



Yearly Meeting of
the Religious Society
of Friends in Britain

To members of Meeting for Sufferings

17 June 2016

Meeting for Sufferings will be held on Saturday 2 July 2016

Dear Friends,

We plan to start the day hearing from Trustees, and then receive a number of minutes. We didn't spend a lot of time on minutes received at our last meeting as we were trying to allow enough time for our consideration of living out our faith in the world, so we have given more time for them at this meeting.

The minutes we will consider include an update about QPSW's developing work on refugee issues, conscientious objection to military taxation, and arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

(In addition to the minutes in our papers we have also received a few minutes in response to our minute of last time on the decriminalisation of drugs which Arrangements Group felt we should take in December, when we return to the matter.)

After lunch we will start as usual with appointments, including the appointment of our Clerks for 2017. There will then be an opportunity to reflect on Yearly Meeting – thinking about Yearly Meeting 2016, but also start looking forward to Yearly Meeting next year and beyond.

We end the day by hearing from Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR) about their work. QCCIR is responsible for keeping Quakers in Britain informed of the various movements towards co-operation within the Christian church and opportunities for interfaith dialogue. This item is not just a report, but a chance for two-way dialogue – so that we can hear about the work QCCIR is doing but also help inform that work.

Please prepare for the meeting. Your practical preparation really helps our discernment to be well-informed as well as prayerful. Please read the papers well in advance so you know what will come up, and where appropriate discuss the matters with others in the Meeting or group you represent.

I'm looking forward to seeing you on 2nd July.

/cont...

Yours in Friendship

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ethel Livermore". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Ethel" and last name "Livermore" clearly distinguishable.

Ethel Livermore,
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

Papers enclosed with this mailing

Agenda

News and Views/Practicalities

MfS Arrangements Group minutes 2016 06 06

MfS 2016 07 06a Minutes from Area Meetings not taken elsewhere.

MfS 2016 07 06b Minutes from Central Committees and other bodies not taken elsewhere.

MfS 2016 07 07 Lancaster University Court future representative appointment

MfS 2016 07 10 Yearly Meeting reflections

MfS 2016 07 11 Travelling minute for Deborah Rowlands and Paul Parker

MfS 2016 07 12 Meeting for Sufferings October 2017 – venue

MfS 2016 07 13 Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations Annual Report

Meeting for Sufferings 2 July 2016

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



Agenda

09:00 Arrivals

10:00 Session starts

1. Opening worship

2. Welcome and introductions

3. Membership (MfS 2016 07 03 – tabled paper)

4. Agenda Adoption and acceptance of the agenda.

5. Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees Ingrid Greenhow, clerk of BYM Trustees will report on Trustees' work. (MfS 2016 07 05 – tabled paper)

11:00 Break

6. Minutes sent to MfS from Area Meeting's, Central Committees and other bodies not taken elsewhere.

Area Meeting Minutes (MfS 2016 07 06a)

Leeds AM regarding the report of the Leeds Quaker-Jewish Dialogue Group.

Leeds AM regarding the book, *Assisted dying: a Quaker exploration*.

Notts & Derbys AM regarding the plight of unaccompanied refugee children.

Mid-Essex AM regarding a conference to consider the refugee crisis.

Central Committee Minutes (MfS 2016 07 06b)

Church Government Advisory Group recommending a review of the appeal process described in sections 4.25 and 4.26 of *Quaker faith & practice*.

Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum minute of record.

Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee regarding Arms trade: UK sales to Saudi Arabia.

Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee regarding

Conscientious objection to military taxation. Also included is a related minute from **Northumbria AM**.

7. Lancaster University Court

To pass the appointment of a representative to Lancashire Central and North AM.
(MfS 2016 07 07)

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch in the Restaurant

Informal lunchtime gatherings: meet the Trustees; meet QCCIR members

8. Appointments of Meeting for Sufferings clerks

To approve the appointment of MfS clerks for 2017.
(MfS 2016 07 08 – tabled paper)

9. Appointments

(MfS 2016 07 09 – tabled paper)

10. Yearly Meeting reflections

To reflect on this year's Yearly Meeting and look ahead to future YMs
(MfS 2016 07 10)

11. Travelling minute for Deborah Rowlands and Paul Parker

To agree a travelling minute for an anticipated visit to Friends in the USA.
(MfS 2016 07 11)

12. Meeting for Sufferings October 2017 – venue

To consider whether Meeting for Sufferings should meet outside London in October 2017.
(MfS 2016 07 12)

15.00 Break

13. Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations Annual Report

Mark Lilley, assistant clerk, will speak to the QCCIR Annual Report from 2016.
(MfS 2016 07 13)

16:00 Close

Tea, coffee and departures

News & views – July 2016

The newsletter of the MfS Support Group

Welcome Friends, to the sixth meeting of this triennium.

Please remember that the Support Group is here to help and to act as Elders and Overseers during our Meeting for Worship for Business. We welcome any comments and enquiries and you will know us by our yellow-topped name badges.

Contacting us

Ann Banks, (Convenor) Brighthouse West Yorkshire AM - annbanks101@gmail.com

Sylvia Boyes, Craven & Keighley AM - robinandsylvia@aol.com

Joan Bulmer, Kingston & Wandsworth AM - bulmer.leapfrog@ntlworld.com

Debbie Cates, Cambridgeshire AM - debzcates@hotmail.co.uk

Judith Mason, Banbury & Evesham AM - judithmason@talktalk.net

Angela Pivac, Thaxted AM - angelapivac@gmail.com

Gillian Turner, South London AM - gillianturner033@gmail.com

- You will find members of the Support Group at the welcome desk, (where the name badges are laid out for collection), until 9.50am. They will be looking for volunteer microphone stewards, as usual.
- Other members of the Group will be collating the extra papers at a table in the landing by the George Fox room – you will also find spare copies of the mailed papers – and hole-punches, staplers and expense forms there.
- Two of the group will be in Elizabeth Fry 1 (up to 9.50 am), and are always glad to meet with other members of Meeting for Sufferings, especially if this is your first time.

Usually, on the Friday evening before Sufferings, a few of us go out for a meal, such as an Italian or a curry, and we would welcome extra company if any Friends would care to join us. We meet in the Friends House Lobby at about 6.45 pm. If you want to find out more, please contact one of the Support Group members

Right ordering and the use of electronic devices

The Quaker business method is a discipline in which all present should be focusing on worship and discernment of the matter at hand. Any activity that detracts from the focus on Meeting for Sufferings is not compatible with our business method.

Friends are increasingly using electronic devices to access Meeting for Sufferings documents, and this is to be encouraged as it reduces the need for printing. Please resist the temptation to check or post to social networking sites or emails during sessions and endeavour to ensure that your use of such devices does not disturb your neighbours.

During the meeting

You will see that some of us sit in the front row, to the right (as we face it) of the clerks' table. This is the nearest thing we have to an "elders' bench".

At Meeting for Sufferings we start our Opening Worship by gathering in silence, so that the worship starts as soon as the first Friend settles down. After 10:00, any Friends who arrive late will be able to worship in the Margaret Fell room until the doorkeepers open the doors of the George Fox room to admit any latecomers at 10:30.

We trust that Friends will continue to work to strengthen the discipline of our meetings; we remind ourselves of the useful advice in *Quaker faith & practice* 3.01 to 3.11. We recognise that there is little time during the day to socialise, but nevertheless ask that shuffle breaks are for shuffling not chatting; paper rustling is kept to a minimum; and conversation at lunchtime ceases 5 minutes before the session begins so that we are worshipping together when the clerks enter.

Practicalities

As usual, you are asked to register for the meeting in advance. Please visit forms.quaker.org.uk/sufferings and input your details. This will help us make sure the correct badges are available, provide sufficient refreshments as well as checking all members of Meeting for Sufferings are represented. When you arrive and collect your badge, if you have not registered online please 'sign in' by ticking your name on the sheet.

For this meeting, we are in the George Fox room which is on the Second Floor – South wing of Friends House. We have the William Penn Suite for the refreshment room which is on the Second Floor – North, and on the north side of the landing from the George Fox room. The cloakroom will be in Elizabeth Fry 2 which is at the end of the Second floor – South wing corridor. There are toilets on both the first and second floor landings as well as on the far side of the Large Meeting House on the ground floor and by the Restaurant in the basement.

The Support Group will be based in Elizabeth Fry 1 which is the penultimate room on the Second Floor – South wing on both Friday and Saturday.

The restaurant in the Basement will be open at lunchtime as usual to buy hot food and the Quaker Centre Café on the Ground Floor – North wing will also be open along with the Bookshop. Please be aware that the restaurant is returned to serving meat alongside the usual vegetarian and vegan food.

Wi-Fi at Friends House

The best Wi-Fi for you to use is the FH Conferencing Wi-Fi. The code for this is **@BritishQuakers**

Hampstead meeting Bed & Breakfast scheme

Members of Hampstead Meeting offer bed and breakfast for Friends attending Meeting for Sufferings. They charge £15, which covers the costs and also contributes to Meeting funds. For more information please contact Mary Barnes by telephone 0207 485 3850 or marybarneslineone@btinternet.com

Agenda mailing

Volunteers are always needed to help with the Meeting for Sufferings agenda mailing. We would appreciate any offers of help in preparing the Meeting for Sufferings agenda mailings (collating and envelope-stuffing) on mornings of the following Fridays (all travel expenses are paid and a free three course lunch in the Restaurant is provided):
16 September 2016
18 November 2016

If you are within easy reach of Friends House and would like to offer some help, please contact Graham Spackman on grahams@quaker.org.uk or 020 7663 1021.

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group

Minutes of Meeting on 6th June 2016

Present: Ursula Fuller, Sue Goodson, Ethel Livermore, Jane Pearn, Anne Ullathorne (convenor), Juliet Prager and Anne Wilkinson.

1. Reflections on MfS held on 6th April and YM 2016

We considered our experience of the April Meeting for Sufferings and of Yearly Meeting 2016 and in particular the exploration and summaries of the work that is being done by Quakers throughout the Yearly Meeting on living out our faith in the world.

We are aware of substantive questions about the work of Meeting for Sufferings:

- a) our relationship with trustees, both in being explicit about the way in which they are held to account and in MfS articulating priorities for centrally managed work
- b) the way in which we have communicated with Area Meetings and the tension between allowing time to take items and yet dealing with all necessary matters.

2. Living out our faith in the world

We are aware that we have not fully addressed all the questions posed at our April meeting (Paper MfS2016.04.05). We remind ourselves that MfS has a role 'to foster communication throughout the Yearly Meeting'. (QFP 7.02 (i)). We will share some of the ways that networking can take place at our next meeting.

3. Forward agenda

We have considered the forward agenda which helps our planning.

4. Agenda planning for 2nd July 2016

We have considered the items due to come before MfS in July and have planned the agenda.

5. Long term framework working group – final report

We have received the final report of this group (**MfSAG 2016.06.05**) and will forward it for information to BYM trustees, YMAC, and BYM central and standing committees and Management Meeting. We see this document as being useful reference for the future and it is available to members of Meeting for Sufferings on request.

6. MfSAG organisation

- a) We hope to look at Gold papers and minutes at our next meeting
- b) Fran Owen has shown us how Q groups works and we have considered how we might use this facility.

7. Dates of meetings

We confirm our plan to meet on Tuesday 6th September (11-4pm) and Monday 24th October (11-4pm).

Anne Ullathorne
Convenor

From a meeting of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees

Held Friday 17 to Sunday 19 June 2016 at Bull Street Meeting House, Birmingham

Present: David Burnell, Sarah Donaldson, James Eddington, Nick Francis (Assistant Clerk), Ingrid Greenhow (Clerk), Alison Ironside, Roy Love, Lynn Moseley, David Olver, Virginia Pawlyn, Steve Pullan, Alastair Reid, Tim Southall, , Peter Ullathorne (Treasurer) (minutes 1-23)

In attendance: Peter Coltman, Clerk of Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd Board, (minutes 16-17); Helen Drewery, General Secretary, QPSW (minutes 1 - 23; Paul Grey, Head of Facilities, (minutes 1- 17); Lisa Kiew, General Secretary, Finance & Property (minutes 1-9); Paul Parker, Recording Clerk; (except minute 26); Mike Perks, Clerk of BYMT Audit Committee (minute 21); Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk, (except minute 26); Michael Sturge, BYMT Audit Committee Review Group (minute 21)

Prevented: Graham Taylor

BYMT-2016-06-01 Welcome, agenda check, conflicts of interest check, minutes of last meeting

During our opening worship we have heard part of Waldo William's poem "In two fields".

The minutes of the meeting held on 19-20 February and 1 April 2016 have been signed by the clerk and placed in the minute book.

There are no unrecorded conflicts of interest.

We confirm our agenda.

We ask Alison Ironside to report back to Graham Taylor.

BYMT-2016-06-02 Consent agenda 1

We record the receipt of the following:

- Employment Committee minutes 23iii15 (**BYMT-2016-06-02i**)
- Quaker Life Central Committee minutes 19-20ii16 (**BYMT-2016-06-02ii**)
- Quaker Life Central Committee minute 16.25 "Quaker Life Central Committee terms of reference" (**BYMT-2016-06-02iii**)
- Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee minutes 26-28ii16 and 29iv-1v16 (**BYMT-2016-06-02iv,v**)
- Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee minute QPSWCC 16/57 "Prevent" (**BYMT-2016-06-02vi**)
- BYMT continued minutes (**BYMT-2016-06-02viii**)

BYMT-2016-06-03 Consent agenda 2

(a) Data protection

We have received paper **BYMT-2016-06-03i** which reminds us of our responsibilities towards the personal information to which we have access in our role as trustees.

(b) Meeting the auditors

We have received paper **BYMT-2016-06-03ii** asking us to consider whether we wish to meet with the auditors in 2016.

We decide not to meet with the auditors this year.

(c) Joint Libraries development

Further to minute **BYMT-2016-02-23**, we have received paper **BYMT-2016-06-03iii** giving us a progress report on this project.

(d) Kathleen Lonsdale papers

We receive minute 3 of Library Committee held on 6 May 2016 and paper **LIB/2016/05/02**. We are grateful to library staff for clarifying the position regarding the collection.

We confirm that, in accordance with the donor's wishes and intentions, personal and other relevant material should be returned to Kathleen Lonsdale's family, as recommended by Quaker Life Central Committee in minute **QLCC 16:53**.

We ask Library staff to make appropriate arrangements.

BYMT-2016-06-04 Recording Clerk's report

We have received the Recording Clerk's report (**BYMT-2016-06-04**) covering:

- News and updates about worship and witness activities (Yearly Meeting 2016, Vibrancy in Meetings, Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine/Israel)
- Operations matters (Health, Safety & Environmental Committee)
- Strategy developments (Communications strategy, Communications & Services departmental review, Global Management Accounting Principles Pioneer Programme)
- Staff matters (Staff changes in Communications & Services, Objections to taxation for military purposes)
- Relationships with other organisations (Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Housing Trust, Quaker Social Action, New Philanthropy Capital, Quaker schools, Grant-making trusts)
- Visits

Appendices are the confidential staffing update, the health and safety update and the Communication & Services Department review process.

We have received minutes of Management Meeting held 8 March, 12 April, 10 May, 24 May and 14 June. We have received minutes of Management Meeting and Extended Management Meeting held 23 February, 22 March and 26 April.

BYMT-2016-06-05 Trustees' News

We have received **BYMT-2016-06-05** giving news of the activities of trustees together with reports of the training, seminars, etc that trustees have attended.

Chris Willmore has updated us on the work of the Sustainability Group.

BYMT-2016-06-06 Finance

(a) BYMT Finance & Property Committee minutes

We have received minutes of Finance & Property Committee meetings held on 10 March and 19 May (**BYMT-2016-06-06i,ii**).

Roy Love, Clerk of Finance & Property Committee, has pointed out that both the Finance & Property Committee and the Audit Committee had had visits from the auditors to receive their report, with members of each committee at each other's meeting.

An informal meeting of interested Friends from Finance & Property, Friends Trusts Ltd and staff took place with Richard Murphy about approaches to companies to persuade them to be more tax-compliant. Rathbone Greenbank, our investment agent, is to be pressed more about their engagement with companies with whom we invest.

(b) Finance reports

We have received finance reports for February, March and April (**BYMT-2016-06-06iia,b,c**).

Lisa Kiew pointed out that she is going to be presenting the written reports in a different way in the future.

We note that we are having to draw down from investment funds to cover capital expenditure such as the first floor refurbishment.

Lisa's enthusiasm for our signing up to the Global Management Accounting Principles Programme has been referred to in the Recording Clerk's report. We warmly welcome this initiative.

(c) Legacy funding annual report

We have received a copy of the Legacy-funding time-limited projects report that went to Finance & Property Committee (**BYMT-2016-06-06iv**).

We welcome these reports and are delighted to note their progress, thank the responsible staff for their work and also noting implications for future work.

We recognise that this work must not endanger the longer-term commitments we have.

BYMT-2016-06-07 Property support proposals

Further to minute **BYMT-2016-02-06**, we have received a proposal for legacy funding for a pilot project to develop ways to empower local and area meetings to look after their property confidently and effectively (**BYMT-2016-06-07**).

Quaker Stewardship Committee received a draft proposal on the proposed pilot property at their meeting in April. We receive their minute **QSC-2016-04-05b (BYMT-2016-06-07 supplement)** supporting and commenting on the proposal.

Many Quaker properties are exceptionally well-maintained. But research has shown that good practice isn't being shared and that approaches vary widely between, and even within, areas.

Sometimes, properties can cause increased stress, risks and expense for meetings. Changing membership patterns may also present future challenges for property management that will need to be addressed.

Friends think that BYM could do more to help – and we agree. So this pilot project will explore new approaches to supporting local and area meetings with their property management and maintenance.

Ultimately, this project aims to find out how best to help:

- more meetings enjoy their buildings as places of community and worship that nourish, rather than drain, the life of the meeting;
- more Quaker buildings, and their use, embody and speak of Quaker values.
- A new staff member will be employed to manage this two-year pilot project.

We agree to allocate funding of £187,833 over three years to this project from legacies. We agree to establish a Reference Group for this project as set out in the paper. We agree the terms of reference as printed in Appendix 4 of the paper, and ask our Nominations Group to bring forward names in due course. We invite Quaker Stewardship Committee to provide the name of one or two Friends to serve on this group to ensure that this project has strong links with QSC's own work.

We ask the Recording Clerk to ensure the project takes account of sustainability, legislation matters and communication to Meeting for Sufferings.

We forward this minute to Quaker Stewardship Committee.

BYMT-2016-06-08 Quaker Council for European Affairs

Sarah Donaldson has reported on progress with the review of Quaker Council for European Affairs' governance. We are pleased to hear of the recent changes to the governance arrangements at QCEA.

BYMT-2016-06-09 Quaker United Nations Office (Geneva)

We note that our Finance & Property Committee is considering the level of the 2017 grant to QUNO in light of the request received from Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee at our last meeting (minute **BYMT-2016-02-08** refers). The Recording Clerk informs us that QUNO wishes to discuss with us longer-term funding issues.

We ask the Recording Clerk, the Clerks to Trustees and the Yearly Meeting Treasurer to discuss this with other interested parties before coming to any further decision about how to take this conversation forward.

BYMT-2016-06-10 BYM Trustees' terms of reference

Quaker Stewardship Committee consulted us on the proposed revised terms of reference (minute **BYMT-2015-11-06** refers). The final draft went to Yearly Meeting 2016 and was agreed with one small amendment (minute 27). We receive this minute and our new terms of reference (**BYMT-2016-06-10**).

We note that our terms of reference will be reviewed every 3 years.

We note the reduction in the number of Trustees.

BYMT-2016-06-11 Strategic Management

Further to minute **BYMT-2016-02-17** we receive paper **BYMT-2016-06-11**.

Trustees have been considering changes to Management Meeting for some years and have been involved with positive discussions with members of Management Meeting. We have asked Management Meeting to work in ways that are more strategic, clearly-defined, effective and trusted.

We have found the discussions innovative and exciting, and we are convinced that this is the right direction for Britain Yearly Meeting.

We now agree the new structure and authorise the changes to Management Meeting. Under the new arrangement, the current departmental structure will not change. The titles of General Secretaries to Quaker Life, Quaker Peace & Social Witness and Quaker Finance & Property and Head of Facilities & Hospitality will be replaced by Head of Worship & Witness, Head of Operations and Head of Finance & Resources, in addition to the posts of Recording Clerk and Deputy Recording Clerk. We recall that the post of Head of Communications and Services was laid down in November 2015 (minute **BYMT-2015-11-14** refers).

We agree to inform Meeting for Sufferings, the Central & Standing Committees and, in due course, Yearly Meeting; we ask Meeting for Sufferings to commission any church government amendments via its Church Government Advisory Group.

We uphold the Recording Clerk, Management Meeting and our staff during the implementation and transition phase.

We ask Sarah Donaldson & David Olver, who were appointed by our minute **BYMT-2015-03-13**, to start work on redrafting the terms of reference of Management Meeting to reflect the new arrangement, with a view to agreeing them by the end of this year.

We expect to monitor the new arrangement carefully, including through conducting an interim review at the end of 2017 and a fuller review at a later stage. We ask the Recording Clerk to bring a proposal for a process for this to a future meeting.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings, Central & Standing Committees, the Hospitality Company Board, Quaker Stewardship Committee and Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee.

BYMT-2016-06-12 Safeguarding and Goddard Inquiry

(a) Safeguarding policy

We receive the Safeguarding annual report 2015/16 (**BYMT-2016-06-12**) which covers the work carried out in the name of the registered charity. The report confirms that the policies, procedures and guidance are being followed.

The report suggests that a shorter policy be considered by BYM Trustees.

We ask our Nominations Committee to bring forward the names of two trustees to work on this policy in conjunction with staff and to bring this back to a future meeting. We confirm that our existing policy remains in place for the time being.

(b) Goddard Inquiry

The Safeguarding annual report (**BYMT-2016-06-12**) reports that the Religious Society of Friends has not been named as an organisation that the Goddard Inquiry will be investigating at this stage. We are aware that further investigations may be identified during the lifetime of the Inquiry, and we will be ready to respond if necessary.

BYMT-2016-06-13 Trustees annual report and accounts/annual return

The Recording Clerk has confirmed that the Charity Commission annual return has been completed. We thank David Olver for his work on this on our behalf. All Trustees confirmed their acceptance of the information to be submitted.

We note that our staff are looking at the format of the report on the centrally-managed work for 2016.

BYMT-2016-06-14 Communications Strategy

Further to minute **BYMT-2015-05-13** we receive the current draft of the BYM communications strategy (**BYMT-2016-06-14**).

The communications strategy is relevant to all aspects of the centrally-managed work to deliver our organisational objectives as set out in Our Faith in the Future. It articulates how all staff employed by BYM are to communicate about and through their work, and what we want Quakers to be known for.

We are pleased to see the progress made in developing a communications strategy and are content with the direction of travel. We note that a further report with more detailed information and a risk analysis will be brought to our September meeting.

BYMT-2016-06-15 Use of the phrase “Quakers in Britain”

We receive Meeting for Sufferings minute **MfS/16/04/13** and associated paper on the use of the phrase “Quakers in Britain” and comments from the Recording Clerk (**BYMT-2016-06-15**).

Cambridgeshire area meeting has a concern that “Quakers in Britain” is being used for official and public declarations from Friends House, rather than our official and registered title of Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Meeting for Sufferings has forwarded their minute to us asking for our advice.

We see connections between the matters raised in this minute and the developing work on our communications strategy which takes into account the intended audiences and objectives for BYM's communications.

Clarity about the identity of the organisation and the authority under which its communications are made is important. Meeting for Sufferings has already approved a Speaking Out policy for the whole Yearly Meeting.

We ask the communications strategy to be accompanied by a clear statement of how the various terms are used.

We will return to this matter when we consider the communications strategy in September.

BYMT-2016-06-16 Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd

(a) Minutes

We receive the minutes of Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd.'s meetings held 3 March and 5 May (BYMT-2016-06-16i,ii).

(b) Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd annual report

We receive the 2015 annual report for The Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd (BYMT-2016-06-16iii) introduced by its clerk, Peter Coltman.

We welcome the excellent performance of the Company in 2015 and extend our thanks to the staff responsible, and we also welcome the steps involving staff taken to ensure that the Hospitality Company is performing as an ethical company.

Peter Coltman has outline some plans for the future, including how to become more visible, not only to Quakers but to the outside world.

We are asked to think about what we want from the business in the long term.

c) Swarthmoor Hall

We are pleased to receive this positive minute (16:52) from Quaker Life Central Committee about spiritual outreach at Swarthmoor Hall in response to our minute BYMT-2016-06-16iv.

BYMT-2016-06-17 Property matters

(a) Property Strategy Group

We receive a proposal for a Property Strategy Group (BYMT-2016-06-17iii) asking us to consider the formation of a small representative group appointed for up to three years to support the development of a long term strategic framework for Britain Yearly Meeting's property.

We agree to the terms of reference proposed, and ask our nominations committee to bring forward names to serve.

(b) HS2 and Cross Rail 2

Further to minute BYMT-2016-02-13c, we receive the terms of reference for the HS2 Monitoring Group (BYMT-2016-06-17iv). We accept the proposed terms of reference.

(c) Quaker Usage of Friends House

Further to minute BYMT-2015-05-15a, we receive a paper on the Quaker usage of Friends House (BYMT-2016-06-17i) which concludes that Quaker usage of the building is year-on-year increasing, but this does mean unrecoverable additional costs being borne by Hospitality Department.

We are pleased to see that there continue to be appropriate levels of Quaker usage of the building, both for specific events and to support partner organisations in taking forward work which is in line with BYM's own priorities.

(d) Naming of rooms in Friends House

Further to minute **BYMT-2015-09-22** on the naming of the Small Meeting House, we receive paper **BYMT-2016-06-17ii** on the naming of rooms in Friends House.

Following consultation with staff, we approve the following names:

First Floor rooms:

North suite – Hilda Clark

North Room – Marjorie Sykes

Room 4 – Abraham Darby

Room 5 – Kathleen Lonsdale

Room 6 – George Bradshaw

Bloomsbury and Endsleigh Suites and Drayton Rooms:

Bloomsbury Suite – Ystafell Waldo Williams

Endsleigh Suite – Ada Salter

Drayton Room 1 – Bayard Rustin

Drayton Room 2 – Lucretia Mott

Drayton Room 3 – John Woolman

Small Meeting House – Sarah Fell

BYMT-2016-06-18 Risk

Further to minutes **BYMT-2015-05-20a** and **BYMT-2015-09-09**, we receive the Risk Report 2016 (**BYMT-2016-06-18**) which identifies 180 different risks.

There are 4 risks categorised as High Likelihood and Major Risk:

- Ageing and declining membership
- Links with the local community in Camden and HS2 are not satisfactory
- Social media reputational risks
- IT interruptions owing to hardware/software failures and cyber-security issues

We note that Management Meeting is working well on these matters, and we ask them to ensure that these, and other risks, are carefully managed to reduce their impact; and to report regularly on high risk areas.

We thank all the staff and trustees for their work to develop this new approach to risk assessment and management.

BYMT-2016-06-19 BYMT training day: follow-up

We receive paper **BYMT-2016-06-19** responding to our training day on 1 April and suggesting next steps. We ask for more advice about the use of and response to social media/digital leadership. We agree we need to continue the development of our relationships with central and standing committees with Woodbrooke.

BYMT-2016-06-20 Link Trustees

We receive a paper on how the Link Trustee system is working together with the original rationale and guidance notes from 2013 (**BYMT-2016-06-20**).

Trustees are invited to write to the Assistant Clerk with their views on how the link trustees system should work. The Assistant Clerk will email all trustees with this reminder.

BYMT-2016-06-21 BYMT Audit Committee

(a) BYMT Audit Committee minutes

We receive the minutes of Audit Committee held 17 March **(BYMT-2016-06-21i)**.

(b) BYMT Audit Committee annual report

We receive the BYMT Audit Committee annual report 2015 **(BYMT-2016-06-21ii)**.
The Clerk of Audit Committee has pointed out that most outstanding matters at the end of 2015 have been completed as minuted in March 2016.

(c) BYMT Audit Committee Review

Further to minute **BYMT-2015-05-21**, we receive the review of BYMT Audit Committee **(BYMT-2016-06-21iii)**. We thank Michael Sturge and Virginia Pawlyn for their work.
We approve the document.

The report recommends that BYM Trustees should continue to include an Audit Committee as part of its governance structure but its operation should be improved and its terms of reference should be reviewed to determine the Committee's remit. We appoint Michael Sturge, David Olver (convenor), Roy Love and the Recording Clerk to draft new terms of reference before our September meeting and to determine what subjects should be addressed by an Audit Committee.

We ask our Trustees Nominations Group to start thinking about potential members of a new, smaller committee, so that, following adoption of new ToR at our September meeting there should not be too much delay in discernment of the make-up of the new committee. We hope to appoint the committee at our November meeting so that it can begin work in January 2017.

We ask Management Meeting to ensure that sufficient support is in place to allow the Audit Committee to carry out its work effectively.

We send this minute to Audit Committee and to Management Meeting.

(d) Membership of Audit Committee

We agree to release John Chestney of the Methodist Church from our Audit Committee with immediate effect.

BYMT-2016-06-22 Appointments

We appoint the following Friends:

HS2 (to end of 2018)

David Burnell BYMT
Mervyn Dobbin Finance & Property
Val Brittin (subject to consent)

Safeguarding policy review

Sarah Donaldson
Chris Willmore

Property Strategy Group (to end of 2018)

Tm Southall (BYMT)

And 2 names to come

Property Support Reference Group (for the lifetime of the project)

Steve Pullan

And 3 names to come

Employment Committee

Virginia Pawlyn BYMT (from 1 January to 31 December 2017)

YMAC Meeting

James Eddington

BYMT-2016-06-23 Reflecting on Yearly Meeting

We receive the substantive minutes of Yearly Meeting 2016 (BYMT-2016-06-22).

We have reflected on Yearly Meeting.

We thank our staff for all their hard work during Yearly Meeting.

BYMT-2016-06-24 Meeting for Sufferings: preparation

We have discussed our participation at Meeting for Sufferings on 2 July.

BYMT-2016-06-25 Reviewing the meeting

We have reviewed our meeting.

We have enjoyed meeting with Friends from Central England and further afield.

We thank the staff of the Priory Rooms and Bull Street Meeting Friends for the warmth of their hospitality.

BYMT-2016-06-26 Time without staff

We have spent time without staff.

BYMT-2016-06-27 Next meeting

We part, hoping to meet again on 9-10 September if nothing occur to prevent.

Ingrid Greenhow

Clerk

Meeting for Sufferings 2016 07 02 – AM minutes received

Interfaith Dialogue

Leeds AM minute 2016/3 Part 2 from the AM held on 14 February 2016 regarding the report of the Leeds Quaker-Jewish Dialogue Group

End of Life

Leeds AM minute 2016/32 from the AM held on 9 April 2016 regarding the launch of the book, *Assisted dying: a Quaker exploration* by the End-of-Life Care Working Party.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Notts & Derbys AM minute 2/3/16 from the AM held on 12 March 2016 regarding the plight of unaccompanied refugee children.

Mid-Essex AM minute 16/33 from the AM held on 13 March 2016 regarding supporting a minute of Essex and Suffolk Regional Gathering held at Great Bardfield on 27 February, requesting a conference to consider the refugee crisis.

Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation

Northumbria AM Minute 11 6/16 regarding the Peace Tax Bill and their donation to QPSW to help fund a Peacemaker. *This minute is included in paper 4b.*

Interfaith dialogue

Leeds Area Quaker Meeting held on 14 February 2016

Minute 2016/3 Part 2: Report of the Leeds Quaker-Jewish Dialogue Group

We ended by expressing thanks to those Friends who have taken part in the Leeds Quaker-Jewish Dialogue Group. We thank them for the report, notwithstanding that there is deep unease about the omission of the Palestinian viewpoint. We feel that we should support Israeli activists who are striving to counteract injustice. We shall let this report sit with us and then decide at a future date what, if anything, we should send to Sufferings.

In view of the focus of the April Sufferings, we agree to inform Meeting for Sufferings that the Leeds Quaker-Jewish Dialogue Group, which has been meeting for five years, has produced a report that we are considering at AM level, and that they are continuing their work.

Veronica O'Mara
Clerk

End of Life Issues

Leeds Area Quaker Meeting held on 9 April 2016

Minute 2016/32 Assisted dying: a Quaker exploration Book Launch

The members of the End-of-Life Care Working Party (originally Quentin Fowler, Ben Francis, Judy Kessler, Phil O'Hare, and Gillian Oakley, and then Quentin Fowler, Barbara Henderson, Paul Henderson, Judy Kessler, and Jill Page) have tirelessly devoted many years to a careful and caring examination of the complex and contradictory issues surrounding assisted dying and end-of-life care. After much reflection and with the support of Leeds Area Quaker Meeting (LAQM), their work has led to the publication, *Assisted dying: a Quaker exploration*.

The co-clerk, Robert Keeble, introduced the morning session on the launch of the book, which has been edited by Quentin Fowler, Barbara Henderson, Paul Henderson, Judy Kessler, and Jill Page, and published by LAQM. Judy Kessler started by giving the background to the Leeds concern on end-of-life care. She explained that the book was a result of the response of Quaker Life to the LAQM Minute that was sent in May 2014. She then explained how the group decided to produce the book as a final project. She described how the contributors were chosen because of their experiences and expertise. Paul Henderson then spoke about the main themes and issues which he thought could be identified in the contributions. He grouped these under three headings: consideration of assisted dying from within the Quaker faith; themes and issues that are external to Quakerism; and the connections between the first two groups. The final speaker was Alison Leonard. She described the foundation of the Quaker concern around the Dying and Death group and explained how she approached her contribution to the book, bearing in mind the changes that took place in the process to enable all the contributors to act as their own interlocutors. The session concluded with comments from Friends.

In the workshop in the afternoon introduced by Jill Page three contributors to the book talked about their considerations of the issue of assisted dying and how they approached the writing. Martin Schweiger described his position from the point of view of a doctor; Rosemary Daley talked from the perspective of a palliative care physician; and Quentin Fowler explained his personal concern about assisted dying in the distressing context of dementia. Friends were encouraged to ask questions of the speakers which then led to further in-depth exploration.

We are very grateful to these Friends who have undertaken this work at considerable emotional cost to themselves, to all the contributors to the volume, and to those who helped in its production. We need to remember that the publication of the book does not put an end to the discussion but is a valuable and provocative continuation of the dialogue for all of us about assisted dying and end-of-life care.

The End-of-Life Care group is grateful for financial support to LAQM, the Sir James Reckitt Charity, and the Sessions Book Trust. A copy of the book has been sent to Friends House Library and to Woodbrooke, and one will be sent to the Quaker Archives in the Brotherton Library (University of Leeds); copies have also been sent to Local Meetings nationwide via Area Meetings.

We forward this Minute to Meeting for Sufferings and Quaker Life.

Robert Keeble
Co-clerk

Background information

In June 2014 Meeting for Sufferings received minutes about End of Life Care from London West and Leeds AMs. Both minutes focused on assisted dying, and were forwarded to Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC).

Subsequently, QLCC held a committee meeting considering a broad range of issues related to end of life, involving Friends from Leeds AM. QLCC reported back in December 2014. Part of minute MfS 2014/12/12c recorded:

'We have heard of Friends' experiences of dealing with end of life issues in their Meetings and at work. It is a huge subject and it is important that Friends talk more about a range of end of life issues, including aging, preparing for death, and medically-assisted dying. We see today's consideration very much as a starting point. We support QLCC in their suggestion for Friends to share their stories.'

Quaker Life established an End Of Life Issues Working Group. The Group has produced a leaflet, *'Love and loss: an invitation to Friends and meetings.'* The Group also supported the organisation of a Quaker Life Representative Council weekend meeting on the subject. One of the workshops during this weekend was about assisted dying, and Friends from Leeds AM were able to share information about the book.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Introduction

Two AMs (Notts and Derby, and Mid Essex) have sent minutes on this subject. The two minutes are followed by an update from Quaker Peace and Social Witness.

Notts and Derby Area Quaker Meeting held on 12 March 2016

Minute 2/3/16

Nicky Hoskins-Stone, having been prevented from attending, has sent us her report, which is attached. We have considered the report together with a concern from Derby Meeting about unaccompanied refugee children. We ask Meeting for Sufferings to reopen the subject with a view to establishing urgently ways in which Quakers locally, nationally and internationally can work to improve the situation for unaccompanied refugee children.

Steve Adams, Clerk

Paul Nicholas, Correspondence Clerk

Mid-Essex Area Meeting held at Maldon on 13 March 2016

Minute 16/33 Essex and Suffolk Regional Gathering, Bardfield, 27 February 2016 - Refugee crisis.

A report by Spencer King has been distributed prior to this meeting and he has spoken to it today. Catherine Henderson and Fred Ashmore from Quaker Asylum & Refugee Network (QARN) spoke about the situation facing refugees from worn-torn Syria and other countries in the region as they cross into EU countries and many try to enter the UK, where their treatment by government authorities is generally less than welcoming. We thank Spencer for his report which will be attached to these minutes and may be included in the AM Newsletter.

Essex & Suffolk Regional Gathering minuted a request for a conference to be organised to explore the issues surrounding the refugee crisis and the movement of peoples and how the Society might respond collectively and as individuals. The minute has been sent to QARN, the clerk of Meeting for Sufferings, the Recording Clerk, QPSW, Jessica Metherringham and also to the clerks of AMs in the Regional Gathering area. To reflect our support for this action, we ask the AM clerk to send today's minute to the above recipients, confirming our support for the minute from Regional Gathering.

Peter Garratt

Clerk, Mid-Essex AM

Quaker Peace and Social Witness - update

In February Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) considered a paper asking for advice/comments on a proposal for possible work to help refugees in Britain. A series of minutes from AMs had made it clear that Friends around the YM were deeply troubled by the situation and were finding ways to address it locally. The question was - what might be done at a national YM level?

BYM had been invited to participate in a private sponsorship scheme which is being coordinated by Citizens UK. Soon after MfS, Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC) considered the proposal and took into account the responses from MfS and from members of the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network. They recognised that there was an appetite among Friends for engaging with a big project but that there are significant worries about this specific project. They decided against participating in it, but asked staff to develop a proposal to use legacy funding for a scoping project.

Management Meeting has now approved the project which involves the recruitment of a full time worker in QPSW for one year in the first instance, to build networks, share ideas and good practice and look for opportunities for Quakers to make a relatively substantial contribution to what is a rapidly developing picture.

Proposals to extend the funding for two further years will be considered by Finance and Property Committee in July.

We expect to advertise the post shortly.

Helen Drewery
General Secretary, QPSW

Meeting for Sufferings 2016 07 02 – minutes received from Central Committees and other bodies

Church Government

Church Government Advisory Group minute CGAG16/16 from the meeting held on 11 April 2016 regarding the recommendation to MfS that they initiate a review of the appeal process as described in sections **4.25** and **4.26** of *Quaker faith & practice*. Also attached is **CGAG paper 2016 04 07** that went before Church Government Advisory Group.

Quaker World Relations

Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum Minute of record from the meeting held on 23 April 2016 at Friends House considering the theme 'Working together in the world: what do we do best and where do we go next?'

Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation

Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee minute 16/56 from the meeting held on 29 April – 1 May regarding;
MfS/16/04/15 Arms trade: UK sales to Saudi Arabia;
MfS/16/04/16 Conscientious objection to military taxation. Also attached is a note by Sam Walton, Peace & Disarmament Programme Manager in QPSW.

Also included is **Northumbria AM Minute 11 6/16** regarding the Peace Tax Bill and their donation to QPSW to help fund a Peaceworker.

Church Government

Church Government Advisory Group held at Friends House on 11 April 2016

CGAG/16/16 Appeals against decisions of Area Meeting

Further to our minute CGAG/16/06 we confirm our recommendation to Meeting for Sufferings that they initiate a review of the appeal process as described in sections **4.25** and **4.26** of *Quaker faith & practice*.

In the light of a number of appeals we believe that the process should be reviewed to see whether improvements or simplifications can be made. We note that 'reconciliation' does not appear in the current text.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

We have also seen a draft set of terms of reference for a group undertaking a review of these sections.

Catherine James
Convener

The draft Terms of Reference follow.

Meeting for Sufferings or XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Group to review appeals procedures (Qf&p 4.25)

Draft Terms of Reference

The Group shall work within these terms of reference, under the authority of minute S/2016/xx/x of Meeting for Sufferings held xxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 2016.

1. Summary of purpose

To review the appeals procedures as described in *Quaker faith & practice* sections 4.25 and 4.26, and to propose any alterations which may be required. This is in the light of a number of appeals that have happened since the most recent revision of the process.

2. Membership

2.1 The Group comprises 4-6 members who will initially be appointed to serve until the end of 2017. The names will be discerned by the Central Nominations Committee.

2.2 The Group shall appoint a convenor from among its membership.

2.3 The Quaker Life Support for Meetings Officer will attend meetings and act as secretary to the Group. Meetings without a member of staff should occur only with the agreement of the Recording Clerk.

2.4 The Convenors or Clerks of Church Government Advisory Group and the Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group and the Recording Clerk or their designate may attend any meeting ex officio and will receive all documents and correspondence circulated by the group.

2.5 The Group may invite the attendance of other Friends or specialists on an ad hoc basis to help on particular issues on its behalf, but may not co-opt on a permanent basis.

2.6 Other members of staff may be asked to attend for specific agenda items by invitation of the Group.

3. Frequency of meetings

3.1 The Group shall meet as frequently as appropriate to carry out its task. Meetings should only occur with agreement of its secretary or the Recording Clerk.

3.2 The Group shall seek an appropriate balance between meeting together face-to-face and communicating individually or collectively in other ways.

4. Duties and responsibilities

4.1 The Group will consider Sections 4.25 and 4.26 of *Quaker faith & practice* in the light of a number of appeals. The process itself should be reviewed to see whether clarifications, improvements or simplifications can be made to it.

4.2 The group should explore if a process to bring about reconciliation between parties could or should have a place in the process.

4.3 The group should report on if an extension of the appeals process is necessary to include other bodies that are part of our Yearly Meeting structure, (e.g. those described in Chapter 5).

4.4 The Group may consult widely as possible including (but not limited to) among Friends who have been involved in as many aspects of the appeals process as is wise.

4.5 The Group will take advice from Church Government Advisory Group when considering any changes to *Quaker faith & practice* which may be required, and will reflect such advice in its final report.

4.6 The Group shall prepare a final report for Meeting for Sufferings proposing any changes to the appeals process, include any suggestions for changes to *Quaker faith & practice* and the reasons for such changes, and provide background papers that will help provide clarity those involved in any part of an appeal.

5. Authority and accountability

5.1 The Group is accountable to Meeting for Sufferings and draws its authority from it.

5.2 The Group shall make reports to Meeting for Sufferings and its Church Government Advisory Group as required.

5.3 The Group shall work according to the Quaker business method, as described in chapter 3 and elsewhere in *Quaker faith and practice*.

5.4 The Group shall keep notes of all its meetings, minute decisions made in formal meetings and keep these notes and minutes together as a record of its work.

5.6 In carrying out its task, the Group may communicate informally with Quaker meetings, committees and groups as necessary, and by minute with Quaker Life Central Committee and Church Government Advisory Group.

5.7 The Group will work within the budget drawn up by the Recording Clerk as part of the operational plan approved by Trustees.

Quaker World Relations

Minute of record from the Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum held on Saturday, 23 April 2016 at Friends House

23 Friends representing QWRC, FWCC World Office, FWCC- EMES, YFGM, QCCIR, QLCC, BYM trustees, Woodbrooke , Meeting for Sufferings, QPSW, QUNO and QCEA (BYM reps) met to consider the theme 'Working together in the world: what do we do best and where do we go next?'

We were enriched by our guest speaker, Diane Randall, executive secretary at the Friends Committee on National Legislation, who also joined us for a lively Q & A session in the afternoon.

We have considered the following questions in two small group sessions:

- What does your organisation/committee do best/what has it done well in the last few years? What challenges have you faced? [either international work you have done, or contact/learning you have gained from outside BYM]
- How does your committee/organisation communicate and collaborate with other Quaker groups and organisations? How could this be improved?
AND
- What has your organisation/committee learnt from Quakers from a different YM/from a different worshipping tradition?
- How could you incorporate that learning in your work, and into BYM? How best can we involve Young Adult Friends in this work in the future?

It has been a challenging, joyful and informative day and we look forward to the next meeting of the Forum on Saturday, 25 March 2017.

QWRC and the co- clerks of the Consultative Forum will examine ways in which we can take our conversations further.

Arms Trade: UK sales to Saudi Arabia

Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee

QPSWCC 16/56 Minutes Received for Consideration

Meeting for Sufferings

MfS/16/04/15 Arms trade: UK sales to Saudi Arabia

Meeting for Sufferings has forwarded to us minutes 16.01.7 of North West London AM and minute 5/16 of Ipswich and Diss AM, expressing concern about UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia, particularly in the light of violent conflict in Syria and Yemen.

Marigold Bentley has advised us that these matters are already being addressed through QPSW support to partners such as Campaign Against Arms Trades (CAAT). We ask staff to prepare a note for Meeting for Sufferings and to make contact with the two AMs.

QPSW update

I have been asked to write a note for you by QPSW Central Committee. There are two significant recent developments to report:

Firstly, Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) have launched a new lead campaign on this very issue. You can find out more at www.caat.org.uk, and paper copies will be available when you meet.

If Friends want to take action on this issue, their petition is the place to start. I highly commend it to all Friends. If you are called to do more, get in touch – the world's largest arms fair is due back in London in September 2017 and there is much work to be done.

I am sure that Friends will be heartened that CAAT, an organisation largely founded by Quakers, is still working so close to our concerns. We will continue our close partnership and support. For example, the meetings mobilising against the DSEI Arms Fair take place at Friends House and BYM will host the European Network Against the Arms Trade at Friends House in July.

Secondly, Friends may be heartened to hear that as I write, a group of young Friends from across the UK are joining Friends from across Europe at the protests outside the Eurosatory arms fair in Paris. They are formally representing our Yearly Meeting, and are displaying our banners and posters.

I find assistance in this work from the words of the All Friends Conference of 1920:

Our conviction is that Christianity has this to say to the world: 'Your reliance upon armaments is both wrong and futile. Armaments are the weapons of organised violence and outrage. Their use is a denial of the true laws of good living. They involve the perpetuation of strife. They stand in the way of the true fellowship of men. They impoverish the peoples. They tempt men to evil, and they breed suspicion and fear and the tragic results thereof. They are therefore not legitimate weapons in the Christian armoury, nor are they sources of security.'

Sam Walton – 13 June 2016

Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation

Introduction

In April, Meeting for Sufferings forwarded a minute about conscientious objection to military taxation to QPSW Central Committee. Northumbria AM has recently another minute on the same subject from, which is copied below QPSWCC's minute. They are followed by an update from QPSW staff.

MfS/16/04/16 Conscientious objection to military taxation

Meeting for Sufferings has forwarded to us minute 16.18.2 of Dorset and South Wiltshire AM, regarding a private members' bill which is to be heard in the House of Commons in July, introduced by Ruth Cadbury MP.

Marigold Bentley has advised us that this initiative is being substantially supported by the Peace & Disarmament programme and one of our UK Peaceworkers. We note this and ask staff to contact the AM.

We send both the part minutes above to Meeting for Sufferings and PECAN.

Northumbria Area Meeting held on Sunday 12th June 2016

Minute 11 6/16 Minutes Received

We receive the minutes of Area Meeting Working Group held on Tuesday 3rd May 2016.

Matter arising – the Peace Tax Bill

We receive Minute 6 WG 5/16 Taxes for Peace Bill.

We have heard from Holly Wallis, the Quaker Peace and Social Witness peacemaker placed at "Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War" speak about the Taxes for Peace Bill, due to be introduced in the summer or autumn 2016. "Conscience", was set up in 1979 by Britain Yearly Meeting to campaign for a change in British law to allow conscientious objection to military taxation, and for the tax of conscientious objectors to go into a peace tax fund.

We thank Holly very much for speaking to our Meeting this evening and agree to encourage our Local Meetings and individuals to lobby their MPs and to write to their local papers about this. Template letters are available:

<http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/template-letter-to-send-to-your-mp/>

Forms are available whereby people may register as Conscientious Objectors:

<http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/register-yourself-as-a-conscientious-objector/>

Area Meeting Working Group recommends support for this campaign.

The weblink is: www.conscienceonline.org.uk and Holly's email address is outreach@conscienceonline.org.uk

We confirm our Area Meeting support for this campaign. We have received copies of the spring issue of "Conscience Update" and copies of forms to fill in and send to the Conscience office, explaining why one might have a conscientious objection to paying for war. We agree to send a minute from our Area Meeting to Meeting for Sufferings informing them that we have adopted this as a concern. We also ask Local Meetings and individuals to write in support of the Bill. We agree to make a donation of £500 to Quaker Peace and Social Witness to help fund a peaceworker.

Susan Bennet
Clerk to Northumbria Area Meeting

QPSW - update

Quaker MP, Ruth Cadbury, is putting forward a Peace Tax Bill for debate in this parliament. This will be a private member's bill (under the '10 minute rule') that calls for a change in the law to allow conscientious objection to military taxation. As yet there is no date set for this, but she is hoping it will be read before the recess of parliament on 20 July. If not, the debate on this bill will be in the autumn. In either case, Friends can be urging their MPs to support this bill in the meantime and helping to raise awareness through their local newspapers or by organising public meetings or discussions within the Meeting or amongst the wider public.

Former Canon to St Paul's Cathedral, Giles Fraser, wrote about the Peace Tax Bill last week in the *Guardian* newspaper (6th June 2016) and this has generated huge interest, including over 1,000 comments to the online article. Popular actor and former director of The Globe Theatre, Mark Rylance, has also agreed to produce a short video message in support of the Bill.

To receive updates on the Peace Tax Bill, including the date it will be debated in parliament when that becomes known, Friends are urged to get on to one or more of the Conscience mailing lists:

a. by becoming a member of Conscience The Peace Tax Campaign:

<http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/get-involved/join-us/>

b. by filling out the form on paper or online to claim your status as a modern-day conscientious objector: <http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/register-yourself-as-a-conscientious-objector/>

c. by signing up to Conscience e-bulletin, which costs nothing and involves no other commitment: <http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/>

QPSW Peaceworker, Holly Wallis, is spearheading this campaign at Conscience and is available for a few more months only to speak to Local and Area Meetings. She will be finishing her QPSW peaceworker placement at Conscience in August.

QPSW staff and committees have been supporting all these efforts. Peace Education, Campaigning and Networking sub-committee of QPSW (PECAN) member Joel Wallenberg is on the Executive Committee of Conscience as is David Milner of Dorchester LQM, who officially represents QPSW on the Conscience committee.

QPSW gives an annual grant to Conscience to support its work as it emanates directly from a Quaker concern that has been upheld by Britain Yearly Meeting since the 1980s.

Tim Wallis
QPSW

Lancaster University Court

For some years, Meeting for Sufferings appointed a representative to the Courts of Lancaster and Loughborough Universities. The arrangement with Loughborough ceased relatively recently.

Lancaster University's Court enables the wider interests served by the University to be associated with the institution, and provides a public forum where members of Court can raise any matters about the University. It meets annually, to receive reports and discuss matters relating to the University, and convey its opinion thereon to the Council or Senate. Most members of the Court are from outside the University, representing the local community and other designated bodies with an interest in the University (other members represent the staff and students).

Meeting for Sufferings has not, at least in recent years, received reports from the representative, and this connection now seems unproductive.

The representative who is appointed to Lancaster University Court is usually nominated by, and a member of, Lancashire Central and North AM.

Discussions with both Lancaster University and Friends in Lancashire Central and North AM indicate that it would now be appropriate for the representative to be appointed by the AM.

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to pass responsibility for this appointment to Lancashire Central and North Area Meeting.

Reflections on Yearly Meeting and looking forward

Yearly Meeting 2016 was the second of the three year arc looking at Living out our faith in the world.

In 2015 Yearly Meeting's minute 36 asked: 'How are we led to live out our faith in a world where we see systemic injustice and increasing inequality?' The minute asked Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) to help take forward the work on social and economic injustice.

We started to do that at MfS in April. We were informed by a national survey about Quaker faith in action, today. We struggled with the concept of being responsible for co-ordination – seeing MfS' role more as encouraging and providing networking among Friends. We also considered testing concerns, recognising the importance of being tender, because acting under concern can be a frightening experience, when you feel impelled and can do no other. We noted that many Meetings don't have experience of testing concerns: the process needs to be explained, clearly.

Yearly Meeting 2016 focussed on our Gifts, and testing concerns. We celebrated the many and diverse ways Friends are living out their faith. We started on Friday evening by hearing again the 'Call to Equality', Minute 36 of Yearly Meeting 2015. This was followed by the responses to it collected through Meeting for Sufferings from area meetings. The text, written and presented by Jane Pearn, can be read at www.quaker.org.uk/ym

2017 is going to move on to movement building and working in collaboration with others.

At this meeting we are asked to reflect on Yearly Meeting 2016 but also to look ahead.

YM 2016

Meeting for Sufferings now has an opportunity to reflect on YM2016 and whether there are any messages that we can be taking forward.

YM 2017

In the Autumn Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (YMAC) will be planning the agenda for 2017. This is our opportunity to see if there are things we want to feed into their consideration, in the broad area of movement building.

Future Yearly Meetings

In November, YMAC will hold a threshing weekend looking at longer term planning for Yearly Meetings and where they go at the end of the current three-year arc. MfS Arrangement Group have been invited to the weekend, so this is also a chance for some initial thinking on what we might want to feed in to the process.

Ethel Livermore
Clerk

Meeting for Sufferings - Request for a travelling minute

Paul Parker, Recording Clerk, June 2016

Summary

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to consider approving a travelling minute for Deborah Rowlands and Paul Parker to visit among Friends in Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Background

The Clerk of Yearly Meeting, Deborah Rowlands, and the Recording Clerk, Paul Parker, intend to travel to Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meetings in July and August, to attend their annual sessions, and to have an opportunity to meet with Friends in those yearly meetings, their clerks and staff.

They also hope to visit several Quaker institutions in Philadelphia and Washington, among them Friends General Conference, American Friends Service Committee, and Friends Committee on National Legislation, as well as the offices of the yearly meetings themselves.

Chapter 13 of Quaker faith & practice describes (in 13.28) the circumstances under which a travelling minute can be written. Essentially the minute is a way of introducing travelling Friends to their host meetings, and of letting them know that the visit is supported by the meeting.

We hope that Meeting for Sufferings will be willing to agree a travelling minute (draft text overleaf) for Deborah and Paul to take on their travels.

Draft travelling minute

2 July 2016

Dear Friends

In July and August 2016. Deborah Rowlands (Clerk) and Paul Parker (Recording Clerk – a role equivalent to General Secretary) of Britain Yearly Meeting plan to visit Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and Baltimore Yearly Meeting annual sessions, and speak with their counterparts in these organisations.

Deborah and Paul also hope to visit with American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Friends Committee for National Legislation (FCNL), Friends General Conference (FGC) and Pendle Hill Quaker Study Centre.

The main purpose of the visit is to learn more about the life and witness of other Yearly Meeting, to gain an understanding of how two different Yearly Meetings hold their annual sessions, in order to bring ideas back to Britain Yearly Meeting, and to exchange views on what makes for good governance in Quaker organisations. What can we learn from one another?

The themes for both US Yearly Meetings resonate with the current overarching theme in Britain Yearly Meeting: 'Living out our faith in the world'. Deborah and Paul will deliver workshops at both US Yearly Meetings to enable cross-fertilisation of ideas and inspiration.

Deborah and Paul will report back to Meeting for Sufferings and other committees of Britain Yearly Meeting on their return.

In peace

Ethel Livermore
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

Meeting for Sufferings October 2017 – venue

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to consider meeting in Manchester on 7th October 2017.

During the 'Meeting for Sufferings Roadshows' in 2014 and 2015, members of Meeting for Sufferings met with Friends around Britain – from Devon to Kent, Dorset to Aberdeen, Machynlleth to Norfolk. We were warmly welcomed everywhere, and Quakers appreciated that we'd travelled to meet with them. In some places, we were asked why Meeting for Sufferings was (almost) always held in London.

Meeting for Sufferings occasionally meets at Woodbrooke, for our residential; and when Friends House was being refurbished, it met in Newcastle. So Arrangements Group agreed to consider possible venues for a meeting outside of London in 2017.

Arrangements Group recommends that our 7th October 2017 meeting is held in Manchester.

Central Manchester Meeting House could accommodate us. Its upstairs room seats over 100 people, and there are several small rooms for lunchtime meetings, refreshments etc. The Meeting is used to providing lunch for groups. The building is accessible for people with physical disabilities, and public transport is good.

We realise that for some Friends this will be a longer journey than usual. Some of us will need to stay overnight: we hope to ask whether Quakers in Manchester could offer some hospitality, and there are many hotels locally. Other Friends, who usually need to stay in London, may appreciate being able to travel to Manchester and back in the day.

If Meeting for Sufferings agrees to this experimental change of venue, we hope there will be opportunities to meet with Friends locally – perhaps inviting some Friends for lunch

There will be a Yearly Meeting Gathering in July/August 2017. Arranging a meeting outside of London in early June would be harder for the Events and Committee Services Team, when they will be particularly busy. For this reason, we suggest October for our meeting in Manchester.

QCCIR Report to Meeting for Sufferings June 2016

Introduction

This report details the experiences of QCCIR over the past year.

The work of QCCIR in the past year has been inspired by a spirit of change as the religious landscape of Britain is being transformed. Charismatic and Pentecostal church communities are growing in size and influence, and an increasing number of people are identifying themselves as being of 'no-faith'. Other faiths are being framed by media and political narratives. Islam is crudely presented as universally 'extremist' and hostile to 'British' values, while dialogue with the Jewish community is undertaken in the context of the complexities of the Israel/Palestine conflict, the realities of anti-Semitism and Britain Yearly Meeting's boycott of 'Settlement goods'.

This changing religious setting has wide-ranging relevance for Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM). Quaker ways that seek and value deeper spiritual truths open new and enriching dimensions to good community relations. The Society's participation in inter-church and interfaith structures create and sustain valuable dialogue and relationships that reach beyond the immediacy of events such as the shootings and bombings in Paris, Brussels, Beirut and Yemen and nurture important fruits of the spirit like love, friendship, tolerance and creativity.

QCCIR was originally founded seventy years ago in the aftermath of the World War II when both this country and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) were very different. Then it was taken for granted that religion and churchgoing were part of everyday life. With the arrival of greater numbers of people of other faiths, the collapse of mainstream church attendance and growing numbers of people of no faith, we feel it is now essential to re-programme this committee to fit this different world. The committee has therefore framed questions that will shape our future work and strategy; these questions, and the search for responses to them, reach into the life and witness of BYM.

In September 2015 Meeting for Sufferings agreed the document 'A Spirit-led Church' which was the response to the 'World Council of Churches' Faith and order paper no. 214, 'The Church: Towards a Common Vision'. 'A Spirit-led Church' came at the end of a journey that QCCIR had taken in faith, discerning from Quaker traditions and experience the place that Britain Yearly Meeting takes in the body of the Christian church, drawn together as 'At the heart of our Quaker faith is the vision of a church unmarred by bitter ruptures, held together in bonds of love'. (A Spirit-Led Church p3).

The experience of the committee members present at the adoption 'A Spirit-led church' was moving and was felt as an affirmation of the work and process of writing the document. 'A Spirit-led Church' is being taken into the life of the Society through the study guide that has been developed and is available as a resource for Friends to use in all parts of the Yearly Meeting and in Ireland Yearly Meeting.

A challenge to be faced is the need for Friends to assess and review their engagement with ecumenical and interfaith issues across BYM. As the religious landscape is changing, so too are the ecumenical instruments through which QCCIR is working. The Committee represents BYM on the ecumenical bodies across BYM and Ireland YM. Members of QCCIR serve on Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and Churches Together in England. There continues to be sensitivity to the basis of membership of the various groups and how this influences and reflects the position of Quakers as a church.

There have been proposed changes to the membership arrangements of Churches Together in England (CTE) to reflect the growth of different concepts of 'church' - particularly the growth of evangelical, Pentecostal and independent churches which have different forms of governance and leadership. We appreciate the efforts CTE are making to alter their membership regulations to reflect their changing

Inter-church work in Scotland and Wales is overseen by General Meeting for Scotland and Meeting of Friends in Wales and, in Ireland, by Ireland Yearly Meeting. In Wales Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales, is the principal conduit through which Friends are engaged with other denominations. Friends in Wales respond to requests from Cytûn to contribute to its consultations or workgroups, but the numbers of Friends, and their geographical distribution can make this difficult; Meeting of Friends in Wales Focus Group helps Friends to discern where their energies are best deployed. Friends in Wales send a representative to the Laser Group of church policy officers.

In Scotland work carried out by the Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) includes a publication CAIRing for Scotland, the Churches contribution to InterFaith Relations in Scotland. InterFaith Scotland has recently produced an annual newsletter available on line which contains much of interest, partly focussing on local groups and also on climate change and the environment. It is very useful that reports are made to QCCIR from Scotland and Wales, and we are developing ways in which this information can be assimilated into the larger context of our inter-church and interfaith for BYM.

QCCIR has a role in supporting local inter-church work, for example by answering queries about local constitutions. A significant example of this type of help is the Same-sex marriage Questions & Answers booklet that is specifically intended for work with other Christian groups.

Interfaith work also takes place both locally and nationally, and needs to be supported at both levels. At a national level, QCCIR is represented on the Interfaith Network and its Faith Communities Forum. Many individual Friends actively pursue interfaith work at local level, but the question of capacity is significant.

It is important to encourage the circulation of news about local activities, and to this end Bessie White, QCCIR's representative on the InterFaith Network (IFN), sent a post to the QCCIR cluster group asking Friends to let her know of any interfaith and inter-church activities or developments in their area. Five responses were received. Quaker Meeting websites do not generally seem to be good sources for finding information about interfaith and inter-church activities; the websites of local Interfaith Groups do show some Quaker activities.

Using common issues, such as climate change or peace, may be a good way to make and develop interfaith links. We see that QCCIR's experience and advice on factors to take into account may be helpful to meetings - the challenges are, of course, resources, capacity and communication. We hope that greater use of the 'Cluster' will encourage the sharing of information. Listening to others on the IFN Faith Communities Forum suggests that Quakers have a wider range of ways of attempting to keep in touch than other bigger, more complex faith organisations.

There are considerable opportunities for all Friends to take a role in interfaith and inter-church work. It is not only through structures that we engage with issues. Events, such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the Women's World Day of Prayer and initiatives like 'Visit My Mosque' are celebrated in all parts of Britain and are enriching for spiritual life, friendship and worship. In Wales, the National Eisteddfod is an important opportunity for interchurch activity.

In October 2015 we spent one day with Paul Parker, the Recording Clerk, developing ideas for the future work of the Committee. The meeting was framed by Paul through a couple of verses from Isaiah 40, vv3-4:

"In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain".

This session was part of an arc of work that began in January 2015 when the committee began a 'strategic review'. This review is intended to help the committee understand its work and to plan future work, looking at both what and how we should fulfil our terms of reference creatively and adventurously.

The outcomes of this session in October were brought forward to our meeting in January 2016. We noted that seeking a vision for the committee's work was both exciting and positive, and that the hard work of anticipating where the committee needs to be in the next five years can be achieved through three objectives: to be visible, to be engaged, and to communicate.

We agreed the following 'Vision and Strategy' statements that will inform our work.

Our Vision

Quakers work gladly with other religious faith, spiritual and human values groups in the pursuit of common goals. QCCIR works to assist this process by reflecting on Quaker insights and values and by entering imaginatively into the life and witness of other faith, spiritual and human values groups to create bonds of friendship and mutual understanding and appreciation.

Our Strategy

Friends aim to be 'patterns and examples', demonstrating that our values are active in the world and that we are committed to working collaboratively in society. QCCIR's actions are rooted in worship. The Committee seeks:

- to be visible, making a distinctive contribution and response where appropriate
- to be engaged with all relevant groups, providing opportunities for participation in worship, learning about each other's' theology and experiences

- These vision and strategy statements are inspiring our work for the future. We are developing an operational plan for 2017-2019 that uses the three lenses of visibility, engagement and communication. We are shaping projects that reflect the issues in the changing religious landscape in Britain, such as faith in a non/anti-religious society, and multiculturalism and diversity.

As A Spirit-led Church says:
'In opening our doors and opening our hearts to new light, we attempt to mirror the words of our Teacher: 'I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd'
 Jn. 10:16').

MfS 2016 07 Additional information

Meeting for Sufferings Forward Agenda (2016)

Arrangements Group hopes members will find it helpful to know that the following items are currently proposed or being considered by Arrangements Group for remaining meetings in 2016. It is possible that these plans will change.

September	Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC) report Living out our faith: returning to the question of how we prioritise between long-term and short-term or responsive concerns. Vibrancy in Meetings – an introduction to the national co-ordinator Dates of Meetings in 2018
December	Young People's Participation Day Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC) report Quaker Housing Trust (QHT) report Reports from other European YMs Responding to Cornwall AM's concern about decriminalising the personal use of drugs (sent to AMs in April) Responding to QPSW's questions about a Quaker vision for a Criminal Justice system (sent to AMs in April)

Matters expected to return in due course

- **Gender Equality and the Tabular Statement** – sent to Recording Clerk March 2015
- **Memorial meetings for reconciliation** – sent to QCCIR for advice in July 2015
- **Pastoral and spiritual support to people who are not able to regularly attend local meetings** – sent to Quaker Life for advice in February 2015
- **Asylum Seekers: destitution** – sent to QPSWCC in March 2015
- **Quaker Recognised Bodies** (changes to Quaker faith and practice) – sent to Church Government Advisory Group in December 2015
- **Use of the phrase 'Quakers in Britain'** - forwarded to BYMT in April 2016

Other items to be timetabled

- **Quaker Recognised Bodies** – approval of proposals (as ready)

Meeting for Sufferings Communications

Arrangements Group suggested that representatives may find this information helpful.

On the BYM website, all information about Meeting for Sufferings can be found here: www.quaker.org.uk/mfs

Two weeks before each meeting	Agenda, papers and calling letter are sent to representatives and alternates; and added to the website
About two weeks before each meeting	AM Clerks are sent 'headlines' of agenda items and reminded that the papers are available
On the day	BYM Facebook post, asking Friends to uphold the meeting
Soon after the meeting, as and when appropriate	Media releases
1 week after the meeting	Minutes and follow-up letter sent to representatives and alternatives; and added to the website
1 week after the meeting	Report in The Friend
About 1 week after the meeting	AM clerks are reminded that the minutes are available

News about issues considered by Meeting for Sufferings might also be shared via:

- Quaker News (quarterly printed and online publication)
- Quaker Life Network
- The Friend
- Monthly mailing to AM and LM clerks
- The AM Clerks' cluster (email group)