



Yearly Meeting of
the Religious Society
of Friends in Britain

To members of Meeting for Sufferings

5 April 2017

Meeting for Sufferings 1 April 2017

Dear Friends,

The minutes from our meeting on April 1st are attached and fall into two main sections - governance, including supporting our own organisation, and looking outward. Following our considerations last time, Arrangements Group felt it would be helpful to map our minutes against our functions as laid down in Quaker Faith and Practice 7.02 and this has been done as a postscript to this letter.

Friends in your meetings may be interested to hear some of the news from BYM Trustees as detailed in the minute. For your information, the Property Support for Quaker Meetings officer is Lesley Hennigan, and can be contacted by email lesleyh@quaker.org.uk or telephone 0207 663 1029.

We spent time hearing from and thinking about the work of Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) - we appreciate that not all area meetings have had time to consider this and so we welcome receipt of further comments which should go direct to QSC by contacting Helen Griffith by email, heleng@quaker.org.uk or phoning 0207 663 1161, in the first instance.

We were told by the Recording Clerk of the letter sent to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Exiting the European Union. Our staff have compiled a schedule, to share with Friends, which gives details of the letters sent and communications entered into on behalf of Quakers in Britain. We, in our area meetings, can refer to these as seems appropriate. The list is included in the following papers.

Quaker World Relations Committee asked us for suggestions to enable them be more effective in their work and in fulfilling their purpose of 'enriching understanding between Friends worldwide and engaging Quakers in Britain in Quaker issues around the globe'. Those Friends particularly interested in linking in with the world family of Friends can join the QWRC network through contacting Marleen Schepers by email marleens@quaker.org.uk or telephone 0207 663 1029.

Our consideration of the two AM minutes relating to vulnerable adult members and transgender or non-binary friends may also be of interest in your local meetings – the full text is available in the agenda papers (or please ask Graham Spackman for a separated copy by emailing sufferings@quaker.org.uk). We will hear from Quaker Life in due course.

As always, your feedback is always appreciated and helps us to plan future meetings. Please send any reflections to us by emailing sufferings@quaker.org.uk.

Finally, don't forget about the Sufferings meeting in Manchester on 7th October for which we will be asking for registration rather earlier than usual. (The handout, available at the meeting, is included in these follow-up papers.) But our next meeting is on 3rd June.

Until then, peace be with you



Anne Ullathorne
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

The following papers are also included in this mailing:

- Speaking Out handout
- MfS is coming to Manchester
- Minutes of the Meeting held 1 April 2017

Meeting for Sufferings: are we addressing our functions?

Quaker faith and practice section 7.02 sets out 19 functions of Meeting for Sufferings (a-s). Arrangements Group hopes it will be helpful to monitor how the agenda items enable us to address these functions. Business at this meeting related to 7 of the functions. (We also hope that function i) *to foster communication throughout the yearly meeting* is addressed by representatives before and after every meeting.)

a) To set the priorities for the centrally managed work

- MfS 17/04/07, Quaker Stewardship Committee
- MfS 17/04/09, Review of the BYM Sustainability Group
- MfS 17/04/11, Quaker World Relations Committee

c) To receive regular interim reports from BYM trustees

- MfS 17/04/06, BYM Trustees' report

g) To deliberate on how best to support the spiritual life of the yearly meeting and to further the development of its visionary and prophetic role

- MfS 17/04/07, Quaker Stewardship Committee
- MfS 17/04/11, Quaker World Relations Committee

h) To keep under review and to test as appropriate the existing and new concerns referred to it by AMs and others

- MfS 17/04/14, Vulnerable adult members
- MfS 17/04/15, Transgender and non-binary inclusion

i) To appoint representatives to attend other Yearly Meetings

- MfS 17/04/10, appointments and MfS 17/04/13, Letter to Ireland YM

j) To receive minutes from area meetings

- MfS 17/04/13, Towards a vision of a criminal justice system
- MfS 17/04/14, Vulnerable adult members
- MfS 17/04/15, Transgender and non-binary inclusion

r) To authorise action and minutes as required under other sections of Quaker Faith and Practice

- MfS 17/04/08, amendments to Quaker faith and practice; MfS 17/04/16; Quaker Recognised Bodies



Britain Yearly Meeting: speaking out 2017

Date	Area of concern	Item	Notes
6 January	Crime and community justice	Sunday Mirror article regarding funding for Circles UK	Staff responded to a request for a quote
13 January	Economic justice	BYM is the first major charity to be awarded the Pay Compare Mark	Media release; BYM website; social media
16 January	Forced migration	Quaker Axel Landmann on BBC TV Antiques Roadshow about the Kindertransport	Staff facilitated an article in The Friend
15 January	Equality	Joint letter to Sunday Telegraph on Equality Act	The Recording Clerk signed a joint letter co-ordinated by the Equality Trust
16 January	Crime and community justice	Premier Radio interviewed Paul Parker about Quaker opposition to the death penalty	
19 January	Outreach	Feature on outreach in The Friend	Staff facilitated an article in The Friend
31 January	Sustainability	Quakers in Britain and the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) held two interfaith luncheons with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).	BYM and QUNO jointly hosted quiet talks involving faith and science communities; this was accompanied by some social media and information on the BYM website
4 February	Transparency, accountability and integrity	Meeting for Sufferings minute MfS 17/12/04 'Response to the current international situation'	Text of the minute shared in a media release, on BYM website and via social media ("Humanity needs leaders of integrity and conscience"). Also sent to all local meetings; some used it with their local media and MP. One Quaker school read it out in assembly and sent it to parents.
4 February	Sustainability	MfS/17/02/07 Fracking for shale gas	Text of the minute was circulated in a media release, on BYM website, and via social media; and sent to all local meetings.
8 February	Peace	Peace activists target warplanes	Media release for the Church Times; , social media
10 February	Forced migration	Joint letter to Home Secretary denouncing suspension of the Dubs policy	The Recording Clerk co-signed a letter with other church leaders. This was co-ordinated by the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT: Baptists, Methodists, United Reformed Church and

			Church of Scotland working together on issues of justice and inequality).
6 March	Forced migration	Joint letter to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Countering Extremism, on boarding school places for refugee children	A private letter signed by Quakers in Britain, Coram, the Boarding Schools' Association and Friends' Schools' Council
8 March	Forced migration	Submission to the Scottish Parliament on Asylum and Destitution	A joint submission by BYM, General Meeting for Scotland and the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network.
9 March	Forced migration	Joint letter to Home Secretary about family reunion (part of the consultation on the strategy to safeguard unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children)	A private letter co-signed with the Jewish Council for Racial Equality
22 March	Peace	Westminster attack	The Recording Clerk made a short statement which was published on the BYM website and social media. Fred Ashmore of London Quakers also signed a statement from the Faiths Forum.
24 March	Peace	Nuclear ban treaty talks: signed JPIT letter; signed interfaith letter.	Co-signed a letter co-ordinated by JPIT; and co-signed an interfaith letter. Daily accounts from the talks from our Peace and Disarmament Manager Tim Wallis, on BYM website and social media.
27 March	Forced migration	Feature on Forced migration listening tour	Staff facilitated an article in The Friend/
28 March	Sustainability	Letter to Minister of State for Climate Change & Industry about fracking	A private letter
30 March (expected)	Sustainability; peace; forced migration; transparency, accountability, integrity	Letter to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Exiting the European Union	A private letter, sent by the Recording Clerk following an interfaith meeting with the Parliamentary Secretary of State.

Meeting for Sufferings is coming to Manchester!

On Saturday, 7 October 2016, Meeting for Sufferings will be held at Central Manchester Meeting House.

This is an exciting opportunity for members of Meeting for Sufferings and Quakers in and near Manchester to meet, worship with each other, and share concerns.



What will be different about the timing?

We don't expect any change to the meeting itself, which will be held from 10am to 4pm on Saturday, as usual.

Although this isn't a residential, Friends can gather together before and after the meeting:

- Friday 6th October, 6pm to 8pm – informal gathering with a bring-and-share meal, for members of Sufferings and for any other Friends from the region
- Sunday 7th October – representatives staying in the area will be very welcome at any of the local Meetings for Worship.

What will be different about the agenda?

The agenda will be the same as for any other meeting. At present, we're expecting a report from Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee; to reflect on Yearly Meeting 2017; and to consider BYM communications, including our Speaking Out Policy.

How will Sufferings connect with local Quakers?

- The clerks have invited four neighbouring AMs to send additional representatives on this occasion
- Friends from these AMs have also been invited to offer a display about their Quaker life, concerns and activities
- If space allows, we'll organise lunchtime discussions on Saturday
- We hope local Quakers will join us on Friday evening for an informal gathering and food; and offer overnight accommodation to representatives.

What about accommodation?

Some of us will be able to travel to Manchester for the day. But for anyone who needs overnight accommodation, there are several options:

- Local Quakers can offer accommodation on Friday and/or Saturday night.
- You may have friends or family in the area.
- There are city-centre hotels near the Meeting House.

We hope Friends will feel able to stay with local Quakers; it would be especially good to join them at their Meeting for Worship on Sunday morning.

Please Register Early!

To help us plan, especially catering and accommodation, we will ask representatives to register much earlier than usual. Information will be sent out shortly.

Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk, 1 April 2017

Central Manchester Quaker Meeting

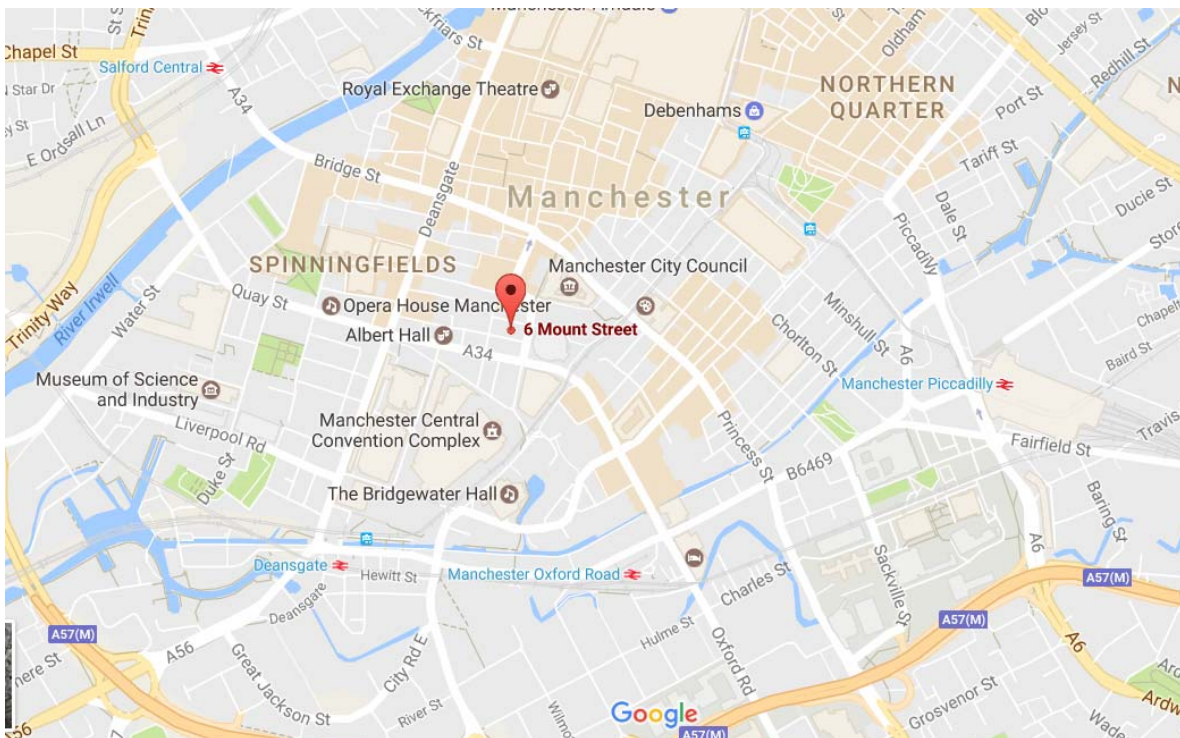
Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS

www.manchesterquakers.org.uk

The Meeting House is served by:

- Train:
Manchester Piccadilly – 20 minute walk, or link by tram or bus
Manchester Victoria – 15 minute walk, or link by tram or bus
Manchester Oxford Road – 10 minute walk
Deansgate – 10 minute walk
Salford Central – 15 minute walk
- Tram - St. Peter's Square - 5 minute walk
- Bus - Several buses, including Metroshuttle free buses from train stations

There are car parks within 5 minutes' walk.



Area Meetings 'in striking distance' - & their local meetings (not all close to Manchester!)

Manchester & Warrington AM

Central Manchester
Eccles
Sale
South Manchester
Warrington

Hardshaw & Mann AM

Isle of Man
Liverpool
Southport
St Helens
Wigan

East Cheshire AM

Cheadle Hulme
Crewe & Nantwich
Disley
Frandley
Macclesfield
Marple
Stockport
Wilmslow

Pendle Hill AM

Blackburn
Bolton
Clitheroe
Chorley
Crawshawbooth
Marsden
Rochdale

Meeting for Sufferings held at Friends House, Saturday 1 April 2017

MfS/17/04/01 Opening worship

During our opening worship we have heard read section 27.07 of Quaker faith & practice, and we have remembered former members of this meeting who have recently died.

MfS/17/04/02 Minutes

The minutes of our meeting held on 4 February 2017 have been signed.

MfS/17/04/03 Apologies

We receive apologies from Pickering and Hull and West Scotland AMs, which have not been able to send a representative on this occasion.

MfS/17/04/04 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:

Helen Chambers – Bristol AM alternate

Release requests received:

Miriam Yagud – Bristol AM alternate

We appoint the Friend named and thank the Friend released for her service.

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

Lesley Chandler – Cornwall AM

Other visitors:

Mary Aiston, Kingston & Wandsworth AM - Quaker Stewardship Committee

Anne van Staveren – Media Relations Officer

MfS/17/04/05 Adoption of Agenda

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

MfS/17/04/06 Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees' Report

Ingrid Greenhow, clerk of BYM Trustees, has spoken to the minutes of the meeting held on 17 and 18 February 2017. Her presentation has brought them to life for us today.

1. The Quaker Meeting Houses Heritage Project has come to a successful end. There are 345 meeting houses, 46% of which are listed. Friends are thanked for their engagement with this work. We currently have a property support officer who is helping support meetings with their property issues.

2. Trustees will be considering options for BYM's continuing commitment to support an Edinburgh-based Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer who will work with Friends in Scotland to advocate peace and truth and equality in the Scottish Parliament.
3. We have heard of the continuing strong relationship between BYM and QUNO and the legacy funding for their project on Human Impacts of Climate Change.
4. Friends House has received a Carbon Smart gold certificate for reducing its carbon footprint by 29% since 2009.

Peter Ullathorne, Yearly Meeting Treasurer, has told us that the 2016 accounts have been approved by the trustees and will be available for discussion at our next meeting.

We have been able to ask questions. We have heard about Quaker Life's initiatives to address the problems of ageing and declining membership. We encourage Friends to consider how they can communicate their work in a more accessible way.

We thank the Trustees for their work.

MfS/17/04/07 Quaker Stewardship Committee

Ursula Fuller and Mary Aiston of Quaker Stewardship Committee have spoken to its report (MfS 2017 04 06). We have also received minute 2017/21 from Leeds Area Meeting.

Like Sufferings, QSC has a vision of vibrant, well-managed meetings that can develop innovative solutions to the problems facing them. Like Sufferings, QSC works primarily with area meetings. Sufferings works on our faith and action, QSC looks after the good governance that underpins it.

QSC has helped our area meetings so that in 2016, Yearly Meeting was told that every meeting that has to send their annual report and accounts to the Charity Commission or to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator met the deadline and the reports contained all necessary requirements.

We reaffirm that all Quakers should be good stewards of our resources: it is part of our witness in the world to do this job well and there is ongoing work needed to support meetings in their stewardship of our resources.

We have considered the three questions that QSC has put before us:

1. What more can QSC and area meetings do to ensure that trustees and treasurers receive the support they need?

Initial feedback from representatives today was positive: the support QSC offers via Trustee and Treasurer News and their willingness to work with Friends in their meetings is appreciated.

News of Woodbrooke's proposed online course was welcomed. Feedback on annual reports from QSC link Friends is also helpful.

A proactive approach is needed to engage Friends in matters of governance, as there are difficulties in some areas in finding Friends to serve. Friends would welcome QSC members visiting them in their area meetings.

2. Would making wider central use of the information provided in trustees annual reports and accounts be a worthwhile expenditure of BYM's resources?

In responding to this question, we were reminded of the opportunity annual reports provide for outreach to the wider world. They are a report on the life of the whole area meeting and whilst legally their production is the responsibility of trustees, we are reminded of the guidance in Qf&p 15.03 that the ultimate authority lies with the gathered meeting.

Asking for reports to provide information about, for example, sustainability, would require clear guidelines to enable consistency.

We were urged not just to follow the letter, but to respond to the Spirit.

3. How can QSC best prompt a wider conversation to ensure that BYM's governance structures are sustainable in the long term?

We acknowledge that there is no 'one size fits all' and there are limits to Friends' ability and willingness to sustain the work of governance. This is a serious risk.

We thank Ursula Fuller and the members of QSC for their report to us today and for their work for the Yearly Meeting and we will return to these matters at a future meeting.

We look forward to hearing further comments when all representatives have reported back to their meetings.

MfS/17/04/08 Quaker faith & practice: proposed revision to section 14.40

Last December, MfS approved some proposed changes to Quaker faith and practice section 14.40 (Quaker Stewardship Committee), and forwarded them to Yearly Meeting (minute MfS/16/12/16). Church Government Advisory Group (CGAG) had overlooked recent changes to the terms of reference to Quaker Stewardship Committee. Accordingly, it now suggests a simplification to the wording of section 14.40 as set out in paper (MfS 2017 04 07).

We agree to this proposed amendment, and forward it to Yearly Meeting.

MfS/17/04/09 BYM Sustainability Group: Review Group terms of reference

Further to minute MfS/17/02/06, we receive paper MfS 2017 04 08 setting out terms of reference for a group to review the BYM Sustainability Group.

We approve the terms of reference.

MfS/17/04/10 Appointments

Central Nominations Committee

Brings forwards the following names for service:

BYM Sustainability Group

2nd term to serve from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020:

Martina Weitsch – North West London AM

To serve from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020:

Christopher Martin – Central England AM

BYM Sustainability Review Group

To serve from appointment until the review is finished:

Teresa Belton – Norfolk & Waverley AM

Jane Stephenson – West Wiltshire & East Somerset AM

Gordon Benson – Pendle Hill AM

Rici Marshall Cross - Leeds AM

Friends Trusts Ltd.

2nd term to serve from 1 June 2017 to 31 May 2020:

Richard Anderson – Oxford & Swindon AM

Janet Slade – Manchester & Warrington AM

Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations

To serve from appointment to 30 April 2019:

Evelyn Shire – Craven & Keighley AM

Representatives to Ireland Yearly Meeting

To serve at Ireland Yearly Meeting (20-23 April 2017):

Josephine Brennan (aka Matthews) – Chilterns AM

Quaker Council for European Affairs

To serve from appointment to December 2020:

Joshua Habgood-Coote – Sussex East AM

We appoint the Friends named.

MfS/17/04/11 Quaker World Relations Committee

Barbara Windle, Quaker World Relations Committee representative to Meeting for Sufferings, has presented its report (paper MfS 2017 04 10).

The report details the many ways in which QWRC works to fulfil its purpose of 'enriching understanding between Friends worldwide and engaging Quakers in Britain in Quaker issues around the globe'. There are particular challenges in working globally in the context of our YM commitment to sustainability. We are glad to read that legacy funding has just been agreed for a sustainability communications officer whose key role will be to gather information about worldwide Quaker action on sustainability and to facilitate collaboration and movement building.

One of the ways in which Friends in Britain can engage with Quakers nationally and internationally is to join the Quaker World Relations Network.

We are delighted at the breadth and scope of the work done in our name.

MfS/17/04/12 Letter of Greeting to Ireland YM

We receive from Quaker World Relations Committee a draft for our letter of greeting to Ireland Yearly Meeting to be held at Rathgar, Dublin, over the weekend of 20-23 April 2017 (paper MfS 2017 04 11).

We ask the clerk to sign the letter (as amended in the meeting) on our behalf.

MfS 17/04/13 Towards a vision of a criminal justice system

Further to minute MfS/16/12/18, we receive minute 7 of Hampshire and Islands AM held on 14 January 2017, and minute 9 of Hampshire and Islands AM held on 9 July 2016. We note that the earlier minute was sent to Meeting for Sufferings last year, but due to an administrative error it was not shared with Meeting for Sufferings when we considered the matter last December.

We forward the minute to Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee, for its Crime, Community and Justice sub-committee.

MfS 17/04/14 Vulnerable adult members

We receive minute 17/02/11 Concern: Vulnerable Adults from Brighouse West Yorkshire AM, held on 12 February 2017. The experience of supporting a vulnerable adult has led the Area Meeting to seek to ensure good Quaker collective practice in similar situations. The Area Meeting recognises this can be complex, and suggests that guidelines for good practice might be provided, to be shared nationally through Quaker Life.

We forward this minute to Quaker Life Central Committee, asking them to take this forward, and to report on progress later this year. We also forward it to Quaker Stewardship Committee, asking them to send any comments to Quaker Life Central Committee.

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

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

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

Further to our minute 2015/03/09, the Recording Clerk has told us that the tabular statement now contains a third column for those choosing not to be listed as male or female.

MfS 17/04/16 Quaker Recognised Bodies

Further to minutes MfS/15/12/1 and MfS 16/07/19, we receive paper MfS 2017/04/13 recommending three groups for registration as Quaker Recognised Bodies.

We agree to register the following groups for five years, with registration to be reviewed before the end of April 2022:

Free-standing:

Non-theist Friends Network
Quaker Concern for Animals

Externally-regulated:

Quakers in Business (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

We expect to register more groups at forthcoming meetings.

MfS 17/04/17 Meeting for Sufferings in Manchester

The clerks have shared news about plans for our meeting on 7th October which is to be held at Central Manchester Meeting House. We hope there will be opportunities for some Friends from nearby area meetings to join us during sessions and, for some of us, to meet with Friends at other times during the weekend.

Representatives or alternates attending the meeting will be invited to register earlier than usual, to help with practical arrangements.

MfS/17/04/18 Close

We close, intending to meet again on 3 June 2017.

Anne Ullathorne
Clerk