



Yearly Meeting of
the Religious Society
of Friends in Britain

To members of Meeting for Sufferings

7 July 2016

Meeting for Sufferings 2 July 2016

Dear Friends,

I think it's safe to say that we haven't specifically referred any items to area meetings on this occasion (they probably have enough from us at the moment anyway). However, there are some items where we are encouraging Friends to take action and as ever a number of other items that Friends will be interested in. As promised there are a lot of links at the end of this letter.

There are a number of items from Trustees that could be of interest. In particular the new post to support meetings with managing their properties and the changes to management meeting (the handout shared at the meeting is included in these papers). Ingrid has asked me to remind you that if ever you have any specific comments or questions about any aspect of Trustees' work, you are welcome to contact her directly at clerkoftrustees@quaker.org.uk

From the minutes,

- **End of Life Issues:** encourage Friends to look out for the publication from Leeds AM on 'Assisted dying: a Quaker exploration' which has been sent via AMs. Also if Friends haven't seen the Quaker Life leaflet on love and loss there is a link to the online version below.
- **Refugees:** I hope Friends will be interested to hear about the new post which is being created. Also, encourage them to look out for details of the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network conference to be held at Woodbrooke 3-5 February 2017.
- **Arms Trade, UK sales to Saudi Arabia:** Friends are encouraged to support the Campaign against the Arms Trade (CAAT) campaign – link below
- **Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation:** again, Friends are encouraged to get involved through Conscience (link below) and write to their MPs.

Friends are obviously concerned about a number of issues around the EU referendum and in particular the divisive effect it has had. There are a number of links below which I hope will be of help to Friends. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have collated links to statements from a number of churches, church based organisations and the Inter Faith Network on their website.

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It's heart-warming to read these and reminds me of how important it is for us all to work together.

I'm sorry to those of you who wished for a fuller minute on our reflections on Yearly Meeting. As promised our notes are attached. If any of you wish to feed in additional thoughts to help the clerks in preparing a paper for YM Agenda Committee then you can email us at sufferings@quaker.org.uk

There are a number of points coming out of the report from Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR). We heard of how their document: 'A Spirit-led Church', together with the study guide, has been used by some local meetings. I have mentioned above the importance of working together with others and we heard earlier in the meeting about the importance of dialogue with others. QCCIR are a resource to local Friends and are keen to hear of what we are doing. There is more information about the committee on the website (link below) and you can contact the members via their secretary Marigold Bentley at marigoldb@quaker.org.uk For Friends who are interested there is a QCCIR cluster group – again the contact to join this is Marigold at the email address above.

Thank you as ever for your support and discipline during the meeting. It wasn't a meeting for making big decisions, but having written this letter it's clear that we covered a lot of ground and if anything slightly ahead of time!

Yours in Friendship



Ethel Livermore,
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

Further information - links

EU Referendum

- [BYM statement](#) following the referendum
- [Northern Friends' Peace Board statement](#) about the referendum
- [Quaker Council for European Affairs statement](#) about the referendum
- [Churches Together in Britain and Ireland](#) – church reactions to the referendum
- [Letter to other European YMs](#) from Quaker World Relations Committee

Economics - QPSW's [new economics resources](#)

End of life issues: [Love and Loss: an invitation to Friends and Meetings](#) (leaflet - for paper copies or information email the Quaker Centre, quakercentre@quaker.org.uk or telephone 020 7663 1030.)

Arms sales to Saudi Arabia - [Campaign against the Arms Trade](#)

Conscientious objection to military taxation - [Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War](#)

[Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations](#) (QCCIR)

The following papers are also included in this mailing:

- July 2016 MfS Minutes
- Notes from item 10, Reflections on Yearly Meeting.
- New structure for Management Meeting

Meeting for Sufferings held at Friends House, Saturday 2 July 2016

MfS/16/07/01 Opening worship

During our opening worship we have remembered former members of this meeting who have recently died.

We have also heard read part of section 19.32 of *Quaker faith and practice*.

MfS/16/07/02 Minutes

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

MfS/16/07/03 Apologies

We receive apologies from Dorset and South Wiltshire, Staffordshire, and West Somerset AMs, and Young Friends General Meeting, which have not been able to send a representative on this occasion.

MfS/16/07/04 Membership of Meeting for Sufferings

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

Nominated:

Pat Beard – Gloucestershire AM alternate
Stephanie Grant – QCCIR representative
Terry Faull – Central Nominations Committee alternate
Christine Habgood-Coote – Central Nominations Committee representative

Release requests received:

Liz Muir-Edwards – South Wales AM/CCR De Cymru alternate
Christine Habgood-Coote – Central Nominations Committee alternate
Gabriel Parlour – Gloucestershire AM alternate
Catherine Putz – Central Nominations Committee representative.

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

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

Barbara Bone – Northumbria AM
Caro Kelly – Lancashire Central & North AM
Lyn Sissons – Cornwall AM
Sue Tompkins – Swarthmoor (SW Cumbria) AM

Other visitors:

Mark Lilley – Assistant Clerk, QCCIR
Ann van Staveren – BYM staff - Media Relations Officer
Anne Wilkinson – BYM staff - Events & Committee Support Manager

MfS/16/07/05 Adoption of Agenda

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

MfS/16/07/06 Court and prison register

We have heard that five Friends who participated at the No Faith in Trident day of action at Burghfield on Monday 27th June 2016 are expected to appear in court. Jo Frew, attender at Tottenham LQM (North London AQM); Ellis Brooks, attender at Wandsworth LQM (Kingston and Wandsworth AQM); and Sam Donaldson, attender at Hull LQM (Pickering and Hull AQM) were arrested and released later the same day and will appear in court in August. John Lynes of Sussex East AQM and Hannah Brock of Hampshire and the Islands AQM were not arrested, but were issued with summonses to appear in court.

We will add these names to our Court and Prison Register, and hold the Friends in the light.

MfS/16/07/07 BYM Trustees

Ingrid Greenhow has spoken to the minutes of BYM Trustees' meeting held on 17-19 June. She has referred in particular to a new post to support Meetings with properties, funded from legacy funding; HS2; the use by Quakers of the large meeting house; changes to management meeting; and the EU Referendum.

We receive minute **BYMT/20/06/11** on strategic management, and forward it to Church Government Advisory Group.

MfS/16/07/08 Interfaith relations

We receive minute **2016/3 Part 2 of Leeds AM**, informing us that the Leeds Quaker-Jewish Dialogue Group, which has been meeting for five years, has produced a report that is being considered by the Area Meeting; and that the Dialogue Group continues its work.

We send this minute to Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations.

MfS/16/07/09 End of Life Issues

In December 2014 Meeting for Sufferings spent time considering end of life, prompted in part by a minute from Leeds AM concerning assisted dying and in part by Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC) consideration (**minute MfS 2014/12/12c** refers).

We now receive **minute 2016/32 of Leeds AM**, informing us of the publication of 'Assisted dying: a Quaker exploration'. Copies have been sent to Local Meetings nationwide via Area Meetings.

QLCC has continued to address end of life issues. Quaker Life Representative Council in April focused on this topic, and a short leaflet 'Love and Loss' has been published.

MfS/16/07/10 Refugees and Asylum Seekers

We receive **minute 2/3/16 of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire AM**, concerning unaccompanied refugee children.

We also receive a minute of **Mid-Essex AM** held on 13 March 2016, supporting the suggestion of a conference to explore the issues surrounding the refugee crisis and the movement of peoples and how the Society might respond collectively and as individuals.

We have heard today from Helen Drewery, General Secretary of Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW), that after careful consideration and listening to the experience of Friends actively involved in supporting refugees, as well as Meeting for Sufferings, QPSWCC decided not to pursue the possibility of signing up to a Private Sponsorship scheme initiated by Citizens UK (**minute MfS/16/02/08** refers).

However, QPSWCC is supporting a project called Responding to Forced Migration. Legacy income has been allocated and BYM will shortly recruit a full time worker to build networks, share ideas and good practice and look for opportunities for Quakers to make a contribution to what is a rapidly developing picture.

Helen also informs us that the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN) is planning a conference 'Forced Migration: how can Quakers respond?' to be held at Woodbrooke Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th February 2017. Other European Yearly Meetings will also be invited to this conference.

MfS/16/07/11 Appeal Process

We receive **minute 16/16** of **Church Government Advisory Group**, recommending a review of the appeal process as described in sections 4.25 and 4.26 of *Quaker faith & practice*.

We agree to this. With some amendments made in our meeting, we agree to the Terms of Reference. We ask Central Nominations Committee to bring names forward to a future meeting.

MfS/16/07/12 Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum

We receive a minute of record from the Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum held on Saturday, 23 April 2016 at Friends House.

MfS/16/07/13 Arms Trade: UK sales to Saudi Arabia

Further to **minute MfS/16/04/15**, we receive part of **minute QPSWCC 16/56** responding to minutes from North West London AM and Ipswich and Diss AM, expressing concern about UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia, particularly in the light of violent conflict in Syria and Yemen. We note that QPSW is working closely on this issue with Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT). Friends are encouraged to take action in support of its work. Quakers from across Europe joined recent protests outside the Eurosatory arms fair in Paris.

MfS/16/07/14 Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation

Further to **minute MfS/16/04/16**, we receive part of **minute QPSWCC 16/56** responding to a minute of Dorset and South Wiltshire Area Meeting concerning a Peace Tax Bill under the Ten Minute Rule, proposed by Ruth Cadbury, an MP who is a Quaker. The AM asked what action the Society of Friends will take in support of this Bill.

QPSWCC informs us that this initiative is being supported by the Peace & Disarmament programme, including through the placement of one of our UK Peaceworkers, Holly Wallis, with Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War. Friends are encouraged to learn more and to contact their MPs.

We also receive **Minute 11 6/16 of Northumbria AM**, informing us that, following a visit from Holly Wallis, it has adopted this as a concern.

MfS/16/07/15 Lancaster University Court

For some years Meeting for Sufferings has appointed a representative to Lancaster University Court. We agree to pass responsibility for this appointment to Lancashire Central and North Area Meeting.

We forward this minute to Lancashire Central and North AM, and to Central Nominations Committee.

MfS/16/07/16 EU Referendum

We have taken time to reflect on the outcome of the EU Referendum held on 23rd June, and to reflect on what Love now requires of us.

MfS/16/07/17 Appointments

Committee on Clerks

Brings forward the names of the following Friends to serve from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017:

Meeting for Sufferings Clerk: Anne Ullathorne

Meeting for Sufferings Assistant Clerk: Margaret Bryan

We appoint these Friends accordingly.

Central Nominations Committee

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

BYM Sustainability Group

To serve from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019

Re-nominated:

Lis Burch - Oxford & Swindon AM

Nominated:

Stevie Krayner - Southern Marches AM

Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee

To serve until 31 December 2017

Nominated:

Andrew Burns - York AM

Trevor Evans - Luton & Leighton AM

Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations

Release from 1 September 2016:

Chris Wilson - Dorset & South Wiltshire AM

To serve until 30 April 2017

Nominated:

Kim Ashcroft - Sussex East AM

Quaker Life Central Committee

To serve until 31 December 2017
Nominated:
Simon Colbeck - Luton & Leighton AM

Quaker United Nations Committee - Geneva

To serve until 31 December 2017
Nominated:
Geoff Tansey - Brighouse West Yorkshire AM

To serve from 1 January 2017 until 31 December 2019
Re-nominated:
Colm O Cuanachain - Luton & Leighton AM

Representatives to other European Yearly Meetings

To be released from service as representative to Norway YM (25-28 June 2016):
Bronwyn Harwood - Sussex East AM

We appoint and release the Friends named accordingly.

The following appointments have been made by our clerks between meetings:

Netherlands YM (3-5 June 2016)

Laura McQuillan - Kendal & Sedbergh AM

Norway YM (25-28 June 2016)

Patricia Cockrell - Sussex East AM

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee

Nominated on behalf of Yearly Meeting to serve in the interim until Yearly Meeting 2017:
Rachael Swancott - Pendle Hill AM

MfS16/07/18 Yearly Meeting reflections

We have spent time reflecting on Yearly Meeting 2016, and also looked forward to Yearly Meeting 2017, and to future Yearly Meetings.

Our clerks will use these reflections to feed in to Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee meetings later in the year. Additional comments can be sent to the clerks after this meeting, and the papers prepared for Agenda Committee will be circulated to all representatives and alternates.

MfS/16/07/19 Travelling minute: Deborah Rowlands and Paul Parker

Our Yearly Meeting clerk, Deborah Rowlands, and Recording Clerk, Paul Parker, plan to visit among Friends in Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meeting, in July and August this year.

They hope to join Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meetings, meeting meet with their clerks, Friends, 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.

We have approved a Travelling Minute, and wish Deborah Rowlands and Paul Parker a safe and productive trip.

MfS/16/07/20 Meeting for Sufferings October 2017 - venue

We have heard from our clerks that, during their travels around Britain on behalf of Meeting for Sufferings in 2014 and 2015, they were encouraged to hold Meeting for Sufferings outside of London from time to time. It has been suggested that we meet in Manchester, in October 2017.

We agree to this, and we ask our Arrangements Group to work on the details.

MfS/16/07/21 Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations

We have received a report from Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (**paper MfS2016/07/13**) and Mark Lilley, assistant clerk of the Committee, has spoken to it.

We note that the committee have been reviewing their vision and strategy particularly in the light of the changing religious landscape of Britain.

We have heard some examples of local Friends' activities.

We thank the committee for their report and for their work on our behalf.

MfS/16/07/22 Close

We close, hoping to meet again in London on 1 October 2016.

Ethel Livermore
Clerk

Reflections on YM at MfS 2 July 2016

Main themes to emerge were:

1. Working with others and cooperation

James McCarthy suggested that we invite people from other groups that Quakers had in the past set up or encouraged, to feed in to us and to perhaps advise. Jane Pearn also felt that movement building meant linking with those we had worked with in the past and with whom there was trust and support. Aubrey Hill felt we needed greater understanding of how Friends work with other organisations where we are in unity with their aims – that there should be more of this and should encourage us all where we are, together. Bridget Walker wanted YM to focus on making joins so that we could be more connected with others in the different concerns that we had – she acknowledged it's difficult to know how to find a focus, when Quakers are active in so many things

2. Reaching out to the people around us

Kim Noy-Man Jackson spoke about the great pain of difference that existed between us and others. His own meeting was able to sort themselves out but other local meetings were struggling with their environment and one was likely to shut. These are the places that need us – usually we are preaching to the converted and those who are employed and comfortable. The young are struggling with no employment and no accommodation. We need to offer our Meetings for Worship in those places that need the stillness. We are far away from where we are needed – this is the current challenge for us: to listen to that still small voice and offer opportunities for others to listen to it, away from the noise of the media and the politicians. Judith Mason also felt that we were too cerebral and put people off and that we needed to reach out to others in a more accessible way. Christine Fellowes emphasised the importance of listening to people around us and try to communicate. (My own feeling at this point was that there was something deep here about the mission that Quakers were called to – to go out and share what we have found in a simple way with all peoples around us.)

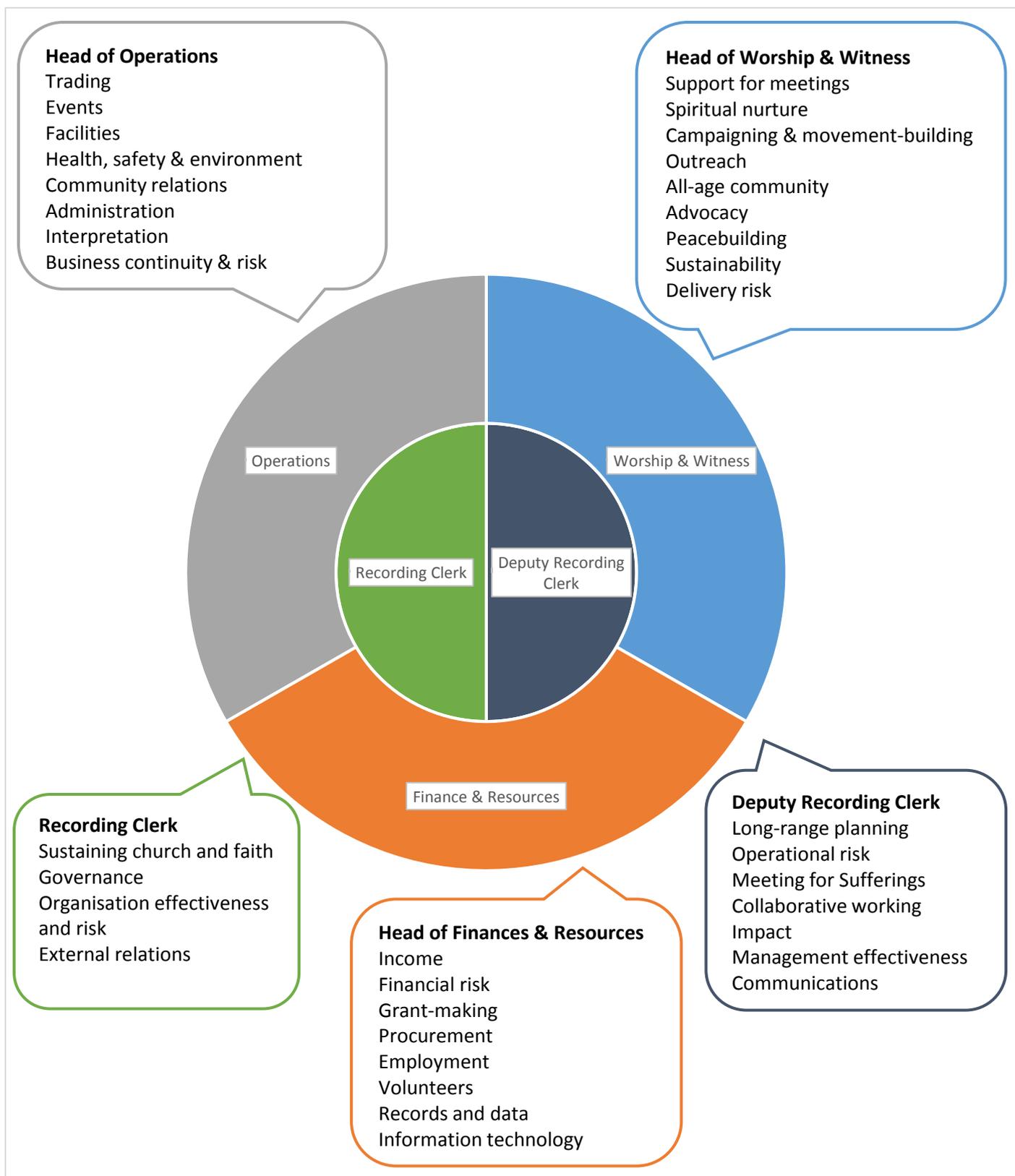
3. Specific ideas

Andrew Backhouse suggested that we concentrated on taking one particular topic in workshops as well as plenary, and see what we can do with it in practice. Ingrid suggested having a specific session on Meeting Houses Heritage Project and perhaps having the new staff member speak to this. Graham Dragon wanted us to spend time with no agenda and to see what being truly open to the Spirit led to. There was a suggestion from James McCarthy that we should look at Meeting for Worship in an enquiring way to tap in to the source of power that we have there. Avril Dawson wanted Quakers to be more open about being Quakers; and in particular, for someone from Quakers in Business to talk. Rachel Berger wanted us to keep space as led for current events as they might happen and not to be too fixed in advance. Caro Kelly wanted us to focus on Our Faith in the Future and to consider how accountable we are for what we do and how we can make our vision more a living reality.

Notes made by Anne Ullathorne 3.7.16

Management Meeting changes

Management Meeting is composed of the Recording Clerk and other members of the senior staff. It is responsible for co-ordinating the management and overseeing the implementation of the work of Britain Yearly Meeting (Qfp 8.21). Its structure is changing. There will be five members of Management Meeting: the Recording Clerk, Deputy Recording Clerk, Head of Finance & Resources, Head of Operations, and Head of Worship & Witness. They will also have different roles, reflecting themes of work rather than departments.



Why are we doing this?

This is the latest step in a fairly long journey. Over the past century BYM has shifted from a pattern in which most “central” work was done by individual Friends acting under concern, with minimal paid staff overseen by separate, largely independent committees - to one in which centrally managed work for and on behalf of Quakers is carried out largely by paid staff overseen by committees within a central structure.

Back in 1994 Yearly Meeting noted a need for ‘a clearer corporate vision’. In 2005, the RECAST report recommended ‘slimmer central structures’.

The Trustee body was established in 2006. When the group set up to review the workings of MfS and BYM Trustees reported in 2011, it made several recommendations about Management Meeting. It asked for a clear protocol for the operation of Management Meeting; and for Trustees to prioritise building an effective relationship with the Recording Clerk - focusing on ways to ensure that staff implement the discerned priorities of Meeting for Sufferings.

In order to respond effectively to Our Faith in the Future, BYM Trustees – and Management Meeting, itself - are clear that the organisation needs to work more as a single, joined-up body, with effective strategic management overseeing all of the operational work.

Having interdepartmental responsibilities will allow Management Meeting to better prioritise concerns that sit across the organisation – church, charity and company. We expect this approach will improve the support offered to Quaker meetings; co-ordinate outreach work in our buildings and nationally; and strengthen our witness in the world.

This is not a cost-cutting exercise. However, having a smaller Management Meeting will also be a better use of funds, freeing up resources for other work.

A single Head of Worship & Witness will help committees work in a more joined-up way. Quaker Life and Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committees have both responded positively to this.

How and when are we going to do this?

The new structure will take shape over the next six months, with a view to the new roles being in place by January 2017. Some things have happened already – for example, Helen Drewery is working with both Central Committees.

How will this affect Quakers and Meetings?

Most Quakers will not notice any change in the short term. But Meetings should benefit from more effective work, in the medium to long term.

The current structure of Central and Standing Committees will remain the same, as will their responsibilities.

The existing departments will remain, as will current staff roles.

We hope the better structure will help staff respond more quickly and flexibly to enquiries from Quakers and others. Staff will work directly with colleagues across the organisation, rather than in departmental silos. Making BYM’s strategic direction clearer will help staff to see how they contribute to the overall work of Quakers in Britain.

We see these changes as exciting and innovative. We know change can also be challenging: we are encouraging all staff to keep talking with members of Management Meeting and Trustees as we all move forward together.