of Quaker faith & practice read.

### **MfS/20/06/02 Membership of Meeting for Sufferings**

Since our last meeting we have received the following requests for release and nominations for Meeting for Sufferings until the rise of Yearly Meeting 2021:

#### **Release requests received:**

Jayne Meadows – Luton and Leighton AM representative  
Rosie Roberts – Sheffield & Balby AM representative  
Craig Barnett – Sheffield & Balby AM alternate  
James McCarthy – York AM representative  
Eleanor Fuller – Young Friends General Meeting

#### **Nominated:**

Simon Colbeck – Luton and Leighton AM representative  
Hilary Tucker – Manchester & Warrington representative  
Faith Goodfellow – Northumbria AM alternate  
Craig Barnett – Sheffield & Balby AM representative  
Emma Norminton – Sheffield & Balby alternate  
Robert Straughton – Swarthmoor AM representative  
Barbara Penny – York AM representative  
Alexandra Boliver-Brown – Young Friends General Meeting

We appoint the Friends named and thank the Friends released for their service.

#### **Visitors invited to represent area meetings/committees in the absence of the appointed representative or alternate:**

Marie McCusker – Lancashire Central & North AM

#### **Other visitors:**

Neil Jarvis – BYM Staff, Recording Clerk's Office  
Suze Lidbury – BYM Staff, Communications and Services  
Rachel Matthews – BYM Staff, Quaker Life  
Sherry-Ann Mitchell – BYM Staff, Recording Clerk's Office  
Anne van Staveren – BYM staff, Communications and Services

Joseph Jones – The Friend  
Kellie Turner – Young Adult Friend  
Oliver Waterhouse – BYM Staff, Quaker Life

We note that Lisa Kiew, Head of Finance and Resources, has left BYM, and we thank her for all her work.

### **MfS/20/06/03 Apologies**

We receive apologies from Cornwall and Hardshaw and Mann Area Meetings which have not been able to send a representative on this occasion.

### **MfS/20/06/04 Agenda**

The Clerk has introduced the draft agenda, and we have agreed to this.

### **MfS/20/06/05 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 and 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 and 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 – South Wales AM/CCR De Cymru

We appoint the Friends named accordingly.

### **MfS/20/06/06 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 Chief Executive Officer'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.

### **MfS/20/06/07 BYM Trustees and report from Yearly Meeting Treasurer**

We received the minutes of Trustee meetings held on 15 February, 3 April and 15 May.

Caroline Nursey (Clerk of trustees) and Linda Batten (YM treasurer) have spoken to the minutes and highlighted the challenges that the YM is facing at this time.

The outturn at the end of 2019 left us in a comfortable position before Covid-19 , but we are now facing a considerable fall in income and the constraint this places on all our activities

With challenge comes opportunity and we are glad to hear that Quaker Life and Woodbrooke have been able to work together more closely on the integrated strategy, introduced to us in the April papers. Covid-19 is exacerbating the problems already felt in some meetings across the country and we have heard of the value of Local Development Workers in helping BYM address these.

Friends contributed their largely positive experiences of the new ways of holding meetings, and the greater inclusion it can bring. We have much to learn from friends worldwide about online worship and business, and we miss each other's company.

We look forward to further contributing to this conversation and thank Trustees for all their work at a difficult time

### **MfS/20/06/08 Meeting dates for Meeting for Sufferings**

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group has proposed the following dates for the next triennium of Meeting for Sufferings:

2021

2 October

3–5 December (residential)

2022

5 March

2 July

1 October

3 December

2023

4 March

1 July

6–8 October (residential)

2 December

2024

2 March

1 June

We agree to these dates. We note the date 1 June 2024 is provisional on confirmation of the date of Yearly Meeting that year and so may change. We have heard concern about reducing the number of meetings from five to four, given the extent of our business, and agree to ask Arrangements Group to review the pattern, including the possibility of online meetings, and to report back to us in October.

### **MfS/20/06/09 Yearly Meeting**

Because of public health restrictions currently in force, changes have had to be made to the planned dates for holding Yearly Meetings in 2020 and 2021.

#### Yearly Meeting 2020

Further to minute MfS/18/02/08 we now receive minute BYMT-2020-04-04 (c) which notifies us that the Yearly Meeting Gathering planned for 1-7 August 2020 has been postponed due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The Yearly Meeting Clerk has told us about her consultation with the clerks of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee and the Recording Clerk about options for holding a Yearly Meeting in 2020. They recommend that a virtual Yearly Meeting session be held on the afternoon of Sunday 15 November 2020, in order for Friends from across the yearly meeting to come together online to worship and conduct some necessary business. We agree to this. We understand that Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee may propose that Yearly Meeting delegate some business to Meeting for Sufferings to be dealt with in the interim before the next face-to-face Yearly Meeting can be held in 2021.

#### Yearly Meeting 2021

Further to minute MfS 2019/02/8 we note the proposal to hold a Yearly Meeting Gathering at the University of Bath from 31 July to 6 August 2021. We agree to this, noting that the Gathering will replace the Yearly Meeting previously called for 30 April to 3 May 2021. BYM Trustees, YM Agenda Committee and staff will continue to monitor risks and act upon public health advice as their planning develops.

We expect to receive revised recommendations for the dates for holding Yearly Meeting in 2022 and beyond from Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee in due course.

**MfS/20/06/10 How is the Truth prospering in our meetings?**

Meeting for Sufferings representatives have shared news from their areas of how meetings are responding in the present circumstances.

We have closed our time together with worship.

Margaret Bryan  
Clerk