

Meeting for Sufferings held at Friends House, Saturday 1 October 2016

MfS/16/10/01 Opening worship

During our opening worship we have heard read part of section 24.53 of Quaker faith & practice. We have also remembered former members of this meeting who have recently died.

MfS/16/10/02 Minutes

The minutes of our meeting held on 2 July 2016 have been signed.

MfS/16/10/03 Apologies

We receive apologies from Banbury & Evesham AM and Gloucestershire AM which have not been able to send a representative on this occasion.

MfS/16/10/04 Membership of Meeting for Sufferings

Since our last meeting we have received the following nominations and requests for release for Meeting for Sufferings until the rise of Yearly Meeting 2018:

Nominated:

Heather Lister – Bristol AM representative
Richard Vesey – Craven & Keighley AM alternate
Alyson Buchan – East Scotland AM alternate
Mary Dower – North Scotland AM alternate
Rosemary Barnett – Staffordshire AM alternate
Sue Tompkins – Swarthmoor (South West Cumbria) AM alternate
Edna Rossiter – Wensleydale & Swaledale AM representative
Ian Hunter Smart – Wensleydale & Swaledale AM alternate

Release requests received:

Judy Holyer – Bristol AM representative
Patricia Saunders – Craven & Keighley AM alternate
Beryl Milner – East Scotland AM alternate
David Sanders – North Scotland AM alternate
Wendy Hampton – Pendle Hill AM representative
Robert Horton – Staffordshire AM alternate
Maggie Vicuna – South Wales AM / CCR De Cymru representative
Judith Bromley Nicholls – Wensleydale & Swaledale AM representative
Edna Rossiter – Wensleydale & Swaledale AM alternate
Keith Rycroft – Wirral & Chester AM alternate

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

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

Amanda Moore – Lincolnshire AM
Gordon Benson – Pendle Hill AM
Alan York – South Wales AM / CCR De Cymru
Rosemary Barnett – Staffordshire AM
Penny Vernon – Wirral & Chester AM

Other visitors:

Margaret Bryan – Incoming MfS Assistant Clerk
Carrie Comfort – BYM staff, Vibrancy in Meetings Local Development Worker
Tilly Goodwin – BYM Staff, RCO intern
Wendy Hampton – BYM staff, Vibrancy in Meetings Local Development Worker
Pip Harris – BYM staff, Vibrancy in Meetings Local Development Worker
Rachel Matthews – BYM staff, Vibrancy in Meetings programme co-ordinator
Helen Oldridge – BYM staff, Vibrancy in Meetings Local Development Worker
Charlotte Seymour-Smith – Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee clerk
Ann van Staveren – BYM staff, Media Relations Officer

MfS/16/10/05 Adoption of Agenda

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

MfS/16/10/06 Vibrancy in Meetings

We have been introduced to newly-appointed Vibrancy in Meetings staff: Rachel Matthews, Programme Co-ordinator; and the local development workers Carrie Comfort (Kent, Sussex and Surrey), Wendy Hampton (North West England), Helen Oldridge (Wales and Southern Marches) and Pip Harris (West Somerset, Devon and Cornwall).

The team has told us about the Vibrancy in Meetings pilot project and given us some examples of how they might work with Friends and Meetings. We recognise that this is a pilot project and so doesn't cover all of our Yearly Meeting at this stage.

We are glad to hear that they will be using Our Faith in the Future as a resource for working with local Friends. We thank them for sharing with us and for the origami gifts that they brought for us.

We encourage Friends and Meetings to be in touch with them and to invite them to visit.

MfS/16/10/07 Yearly Meeting Clerk and Recording Clerk's recent visit to the USA

Further to minute **MfS 16/07/19**, we have received back the travelling minute we agreed at our last meeting, and heard the endorsements from the two Yearly Meetings visited.

The Yearly Meeting Clerk, Deborah Rowlands, and the Recording Clerk, Paul Parker, have shared their reflections on their visit to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, and other Quaker groups based in the East of the USA.

We have heard a little of their experiences and about the two Yearly Meetings. This included details on how they are organised and on concerns that are held with their Yearly Meeting. In particular, on racism, both within the wider society but also looking at inclusiveness and diversity within the Yearly Meetings; and the involvement of young adult Friends at all levels of the Yearly Meetings.

It has been good to get a flavour of the visit.

It is clear that there are many areas of commonality where we can learn from each other and share experiences, and we are glad to hear that Paul and Deborah are making links between Friends and groups on both sides of the Atlantic.

MfS/16/10/08 Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee

We have received a report from Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC) and Charlotte Seymour Smith, the clerk, has spoken about its work.

The Committee see their work as carried out very much in partnership with local Friends, supporting Quaker witness in local communities alongside the central work that is carried out on their behalf. Friends can see QPSW as a hub for local and national action for peace, justice and nonviolent change.

QPSWCC are working within the context of 'Our faith in the future' approved by Sufferings last year and are currently finalising the overall strategy for QPSW's work. They are not anticipating any dramatic shifts in the work or its areas of focus, but do want greater clarity in objective setting, and to further develop the links between QPSW work and that of Quaker Life.

The committee was clear that very small programmes of work use resources less effectively so a policy of grouping programmes together has been developed and found to lead to more creative connections.

Today we have appreciated more news about some of the rich tapestry of work that QPSW oversees in many different areas and feel that this is work that Quakers can be proud of and with which Friends can engage in ways that support and enrich their own faith.

We thank QPSWCC and all those who work on our behalf, and hold them in the Light.

MfS/16/10/09 Appointments

a) Meeting for Sufferings Support Group Search Group

Since the release of Janet May-Bowles as a member of Meeting for Sufferings, there has been a vacancy on the Support Group. We ask Andrew Backhouse (East Cheshire AM), Jenny Mattingly (Leicester AM) and Alan York (South Wales AM) to bring a nomination to a future meeting.

b) Yearly Meeting Nominating Group

Brings forward the following names for release:

Central Nominations Committee

Release:

Liz McDermott – South Wales AM

Ros Morley – North Wales AM

We release the Friends named and thank them for their service.

c) Central Nominations Committee

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

Book of Discipline: Review Preparation Group

Release with immediate effect:

Sheila Houldin – Wirral & Chester AM

We note the following appointment to the Book of Discipline Review Preparation Group was made by our clerks between meetings:

To serve until 31 December 2017

Nominated:

Richard Bush – Bournemouth Coastal AM

BYM Representatives to Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) serving on Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC)

To serve from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018 (2 years)

Re-nominated for 2nd term

Alick Munro – Kingston & Wandsworth AM

Barbara Windle – York AM

To serve from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019

Nominated:

Elaine Green – Ipswich & Diss AM

Quaker Appeals Group (CRB)

To serve from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019

Re-nominated for 2nd term:

Douglas Butterfield – Chilterns AM

Nominated:

Nigel Barnes – Northumbria AM

Sheila Mosley – Leicester AM

Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations

To serve from 1 May 2017 to 30 April 2020

Re-nominated for 2nd term:

Kim Ashcroft – Sussex East AM

Kate Arnot – South East Scotland AM

Douglas Butterfield – Chilterns AM

Quaker Housing Trust

To serve from Annual Retirement Meeting 2017 (May) to end of Annual Retirement Meeting 2020 (April)

Re-nominated for 3rd term:

Dugan Cummings – North West London AM

Tim Yeomans – Banbury & Evesham AM

Quaker Life Central Committee

To serve from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019

Re-nominated for 2nd term:

Jocelyn Burnell – West Wiltshire & East Somerset AM

Douglas Butterfield – Chilterns AM

Roy Stephenson – Lancashire Central & North AM

Nominated:

Marilyn Higgins – South East Scotland AM

Alan Pearmain – Oxford & Swindon AM

Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee

To serve from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019

Nominated:

Robert Almond – Sheffield & Balby AM

Jeff Beatty – Southern Marches AM

Pete Redwood – Leeds AM

Dick Stockford – Worcestershire & Shropshire AM

Re-nominated for 2nd term to serve from January 2017 to December 2017

Jenny Amery – Hertford & Hitchin AM

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee

Released:

Wendy Hampton – Pendle Hill AM

We appoint and release the Friends named accordingly, and thank them for their service.

MfS/16/10/10 Living out our faith: prioritising and balancing

At our April meeting we considered issues forwarded to us by Yearly Meeting 2015, minute 36 (minute **MfS/16/04/08** refers). Then, we considered Meeting for Sufferings' role, concluding that we can encourage and provide networking among Friends rather than seek to 'co-ordinate'. We also spent time considering how concerns are tested. Then, we did not have time to consider a third set of questions posed in our papers, encouraging us to explore how Meeting for Sufferings prioritises and balances different parts of the work we are called to do.

We have spent time this afternoon considering how we fulfil our responsibilities for setting priorities for centrally managed work (*Qf&p* 7.02.a). We recognise that we cannot know everything, and that we need to entrust the detail to our trustees, committees and staff.

Our Faith in the Future, as agreed by Sufferings last year, articulated our vision.

All of us on Meeting for Sufferings have a responsibility to prepare for meetings in reading and in prayer. Meeting for Sufferings has the breadth of experience among Friends to provide testing and discernment. We need to discern what is a Spirit-led Quaker concern, that no other body is doing, and what is work we should be doing with others.

MfS/16/10/11 Peacebuilding: the Ammerdown Invitation

We receive minute **16/07/50 of Brighouse West Yorkshire AM** held on 9 July 2016, regarding the Ammerdown Invitation.

The Ammerdown Group is made up of people involved in peace-building work who are increasingly concerned about the future of peace and security the UK and worldwide. Its members believe that our government is not responding effectively to the challenges of the new century, but with a marked change of course, it could be. The Group is keen to begin a public conversation about this in the UK, and has set out its vision for a more peaceful, less insecure world in the Ammerdown Invitation and a recent publication, 'Rethinking Security'.

In an accompanying note, Marigold Bentley, Assistant General Secretary of QPSW, has explained how QPSW is supporting and contributing to the work. She is a member of the Group, which is deliberately made up of a mix of professionals, academics, consultants, campaigners and thinkers, some of whom are Quakers. The Ammerdown Group's work complements and supports a wide range of Quaker peace work.

We encourage Friends to learn more about this work, and to support it where possible. This may be through hosting local community discussions.

We forward this minute to QPSWCC for information, and encourage Brighouse West Yorkshire AM to stay in touch with Marigold Bentley.

MfS/16/10/12 Refugees

We receive minute **3a of East Kent AM** held on 14 May 2016, informing us that it has adopted a concern to support refugees, locally and also in Calais and Dunkirk. We forward this minute to QPSWCC for information.

MfS/16/10/13 Yearly Meeting Accounts

We receive minute **8 of Central Yorkshire Area Meeting** held on 13 July 2016, which raises questions about the presentation of the Yearly Meeting accounts, and in particular the difficulty of identifying which expenditure is attributed to Friends House Hospitality Company.

It has been helpful to learn that the Yearly Meeting Treasurer is working with the Head of Finance and Resources, to improve the way the accounts are presented in future.

We forward this minute to BYM Trustees, asking them to respond to the Area Meeting.

MfS/16/10/14 Cadet Forces in Scottish State Schools

We receive minute **10 of General Meeting for Scotland** held on 11 June 2016, regarding the proposed introduction of cadet forces to Scottish state schools to be financed from fines levied on banks. General Meeting for Scotland's Parliamentary Liaison Function Group is working on this, supported by the Parliamentary Engagement Officer. However, as the funding is allocated by the UK Government via the Ministry of Defence, the Scottish Government has no influence over how the funding is used

We forward this minute to QPSWCC, asking it to consider what work might be done alongside General Meeting for Scotland, and to report back in due course.

MfS/16/10/15 Sustainability

Further to minute **MfS/16/04/11**, we receive minutes **16/06/04** and **16/06/14** of BYM Sustainability Group held 7-9 June 2016.

The Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) World Plenary Meeting held in Pisac, Peru, this year, asked all Yearly Meetings to take actions. BYM Sustainability Group has sent us some suggestions.

We are glad to hear that the October 2016 Quaker Life Representative Council, titled 'Becoming the Change We Want to See' will bring together over 90 Friends to explore the spiritual underpinning of our Canterbury Commitment.

We also note that sixteen Friends met at Woodbrooke in June, exploring how our faith relates to ecology and sustainability.

Other work is being developed. BYM Sustainability Group encourages us all to consider new actions, finding ways to involve young Friends, and perhaps initiating exchange of resources and experience with other Yearly Meetings.

We forward this minute to Quaker World Relations Committee.

MfS/16/10/16 Appeal to Meeting for Sufferings

The clerk has received an appeal under the guidance set out in *Quaker faith & practice* 4.25. We agree to set up an appeal group and ask Central Nominations Committee to bring the names of five Friends to serve.

MfS/16/10/17 BYM Trustees

Ingrid Greenhow, clerk of BYM Trustees, has spoken to the minutes of the meeting held on 9 and 10 September 2016, and about the work of Trustees.

MfS16/07/18 Dates of Meeting for Sufferings 2018

We agree to meet on the following dates in 2018:

3 February

7 April

7 July

6 October (with the Young People's Participation Day)

23-25 November (residential, at Woodbrooke)

MfS/16/10/19 Close

We close, hoping to meet again in the Large Meeting House on 3 December 2016.

Ethel Livermore
Clerk