

Calling Letter



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

To members of Meeting for Sufferings

19 January 2018

Dear Friends,

Our first meeting in 2018 will be on Saturday 3rd February at 10am in the George Fox Room at Friends House, London and I look forward to our worship together.

The agenda is attached and you will see that this time we have only a few items. In the morning we will receive the annual report from the BYM Sustainability Group which is one of our two working groups (the other being the Book of Discipline Review Preparation Group which we heard from last time). BYM Sustainability Group was set up by Meeting for Sufferings in 2014.

The terms of reference required us to review the Group after three years and you will remember that the Review Group was set up last year. We will receive the report of the Review Group at our April meeting but at this meeting, we receive the annual report of BYM Sustainability Group and will be able to hear from Lis Burch, the clerk, about her perspective on the work. Decisions about the way in which the work may be taken forward will be for us to make in our April meeting.

We will also hear from Deborah Rowlands, our Yearly Meeting clerk, about plans and preparation for Yearly Meeting but our main focus will be on Quaker Life and the Central Committee's report to us (postponed from last meeting). We will have a chance to consider the report more deeply and to think about the work and the impact of Quaker Life on local Friends and meetings.

May I remind you that if you have any specific comments or queries about any of the supporting documents sent to you, it is helpful if you email sufferings@quaker.org.uk before the meeting so that we can respond directly if necessary or at any rate we can all be better prepared!

In peace



Anne Ullathorne,
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

Papers enclosed with this mailing

Agenda

MfS Forward Agenda

MfSAG January 2018 meeting minutes with MfS Functions checklist for 2017

MfS 2018 02 05 Court and Prison Register

MfS 2018 02 06 Minutes received from Area Meetings

MfS 2018 02 07 Review of Committee on Clerks

MfS 2018 02 08 Yearly Meeting

MfS 2018 02 09a BYM Sustainability Group report

MfS 2018 02 09b BYM Sustainability Group - progress in addressing the recommendations for action

MfS 2018 02 10 Quaker Life Central Committee

MfS 2018 02 10a Quaker Life Central Committee report

MfS 2018 02 10b Quaker Life Strategic priorities

MfS 2018 02 10c Quaker Life Central Committee minute regarding Transgender and non-binary inclusion

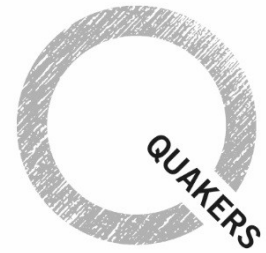
MfS 2018 02 10d Quaker Life Central Committee initial consideration: home groups

MfS 2018 02 11 Quaker Recognised Bodies

n.b. the following papers will be available on the day of the meeting:

MfS 2018 02 03 Membership

MfS 2018 02 12 Appointments



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

Agenda

Meeting for Sufferings 3 February 2018

George Fox room, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

	Item	Paper
09.00	Arrivals	
10.00	Session starts	
1	Opening worship	
2	Welcome and introductions	
3	Membership (Tabled paper)	MfS 2018 02 03 (to note)
4	Agenda Adoption and acceptance of the agenda	
5	Court & Prison Register	MfS 2018 02 05 (for information)
6	Minutes received from Area Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kingston & Wandsworth AM regarding setting priorities for centrally-managed work 	MfS 2018 02 06 (to receive)
7	Review of Committee on Clerks To approve terms of Reference	MfS 2018 02 07 (to approve)
8	Yearly Meeting To receive Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee Minutes YMAC 2017/09/15 regarding the venue for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020.	MfS 2018 02 08 (for information)
	Short Break (please hold the silence in the meeting room)	
9	BYM Sustainability Group report Lis Burch (clerk) will speak to the 2017 report from the group.	MfS 2018 02 09a & b (for information)
10	Quaker Life Central Committee Jocelyn Bell Burnell will speak to the 2017 QLCC report, the QLCC Strategic priorities minutes and related paper and the QLCC minute regarding Transgender & non binary inclusion.	MfS 2018 02 10a, b and c

12.00	Lunch in the restaurant	
	Informal lunchtime gatherings Opportunities to meet with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of Quaker Life Central Committee • BYM Trustees 	
13.30	Quaker Life Central Committee (continued) Initial consideration, in home groups	MfS 2018 02 10d
	Quaker Life Central Committee Continued consideration, in plenary	
11	Quaker Recognised Bodies To register some further Quaker Recognised Bodies.	MfS 2018 02 11 (for approval)
12	Appointments	MfS 2018 02 12 (for approval)
	Closing worship	
16.00	Close. Tea, coffee and departures	

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS FORWARD AGENDA – Feb 2018

The following items are currently proposed or being considered by Arrangements Group for meetings in 2018. These plans may change.

Representatives will see that reports from all four standing committees are now scheduled to come to the same meeting. Arrangements Group sees this as an opportunity for MfS to consider all the work together; and hopes this will help MfS in its role of setting priorities across the centrally-managed work.

April '18	<p>Final report of the Group to Review Appeals Procedures</p> <p>Review of BYM Sustainability Group</p> <p>Letter to Ireland YM (to note)</p> <p>Reflections on the 2015-18 Triennium</p>
July '18	<p>New Triennium: induction</p> <p>Yearly Meeting 2018: reflections and follow-up</p>
Oct '18	<p>with the Young People's Participation Day</p> <p>Diversity and inclusion</p> <p>Central decision-making processes in BYM (building on the minute sent by Kingston & Wandsworth AM)</p>
Nov '18	<p>Residential weekend, Woodbrooke</p> <p>Reports from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee • Quaker Life Central Committee • Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations • Quaker World Relations Committee

Other matters expected to return in due course:

- **Pastoral and spiritual support to people who are not able to regularly attend local meetings** – sent to Quaker Life, for advice in February 2015
- **Gender Equality and the Tabular Statement** – sent to Recording Clerk March 2015
- **Government sponsorship of Cadet Forces in Scottish State Schools** – forwarded to QPSWCC in October 2016
- **Integrity, accountability and truth in public affairs** – QPSWCC has indicated it is considering this and may wish to come back



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

At a meeting of

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group

Held at Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

Date 8th January 2018

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group Minutes

Present: Margaret Bryan (convenor), Ursula Fuller, Sue Goodson, James Johnson, Juliet Prager, Jane Stephenson (by phone for part of item 5), Anne Ullathorne

1. Reflections on last Meeting for Sufferings

- i) We have received feedback from Meeting for Sufferings Support Group and various individual Friends.
- ii) We noted that it is helpful to remind Friends in the calling letter that comments and queries on the business before the meeting are welcomed in advance.
- iii) The participation of Young People in two of our business sessions was particularly welcomed.
- iv) We welcomed the reports from Wales and Scotland and suggest that this might happen triennially.

2. Meetings attended by clerk(s)

Anne attended the meeting held this year in Inverness of the “Three Nations” clerks.

3. Forward agenda

We have reviewed our forward agenda which informs our planning.

4. Agenda planning for the next meeting

- i) We planned the agenda for our February meeting.

- ii) We have considered items to be included in our April meeting (the last in the triennium).
- iii) Looking forward to the induction meeting for new representatives in July we expect to get to know each other and the committee's way of working.

5. Role of MfS clerk

We noted the updated paper detailing the role of the clerks of MfS.

6. MfS Handbook

Anne Ullathorne and Ann Banks (MfSSG) have worked on updating the handbook – to be renamed “Essential Information” – and we agreed to the changes.

7. MfS report 2017

We have considered the final version of the report to Yearly Meeting in May, updated following MfS in December.

8. MfS functions list

We received the updated functions list.

8. Date and time of next meetings (11-3.30pm)

2 March 2018

21 May 2018

Margaret Bryan

Convenor

p	To hear appeals against area meeting decisions				1			1	1
q	To give guidance on policy matters referred to it by the BYM trustees from time to time							0	0
r	To authorise action and minute as required under other sections of Quaker Faith and Practice		1	1	3	2		7	4
s	To set up an arrangements group and support and working groups to assist its own work as it sees fit							0	0 ⁱⁱ
	No. of minutes	7	13	18	26	18		82	
	No. of functions addressed (of 19)	7	7	7	10	11		13	

ⁱ in the recent past this has been done annually; but in 2016, Sufferings agreed dates of YM for both 2018 and 2019

ⁱⁱ MfS Arrangements Group is formed of the two clerks, plus three members of MfS who are appointed to serve during the triennium. So, generally, this matter is only on the agenda once every three years. The Group's Terms of Reference were last reviewed in September 2015

Court and Prison Register

In October 2017, Meeting for Sufferings recorded information about Friends who were arrested when witnessing for peace at the Defence Sales Equipment International Arms Fair (DSEI) (minute MfS7/10/05).

We have been informed that some of the details in that minute were not accurate. To correct this, the clerk suggests the following draft minute:

MfS/18/02/xx Court and Prison Register

We note that some of the details recorded at our meeting last October were inaccurate in relation to the arrest of three of the six Friends who were arrested in September 2017, during a Meeting for Worship outside the Arms Fair organised by Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) at the ExCeL centre in Docklands, London.

We record now that on 19 September 2017, Chris Gwyntopher (North East Thames AM) and Hank Eynattan (Kingston and Wandsworth AM) were found guilty of obstruction of the highway and were released on six months conditional discharge and fined £85 court costs plus £20 Victim Support surcharge. Paul Milling (Kingston and Wandsworth AM) pleaded not guilty to obstruction of the highway and his case was not proceeded with.

We ask for this updated information to be included in the Court and Prison Register.

Meeting for Sufferings 2017 02 03 – AM minutes

Kingston & Wandsworth AM minute 17.73 from the AM held on 19 November regarding setting priorities for centrally-managed work

Kingston and Wandsworth AM: 19 November 2017

17.73 Meeting for Sufferings - how to involve the membership in setting priorities for the central work

(a) Further to minutes 17.05, 17.20, and 17.48 reflecting our concern that Meeting for Sufferings are not carrying out their role in setting priorities, we have received the attached paper from our clerk suggesting a possible way to involve the membership more directly in the broad decisions about priorities for the centrally-managed work by holding regional gatherings every 6 years to input to Meeting for Sufferings.

We do not wish to add to existing arrangements and feel that Meeting for Sufferings already has the capacity to carry out its role in setting priorities as set out in Quaker Faith & Practice 7.02a if a suitable process was put in place and a day or weekend was set aside to do this. This should include a planning process that gives Meeting for Sufferings the information it needs, including on options and risks, to discern the proposed allocation of resources to activity over the following 2-3 years. We ask the Clerk to forward this minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

Gillian Ashmore
Clerk

Further note:

This minute builds on two minutes sent to Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) by Kingston and Wandsworth AM last year, titled 'Central decision-making processes in Britain Yearly Meeting: a cause for concern?', which were both received in June 2017. The first minute (17.05) explained that the AM did not see that MfS is effectively fulfilling all of its responsibilities. The clerk responded to this minute with a letter, which led to the second minute from the AM (17.20). (An offer from the clerk to visit Kingston and Wandsworth, to help her understand their concern and explore ways forward together, was not taken up by the AM.)

Both minutes and the letter can be found in the papers for the June 2017 meeting.

At the June 2017 meeting, a period of threshing did not enable MfS to reach clarity about the way forward; MfS Arrangements Group was asked to consider this further and report back.

Arrangements Group was aware that agendas for upcoming meetings were already expected to be particularly full; and that a new Triennium will start from May 2018. At the same time, Arrangements Group had started to introduce some changes, with the intention of addressing at least some of the concerns expressed by Kingston and Wandsworth Friends. This includes regularly monitoring how far MfS is addressing its functions (please see MfSAG January minutes for more information). The MfS Handbook will include an additional section explaining more about decision-making processes in BYM and how bodies are interrelated.

Arrangements Group is planning to set aside time in October 2018 for further consideration of this matter.

Group to review the YM Committee on Clerks

Introduction

Last year's Yearly Meeting asked Meeting for Sufferings to undertake a review of the Committee on Clerks. In October, Sufferings agreed to establish a short-term review group and asked the Recording Clerk to draft terms of reference (minute MfS/17/10/21).

Central Nominations Committee was also asked to bring three names.

The draft terms of reference follow, and Meeting for Sufferings is asked to approve them.

Group to review the YM Committee on Clerks

Appointed by Meeting for Sufferings

Draft version 02 16/12//2017

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Yearly Meeting Committee on Clerks is a standing committee appointed by Yearly Meeting (see *Quaker faith & practice* 6.22) to bring forward names for service as required by Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings (see *Qf&p* 6.19¹).

1. Summary of Purpose

- 1.1 Yearly Meeting, by minute 23 of YM 2017, has asked Meeting for Sufferings to carry out a review of YM Committee on Clerks' manner of working and for a revision of its terms of reference.
- 1.2 The review should include how to nurture potential Clerks and Treasurers and the relationship between Central Nominations Committee and the Committee on Clerks.

2. Authority, Delegation and Relationships

- 2.1 The Group to review the YM Committee on Clerks ('the Group') is appointed by Meeting for Sufferings and derives its authority from Britain Yearly Meeting. It is accountable to Meeting for Sufferings who agree its terms of reference and provide the resources to carry forward its work. It reports to Meeting for Sufferings.
- 2.2 The Group's meetings and work are conducted in faithful waiting on the spirit, in the expectation of being guided forward. We cannot constrain the spirit. If the Group's leadings would take it out of the area outlined in these terms of reference it should record its leading in a minute to Meeting for Sufferings who may discern the way forward or seek the guidance of Britain Yearly Meeting as appropriate.

¹ This paragraph of *Quaker faith & practice* has been amended by Yearly Meeting since the publication of the 5th edition. Current text can be found at <http://qfp.quaker.org.uk/passage/6-19/>

- 2.3 The Group may communicate by minute with Meeting for Sufferings, Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees and their subcommittees, Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee/Arrangements Committee, YM Committee on Clerks, YM Nominating Group, Central Nominations Committee and Church Government Advisory Group. It may communicate with other bodies through the Recording Clerk.

3. Duties

- 3.1 The Group is to discern and recommend changes to the current terms of reference of ConC. It is responsible for the following specific duties:
- 3.1.1 To consider the clerking and treasuring needs of Britain Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and BYM Trustees;
 - 3.1.2 To review the experience, functioning and composition of ConC as presently constituted and to make recommendations for any changes required.
 - 3.1.3 To consider the resources currently available to the Committee to find suitable names for nomination and to consider a wide and diverse range of Friends for this service;
 - 3.1.4 To consult as appropriate with the appointing bodies, Friends with experience of service as clerk or treasurer, and with staff servicing these bodies and ConC;
 - 3.1.5 To consider how the Committee supports potential clerks and treasurers and offer advice about any desirable changes;
 - 3.1.6 To consider whether changes are needed in the relationship between Central Nominations Committee and the Committee on Clerks;
 - 3.1.7 To make any other recommendations about the ways of working, composition and constitution of ConC as the Group shall see fit;
 - 3.1.8 To consult with Church Government Advisory Group in the event that changes are proposed to church government text in *Quaker faith & practice*;
- 3.2 The group should prepare draft terms of reference for consideration by Meeting for Sufferings in November 2018.
- 3.3 The group should produce a final report on its deliberations for consideration by Meeting for Sufferings and support Meeting for Sufferings through the production of briefing material in advance of *Yearly Meeting 2019*.

4. Membership and attendance

The Group will have three members appointed by Meeting for Sufferings.

- 4.2 The convener is appointed by the Group from their number.
- 4.3 The clerk of Meeting for Sufferings and the Recording Clerk (or his/her nominee) may attend meetings ex-officio.

- 4.4 Other Friends, specialists or members of staff may be asked to attend by invitation of the convener for specific agenda items.
- 4.5 The Recording Clerk, or another member of staff designated by them, will normally attend Group meetings to act as secretary to the Group. Meeting without the secretary will only be by agreement with them or the Recording Clerk.

5. Frequency of Meetings

- 5.1 The Group should meet as frequently as necessary to complete its task; it may meet virtually if required.
- 5.2 The Group should agree a mechanism for conducting business between meetings.

6. Agreement of the Terms of Reference

- 6.1 The Group shall work within these terms of reference under the authority of minute 2018/02/XXX of Meeting for Sufferings held 3 February 2018.
- 6.2 These terms of reference may be amended by minuted decisions of Meeting for Sufferings.

Yearly Meeting

Introduction

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (YMAC) is responsible for planning of the agenda for, and the use of the premises during, Yearly Meeting (more information in Quaker faith and practice 6.18). It is asked to work closely with other bodies, including Meeting for Sufferings (MfS), to promote the right holding of Yearly Meeting.

There are two parts to this item.

1. Yearly Meeting 2020 dates

First, MfS is asked to record dates for Yearly Meeting 2020 (which will be a residential event, in August). This is one of the responsibilities of Sufferings. YMAC follows the pattern for arranging dates which was set by MfS in 2011, which means it's not possible at this meeting to suggest alternatives.

2. Yearly Meeting 2018 agenda

Then, we will have the opportunity to hear from Deborah Rowlands, clerk of Yearly Meeting, about the planned agenda for Yearly Meeting 2018 (to be held 4–7 May in London). Deborah may also talk about discernment for YM agendas beyond 2018.

Deborah's introduction to YM 2018 will be verbal, and there are no further details in this paper. When more information is ready, it will be sent to Meetings and available at: www.quaker.org.uk/ym

At a Meeting of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee held 30 September 2017 at Friends House, London

2017/09/15

Venue for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020

We have received paper 2017 09 13 which provides details of visits to Exeter University and the University of Bath, together with additional information.

We have considered geography, cost, provision of meeting spaces and local meeting support.

Having considered these, we agree that the University of Bath is our preferred venue for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020. We are positive about the benefits of returning to a venue we have used in the recent past, enabling us to learn from our previous experience in delivering the Gathering.

The dates available are 1-8 August 2020 and we therefore propose to Meeting for Sufferings that Yearly Meeting Gathering should be held 1-8 August 2020 at the University of Bath.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare Scott Booth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clare Scott Booth
Clerk

BYM Sustainability Group report to Meeting for Sufferings

BYM Sustainability Group is a working group of Meeting for Sufferings, set up in 2014 to provide “a leadership role, similar to eldership and oversight” in relation to the Yearly Meeting’s Canterbury Commitment to become a low carbon sustainable community. Our terms of reference require us to monitor progress in the Recommendations for Action, adopted by Meeting for Sufferings in June 2014 and amended in February 2017, and to identify any need for changes to them, engaging actively with Central Committees, BYM Trustees and others responsible for particular areas of action. We have a good deal to report from 2017, which has seen a turning point in several major pieces of work, plus the comprehensive review of the group.

Immediately after reporting to you last year, we were invited to attend a joint meeting of Quaker Life and Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committees. At that meeting we presented our proposal (‘Nurturing our Sustainability Ministry’) for a major project throughout the yearly meeting to encourage and support Friends in exploring their ministry regarding the commitment – starting from the spiritual imperatives underlying the concern, and developing together the stories, actions, narratives and accounts which help us to make sense of it and integrate it throughout our lives and worship.

In addition to exploring this issue with the Central Committees, we were pleased to have an opportunity to meet with the Vibrancy in Meetings staff and committee members. We feel there are many synergies in the work of the Sustainability Group and the Vibrancy project, and revisited these when we invited Rachel Matthews, Vibrancy in Meetings Coordinator, to speak at our residential meeting in May last year.

Then, shortly after the joint meeting of the Central Committees, we attended part of a meeting with BYM Trustees, and shared with them our view of the progress of the concern throughout the yearly meeting.

Last year we said to you that we thought more priority should be given to the commitment throughout BYM governance, and we are pleased to report that Trustees agreed with this and that now all committee terms of reference will include a reference to the commitment and how their work relates to it. We also said that we would like to see greater readiness to work with us to address gaps in our corporate action in relation to the commitment, and to make available the necessary staff, committee time and funding. I believe there is readiness to work with us, although it has not yet manifested itself in significant staff, committee time, or funding (with the exception of grants to QUNO and FWCC – see below). This is a cause of concern and some frustration within the Sustainability Group, and we very much hope that we can find ways of making progress in this area in the next year.

Last year we reported with pleasure that QPSW and Living Witness were working together, with our encouragement and support, to develop a series of materials named Green Light, including resources on lifestyle change, Quaker conversations about sustainability, corporate discernment, and engagement with the wider community and politics.

We are disappointed that this project has been on hold for much of 2017. Similarly, because BYMSG itself has no budget other than for meetings, we were told that our proposal for Nurturing our Sustainability Ministry would need to be a legacy-funded project: in mid-2017 it passed to a Staff group to finalise the details and make the funding proposal. We understand that numerous changes are being made to the proposal and we await a report on its progress at our next meeting.

One factor which has exercised our group and its predecessor is the best way of collecting and using information about energy use throughout the yearly meeting – Minute 36 of YMG at Canterbury in 2011 referred to the need to establish a baseline of current witness and a framework in which individual Friends and meetings can share their successes, and we have struggled to find a manageable way of establishing that baseline and monitoring the data ever since. We returned to this in 2017, re-thinking our ideas about what information would be useful to collect, why, and how. We are now in communication with a sub-group of Quaker Stewardship Committee regarding the possible inclusion of two additional questions which we have drafted, in the advice to Area Meeting Trustees in preparing their annual reports. If this goes ahead, we hope to hear from Area Meetings about the progress and activities which have taken place in the area meeting towards becoming part of a low-carbon, sustainable community, and the effect these activities have had on reducing carbon emissions. We are delighted to have reached this point after so many years, and hope that Friends will encourage their Area Meetings to respond as fully as possible.

We welcome the decisions of BYM Trustees to ensure the continued funding of the climate change work undertaken by QUNO Geneva, and to fund a staff placement with Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). We were glad to welcome Susanna Mattingly, appointed as the new Sustainability Communications Officer for FWCC, to our November meeting. We look forward to the opportunities to engage more with other yearly meetings on environmental issues.

Our terms of reference require us to organise a national, face to face gathering at least every two years, and the last gathering was held in the spring of 2016 at Swanwick. We have had a planning group preparing for the next gathering during the course of 2017, but heard at our meeting in September that the earliest date at which the Events and Committee Services team would be able to offer administrative support for a gathering would be October 2018. We are now working towards a national gathering to be held at Swanwick 19-21 October, and again, we hope that Friends will encourage their Area Meetings to appoint Friends to attend.

Some current and former members of the Sustainability Group attended the Bonn climate conference in November, which saw the launch of a new initiative to engage faith leaders and communities in sustainable living. Leaders were encouraged to sign up to a statement of intention and we are delighted that Paul Parker has signed this statement on behalf of BYM, and Gretchen Castle on behalf of FWCC. We encourage local and area meetings to consider signing the statement, which can be found at <http://www.interfaithclimatestatement.org>.

So for the BYM Sustainability Group, 2017 in many ways has felt like two steps forward, one step back. There has been significant progress, which is reflected in the updated Progress Table on the Recommendations for Action (attached to this report), but there are still many gaps which remain to be addressed. We have refrained from starting major new pieces of work pending the outcome of the review of the group

which took place in 2017. We hope that once the Review Group's report has been received and recommendations implemented the Sustainability Group will be able to move ahead with renewed vigour.

Lis Burch, Oxford & Swindon AM
Maud Grainger, Central England AM (Woodbrooke)
Claudia Fry, Surrey & Hampshire Border AM (YFGM)
Stevie Krayner, CC Y Fenni Southern Marches AM
Martin Mansell, West Scotland AM
Christopher Martin, Central England AM
Laurie Michaelis, Oxford & Swindon AM (Living Witness)
Frances Voelcker, CC Porthmadog North Wales AM
Chris Walker, Secretary
Martina Weitsch, North West London AM
Gillian Westcott, Devon AM

Becoming a low carbon sustainable community: progress in addressing the recommendations for action update for BYM Sustainability Group - November 2017

1. Eldership: rooting the commitment in our Quaker faith

This section of the *Recommendations for Action* is essentially about eldership – supporting Friends in their spiritual practice, worship, ministry, learning and discernment as these relate to our sustainability commitment. These need attention at all levels, from individual Friends and local meetings to the Yearly Meeting and other national and international Quaker bodies. In particular:

Recommendation	Current Activity	Gaps & Priorities
1. Local and area meetings should provide opportunities for worship-based explorations where Friends can share how sustainability is part of their faith, and how that shapes their lives, relationships and actions..	In 2013 Yorkshire Survey, 60% of meetings mentioned corporate exploration of sustainability. Proposed <i>Green Light</i> series (QPSW/LW) resources Friends and Meetings. Currently on hold while other projects develop.	Benchmarking and monitoring of activities This is a proposed focus for Nurturing our Sustainability Ministry
2. Quaker bodies including central committees, Quaker Recognised Bodies and other organisations, should make opportunities (including for their staff, members and networks) to explore how their work connects sustainability with Quaker faith.	QL Rep Council meeting Oct 2016 QPSW & QL CCs, BYMTs and MtM focusing on sustainability in the centrally managed work New FWCC staff member (Susanna Mattingly) working on development of sustainability testimony.	Nurturing our sustainability ministry identified by BYMSG as priority project.
3. Central departments and other Quaker bodies should work together to provide Friends and meetings with resources and support for learning and discernment related to sustainability and its basis in Quaker faith.	<i>Sustainability Toolkit</i> (2011) Proposed <i>Green Light</i> series (on hold) Wb: learning through onsite, online and offsite programmes LW: now pulling back from offering support to Friends and Meetings	More co-ordination of different offerings and publicity/signposting so Meetings know where to find support.
4. There is a particular need to support ministry in all its forms, from spoken contributions in meetings for worship to publications, art, drama and spirit-led action.	Friends Quarterly special issue on sustainability following up from <i>Composting the Covenant</i> course.	Nurturing Our Sustainability Ministry project would address this

Abbreviations: ESP=QPSW Economics, Sustainability & Peace Group. LW=Living Witness. Wb=Woodbrooke.

2. Oversight: Strengthening Our Community

The Canterbury Commitment should be owned and implemented by BYM as a whole including individual Friends, local meetings, central committees, Woodbrooke, listed informal groups and other Quaker organisations. We all have a responsibility for embedding the Commitment in every group and every decision we participate in. Our witness should also be connected to the work of international Quaker organisations, other yearly meetings and non-Quaker organisations.

Recommendation	Current Activity	Gaps & Priorities
<p>1. Regular and ongoing dialogue involving Friends House, local meetings and other Quaker organisations is needed to build community and share resources.</p>	<p>Regular newsletters: Earth & Economy earthQuaker - discontinued</p> <p>Blogs: Quakernomics Living Witness 'Human Dimensions'</p> <p>Being Friends Together</p> <p>Vibrancy in Meetings project</p>	
<p>2. Face-to-face gatherings are also vital for maintaining and developing our community and our focus on becoming low-carbon and sustainable. We see a need for such events to take place regularly, ideally every year, but at least every two years.</p>	<p>Wb courses and retreats</p> <p>Quaker Life Rep Council Oct 2016 & follow-up</p> <p>Events at YMG 2018</p> <p>BYM Sustainability Gathering 2018</p> <p>LW gatherings discontinued</p>	<p>Support for/organisation of regional gatherings</p>
<p>3. Regional and national networks can be ways for Friends and meetings to build community and share resources without relying on paid staff at Friends House. Further networks will be needed.</p>	<p>QPSW ESP focus on sharing local meeting activity and supporting regional networks</p> <p>Wb online and offsite programmes.</p> <p>QL Property Network Cluster</p> <p>Vibrancy project</p> <p>Some regional groupings of meetings arising from BYM Sustainability Gathering 2016</p> <p>LW network support discontinued</p> <p>FWCC working to connect YMs' work on sustainability (Susanna Mattingly's work)</p>	<p>Support for regional networks on sustainability</p>

3. Living faithfully: Changing our lifestyles

Lifestyle change is about more than carbon reduction, it is about all of our priorities and choices including patterns of family and social life, consumption and work. We recommend ongoing and increased encouragement and support for local meetings to be adventurous in helping Friends to live sustainably – adopting, in doing this, approaches that are sensitive and loving, while also radically transformative. This means sharing the joys we find in a simple lifestyle freely chosen, while offering compassion and support to those who find change difficult.

A wide variety of resources are required to address Friends' different and changing needs. For some, personal climate impact calculators are a vital part of understanding and reducing their carbon emissions; for others it is more important to have opportunities to talk about feelings. Some want simple, practical guides to action; others like to do their own research.

Recommendation	Current Activity	Gaps & Priorities
1. Regular revisions are needed in resources for sustainable living such as those included in the QPSW/Living Witness Sustainability Toolkit (footprint guides, guides for practical action, study group session plans). New versions should be brought to Friends' attention in a variety of formats.	QPSW/LW proposed <i>Green Lights</i> series to include footprint guide, study group material, resources for Quaker conversations and for community dialogues. Currently on hold while other projects take shape.	Limited staff or funding committed to this work.
2. We hope that Living Witness, QPSW and Quaker Life will continue to work together to support Friends in deepening dialogue and making lifestyle changes, in particular through group activities. A variety of approaches are available.	<i>Green Lights</i> (on hold) Wb to restart internal sustainability group. Wb onsite, online and offsite programmes LW pulling back from focus on supporting Friends and Meetings	Limited staff or funding committed to this work. More co-ordination would be helpful.
3. We need to provide opportunities for Friends to connect with each other through talks, workshops, etc. Friends' experience of the practical, social and spiritual aspects of lifestyle change should continue to be shared regularly in a variety of ways, from face-to-face contact and networks to blogs, newsletters, talks and workshops.	Wb courses e.g. on co-housing, food. Bamford Quaker Community retreats LW occasional workshops for local meetings & talks at Quaker events. LW courses and retreats mostly discontinued	Limited staff or funding committed to this work. More co-ordination would be helpful.

4. Right Ordering: Quaker Core Activities and Property

Quaker meetings, organisations and committees may struggle with the complexity of addressing their core purposes in low-carbon, sustainable ways. They may need support to get beyond seeing these as conflicting goals, and they may need technical help with addressing buildings, land, travel, food, waste and use of money. Friends particularly face dilemmas about travelling to meetings and maintaining historic meeting houses, which are seen as vital for maintaining and developing community.

Recommendation	Current Activity	Gaps & Priorities
<p>1. Resources should be developed to support Quaker bodies in discernment that takes account of the Canterbury Commitment, including weighing up the effects of their decisions on a wide variety of issues, and considering creative alternatives.</p>	<p>Reduced committee size & travel</p> <p>MfS travel/accom review. Could extend to other groups.</p> <p>Increasing use of teleconferencing</p> <p>Wb developing an Estate Strategy; will look at sustainability aspects of Wb property</p> <p>BYM working with Carbon Smart on emissions associated with FH as a building. Awarded “Gold” certification for progress. Possibly extending to other aspects e.g. food, travel.</p> <p>Resource for LMs on discernment in <i>Green Light</i> series. (on hold)</p>	<p>Limited staff or funding committed to this work.</p>
<p>2. A way needs to be agreed to monitor and review progress by local meetings in developing low carbon, sustainable core practices and premises. This might include collection of data such as annual energy use, and a regular questionnaire or survey of local meeting activities. Central committee and staff support would be required. The results should form part of the BYM annual report.</p>	<p>QSC working with BYMSG recommendations on reporting in area meeting trustees’ annual reports.</p>	
<p>3. Encouragement and support should be given to all parts of the Quaker community to follow the example of BYM trustees in ensuring that our investments are consistent with being low-carbon and sustainable, and in particular to disinvest from fossil fuels.</p>	<p>Fossil fuel divestment by BYM and some local/area meetings</p> <p>Your Faith, Your Finance webpage and resources</p> <p>QPSW & Operation Noah delivering events in Autumn 2016 on investment for active transition. One for wealthy investors/decision makers, one for church goers, Quakers etc.. QPSW researching how BYM can influence our pension provider to divest/reinvest</p>	<p>Need clear, simple information on ethical investment for AM trustees and treasurers.</p>

5. Witness: Taking Political Action and Promoting Systemic Change

We have heard that Friends want to take more political action and to be supported to call for and create systemic change in economics and society. We propose an increased emphasis on this area of action. In particular:

Recommendation	Current Activity	Gaps & Priorities
<p>1. Friends and local meetings need ongoing support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to use their experience of the joys & challenges of changing their lives & meetings as a foundation for engaging others in their local community, national businesses & politicians • to take radical action for change from the current system • to be part of building the alternative • to speak out for systemic change and for climate justice. <p>This support should continue to come from centrally managed work (where the lead committee is the QPSW Economics, Sustainability and Peace subgroup) along with other Quaker organisations including Living Witness and Woodbrooke.</p>	<p>Wb learning through onsite, online and off site programme</p> <p>QPSW supporting Friends to oppose fracking, including three groups in actions at proposed fracking sites.</p> <p>QPSW's New Economy project supporting Friends to learn about what a sustainable economy might look like through booklets and workshops.</p>	<p>Develop a clearer shared understanding of the faith basis of this work: 'witness' as ministry.</p> <p>Connect sustainability better with other areas of Quaker witness, including bridge-building in local communities.</p> <p>Support (advice, resources, guidelines) for local community engagement</p>
<p>2. Many parts of the centrally managed work are engaged, including Turning the Tide, Parliamentary Engagement, Peace Education, and the Peacemaker scheme. A continuing effort is needed to strengthen and connect up the Canterbury Commitment aspects of their activities.</p>	<p>ESP working with TTT as pilot for further collaboration, on training and support for groups in NW England and N Wales in sustainability and economic justice initiatives.</p> <p>Recording Clerk and Parliamentary Liaison Officer working with ESP to engage BEIS on climate policy and 'green investment'. RC attended meeting with Minister in Feb; correspondence ongoing.</p> <p>QPSW & Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer to respond to Scottish Government consultation on fracking.</p>	<p>Strengthen the shared story of different areas of work as part of sustainability witness.</p>
<p>3. British Friends should continue to be supported to connect with work on climate change and sustainability beyond BYM. There are opportunities to share our experience and contribute to work for change, in particular with international Quaker bodies, other churches and faith organisations, campaigning</p>	<p>New FWCC Sustainability Communications Officer supported by BYM to work with other YMs.</p> <p>BYM support for QUNO work at UN climate negotiations.</p> <p>Connecting UK Friends with QUNO work through talks incl. via skype connections at events, articles in The Friend.</p> <p>LW working with Climate Psychology Alliance</p>	<p>Developing a shared understanding of our Quaker contribution on sustainability so Friends can articulate it better to other faith &</p>

<p>organisations and movements.</p>	<p>to bring together practitioners in different approaches to individual & collective change agency</p> <p>LW working with new networks of practitioners and researchers on 1.5°C living, in UK and internationally</p> <p>LW working with GreenFaith on international faith initiative on sustainable living</p>	<p>campaign groups</p>
<p>4. We recommend that Quaker bodies of all kinds continue to speak out publicly on systemic change and climate justice, making the links to traditional Quaker concerns for peace and justice. Advice and other resources are needed to help them to do this. Public statements can help to strengthen our Quaker community and identity, and affirm our shared values.</p>	<p>QPSW work on fossil fuel divestment</p> <p>QPSW and Recording Clerk engagement with government on climate action and green investment, and with Church of England on Fracking.</p> <p>BYM responded to Scottish Government's consultation on fracking.</p> <p>QPSW calling on UK gov't & parliament to improve Clean Growth Plan and related climate policy, to uphold UK's international climate commitments.</p>	<p>Developing shared understanding of Q. contribution on sustainability so Friends can articulate it better</p>

Quaker Life Central Committee

There are three parts to this item about Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC):

1. QLCC's report to Meeting for Sufferings (paper 10a);
2. The Quaker Life strategy document, which is preceded by three minutes QLCC 17.84, QLCC 17.86 and QLCC 17.87 (paper 10b);
3. A minute about Transgender and non-binary inclusion which responds to our minute MfS/17/04/15 (paper 10c)

The plan for this part of the agenda is that Jocelyn Bell Burnell will introduce the report just before our lunch break.

Immediately after lunch, we will move into Home Groups, gathered geographically (paper 10d), when Friends will be invited to consider these questions together:

- In your judgement what are the 'big issues' in the Quaker Life area of BYM?
- What do you consider should be the most important strategic aims of QLCC?

You are asked to consider BYM as a whole as well as your own area/region.

We will then gather together in full session to consider the report, and particularly these questions about the strategic priorities.

Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC) 2017 Report to Meeting for Sufferings

QLCC Strategy

The major piece of work for QLCC this last year has been the development of strategic aims for 2018 – 22. Attached is the statement of those aims, as agreed at our November 2017 meeting. QLCC would like feedback from Meeting for Sufferings on these. We have worked with QL staff on this and are pleased to report that staff could readily fit almost all existing work under these aims. It is intended that this strategy will shape the future work of the Committee.

The statement is structured in six sections, matching the six sections in Our Faith in the Future. The six sections are:

1. Meeting for Worship is the bedrock of living as a Quaker.
2. Quaker communities are loving, inclusive and all-age.
3. All Friends understand and live by Quaker discipline.
4. Quaker values are active in the world.
5. Quakers work collaboratively.
6. Quakers are well known and widely understood.

Under each of these headings we have several aims (e.g. Meetings are more joyful, confident, dynamic and welcoming), followed by several 'indicators of success' which, if found to be true, would suggest the aim was (at least) being achieved in part (e.g. More Local Meetings are large enough to be vibrant and sustainable).

Meeting for Sufferings is invited to comment on these aims and indicators.

This is, clearly, too much to be done all at once, so QLCC has identified three of the six to work on initially. These are the areas numbered 1, 2 and 6 in the list above. However we also recognise that many of the areas interlock and in pursuing these three areas initially we will also address some elements of the others.

Meeting for Sufferings is invited to comment on this selection of priority areas.

Other significant items from the past year

- QL staff provided about 27 events at Yearly Meeting Gathering, in addition to the substantial Children and Young People's programme. Many of the events were oversubscribed. There was a huge turn-out for events on End of Life Issues, and this work continues, albeit at a low level.
- In March Cadbury's chocolate eggs and their omission of the word 'Easter' was in the news. There was then a Cadbury relative on the Friends House staff whose contribution to the debate raised the Quaker profile and put Quakers (briefly) in the media more than usual! Quaker Life saw a sharp peak in the demand for Enquirer's Packs that month!
- Diversity:
 - a) Meeting for Sufferings in April 2017 forwarded to us a question on the pastoral care of vulnerable adult Friends – we hope to be able to circulate good practice guidelines soon;

- b) we have started consideration of non-binary gender issues (also forwarded to us by that same Meeting for Sufferings);
 - c) our first consideration of the pastoral care of unattached Friends (forwarded to us by Meeting for Sufferings following BYM 2014) foundered, but we hope to restart consideration at our next meeting;
 - d) we are working with the Engaging Young Adult Quakers group to find ways of better engaging that cohort;
 - e) just starting is a legacy-funded project to provide regional youth workers to support work with 11 – 18 year olds.
- Quaker Life staff have recently had a significant presence at some major Festivals, in collaboration with local Friends. This will continue this year at Greenbelt and (for a second year) at the Hay Festival.
 - We have been looking at the limited use being made of Being Friends Together to see what lessons can be learned about the use of on-line materials (do people need stronger story lines to encourage them to dabble in such enormous resources?). Meanwhile technical improvements are being made and access to the website is now free.
 - We have begun to review of some of the Department's work. We will need to give more thought to what we are expecting from such reviews as we work more strategically.
 - QLCC has been making a conscious effort to strengthen relationships with other Quaker bodies like Swarthmoor, Woodbrooke, Vibrancy, Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC). We have also started having some meetings each year out of London, giving opportunity for meeting Friends in Local Meetings.

Quaker Life Central Committee (membership as of 1 Jan 2018)

Jocelyn Burnell, Co-clerk
 Douglas Butterfield, Co-clerk
 Simon Best
 Simon Colbeck
 Jeffrey Dean
 Marilyn Higgins
 Iain Law
 Michael Long
 Marion McNaughton
 Alan Pearmain
 Martin Pennock
 Emma Roberts
 Lizzie Redwood
 Roy Stephenson

January 2018

Quaker Life Central Committee strategic priorities

Quaker Life Central Committee

Held at Swarthmoor Hall 24 – 26 November 2017

QLCC 17.84 Our strategy

Further to QLCC 17.59, we have received and welcomed paper QLCC 2017 11 15, prepared by Quaker Life staff, showing how the existing and upcoming Quaker Life work fits with our strategic framework. We are grateful for the work staff have done on this and appreciate the creative and out-of-the-box thinking that has gone into this.

Their work for us has shown that:

- a) There are remarkably few areas of Quaker Life work that don't appear to fit anywhere in our strategic framework
- b) The work of the Library is broader than Quaker Life (e.g. archiving BYM records)
- c) Reviewing and planning may not be part of the strategy but are an essential component of an operational plan.

We have asked ourselves if this exercise has shown gaps in our strategy and/or in the work currently done in Quaker Life. We can see five possible work areas that we might explore further:

- i. Do we know what the needs of Friends and meetings are?
- ii. We note that there doesn't appear to be any visible work done by CYP under the heading (6.4) 'Quaker meetings are visible and active in their local communities'.
- iii. Should there be more emphasis on collaboration?
- iv. Meetings better reflecting the diversity of wider society (2.3).
- v. Language – have we captured this adequately? (6.3)

Looking ahead, we recognise that both our strategic outcomes and the operational plan aims will become better aligned with time, and we expect this to be a two-way process.

Work on the 2019 Operational Plan will start early in 2018 and we encourage staff to report to our February meeting how they are finding this and to identify any issues on which they would like committee guidance.

Our strategic framework is not a piece of work set in concrete. It will and must evolve, and we look forward to working with staff to make this happen.

QLCC 17.86 Our strategy – contd.

We now recognise that what we have been describing as our draft strategy has become, with staff help, our strategy for 2018 - 2022.

QLCC 17.87 Our strategic priorities

We have looked at our strategy, which contains more aims than we can address all at once, to identify which areas should have priority. While all are important we recognise the following as good starting points:

§1 and §2 – concerning Meeting for Worship being the bedrock and Quaker communities being loving. Supporting these two is §6 “Quakers are well known and widely understood”. We also see increasing diversity as important, particularly better incorporating young Friends in our structures and business.

We also recognise that we must work collaboratively (§5.3) or in partnership with many bodies, for example Vibrancy, Quaker Renewal Group, Summer schools, Kindlers, Experiment with Light, Quaker Quest, Enquirers weekends etc.

While we have explicitly selected only a limited number of items from our strategy, we recognise that many of these items interlock, and in pursuing these selected objectives we will, in fact, be addressing many items in our strategy, for we continue to believe that all items in that strategy are needed.

We ask Quaker Life staff to identify the operational resource implications of these emphases and to suggest ways of carrying out these priorities. We also ask our Planning Group to work with these priorities in planning how this committee works.

We send Minutes 17.84, 17.86 and this Minute, along with the final version of our strategy to Meeting for Sufferings and BYM Trustees.

Jocelyn Burnell
Douglas Butterfield
Co-Clerks

Quaker Life Central Committee Strategy for Quaker Life, 2018 – 2022

Purpose

Quaker Life Central Committee's purpose is to support and strengthen Quaker life throughout the Yearly Meeting to help to deepen our experience of God's grace, its consequent expression in our lives and in all our meetings, and to increase awareness of and interest in Quakers in Britain. This remit covers faith and practice, spiritual nurture and the practical tasks required for the running of our Quaker meetings. Quaker Life Central Committee discerns a programme of work and provides strategic guidance and oversight for the work of Quaker Life. The work may be taken forward in many ways, e.g. by staff, the Committee, Friends, or partner organisations.

[Terms of Reference of QLCC]

Strategic aims of Quaker Life

The following aims are grouped under the headings of Our Faith in the Future, the vision for what Quakers in Britain would like the Society to be like in the future, approved by Meeting for Sufferings in September 2015.

1. Meeting for worship is the bedrock of living as a Quaker ...

- 1.1. Meetings are more joyful, confident, dynamic, welcoming, and growing.
- 1.2. Ways of worshipping better meet the various needs of worshippers.
- 1.3. Meetings and individuals are more comfortable with exploring their spirituality and theology.

Indicators of success might include:

- ✓ The number and variety of Meetings for Worship rises.
- ✓ Attendance at Meetings for Worship rises ('they can't stay away').
- ✓ More – and a wider range of – Quakers engage in Woodbrooke courses.

2. Quaker communities are loving, inclusive and all-age ...

- 2.1. More Local Meetings are large enough to be vibrant and sustainable.
- 2.2. Meetings and materials are more accessible.
- 2.3. Meetings better reflect the diversity of wider society.
- 2.4. Meetings are able to welcome and support all who might be part of their community.
- 2.5. Meetings for Worship for Business, at all levels, increasingly involve Quakers of all ages.
- 2.6. Conflicts are more often acknowledged and handled with love and respect.

Indicators of success might include:

- ✓ More meetings provide activities for children and young people.
- ✓ Flexible regional and virtual spaces for interaction are developing.
- ✓ Young adult Quakers report that they feel more engaged with 'mainstream' Quaker structures and processes.
- ✓ Meetings come to Quaker Life to seek support at an earlier stage in a conflict.

3. All Friends understand and live by Quaker discipline ...

- 3.1. More Quakers understand Quaker discipline, live by it and pass it on to new Quakers.
- 3.2. Quakers hold fast to the essentials of Quaker discipline and testimony, while not being rigid about particular expressions of them.

Indicators of success might include:

- ✓ The Book of Discipline and Quaker Life publications more clearly and simply explain and account for Quaker discipline and roles.
- ✓ More role holders make use of learning opportunities and resources.
- ✓ Quakers make more frequent use of Meetings for Clearness and Threshing Meetings.
- ✓ Concerns sent to Meeting for Sufferings have been well tested.

4. Quaker values are active in the world ...

- 4.1. All Quaker actions are led by the Spirit.
- 4.2. Quakers are becoming more prophetic and effective in our witness in the world, ready to confront the established order vigorously.
- 4.3. Quakers affirm the importance of living our testimony in all its aspects, especially Sustainability at this time.

Indicators of success might include:

- ✓ Our media work more frequently spells out the spiritual foundation of our social witness.
- ✓ Quakers become known for the whole breadth of our testimony, not simply for Peace.

5. Quakers work collaboratively ...

- 5.1. There is more engagement among local and area meetings.
- 5.2. Quakers increasingly work on common causes with other bodies.
- 5.3. QLCC work more collaboratively within BYM.

Indicators of success might include:

- ✓ There is evidence of area meetings working together beyond geographic proximity.
- ✓ The number and range of partners we work with – at all levels – increases.
- ✓ Quaker Life increases its participation in joint activities with other Quaker bodies.

6. Quakers are well known and widely understood ...

- 6.1. Quakers are able to talk among ourselves about living as a Quaker, so that we can talk to others confidently and clearly.
- 6.2. Quakers are actively and creatively engaging in outreach, both locally and nationally.
- 6.3. Quakers use the language of the Spirit to explain our witness in the World, so that Quakerism is more visible.
- 6.4. Quaker meetings are visible and active in their local communities

Indicators of success might include:

- ✓ Media training take-up increases.
- ✓ Quakers appear more often and more effectively in local media and in social media.
- ✓ A future survey of the public shows an increase in accurate knowledge of Quakerism.
- ✓ There are more members and attenders.

Agreed by Quaker Life Central Committee 25 November 2017, by minute QLCC 17/86

Quaker Life Central Committee Minute regarding Transgender and non-binary inclusion

Quaker Life Central Committee

Held at Swarthmoor Hall 24 – 26 November 2017

QLCC 17.89 Transgender and non-binary inclusion

Further to QLCC 17.69 c), we have returned to the matter of transgender and non-binary inclusion. We have also had before us paper QLCC 2017 11 17, the leaflet written by North East Thames AM.

There was a very well attended event at Yearly Meeting Gathering on this topic. We understand a number of Area Meetings are drawing up statements on diversity. We agree we should collect what statements have appeared and ask staff to be responsible for this, so that we can be sure where Britain Yearly Meeting is right now.

Whilst we can see the trend, we are also aware that some Friends and meetings would have considerable difficulty with parts of the North East Thames AM leaflet. We want to welcome everyone, but sometimes it is not obvious how. It seems that extra exploration is required. Can we help meetings explore these issues, perhaps by asking them what kind of issues (if any) will these kinds of questions raise in their AM; what might help bring unity? How can we help meetings to be able to welcome and support all who might be part of their community (Strategy 2.4)?

We recognise that this may take quite some time because understanding of these issues is still evolving rapidly.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings for information, and copy it to North East Thames AM.

Jocelyn Burnell
Douglas Butterfield
Co-Clerks

Background note:

This responds to a minute of Meeting for Sufferings, April 2017:

MfS/17/04/15 Transgender and non-binary inclusion

We receive minute 17.21 of North East Thames AM, held on 18 February 2017, attaching a statement concerning the inclusion of transgender and non-binary people in our Quaker communities. We welcome the opportunity to increase our learning about this issue - non-binary people are those who do not identify as either male or female.

We forward this minute to Quaker Life Central Committee for their consideration.

February 2018 MfS Home Groups

More information, including rooms, will be available on the day.

We suggest that Trustees and members of central/standing committees join the group which includes their own AM.

1 - London

Kingston & Wandsworth AM
London West AM
North East Thames
AM North London AM
North West London
AM South East
London AM South
London AM

2 - Midlands and East of England

Cambridgeshire
AM Central
England AM
Ipswich & Diss AM
Leicester AM
Lincolnshire AM
Mid Essex AM
Norfolk & Waveney AM
Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire AM
Southern East Anglia AM
Staffordshire AM
Thaxted AM
Worcestershire & Shropshire AM

3 - North and North West England

Cumberland AM
East Cheshire AM
Hardshaw and Mann AM
Kendal & Sedbergh AM
Lancashire Central & North
AM Manchester & Warrington
AM Northumbria AM
Pendle Hill AM
Swarthmoor (SW Cumbria)
AM Teesdale & Cleveland AM
Wensleydale & Swaledale AM
Wirral & Chester AM

4 - Scotland and Wales (with the option of splitting into two groups)
East Scotland
North Scotland AM
South East Scotland
AM

West Scotland AM
Mid Wales AM
North Wales AM
South Wales AM
Southern Marches AM
General Meeting for Scotland
Meeting of Friends in Wales

5 - South Midlands

Banbury & Evesham AM
Chilterns AM
Gloucestershire AM
Hertford & Hitchin AM
Luton & Leighton AM
Mid-Thames AM
Northamptonshire AM
Oxford & Swindon AM

6 - South of England

Bournemouth Coastal AM
East Kent AM
Hampshire & Islands AM
Surrey & Hampshire Border AM
Sussex East AM
Sussex West AM
West Kent AM
West Weald AM

7 - South West England

Devon AM
Bristol AM
Cornwall AM
Dorset & South Wiltshire AM
Mid-Somerset AM
North Somerset AM
West Somerset AM
West Wiltshire & East Somerset AM

8 - Yorkshire

Brighouse West Yorkshire AM
Central Yorkshire AM
Craven & Keighley AM
Leeds AM
Pickering & Hull AM
Sheffield & Balby AM
York AM

Quaker Recognised Bodies: Request for recognition

Introduction

In 2015, following a review of the Listed Informal Groups arrangement, Meeting for Sufferings agreed a new way for BYM to relate to other Quaker bodies (minute MfS 2015/12/17).

- The full paper, setting out the reason for the change and how it will work, is available in the papers for the December 2015 Meeting for Sufferings papers www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes; or please ask for the paper by emailing sufferings@quaker.org.uk.
- The guidelines for groups that would like to be a QRB are also on the BYM Website www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/quaker-groups

A Quaker Recognised Body (QRB) is an independent group where concerned Friends explore a common interest, seek affirmation, or carry out witness. It wishes to be recognised as a Quaker organisation because its Quaker roots are an important part of its identity.

This aims to clarify benefits and responsibilities for QRBs and Britain Yearly Meeting. It's also a way to strengthen links between centrally-managed work and the wide range of exciting Quaker work being done by other bodies, helping build a vibrant Society of Friends.

So far, Meeting for Sufferings has registered 34 'Quaker Recognised Bodies'.

The following two organisations have applied to become Quaker Recognised Bodies. Each appeared in the 2016 Book of Meetings:

1. The Kindlers
2. Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

Staff have looked at the documentation provided by each of the organisations and consider that the criteria for listing them as Quaker recognised bodies have been met.

The notes below give more details to support the applications.

1) The Kindlers

Constitution: A constitution was agreed at the 2017 AGM.

Governance: The Kindlers has been part of North West London Area Meeting, it is in the process of being set off from that Area Meeting and it is deciding what form its future legal status should take.

Major decisions are taken at the Annual General Meeting, which is open to all. Other decisions are taken by co-clerks in consultation with the administrator and treasurer. In addition, ad-hoc groups organise activities, such as the northern and southern series of workshops. There are elders, a nominations committee, a publications and a fundraising group. The Quaker business method is used at AGMs.

Type of Group: Free-standing

Foundation: 2008.

Aims: The Kindlers are an experimental group working to rekindle the power of Quaker worship by renewing and deepening our spiritual practices. This is achieved through developing and delivering workshops to deepen the spiritual life of Quaker meetings and publishing associated material.

Publications and activities: The Kindlers provide about 40 workshops a year, which usually last a day but occasionally last a weekend. 10 workshops take place in fixed venues; the rest are at local venues by invitation of local (and occasionally area) Quaker meetings. Workshops are also offered at residential Yearly Meetings. The outcomes of the work are published in booklets for personal use and study groups, sold at Friends Book Centre, Woodbrooke and Swarthmoor Hall. The Kindlers also have links with the Vibrancy Initiative and Woodbrooke.

Membership: Approximately twenty members (as of 2017).

Finance: The Kindlers has a budget about £15,000; income comes from Quaker trusts, workshop fees, bequests and donations. Since funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust ended in 2017, it relies increasingly on fees and donations. Accounts are examined in accordance with constitutional procedures.

Winding up: In the event of The Kindlers being laid down any remaining resources will be passed on to Quaker Life of Britain Yearly Meeting or its successor body.

Archives: Held by Alec Davison.

Current contact details: Margaret Calvert (Administrator)
7 Queens Rd, Sale, Cheshire, M33 6QA
Tel: 0161 905 2518; 0747 0044 072 e-mail: memberquakerkindlers@gmail.com

Website: <http://thekindlers.webs.com/>

Staff link: Alistair Fuller, Head of Ministry and Outreach team, Quaker Life.

2) Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

Constitution: Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre's constitution is set out in its Trust Document. It is a registered charity no. 313816.

Governance: As set out in the document "Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre Governance Procedures".

Type of Group: External

Foundation: 1903

Aims: A learning organisation which supports and informs Quakers, as individuals and as a community, to enable their work in the world and in local communities from a place of understanding and spiritual renewal.

Woodbrooke offers a broad range of learning opportunities for both individuals and meetings using a variety of delivery methods and programmes, which include the use of Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, other venues and locations and online learning. They aim for their programmes of learning to be as accessible as they can make them.

Publications and activities: Annual Programme of learning; Swarthmore Lecture; a variety of other documents relating to objectives.

Numbers involved in the organisation: There are currently 15 trustees. Woodbrooke estimate that in a typical year over 3,500 people experience their on-site courses and on-the-road events.

Finance: Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre has an Annual Report and Accounts that are audited and examined in accordance with their constitution.

Winding up: Their winding up procedure is set out in their Trust Document.

Archives: Held at Woodbrooke in the library.

Current contact details:

Sandra Berry (Director)
1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LJ
Tel: 0121 472 5171
Email: enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk

Website: www.woodbrooke.org.uk

Links with BYM: A formal Memorandum of Understanding between Woodbrooke and BYM is in place. This guides how both organisations work together to provide Quakers with joined-up, good value, relevant services and support by: sharing resources when beneficial to do so; considering the risks and benefits of working together; coordinating effort to avoid duplicating work; and thinking proactively about the needs of the Quaker community.

Specific details of joint work are overseen by relevant committees. Areas of joint work include the Being Friends Together resource, preparation for participants in the Ecumenical Accompaniers Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) and QPSW Peaceworker scheme, Joint Libraries Project, roles training and conferences, Swarthmoor Hall courses and Vibrancy in Meetings.

The Memorandum of Understanding allows for BYM to contract Woodbrooke to undertake appropriate short-term projects on its behalf. Woodbrooke also acts as a welcoming Quaker venue for gatherings and committee meetings, including Quaker Life Representative Council.

Staff link: Paul Parker, Recording Clerk