

**YEARLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) IN BRITAIN**

**AT THE YEARLY MEETING
HELD IN YORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK
30 JULY – 6 AUGUST 2005**

Saturday 30 July 2005

Evening

Minute 1: Clerks

The Yearly Meeting Committee on Clerks nominates the following Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerks for Yearly Meeting 2005:

Clerk:	Peter Eccles
Assistant Clerks:	Janet Quilley Richard Ogden

These names being acceptable, we appoint the Friends named accordingly.

Minute 2: Permission for non-members to attend

Permission has been given for the attendance of 151 non-members, and we welcome them to this Yearly Meeting.

Minute 3: Welcome to York

We have been welcomed to York and to Yorkshire General Meeting by a presentation on the life and witness of Friends in Yorkshire over the last 350 years and today.

Sunday 31 July 2005

Morning

Minute 4: Being a People of God – minute of record

We have gathered in worship to reflect on what it means to be a People of God in this century. Can we each respond to the leadings of God with humility and passion, witnessing in the smallest of our everyday encounters? Let us pray that we can carry these individual leadings into our corporate life as a worshipping community this week, and back into our daily lives.

“Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life.”

Advices and queries 1

Minute 5: Under-19 Programme

Jane Dawson has informed us of the programmes for Yearly Meeting participants aged under 19 complementing the agenda which is before adult Friends. This year there are ten age groups with a total of 246 participants. We send greetings to all those participating; we look forward to meeting and worshipping with them at various times during the week, building an all age community, and to receiving their minutes on Friday.

Yearly Meeting Accessibility & Support Group

Release:

Brian Odell Westminster MM

To serve from Yearly Meeting 2005 until Yearly Meeting 2007

Nominated:

Alison Burnley South-East Scotland MM

To serve from Yearly Meeting 2005 until Yearly Meeting 2008

Renominated:

John Sheldon Warwickshire MM

Yearly Meeting Elders

To serve during this Yearly Meeting

Renominated:

Shelagh Robinson Staffordshire MM

Nominated:

David M Robson (convener) Brighouse MM

Martyn Gaudie Guisborough MM

Elizabeth Birmingham East Kent MM

Richard Hilken East Devon MM

Christopher Holdsworth East Devon MM

Yearly Meeting Overseers

To serve during this Yearly Meeting

(in addition to Fran Woolgrove, convener, appointed at Yearly Meeting 2004)

Julia Aspden North Wales MM

David Birmingham East Kent MM

Anne Bull Hereford & Mid-Wales MM

Dot Hull Warwickshire MM

Douglas Rennie Northumbria MM

Peter Ullathorne Warwickshire MM

Marjorie Gaudie Guisborough MM

Committee on Clerks

To serve from Yearly Meeting 2005 until Yearly Meeting 2008 with Jennifer Barraclough nominated by the Committee on Clerks to serve as clerk:

Renominations:

Michael Booth Westminster MM

Paul Bowers Isaacson Devonshire House & Tottenham MM

Julia Gordon Northumbria MM

Donald Southall Hertford & Hitchin MM

Peter Speirs North Wales MM

Nominations:

Simon Best Young Friends General Meeting/Warwickshire MM

Robin Davis West Scotland MM

Jean Jenn Hampstead MM

Deborah Rowlands South Wales MM

David Saunders Norwich & Lynn MM

Joyce Trotter Guisborough MM

One name to come

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee nominates:

Robert Card	Warwickshire MM
Julia Gordon	Northumbria MM
Barbara Potter	West Scotland MM

Young Friends General Meeting nominates:

Majk Stokes.

These names being acceptable to the Meeting, we appoint the Friends accordingly.

Two further names are expected from General Meeting for Scotland.

Minute 10: Nominations Committee (Yearly Meeting 2005 – Yearly Meeting 2006)

By minute 33 of Yearly Meeting held 28-31 May 2004 Margaret Mortimer (South-East Scotland MM) was appointed to serve as clerk of Nominations Committee Yearly Meeting 2005 – Yearly Meeting 2006.

The following additional Friends are appointed to serve on the Yearly Meeting Nominations Committee during this yearly meeting and until Yearly Meeting 2006:

Keith Bowler	North Wales MM
Margaret Heathfield	Southampton & Portsmouth MM
Mary Latham	West Scotland MM
Chris Lawson	West Somerset MM
Margot Lunnon	Westminster MM
Linda Murgatroyd	Kingston & Wandsworth MM
Wendy Needham	Leicester MM

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee, by its minute 05/16 of 21-23 January 2005, recommends to Yearly Meeting that the conveners of both YM elders and overseers be appointed annually the year before their service commences.

We agree to this proposal.

The appointed Nominations Committee is therefore asked to nominate to a later session:

- a clerk of Nominations Committee to serve from Yearly Meeting 2006 to Yearly Meeting 2007;
- Yearly Meeting Elders: one Friend to serve as convener of Yearly Meeting Elders at Yearly Meeting 2006;
- Yearly Meeting Overseers: one Friend to serve as convener of Yearly Meeting Overseers at Yearly Meeting 2006;
- One Friend to serve on the Committee on Clerks from Yearly Meeting 2005 – Yearly Meeting 2008.

The Committee is asked to bring the following nominations to Yearly Meeting 2006:

- Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee: three Friends to serve until Yearly Meeting 2009;
- Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee: one or two Friends, to serve with the three Yearly Meeting clerks and three Agenda Committee members;
- Yearly Meeting Accessibility & Support Group: three Friends to serve from Yearly Meeting 2006 to Yearly Meeting 2009;

- Yearly Meeting Publications Group for *Quaker faith & practice*: one Friend to serve until Yearly Meeting 2009;
- Yearly Meeting Epistle Drafting Committee: 5 to 7 Friends to serve at Yearly Meeting 2006, including one to act as convener;
- Yearly Meeting Elders: 5 to 9 Friends to serve at Yearly Meeting 2006, in addition to the convener to be appointed at this Yearly Meeting;
- Yearly Meeting Overseers: 7 to 9 Friends to serve as Yearly Meeting Overseers at Yearly Meeting 2006, in addition to the convener to be appointed at this Yearly Meeting.

Afternoon

Minute 11: Epistle from Ireland Yearly Meeting

The Epistle from the Yearly Meeting of Friends in Ireland, held at the High School, Rathgar, Dublin from 31 March to 3 April 2005, has been read as follows:

To Friends everywhere

We send warm greetings from Ireland Yearly Meeting gathered in The High School Dublin from 31st March to 3rd April 2005.

In 2004 we looked back over 350 years of recorded Quaker worship here in Ireland. The celebrations throughout our country have given us a great opportunity for outreach and we have availed of the public interest in our faith and practice that has arisen.

As we looked back over the message of Friends in the past, we used the occasion to examine our present ways and to plan for the future. By a happy coincidence, our jubilee year has seen the removal of our central office from the beautiful old house Swanbrook to Quaker House Dublin, a new building designed specially for our needs. This move has taken place as a result of the re-location of Bloomfield, our hospital for the care of the elderly. We pray that the new complex, overlooking the city of Dublin and commanding a view which extends as far as the Mountains of Mourne in Northern Ireland, may be a symbol of a great future of good works in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Our Friend S Jocelyn Burnell in the Yearly Meeting Public Lecture has reminded us that our testimonies and, indeed, Yearly Meeting itself should both comfort us and discomfort us. We should feel our beliefs both affirmed and challenged that we live in order to make the Kingdom of God present here and now.

Doreen E Dowd spoke to Ministry and Oversight Session on *Reflections on a Homecoming*, following her return to Ireland after 12 years living in Africa. She spoke about the huge change in Ireland apparent on her return home: a much richer – and ruder – place. She encouraged us to be more passionate about our faith and use our committees as divine opportunity.

We have been reminded that, while we live in comfort and relative wealth and security, the majority of our fellow human beings do not share our privileges but are faced at best with poverty, at worst with warfare and starvation. We heard that, even as we were meeting, a bomb had exploded near Friends' School Brummana in the Lebanon. We were told of the many problems of African countries and of the difficulties endured by communities living a simple life in rural India.

On considering the second draft of the revision of our book *Christian Experience* we were reminded that this is a unique and precious document, that involves us all and that it is not easy to come to a meeting of minds on its content. Aware that there is diversity among Irish Quakers and that diversity

also occurs in other denominations, we are challenged to be honest in recording the wide spectrum of our witness.

While we concern ourselves with words, we remember that George Fox said “There is one even Christ Jesus that can speak to thy condition” and we feel that faith and belief come from personal experience of the Lord.

T David Kingston
Clerk

Minute 12: Committee to examine minutes

We appoint the following Friends to arrange by rota for two of their number to examine the minutes of this Yearly Meeting at the close of each session, and to correct any slight inaccuracies:

Juliet Batten	Cheshire MM
Christopher Coffin	Southampton & Portsmouth MM
Harvey Cox	Wirral and Chester MM
Malcolm Elliott	Leicester MM
Janice Johnson	Banbury & Evesham MM
Janet Lynch	Cornwall MM
Ann Matthews	Southwark, Lewisham & Bromley MM
Stephen Petter	Bristol & Frenchay MM
David Rees	Purley & Sutton MM
Elsbeth Wollen	Witney MM

If any substantive alterations appear to be required, they are to be proposed at the next session prior to further business.

Minute 13: Annual Report of Meeting for Sufferings 2004, and the Trustees' Report and Accounts 2004

The Annual Report of Meeting for Sufferings and its committees for the year ended 31 December 2004, as printed in *Quaker work in 2004*, the *Trustees' report and accounts* of the Yearly Meeting Funds and a provisional Tabular Statement for the year 2004 have been received and laid before us.

Minute 14: The Report of Meeting for Sufferings and our Central Work

We have received a spoken introduction to the written report of Meeting for Sufferings and our central work. This has referred in particular to the progress in the review of central work for children and young people, the review of the process leading to the decision to lease Courtauld House, and the Quaker Life consideration of the Meeting of Friends in Wales report on the Spiritual Hospitality Project. We are delighted that Junior Yearly Meeting is to take place in 2006.

We note that during 2004 Meeting for Sufferings considered 42 minutes forwarded by monthly meetings. We welcome this link between our local meetings and Meeting for Sufferings but we do encourage monthly meetings to heed the advice provided by Meeting for Sufferings before forwarding minutes.

We have been reminded of the role of Meeting for Sufferings Committee and the way in which it helps Meeting for Sufferings to carry out its responsibilities.

We are grateful for this report and for all the work that has been done on our behalf by Meeting for Sufferings and its clerks, its committees and our staff.

Minute 15: Quaker Stewardship Committee: charitable status – 1

Further to minute 27 of Yearly Meeting 2004, we have had introduced to us a report from the Quaker Stewardship Committee on its continuing work and possible pathways to charitable registration for Britain Yearly Meeting (*Documents in advance* Supplement 2 pages 14-20, 50-51). We will return to these matters tomorrow morning.

Minute 16: Size of Quaker Stewardship Committee

We receive minute QSC/05/03/9 of Quaker Stewardship Committee held 15-16 March 2005 which asks the Yearly Meeting to amend the Committee's terms of reference to allow the addition of three further members, bringing the total to eleven.

We agree to amend section 2.1 of the Committee's terms of reference to increase the number of members appointed by Yearly Meeting (additional to the clerk and assistant clerk) from six to nine with three members (rather than two) retiring annually.

We ask the Yearly Meeting Publications Group to prepare the necessary amendment to *Quaker faith & practice* 14.29.

Monday 1 August 2005

Morning

Minute 17: Testimony

Part of the Testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of William Eugene Douglas (pages 67-69 of *Epistles & testimonies*) has been read.

Minute 18: What is our Quaker testimony today?

The testimonies arise out of a deep inner conviction and challenge our normal ways of living. They do not exist in any rigid, written form; nor are they imposed in any way. All Quakers have to search for the ways in which the testimonies can become true for themselves.

Testimonies Committee, 2003.

“Testimony” simply means “bearing witness”.

We have reflected on what testimonies we are called to today and recognised that we have more to do discovering what we are called to in simplicity and sustainability, in equality, in community and in peace.

Our worship leads to and shapes our action which manifest our beliefs and drives us to further reflection. But then our testimonies reveal God to us so that our spirituality springs from our experience of the real world: the sacramental nature of the whole of life. Our testimonies are the outpourings of the Spirit and need to arise from a deep centre.

Putting our testimonies into words can provide comfort but could be a hollow exercise. But if this discomforts us, it can move us on and testimony will continue to grow.

Minute 19: RECAST Report – introduction

Further to minute 29 of Yearly Meeting held 3-6 May 2002 and minute 29 of Yearly Meeting held 28-31 May 2004, we have had a spoken introduction to the report of the Working Group on Representation, Communication and Accountability in our Structures (RECAST). The report is

published as a supplement to *Documents in advance*. The purpose of this group, from its terms of reference, is defined as follows:

“The group shall prepare proposals which are rooted in Gospel Order, develop mutual understanding, communication and engagement, which strengthen the relationship between local meetings and the centre, provide for due accountability and which improve the effectiveness of meetings for church affairs, suggesting changes in our structures only where necessary to achieve these objectives.”

We will return to this matter tomorrow morning after meeting in groups this afternoon. The groups, which will be part of the Yearly Meeting in session, are opportunities for Friends to listen and share their views regarding the changes to local and regional organisation and the central structures. We hope that this time in smaller sessions will allow Friends to be better informed for the plenary sessions over the rest of the Yearly Meeting.

Minutes received in response to the RECAST report are listed below, and (with the exception of the minute from Leeds Monthly Meeting) are printed in Supplement 2 to *Documents in advance*. Other responses sent by individuals and groups not able formally to communicate to Yearly Meeting by minute are available for inspection in a folder at the RECAST desk during Yearly Meeting.

Minutes sent to Yearly Meeting (or to YM Agenda Committee or to RECAST for Yearly Meeting):

General Meetings and other bodies given in chapter 5 of *Quaker faith & practice*

Durham General Meeting held 23 April 2005: minute 05/10.

Meeting of Friends in Wales held 26 February 2005: minute 05.06 and 25 June 2005: minute 05.21.

Young Friends General Meeting held 18-20 February 2005: minute 05/07.

Young Friends General Meeting held 27-30 May 2005: minute 05/23.

Monthly Meetings

Balby MM held 9 June 2005: minute 4.

Colchester & Coggeshall MM held 12 June 2005: minute 05.68.

Cornwall MM held 12 March 2005: minute 7.

East Devon MM held 14 May 2005: minute 05/40.

East of Scotland MM held 14 May 2005: minute 8 (in part).

Gloucester & Nailsworth MM held 8 May 2005: minute 05/39.

Leeds MM held 12 June 2005: minute 6.

Mid Somerset MM held 10 April 2005: minute 22/05.

North of Scotland MM held 14 May 2005: minute 10.

North Wales MM held 14 May 2005: minute 22.

Ratcliff & Barking MM held 21 May 2005: minute 05/100.

Settle MM held 14 May 2005 endorsing Skipton PM held 7 May 2005.

Southwark, Lewisham & Bromley MM held 10 July 2005: minute 6.

Staffordshire MM held 9 April 2005: minute 8b and 14 May 2005: minute 7.

Thaxted MM held 6 April 2005: minute 3.

Wensleydale & Swaledale MM held 15 May 2005: minute 05/31.

Central & other Standing Committees of Meeting for Sufferings

Meeting for Sufferings held 5 February 2005: minute 5.

Meeting for Sufferings Committee held 9 June 2005: minute MSC 05/57 d.

Quaker Communications Central Committee held 9 April 2005: minute QC 05/24.

Quaker Life Central Committee held 25-27 February 2005: minute 2005/20.

Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee held 20-22 May 2005: minutes QPSW CC 05/34 & 05/47.

Quaker World Relations Committee held 26 February 2005: minute QWRC 05/18.

Tuesday 2 August 2005

Morning

Minute 20: Epistle

Part of the Epistle received from Japan Yearly Meeting (pages 35-36 of *Epistles & testimonies*) has been read.

Minute 21: RECAST Report – meeting in groups

Further to minute 19, on Monday afternoon 1 August we met in seventeen groups to consider the report and share our reactions to it.

Minute 22: Epistle

Part of the Epistle received from Great Plains Yearly Meeting (pages 9-10 of *Epistles & testimonies*) was read in the Monday afternoon groups.

Minute 23: Epistle Drafting Committee convener

Further to minute 7, we note that Sarah Donaldson has been appointed Convener of the Epistle Drafting Committee.

Minute 24: RECAST Report – Under 19 minutes

We have received minutes relating to RECAST from
The Spiritual Scooby-Qs (13-14 year olds)
The Recastaways (14-15 year olds)
The Divine Dudes (16 year olds)
The Rekindlers (17-18 year olds)
The Jedi (12-14 year olds)

These minutes are to be made available to Friends during this meeting and included in the Proceedings of this Yearly Meeting.

Minute 25: RECAST Report – Consideration 1

In this morning's session we have returned to the report of the Working Group on Representation, Communication and Accountability in our Structures (RECAST) and considered the recommendations in sections 2, 3 and 4. We have not at this stage considered the names of meetings.

Section 2

We agree to take forward the recommendations that the three categories of local meetings for worship should be replaced by a single category. This will mean that each monthly meeting will need to take care in providing appropriate support and guidance to each local meeting, depending on its size and strength.

Section 3

We agree to the recommendations in this section on the functioning of monthly meetings and their relationship with their local meetings. We pray that this will help release Friends in each monthly meeting to build a community of local meetings, strengthening their worship and witness.

Section 4

We agree to the recommendations in paragraph 34 concerning the existing 18 geographic general meetings. We recognise and value the rich life in some of our existing general meetings which we expect to continue.

We agree that General Meeting for Scotland and the Meeting of Friends in Wales should continue as at present. We ask the Recording Clerk to consider how discussions on the Welsh/English border issues referred to in paragraph 32 can be pursued.

Friends have testified to the help they have gained from the present guidance in *Quaker faith & practice*. None of these changes should be implemented until the necessary changes to *Quaker faith & practice* have been approved by Yearly Meeting. It will be necessary for the new text to provide adequate guidance to monthly meetings so that good practice is shared and the underlying principles made explicit.

Minute 26: Letting our lives speak

Further to minute 18, we have continued with the second of two sessions on Testimony. We have heard the responses of five Friends to two questions:

What is our experience of support for Quaker witness in our local meetings?

How do our corporate structures support us as a vibrant witness community?

Thursday 4 August 2005

Morning

Minute 27: Epistle

Part of the Epistle received from Pacific Yearly Meeting (pages 25-26 of *Epistles & testimonies*) has been read.

Minute 28: Witness groups

The Yearly Meeting session on Tuesday afternoon, 2 August, took the form of meeting in Witness Groups for some of which Over 19 Friends joined groups in the Under 19 Programme. The matters considered were

The Westmorland Peace Concern

Northern Friends Peace Board

The Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva

Quaker Council for European Affairs

Witnessing at the G8 Summit

The Oxford Group on Sustainable Living

Llanidloes Energy Solutions

Our testimony to the earth

Simplicity and sustainability

The Hardshaw East Monthly Meeting Social and Environmental Advisory Group

Huddersfield Living Witness Group

Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust

Young Friends Mental Health Concern

Glebe House Therapeutic Community

Minute 29: Testimony

Part of the Testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of Frank Farmer (pages 71-72 of *Epistles & testimonies*) was read in the Tuesday afternoon groups.

Minute 30: Quaker Stewardship Committee: charitable status – 2

Further to minute 15, we have considered Friends' understanding of trusteeship (see *Documents in advance* Supplement 2, pages 15-16). There is a tension between our church government and charity law. This concerns the relationship between a body of trustees and the appointing meeting.

A Meeting for Worship for Business (for example, yearly meeting or a monthly meeting) is made up of all of its membership. Those present in the gathered meeting meet in the Light to discern the will of God, decide on future action and agree how to go forward.

Trustees appointed by the meeting as required by charity law will carry the statutory responsibility for this action and for the stewardship of resources. The trustees have a responsibility to advise the meeting about legal constraints and about whether any proposed actions can be properly financed and managed. The law may assume that authority for determining action passes to the trustees and the meeting may choose to do this. However, under Gospel Order, the ultimate authority will still lie with the gathered meeting. This also means that the meeting provides support for the trustees and is ready to release a trustee who no longer feels able to fulfil this responsibility.

We have considered the proposals from the Quaker Stewardship Committee concerning charitable registration (*Documents in advance* Supplement 2, pages 16-18).

Since excepted status ends in England and Wales in 2007, we agree that Britain Yearly Meeting and its constituent parts in England and Wales should register, as required, with the Charity Commission. Meetings in Scotland are already registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

For the purposes of registration we agree to adopt for the time being a statement of the charitable purpose of Britain Yearly Meeting as 'for the general charitable and religious purposes of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain and beyond'. We ask Quaker Stewardship Committee to consider whether some additional words indicating how our religious purposes are determined would be helpful.

We ask Quaker Stewardship Committee to bring in a draft template for a governance document for Quaker bodies in England and Wales including arrangements for membership, trusteeship and administration.

We ask Quaker Stewardship Committee to undertake the steps requested for the registration of Britain Yearly Meeting and its centrally managed work with a view to the required document being presented to Yearly Meeting 2006 for approval.

We ask Quaker Stewardship Committee to develop a pattern for the registration of monthly meetings and other eligible meetings for work done across Britain.

We ask Quaker Stewardship Committee to ensure that appropriate advice is provided for Friends in the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

Minute 31: RECAST Report – Under 19 minutes 2

Further to minute 24, the clerk has reported on meetings with the Spiritual Scooby-Qs and the Rekindlers on Tuesday afternoon to report back on the outcome of the consideration of the RECAST report on Tuesday morning.

The Rekindlers expressed great disquiet that their minute had not been read in full when received in the Yearly Meeting session. These minutes reflect the participation of these Friends in the consideration of the RECAST report since only a few of them are able to attend part of the Yearly Meeting session when the report is considered.

Arrangements Committee has considered this matter and taken the view that reading all these minutes in full in the session is not the best way to bring the content of these minutes to Friends' attention. Efforts have been made to ensure that Friends in this Yearly Meeting session have copies of the Under 19 minutes and we encourage Friends to take full account of them as we move forward with the RECAST report.

Arrangements Committee recommends that these minutes be forwarded to Agenda Committee and that Agenda Committee is asked to consider how younger Friends including Under 19s can be included in our decision-making. We agree to this.

We agree to forward the Rekindlers minute to Young Friends General Meeting.

Minute 32: RECAST Report – consideration 2

Further to minute 25, we have returned to the report of the Working Group on Representation, Communication and Accountability in our Structures (RECAST) and considered the recommendations in section 5(a). Friends have questioned whether we need a separate smaller body of trustees suggesting that the trusteeship function would be better carried out by the proposed smaller representative meeting. We will return to this matter in the afternoon.

Afternoon

Minute 33: Gathering the threads

We have been offered one Friend's reflections on the experience of the Yearly Meeting so far.

Minute 34: RECAST Report – consideration 3

Further to minute 32, we have returned to the report of the Working Group on Representation, Communication and Accountability in our Structures (RECAST) and considered the recommendations in Section 5(a).

We have explored at length the recommendations in this session. We recognise that our representative meeting needs a smaller body to make the work manageable. Our difficulty has been to determine which of these bodies should carry the trustee role.

It has been suggested that Meeting for Sufferings has become more effective in managing the central work with the help of Meeting for Sufferings Committee. However there is still uncertainty whether a representative meeting is really able to carry the trustee role, even if reduced to about 100 Friends. We recognize that there is more work to do, building on the experience of our session this morning, to tease out the full implications of trusteeship for us.

A vision has been presented to us of how, if the representative meeting were released from trustee responsibilities, it could provide a crucible for sharing and testing all the witness that is going on throughout the Yearly Meeting, so that we all learn from each other's experience and support each other. This is where the real life of our Yearly Meeting lies.

A smaller trustee body could have a better command of the details of the central work.

However, we are unable this afternoon to discern whether or not it is right to accept the proposals in section 5(a) of the report. We will return to this matter tomorrow.

Friday 5 August 2005

Morning

Minute 35: RECAST Report – consideration 4

Further to minute 34, we have continued our consideration of the RECAST report.

Section 5(a)

Yesterday afternoon we were unable to discern the way forward on the key proposals in section 5(a). Whilst some Friends saw opportunities for work of real value by the representative meeting if it were released from regular involvement in trustee matters, others saw dangers in the trustee role being assigned to a small subgroup of the representative meeting. There is no unity on whether or not a representative meeting of 100 Friends or more would be capable of exercising the trustee function effectively, including the necessary oversight of the Management Meeting.

It may be that sufficient safeguards can be put in place so that Yearly Meeting can be reassured that the representative meeting would be able to exercise the appropriate authority on behalf of Yearly Meeting over the small body of trustees described in minute 30. Accordingly, we agree to take forward for the next triennium the recommendation in paragraph 55 for the setting up of a small body of trustees who will all be members of the representative meeting as described in paragraph 56. We ask Quaker Stewardship Committee to prepare proposals for Yearly Meeting 2006 describing the relationship between these trustees and the whole representative body and the relationship of them both to Yearly Meeting. They should also consider the sharing of responsibilities between the representative meeting and the trustees. If it is not possible to provide sufficient reassurances to Yearly Meeting in 2006 then all the members of the representative meeting will continue as trustees when Britain Yearly Meeting and its centrally managed work is registered with the Charity Commission.

Since we envisage an expanded role for the representative meeting in communication between Friends, we agree not to change the composition of Meeting for Sufferings for the time being.

We agree that these arrangements should be reviewed by Yearly Meeting after the end of the next triennium in 2009.

Section 5(b) and 5(c)

We are not clear at this stage whether appointments to a trustee body and the central and other standing committees should be made by Yearly Meeting or by Meeting for Sufferings. However, we do see value in moving to a single Central Nominations Committee in place of the present Meeting for Sufferings Nominations Committee and Yearly Meeting Nominations Committee. This should produce a body of Friends able to carry out this crucial role effectively. We ask Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee to arrange for the proposals in paragraphs 66 and 67 of the Report to be implemented at Yearly Meeting next year.

We ask the Clerks of the present Yearly Meeting Nominations Committee and the Meeting for Sufferings Nominations Committee to consider how the committees can work together to be ready to bring forward names for a trustee body by Yearly Meeting 2006.

Section 6

We do not have time to consider this section at all. However, we encourage Quaker Life Central Committee, Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee, Quaker Finance & Property Central Committee, and Quaker Stewardship Committee to consider the proposals in this section. We authorise Meeting for Sufferings to replace the representative councils of Quaker Life and/or Quaker

Peace & Social Witness by conferences as described in paragraph 76 of the Report if recommended by the appropriate central committees.

Section 7

We ask Quaker Life Central Committee to consider the recommendations in this section, reporting the outcome to Meeting for Sufferings.

Section 8

We ask Quaker Communications Central Committee to consider the recommendations in this section reporting the outcome to Meeting for Sufferings.

Section 9

We ask Quaker World Relations Committee and Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations to consider the recommendations in this section meeting together if appropriate and reporting the outcome to Meeting for Sufferings.

Names

We do not have time to consider the changes in names recommended in the report. We can return to the name recommendations in sections 2, 3 and 4 when the required changes to *Quaker faith & practice* are considered.

Sections 10 and 11

We ask our Nominations Committee to nominate a drafting group as envisaged in paragraph 107(a) to prepare necessary amendments resulting from the changes arising from section 5 of the RECAST Report for Yearly Meeting 2006 and those arising from Sections 2, 3 and 4 for Yearly Meeting 2007. It might be useful if this group were to include a Friend or Friends not on the existing Church Government Advisory Group or RECAST. This drafting group should consult where appropriate.

We ask Meeting for Sufferings with Quaker Life to consider the recommendations in paragraph 103 and to report back to Yearly Meeting in due course.

Minute 36: RECAST Report – conclusion

We recognise that we have not at this Yearly Meeting been able to do justice to the huge amount of work that has gone into the preparation of the RECAST report and the consideration of it by Friends around the country. We are grateful for all the work of the RECAST Committee over several years. We ask Agenda Committee to consider whether Yearly Meeting should consider further any material in the report, and if so how.

We are disturbed that we have laid a great deal on the Quaker Stewardship Committee in this Yearly Meeting. We encourage them to consult as appropriate and if necessary to ask Meeting for Sufferings or Meeting for Sufferings Committee for additional support.

Minute 37: Letter from Washington DC Meeting

A letter to Friends of Britain Yearly Meeting from Florida Avenue Meeting, Washington DC, following the recent bombings in London, has been read.

Afternoon

Minute 38: Individual and Corporate Witness

For a short time in a busy Yearly Meeting we have reflected on our individual and corporate witness. We have heard of the violence around us and its effect on children but we have also heard of our own

failings this week in our relations with each other and with the University staff. Our witness begins with our daily encounters with those around us. There is a unity in our witness.

Our concern for sustainability and the environment has been a strand running through this week, involving Friends of all ages. This testimony is developing and, building on our deliberations at Yearly Meeting four years ago, there is now much individual witness. The time has come to find a way of witnessing corporately, so that we can truly cast our lot with those who would reconstitute the world.

Minute 39 Yearly Meeting Nominations Committee – terms of reference

We receive minute 05/31 of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee held 8-9 April 2005, forwarding draft terms of reference for the Yearly Meeting Nominations Committee (*Documents in advance* Supplement 2, pages 12-14).

We approve these terms of reference.

Minute 40 Summer Gathering Planning Committee for Stirling 2007 – terms of reference

We receive minute 04/77 of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee held 27 November 2004, forwarding draft terms of reference for the Summer Gathering Planning Committee for Stirling 2007 (*Documents in advance* Supplement 2, pages 5-11).

We approve these terms of reference.

Minute 41: Amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*

We receive minute 6 of Meeting for Sufferings held 5 February 2005 recommending amendments in *Quaker faith & practice* relating to the Library Committee. We agree to revised text as follows:

CHAPTER 4: Monthly meetings and their constituent meetings

RECORDS

To replace current sections 4.41 – 4.46:

- 4.41 Monthly and general meetings should appoint a Friend to act as a custodian of their records, or else appoint a committee for the purpose. Monthly meetings should take responsibility for the records of their constituent meetings, ensuring their timely transfer to the custodian of records. They are advised in particular to ensure that the records of any local meeting, which has been laid down, are collected together. The Library Committee publishes guidance for clerks and custodians on the creation, care and custody of records.
- 4.42 It is advised that the following be preserved in Friends' ownership:
- a. minute books of yearly, general, monthly and preparative meetings;
 - b. minute books of elders and overseers and of standing committees of meetings for church affairs;
 - c. official registers of members (11.44), printed lists of members and attenders (11.46), marriage registers (16.45), registers of burials (17.12), burial ground plans (15.17), registers of properties and trusts (15.09);
 - d. such other documents as it is reasonable to expect may be needed for future reference.

It is an essential part of the stewardship of the meeting's assets that the custodian should maintain a full catalogue of records and where they are located, whether kept in meeting house safes or strongrooms, or elsewhere. It is advised that monthly meetings should check the accuracy and completeness of their catalogues at least triennially.

- 4.43 The attention of monthly and general meetings is drawn to the many advantages of depositing older records with an appropriate national or local record office or repository. Records not in current use should be deposited on loan. Such documents, deposited under suitable conditions, remain the property of the monthly or general meeting concerned, while benefiting from the care of professional archivists.
- 4.44 It is the responsibility of monthly meetings to decide which records shall be available to students, whether Friend or non-Friend, and to stipulate the conditions for their release. The Library at Friends House and many meetings make available records more than fifty years old, subject to exceptions where particular discretion is needed (e.g. overseers' minutes).
- 4.45 Meetings requiring advice or information on the handling of their records are encouraged to get in touch with the Library Committee through the Librarian at Friends House. The Library Committee maintains a central catalogue of local meeting records, and it should be notified of any change in the place where they are deposited.
- 4.46 Meetings have sometimes been approached by an outside body and offered the opportunity to put old records on microfilm. This may be primarily for the benefit of those making the offer. The monthly meeting is responsible for deciding whether it would also be of benefit to the meeting and is strongly advised to seek guidance from the Library Committee (4.45). The Library Committee (8.18) should be kept informed of decisions made so that the relevant experience may be shared with other monthly meetings.

CHAPTER 8: The central work of Britain Yearly Meeting

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

To replace current section 8.18:

- 8.18 Library Committee is responsible for the maintenance of the Library at Friends House (comprising books, manuscripts, pictures and other material relating to Quaker thought, testimony and service) and for the proper custody of Britain Yearly Meeting's central archives. It is authorised to accept in the name of the Meeting for Sufferings material by gift or on deposit. It provides advice to local meetings on good practice in the keeping and continuing care of their records, including appropriate deposit, and maintains an index of the whereabouts of local meeting records. (See 4.41 - 4.46 Records). Similarly it provides advice to local meetings on the care and maintenance of their libraries.
- Library Committee is a functional committee of Quaker Life Central Committee (8.08) but may report direct to Meeting for Sufferings when appropriate.

CHAPTER 13: Varieties of religious service

To replace current section 13.40:

13.40 Monthly meetings are required to keep under regular review the maintenance and use of libraries in local meetings (see 4.07); they should encourage any meetings which do not have their own library to establish one. The running of the library, however, remains the responsibility of the local meeting. Most local meetings appoint a librarian, who will need the support of the meeting and a budget for the purchase of books. In some meetings this task is shared by a number of Friends. Some monthly meetings draw their librarians together from time to time to share their experience. Help is also available from the Library Committee through the Librarian at Friends House, which can advise on acquisition policy and the care of collections (8.18).

We ask our Publications Group for *Quaker faith & practice* to match this text to the existing format and to arrange for its publication in due course.

Minute 42: World Gathering of Young Friends 2005

We send our loving greetings to Friends assembling for the World Gathering of Young Friends to be held at Lancaster 16-24 August 2005.

Minute 43: Receipt of the Yearly Meeting General Epistle

The Epistle Drafting Committee appointed by minute 9 has submitted a draft Epistle, which has been read and accepted as the General Epistle.

Minute 44: Meeting for Sufferings: interim membership changes since last Yearly Meeting

The following changes to the membership of Meeting for Sufferings have occurred since Yearly Meeting 2004:

Added	Released	Nominating Body
Catherine Brewer		Quaker World Relations Committee
	John Geale	Settle MM
	Janet Rothery	Lincolnshire MM
Simon Best		Young Friends General Meeting
Elaine Miles		North Wales MM
Peter Varney		Norwich & Lynn MM
	Marjory Dodds	Northumbria MM
Dana Adler		West Kent MM
Rebecca Grove		Chichester MM
	Barbara Adshead	Northumbria MM
	Alan Rowland	Herefordshire & Mid-Wales MM
	Roger Sturge	Ex officio (former clerk)
	Alan Davies	Ex-officio (MSC)
Sue Lawson		Northumbria MM
	Jill Hopkins	West Devon MM

Added	Released	Nominating Body
	Ruth Robson	Pickering & Hull MM
	David Saunders	Worcestershire & Shropshire MM
	T. Roger S. Wilson	Hardshaw West MM
Libby Hudson		Hereford & Mid-Wales MM
Charles West		Worcestershire & Shropshire MM
Miriam Branson		Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee
Virginia Membrey		Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee
	Nicolas Francis	North Somerset & Wiltshire MM
Jane Pearn		Hardshaw West MM
	Andrew Hatton	Witham MM
	Tony Buckland	Banbury & Evesham MM
	Ben Pink Dandelion	Marsden MM
	Richard Traub	Norwich & Lynn MM
	Annabel Dixon *	Hertford & Hitchin MM
Diana Brace		West Devon MM
Roger Jarvis		Hertford & Hitchin MM
Sheila Legg		Banbury & Evesham MM
Enid Smith		North Somerset & Wilts MM

* not yet minuted by Meeting for Sufferings

Minute 45: Meeting for Sufferings: appointments YM 2006-YM 2009

In accordance with section 7.05 of *Quaker faith & practice* we agree the schedule of representation on Meeting for Sufferings for the triennial period beginning Yearly Meeting 2006. Representation will be on the basis of two Friends per monthly meeting, with additional representation for every 300 members or part thereof in excess of 300, based on the provisional Tabular Statement for 2004.

The following monthly meetings are listed as having more than 300 members but fewer than 600, and hence are asked to nominate 3 representatives:

Luton & Leighton	Southampton & Portsmouth
Reading	Westminster
Witney	Cambridge & Peterborough
North Somerset & Wiltshire	Norwich & Lynn
Notts & Derbys	Gloucester & Nailsworth
Northumbria	York

The following monthly meeting is listed as having more than 600 members but fewer than 900, and hence is asked to nominate 4 representatives:

Warwickshire

Minute 46: Appointments

The Nominations Committee appointed by minute 14 brings in the following nominations:

As clerk of Nominations Committee to serve from Yearly Meeting 2006 until Yearly Meeting 2007: Margot Lunnon (Westminster MM).

As convener of Yearly Meeting Elders for Yearly Meeting 2006: Richard Hilken (East Devon MM).

As convener of Yearly Meeting Overseers for Yearly Meeting 2006: Julia Aspden (North Wales MM).

A Friend to serve on the Committee on Clerks from Yearly Meeting 2005 until Yearly Meeting 2008: Pamala McDougal (East of Scotland MM).

To form the *Quaker faith & practice* Drafting Group (see minute 35):

Phillip Gething (Guildford & Godalming MM)

Diana Simpkins (Hampstead MM)

Nicholas Sims (Jordans MM)

Joyce Trotter (Guisborough MM)

Jim Putz (East Devon MM)

Barbara Windle (York MM)

Clare Scott Booth (Westminster MM)

Judy Brill (Bristol & Frenchay MM)

together with a member of Young Friends General Meeting co-opted in consultation with the officers of Young Friends General Meeting.

These names being acceptable, we appoint the Friends accordingly.

Minute 47: Epistles from other yearly meetings

We have received 28 Epistles from other yearly meetings and bodies (pages 4-40 in *Epistles & testimonies*), extracts from three of which have been read in our sessions.

Minute 48: Testimonies

The following Testimonies to the Grace of God as shown in the life of deceased Friends, in addition to those from which extracts have been read in our sessions, have been received:

<i>Names</i>	<i>Epistles & testimonies page no.</i>
Margaret Aiston	42
Kathleen May Ashford	44
John Barnes	50
Kathleen Irene Barratt	52
Audrey Beckett	53
Edna Beyts and Ernle Beyts	56
James Bernard Bradbury	58
Gordon Browne	60
Duncan Campbell	63
(George) Eric Curzon	66
Roderick Ede	69
Frank Foster	73
Philip Giles	74
Elizabeth Mary Hambly	76
Theodora Headley	78

Martin Herford	79
Harold Huddart	83
Martha Leonora (Lena) Hutchinson	85
Joseph Burt (Jack) Hutchinson	87
Tim Jordan	91
Alec Lea	93
Eluned (Lyn) Lewis	95
George Mann	98
Margaret Marrow	99
Russell Stanley Mortimer	102
Priscilla Nunn	104
Elsie Olver	107
Harry Pallett	108
Adrian Richmond	110
Connie Sara	111
Ruth Satterthwaite Shutt	115
Alfred Tallant	117
Peter Tennant	119
John Tod	122
Phyllis Waterfall	124
Frank Whidby	127
Stephen Wolfenden	128

Minute 49: Welcome to overseas visitors

We have welcomed visitors from other yearly meetings and other Friends' groups as follows:

Australia YM	Tony Noakes
Baltimore YM	Laura Nell Obaugh
Belgium & Luxembourg MM	Jeannette Delgado-Holdsworth
Belgium & Luxembourg MM	Vivien Flynn
Belgium & Luxembourg MM	Paul Holdsworth
Central & Southern Africa YM	Roland Dale
Central & Southern Africa YM	Alasdair Knox
Finland YM	Anne Herbert (representative)
France YM	Didier Kahlig (representative)
German YM	Friedrich Huth (representative)
German YM	Wendelin Schnedler
Hill House MM, Ghana	Richmond Smith
Indiana YM	Bill Medlin
Indiana YM	Poh Medlin
Indiana YM	Sarah Medlin
John Punshon	Indiana YM
Indiana YM	Kathy South
Indiana YM	Colin South
Ireland YM	Rachel Bewley-Bateman
Ireland YM	John Fitzgerald
Ireland YM	Aidan McCartney
Ireland YM	Alan Pim (representative)
Ireland YM	Sue Pim (representative)
Kenya	David Lugaria
Kinshasa MM, Congo	Luse Kalala
Netherlands YM	Inge Herrebout
Netherlands YM	Tineke Kappen-Dijkhuis
North Pacific YM	Nancy Irving
Norway YM	Kristin Skarsholt

Philadelphia YM	Jackie Bowers
Philadelphia YM	Will Bowers
Philadelphia YM	Margaret Fraser
Sweden YM	Annika Hollsing
Sweden YM	Ingmar Hollsing
Sweden YM	Mia Hollsing
Switzerland YM	Jackie Leach Scully (representative)
Switzerland YM/ German YM	Christiane Muschter

Minute 50: Annual Report of Meeting for Sufferings 2004, and the Trustees' Report and Accounts 2004

The Annual Report of Meeting for Sufferings and its committees (printed in *Quaker work 2004* pages 7-157 & 161-171), and the Trustees' Report and Accounts 2004 are now accepted.

The reports of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (pages 158-160) and the Quaker Stewardship Committee (*Documents in advance* Supplement 2, pages 50-51) are also accepted.

The provisional Tabular Statement is noted and we ask Meeting for Sufferings, if possible, to receive the corrected version in September so that it can be printed in the Proceedings of this Yearly Meeting. Otherwise the corrected version will come to us next year.

Minute 51: Dates of Summer Gathering 2007

We have been informed by Meeting for Sufferings in its minute 5 of 6 November 2004 that it has appointed Summer Gathering 2007 to be held at the University of Stirling from 21-28 July 2007.

Minute 52: Dates of Yearly Meeting 2007

We have been informed by Meeting for Sufferings in its minute 3(1) of 4 December 2004 that it has appointed Yearly Meeting 2007 to be held at Friends House in London from 4 to 7 May.

Minute 53: Ecumenical and interfaith visitors

Minute 25 of Yearly Meeting held 28-31 May 2005 refers.

We have been pleased to welcome to this Yearly Meeting:

Andrew Clements, Church of England Ecumenical Officer for York Archdeaconry,
Ayub Laher, Jamiat-e-Ulama Britain (Association of Muslim Scholars),
Barnabas Leith, Secretary for External Affairs, National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, and
Manjula Sood, a Hindu follower of Sai Baba, based at Leicester Meeting House.

Minute 54: Receipt of Under 19 Programme minutes

We have received minutes from the groups of the Under 19 Programme of this yearly meeting as follows:

Small Fry (under 4 years old)

It is difficult for Under Fours to write a minute but at our circle time on the last morning we shared our experiences of being a Small Fry at Yearly Meeting most of us for the first time.

We have had a happy time making new Friends and having grown ups – who were taking a break from RECAST – to help us.

Walking cheerfully to the twisty trees for a picnic and later to watch the ducks being fed were highlights of the week. Our other activities involved sand, play dough, music and gloop.

At the end of each session we sat quietly and watched a beautiful candle as we worshipped together.

Small Fry and Core Team

Leaping Lizards (4 – 6 years old)

We have really enjoyed making new friends. Each day we were thinking of the themes of Yearly Meeting.

The name Leaping Lizards was chosen because one of the main themes of Yearly Meeting was change. We have learnt a lot about lizards and made lots of different sorts of lizards.

We've looked at how we have changed and how things change with the seasons.

We thought about our Quaker Testimonies including
Simplicity, when we played with simple things such as sand, stones, stick and shells,
Peace, when we joined in cross-age worship in the marquee, by making doves with happy and sad thoughts to share, and
Equality, when we made fair-trade sweets with the Divine Dudes.

We have enjoyed our lizard song and songs from the new Quaker Song Book.

Many of us look forward to coming to Yearly Meeting again.

Hoolee Hoolees (6 – 9 years old)

We have shared our stories about changes in our lives especially when people or pets have passed away.

We have discovered that often these sad things lead to much happier things.

We've been collecting golden nuggets as examples of how we live as Quakers.

The nuggets are good deeds.

During our petal worship the petals opened like our hearts opening to the world.

We played a trading game in which we found out how unfair things can be.

A lady called Helen came in and we did some singing while she played her guitar.

We did some role-plays including situations where we were blamed for things we didn't do.

In our Cross Age Witness session there were almost as many adults as children.

We thought about recycling and making the earth a better place by making four giant collages with Anne Brewer.

After, we made 'Earth Treasure' boxes.

We learnt about telling the truth, how it feels when you don't and did plays about truth and making up excuses.

We enjoyed the Truth Game and chose a shell to take home to remind us of our testimony to truth.

We have loved making new friends, doing lots of activities and being part of Britain Yearly Meeting in session.

Bright Light Bulbs (9 – 10 years old)

We have felt welcomed by everyone in the Bright Light Bulbs. The university is very big and we sometimes got lost. A scavenger hunt helped us find our way around. Base groups and secret friends have helped us build new friendships.

Playing games like Wink Murder, having fun with lego, cooking and making collages together, and teaching each other new skills like handstands have helped us find common interests.

We built an interesting growing monster. It was a bit scary, but from a distance we knew it was just a pile of recycled junk.

We really enjoy games, especially outside in the fresh air. We've played parachute games, bleep tests and mini Olympics. The earth ball is special to Yearly Meeting. We don't play it anywhere else. It is a bit scary, too, but makes us feel powerful, as if we are holding up the world. We can't wait until we are old enough to stand on top.

Everyone contributed to our Meetings for Worship. We have worshipped together for about ten minutes each day. Some people find it hard to keep quiet and still for that long. Like a hamster in a cage, every now and then there is a shuffling. Being Quakers lightens up our souls.

We have thought about Quakers past, present and future. It was interesting and inspiring to hear Helen Steven's stories about her peace witness. We are amazed by her strength, bravery, stamina and endless ideas, and pleased that we don't have to go to prison in order to witness to peace. We have written messages about Hiroshima on paper boats and made peace lanterns for our witness around the lake tonight.

We hope everyone else has enjoyed themselves as much as we have. This whole week will shine in our memories, particularly for the new friends we have made.

Chrysalis (10 – 11 years old)

On our first day we wax crayoned paper flowers and folded them up. When we placed the folded flowers in water they floated around and slowly opened up. When we came to Yearly Meeting we were like our wax flowers, colourful on the inside but closed up so it couldn't be seen.

We used masks to make communication difficult. Without facial expressions or eye contact it was harder to understand each other. We didn't realise how much we use our faces to communicate and get along with others. Communication can be difficult when everyone talks at once.

The testimonies help us to understand what we as Quakers and as human beings can do for the world. The making of our own posters helped us to identify our own additional testimonies and be clear on which are important to us.

Sometimes you don't choose changes, they happen to you. Changes can be good things as well as bad. You have to cope with the bad and enjoy the good. We can't control change but all changes

offer the opportunity for learning and character building. Changes can be little things or big things, can be in big leaps or very slow.

We held a business meeting and found out how hard it is to make decision in a spirit of worship. We had to put aside our personal views to put across the ideas we had. We also had to try and reach agreement without being able to vote. This was the most difficult thing of all.

The Jedi (12-14 year olds)

We are the Jedi. We have spent this week exploring and deepening our understanding of Quakerism and having fun together at the same time.

Our base groups helped us to get to know people with a variety of views and lifestyles but who share similar views on what is going on in the world. It has been a chance to see old friends and make new friends – and you can be sure that we'll keeping touch with each other through emails and text messages.

We've packed lots of things on the Yearly Meeting themes into the week. On Monday our activities on the subject of RECAST led to us sending a text message to the Yearly Meeting Clerks to make our voice heard in an unusual way. (But we still think that people are better than screens.)

On Tuesday 5 over-19 speakers visited us to challenge us to think about how testimonies can affect our lives and on Thursday Helen Steven's stories about direct action left us feeling 'awe inspired'. We're talking about the dilemmas she set us.

From taking part in all the activities and worshipping together in a variety of ways, many of us have come to understand Quakerism better and have a deeper appreciation of silent worship.

For all of us, and especially those of us from small Meetings, it's exciting to see so many Quakers together and from so many different places. This has been a fun, inspiring week and it is important to take it away with us.

Let's smile and share our joy with the world.

Spiritual Scooby Qs (13 – 14 years old)

RECAST has been an influential and main feature of Yearly Meeting this week, and has branched off into many other ideas about the culture and history of Quakers and the representation of under 19s in the Society of Friends. However the idea of RECAST got a very varied response across the group.

Acting out the testimonies was really cool; we got to see how much they come up in our lives. The group of people who went to the Swarthmore Lecture found it an important part of the week, although some in the group were disappointed to have not got the chance to talk to Helen after the lecture as some other groups had done.

We have all enjoyed making new friends and seeing old ones and having the chance to work in groups where we felt accepted and listened to. Having secret friends encouraged this. The whole week has been a large confidence boost for us. Playing with the earth ball was really fun.

This week has helped us get a better understanding of Quakers and looking at the five things that are important about Quakerism to us as individuals has made us see things that we haven't thought about before.

It has been good having under 19s in important roles such as clerking and reading the minute. We appreciate being listened to by the over 19s and hope our opinions will be valued even more in the future.

Re-Castaways (14 – 15 year old)

As soon as we arrived at Britain Yearly Meeting there was a sense of belonging and inclusiveness which continued and became stronger throughout the week.

We explored the theme of being a people of God, and how our faith affected our lives. We discussed other serious topics such as 'Preserving Paradise' and looking at the Quaker testimonies. In contrast we did light-hearted activities such as a 'Chocolate trail', a treasure hunt and earth ball (Tim rocks). On the subject of 'Preserving Paradise', Gill Westcott came in and we did a session on how what we do affects the environment. In general we appreciated involvement from outside the Re-Castaways Core Team. Linking into this, we felt our session on the testimonies went well because they also showed us how the testimonies affect our everyday life and how we can live our faith.

Throughout the week RECAST affected us as well as the rest of Yearly Meeting. We were pleased that our voices were heard to some extent, but felt that the time we had was not enough and that it could have been presented in a more interesting and clear way. We also felt that we should have had more opportunities for all-age discussions.

The evening sessions involved meeting up with the two groups above us, and this was thoroughly enjoyed. We played group games and even had a children's tea party. This allowed us to interact with more people and expand our friendships. We would like to thank the Fireflies organisers as many of us are involved in organising the Hiroshima witness and its content. We have appreciated just how much work goes into organising these big events.

Throughout the week we have enjoyed the atmosphere of Britain Yearly Meeting and we look forward to our future involvement in up and coming issues.

We will leave this event feeling uplifted and with new friends. We decided that our Quaker motto should be 'Quakers R nice'.

Divine Dudes (16 years old)

As the 16 year olds at Britain Yearly Meeting 2005 we have appreciated the opportunity for our involvement in RECAST. We found it a challenging topic which engaged us at several levels. We would like to be involved in more decisions of this sort in the future. We have also been stimulated by the responsibility given to us to help the Hiroshima Witness.

We have been inspired by how speakers and others in our group lead Quaker lives. This has helped us reassess our priorities and the way in which we live.

It has been important to for us to meet with other friends. Participating in activities with other age groups had been fun and enlightening. It has been good to have worship with our own age group which had drawn us closer together. Activities like making music have added to this.

Meeting one another in a Quaker community where we have been respected and valued is fundamental to our experience.

Rekindlers (17 – 18 years old)

The Rekindlers, comprising forty Young Friends aged 17 and 18 from across Britain Yearly Meeting, including two from Scandinavia and five Core Team members have gathered together as part of the largest U19 programme Britain Yearly Meeting has even seen.

We came excited, but also conscious that this for many of us, as we are reaching adulthood, would be our last U19 programme. We are challenged by what Quakerism means for us both now and in the future.

We have found at York that as with all U19 events we have enjoyed and cherished the community and atmosphere, which develops from meeting friends new and old, discussions, speakers, activities and games.

But we have found that this Britain Yearly Meeting has gone further. In our discussions about RECAST we were surprised at how passionately we engaged and how much we cared. We feel after initial turbulence in our interaction with the Over 19 programme we have now been listened to and we are grateful to the rest of Yearly Meeting for this recognition. We look forward to the proposed development of the 19-25 Transition Programme and we will give this our full support.

At this point in our spiritual journeys we are not always clear about what the future holds but this week has shown us that whatever the future does hold, it is upon us, and the inspiration we have gained from our visit to The Retreat, from Helen Steven's Swarthmore Lecture and from our speakers throughout the week, has opened our eyes to how Quakerism works in the everyday world and to the future possibilities. The Retreat was for us a key example of Quakerism in action and has made us proud to be Quakers.

We feel we can take this with us into our everyday lives – and that we will indeed have a part to play in Britain Yearly Meeting in the days to come.

The experience of the week has REKINDLED our passion for the Quaker Testimonies.

Our final sentence has been translated into Welsh, Norwegian and Swedish and will be included in our printed copy.

Yn wir mae profiad yr wythnos wedi ail-gynnu ein brwdfrydedd am Dystiolaethau'r Crynwyr.

Ukens opplevelser har virkelig fått vår lidenskap for kvekervitnesbyrdene til å blusse opp.
Norwegian

Veckans upplevelser har verkligen fått vår lidelse för kväkarvittnesbörden att blossa upp.
Swedish

Minute 55: Thanks

We record our thanks to all the people who have worked to enable this Yearly Meeting to take place.

Saturday 6 August 2005

Morning

Minute 56: Yearly Meeting Epistle

The General Epistle approved by minute 43 has been read and signed by the clerk on behalf of the Meeting.

It reads as follows:

To all Friends everywhere,

Britain Yearly Meeting, old and young, has gathered across the campus of the University of York, from 30 July to 6 August 2005. We send you our loving greetings as we strive to live as a people of God.

We come together not just to make decisions, but also to support one another, to be challenged, and to see each other's faces – and what love and delight we experience when we connect in this way! Our sessions, plenary and in groups, formal and informal, are enlivened with laughter and music.

There is also tension; sometimes we hurt each other through our actions, words, or attitudes. Acknowledging this hurt is the first step towards forgiveness. We must remember that we can be spoken to, and learn from, anybody within our community of Friends, whatever form their ministry takes.

God is neither the puppet master pulling our strings, nor the patriarch in the sky. God is at the centre of our time together, the life pumping through our arteries, the very ground of our being.

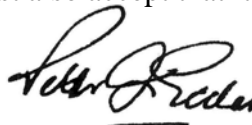
As a people of God we are not just a collection of individuals, we are also a corporate Church. Our structures exist to offer us a clear framework allowing us creatively to nurture our community, deepen our worship, and support the interaction of our faith and witness.

We have been considering structural changes within our Yearly Meeting. It is a difficult process and we continue to struggle with issues of trust, responsibility and power in our organisation. However, the exercise is useful as we deepen our understanding of the relationship between our structures, our testimonies and the divine.

We often search for comfort in our relationships with God, seeking a place for nourishment and security, healing and peace. But we may also experience discomfort, finding ourselves challenged to confront the truth in our hearts and to live and love in ways that are difficult and dangerous. These challenges are on our doorstep as well as in distant lands. All in the world is sacred; not only the things we find soothing and beautiful, but also those things which distress us.

For several years our minutes and epistles to each other have urged us to act to limit the damage we inflict on our environment. Many Friends are working hard to address this, but there is far more to be done as Quaker witness. Our time truly is running out; we all need to make the difficult choices to make a real difference.

We must remind ourselves constantly that all our testimonies are the daily expression of God in our lives. Being a people of God is rewarding – but we must also accept that it is costly. Are we prepared to pay the price?



Signed in and on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting
PETER J. ECCLES, Clerk

Minute 57: Concluding Minute

This has been a busy Yearly Meeting dominated by our consideration of proposals for our administrative arrangements designed to release us to be more effective in our witness. It has proved difficult to discern the way forward.

But throughout the Yearly Meeting we have been conscious of the violence and suffering in the world and problems of sustainability.

Yesterday evening, as night fell, we stood together around the lake, witnessing to the memory of all those who died as a result of the bomb which fell on Hiroshima sixty years ago today, re-dedicating ourselves to God's service in building a world where such things do not occur.

Let us now go out from this meeting with a new commitment to be faithful to the Spirit, so that we can build in each of our meetings a true community of faith, supporting each of us in our witness.

There being no further business for this yearly meeting, we separate, hoping to meet again in London from 26-29 May 2006.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter J. Eccles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

PETER J. ECCLES, *Clerk*