

REPORTS TO CIRCULATE

03-2020

**For Central England Quakers Area Meeting
to be held on 07/03/2020
at Hall Green Meeting House**

Meeting for Sufferings Report

Meeting held at Friends House on 1st February 2020

Main items on the agenda:

- Prison and Court register
- Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) Triennial Report to Meeting for Sufferings
- Britain Yearly meeting (BYM) Trustees
- Speaking Out
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Quaker Recognised Bodies
- Yearly Meeting

The Meeting began with opening worship during which the postscript to Quaker Faith and Practice chapter 23 was read, which begins:

'Those who have looked for a more forthright statement of a Quaker view on a subject which concerns them deeply, may experience some disappointment at not finding it here.....'

The new clerk, Margaret Bryan welcomed us and introduced the new assistant clerk, Robert Card.

Prison and Court Register

The names of two Friends found guilty of offences committed during Extinction Rebellion actions were recorded in the Prison and Court register.

Quaker Council for European Affairs

The triennial report to Meeting for Sufferings was presented and spoken to by Josh Habgood-Coote, BYM representative to QCEA. He began by assuring us that although UK has left the EU, this does not lessen the need to work for peace in Europe. He reminded us that UK remains a member of the Council of Europe, NATO, and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

QCEA operates from Quaker House Brussels, and has two main areas of work: the peace programme and the human rights programme. The peace programme aims to promote a process of rethinking security, and sets out to challenge the dominant narrative that conflict is best resolved with military might. QCEA launched 'Building Peace Together' in 2018, as a peacebuilding resource. (Available to download from the QCEA website – www.qcea.org). The human rights programme includes work on child immigration detention, and raising awareness of online hate speech through a project called #ChooseRespect. QCEA engages in the quiet diplomacy Quakers are known for – bringing together people in an informal, off-the-record setting to build common ground.

Friends and Meetings are encouraged to engage with QCEA – look at the website, read the publications, take part in a study tour, contribute financially.

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees

Caroline Nursey, clerk of BYM Trustees spoke to us about the broad agenda of trustees, and the relationship between trustees and Meeting for Sufferings

She assured us that Trustees want the relationship with MfS to be a proper conversation. All fifteen trustees are members of MfS, appointed by and reporting to BYM; and seeking to explore and test matters with and from BYM. Current priorities are to encourage thriving Quaker communities, to

work for a sustainable and peaceful world, to simplify our structures and practices, and to do all this in a way that is distinctively Quaker and well governed.

Meeting centred support, regional hubs and local development workers are all part of the 'thriving Quaker communities' strand. Thirty eight expressions of interest were received for LDW, and it is expected that the rollout period for LDW everywhere will be 3 – 5 years.

Speaking Out

We were asked to consider two questions:

1. Where is the right balance between being compelled to witness and compelled to achieve change?
2. Is it better to be distinctively Quaker or to voice all concerns?

We considered them with enthusiasm but no definitive answers.

Diversity and Inclusion

Sophie Bevan and Sam McNair represented MfS at the second Diversity and Inclusion gathering held at Woodbrooke in January, and we heard their reports. After a short time hearing reflections of the event we spent more time in groups of about eight considering some challenging questions arising from the gathering:

What do you fear most about welcoming to your LM i) a trans woman; ii) a group of black men; iii) a child with severe and complex needs?

The clerks minuted that we recognise the limitations of our inclusiveness and our fear of getting things wrong.

Quaker Recognised Bodies

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust was registered for five years.

Britain Yearly Meeting 2020

Yearly Meeting Gathering will be held at Bath University from 1st – 7th August. The theme is 'Listening, prophecy and reconciliation: allyship in a climate emergency'. Bookings are open, preparation materials are available for all Friends, visit www.quaker.org.uk/ym and book by the end of April. For the children's and young people's programmes booking needs to be completed sooner – places fill up!

Other business

In response to the UK leaving the EU, Quakers in Ireland and Britain Yearly Meeting have issued a joint statement, which we welcomed.

All Meeting for Sufferings papers and minutes for this meeting can be found on:

www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes

Cathy Khurana

CEQ representative on MfS

Observations on Outreach 2019 / 2020

Outreach committee now consist of eight willing volunteers, we are still supporting / promoting events within the Central England area. In 2019 our most successful ones were Moseley Street Festival with a stall and display boards in July, and Bournville Heritage trail where up to 13 buildings in Bournville had open days, these included Bournville meeting house and Woodbrooke gardens. Moseley was quieter than usual with fewer people about but as this was the first weekend in July there were lots of other fetes or carnivals in the area so there was a lot of competition, Bournville meeting House however attracted over a thousand visitors.

What of the future of Outreach, 2020 onwards, we all know we are an ageing population and need to increase our numbers but how do we do it, looking at reasons why people came to Quakers we learn it was because people knew one or had some kind of contact with a Quaker, rapidly dispelling the misconception that people had about Quakers, yes we still exist, no we are not Puritans, and yes some of us eat porridge for breakfast etc.

But how do we get to know and more importantly influence people? In a recent article in the Friend, Swarthmore area Meetings have all increased attendance, this has taken over three years but was done by getting to know people by having open days, coffee mornings, plant, book, and cake sales on a regular basis. I know many meetings engage with their local communities but do we need to do more? Do all meetings / individuals need to become outreach aware.

Inreach can be as important as outreach by inviting friends and users of our buildings to events helping to promote Quakerism and dispel those myths about us. Outreach committee can provide lots of recourses display boards, leaflets, and helpers if you are short staffed, one suggestion was a 20 minute mindful session, 60 minutes of silence can be intimidating especially for newcomers, Mindfulness is now widespread and many people find it useful, there are special features in Quaker mindfulness, we can help lead a short session for your meeting.

I was asked a few months ago what's happened with Intervisitation, where once a month where people went to another meeting to worship, this would increase and help out smaller meetings and help people to get to know each other better, guest speakers at our shared lunches I know many meetings do have them but do we invite people from outside our meeting or people from other meetings.

I hope my comments are not seen as negative ones, I know many of our meetings do engage with the local communities but as Swarthmore area found out it took 3 years to show any results, one thing I have learnt over the years the best Outreach is US.

Outreach committee are here to help, is there anything you would like help with, or any ideas you have to help promote Quakerism not just for Quaker week but throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact us for help or advice.

Roderick Keefe

Convener Outreach

Reading through some of the feedback from the recipients of our food parcels really brought a tear to my eye. It is humbling and sad that, with a gift of specially chosen items to eat, you can make such a difference to someone's life. I have copied just a few comments below (received via the Probation Service) to enable Friends to appreciate what their giving of time and money has meant to so many.

- *"It will help with the children at Christmas time so at least we will not go starving."*
- *"Thank you so much for the food hamper, you have made a tough time seem just that little bit easier for me. It's just lovely to know there is people that can help and will help. Thank you for making me smile. Merry Christmas"*
- *"To whomever this may concern. I have today Tuesday 10 December 2019 received a food hamper/parcel from my Probation Officer. `I most humbly and graciously thank you for affording me the privilege of being a beneficiary of this most valuable service. Have yourselves a wonderful Christmas and a truly memorable New Year."*
- *"I am extremely grateful to receive this, as it will not only help myself, but my dad also who I help and struggles to go out and get shopping. It is very generous and nice to feel as though someone cares and is thinking of me/us. Thank you"*
- *"My family and I are struggling this Xmas. My wife is disabled and I have not been able to find work since leaving prison. I have pawned my wedding ring for Xmas presents! These luxuries will really help – especially the cherry bakewells which I can give to the children as a treat."*
- *"The thought of someone working to give help to someone who doesn't have anything in the first place shows that there is always someone who can help and look after you. You don't need to be sad and depressed and can ask for help when you need it."*
- *"Thank you so much – really appreciate it – lovely surprise. So helpful coming up to Christmas. My daughter will love the treats"*
- *"Thank you so much it is so kind what you are doing. By giving me this parcel, it will be more like a proper Christmas, like it was when I was a kid"*
- *"A really lovely gesture – I appreciate it tremendously. Thank you very much it will certainly make my boys' day."*

Finally, the one that really made me smile, *"This parcel will stop me shoplifting/re-offending (I thought about it) and really needed some help. This will help me get through – stop feeling hungry and desperate."*

Friends, we were able to give 921 packed parcels to Probation plus 86 packed parcels for asylum seekers and refugees. Derbyshire Probation collected 20 of the parcels and Chesterfield Quakers were able to pack 20 parcels of their own for Probation. Additionally, 192 sets of 11 items of food were despatched unpacked to enable items to be given out individually or in smaller packages. I would like to thank Committee members for all their hard work, and especially Cyril Bezant and Trevor Barker who retired last year. Obviously, a huge 'Thank You' also goes to John Ironside, our Treasurer, who apart from banking all the donations, undertakes the shopping (spotting bargains early in the year!), the laying out of Selly Oak Meeting House for the packing and numerous other tasks. We would all be lost without him! His report is overleaf.

It is evident that this scheme only works while you support us with your generous donations as well as providing packers for the parcels, so thank you to you too.

Tricia Bradbury (Clerk)

Current Committee Members: Nicholas Ronan, Mina Tilt, Howard Saunders, Philip O'Shea, John Ironside (Treasurer)

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Central England Area QM
Quaker Christmas Parcels Appeal
Accounts 2019

	2019		2018	
	Qty	£	Qty	£
DONATIONS				
Individuals	126	6,484 see note 1	125	5,662 see note 1
Tax recovery (current year GiftAided donations)		994		638
Quaker Trusts	9	6930	11	10,200
CEA Quaker Meetings, special collections	5	506	4	552
Quaker meetings, outside CEA	2	440	2	396
Total QMs collections, individuals and Q trusts		15,355		17,448
Total donations, exc grants transferred from CEA QMs		15,355		17,448
CEA Quaker Meetings, grants from meeting funds	3	675	3	425
TOTAL DONATIONS		16,030		17,873
Bank interest		18		9
COIF units dividend		749		735
Investment income		767		744
Other income				
TOTAL INCOME		16,797		18,617
EXPENDITURE				
Bank charges		60		60
Stamps, envelopes, printing, stationery, tally counters		46		35
Admin costs		106		95
Plastic bags (inc bag labels)		233		164
Groceries				
Purchases for food parcels	21,168	15,785	21,168	15,808
Extra for refugee/asylum seekers/homeless groups	2,112	1356	2,112	1,338
Total cost of food parcels		16,018		15,972
Cost per food parcel	1,008	15.89	1,008	15.85
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		17,480		17,406
OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)		(684)		1,211
Unrealised gain (loss) on investment		3,746		(629)
Realised gain (loss) on investment				
INCREASE/DECREASE IN RESOURCES		3,062		583
OPENING FUNDS		30,070		29,487
CLOSING FUNDS		33,132		30,070
ASSETS CARRIED FORWARD				
Bank cheque account (CAF)		116		116
Bank deposit account (CAF)		7,275		8,159
Cash at Bank		7,391		8,275
CCLA COIF units		24,212		20,466
		31,603		28,741
Creditors - (QCP payment outstanding at year end)		(21)		
Debtors - Donations not cleared at year end		527		1,300
- GiftAid not yet recovered		1,025		31
		1,531		1,331
TOTAL ASSETS		33,135		30,072

Note 1 : Included here from CEA schedule distributions

signed

John M. Ironside

John Ironside

18 Jan 2020

Examiner's report

I have examined the financial statements of the Quaker Christmas Parcels Committee in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission and with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting by Charities.
In my opinion the accounting records of the Committee have been kept in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission, and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 accord with those records.
All information and explanations to which I am entitled in connection with this examination have been afforded to me and no matter has come to my attention which requires further report under the regulations.

signed:

Peter Ullathorne

Peter Ullathorne

18 Jan 2020

Quaker Christmas Parcels

Treasurer's report for 2019

Individual donations from within the AM and from Rugby and Ludlow Friends increased this year. This was offset by a reduction in giving by trusts. Income from trusts was boosted last year because one trust's planned donations for both 2017 and 2018 fell within that reporting period.

Appeal letters were distributed in bundles via LMs, to individual named members; donor numbers were steady.

At our July meeting we decided to supply the same number of parcels (1008) and of extra un-parcelled food for refugee and homeless groups as in 2018. To pay for the food we drew down our cash reserve slightly. We did not sell any of our COIF ethical units. The income from them was stable, and the units rose in value.

I do not think it will necessary to reduce spending on parcels in 2020.

Orders were placed with Sainsbury's and Aldi as usual. Chocolate bars were got for £500 less by touring the major supermarkets in the W Midlands in October. Sainsbury's small tuna tins were no longer MSC certified; so most were sourced from M&S instead at the same price. Overall, food prices were stable.

There were hardly any shortfalls in supply. Some minor substitutions were made on the fly. The same record amount of food was distributed, over 23,300 items.

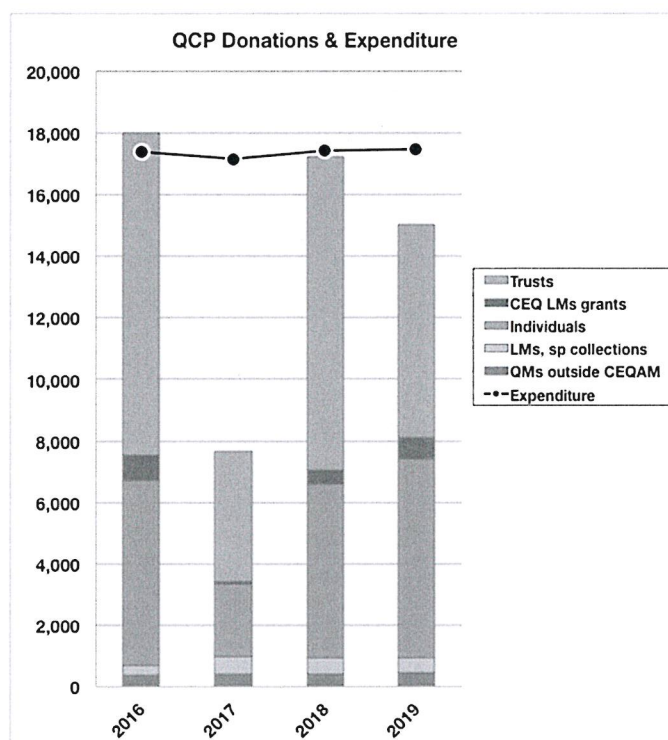
The practical aspects went like clockwork, thanks to the reception team on Thursday, and the UPW teams that bought the food from Aldi and took away the parcels on Saturday. Thanks are also due to the staff at Aldi, Sainsbury's and M&S.

Most of all, we thank our donors and the numerous Friends who packed and organised so well on Friday and Saturday, and the wonderful waste management team.

I thank Peter Ullathorne for examining the accounts.

JMI

17 Jan 2020



The work of Trustees in 2019

As trustees of the Area Meeting we are responsible to Friends to ensure that the charity is managed as well as possible so that they can continue to worship Sunday by Sunday, live out their lives following Quaker testimony and pursue their concerns without worrying too much about governance. In our Governing Document I am reminded that in section 5 it says the following.

5. Application of the Income and Property

Within Central England Area Meeting income and property are used to further the area meeting's object by work such as:

- i) strengthening the life and witness of Quaker meetings both in the area of Central England Area Meeting and beyond
- ii) spreading the message of Quakers and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Religious Society
- iii) undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad
- iv) funding the concerns that Quaker meetings in the Central England Area Meeting or beyond have adopted or agreed to support
- v) providing pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance to those in need and for education
- vi) maintaining and developing Quaker meeting houses as places of public worship and from which to carry out witness to the world
- vii) administering and maintaining the organisation of Central England Area Meeting and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting.

This commitment is a joint responsibility between Area Meeting, Local Meetings, our Branches and trustees. Trustees are required each year to report to Area Meeting on what they have been doing to support the object. In the same way Local Meetings are asked at the end of each year to complete their 'Responsibility Form' and it includes a section describing 'how the truth has prospered'. You might wonder what happens to that information. I am pleased to tell you that it does contribute to the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts.

Who are we and what have we been doing in 2019 on your behalf?

Anne Austin (COT), Patricia Bradbury (STO), Miriam Branson (STO) (completed her service in May 2019), Rhiannon Grant (BOU) (released in January 2019), Jim Green (WAL), Janet Hilken (STO), Judith Jenner (COT), John Kimberley (BUL), Robert Morris (HAL), Tony Pegler (SUT), Gill Smith (WAR), Barry Stimpson (B&R) (released in October 2019), Jill Stow (COT), Sue Thompson (COT) and Peter Ullathorne (COT) were trustees in 2019. At the end of 2019 there were 12 serving trustees. We held five trustees' meetings in February, May, July, September and November and a training day in February. This gave us the opportunity to consider how we work together as a team.

In 2019 there were five service committees: finance, property, employment, records advisory and governance and compliance. The first 4 have one or two trustee members and the rest of the committee members are Friends from Local Meetings appointed by the Area Meeting in session. Five trustees serve on the governance & compliance committee. Trustees are reliant on these committees to ensure the responsibilities of trustees are covered. They meet regularly and report to trustees meeting. In addition to committee work trustees are responsible for oversight and offering

support to the Local Meetings, branches and Area Meeting Committees. These Link Trustees report regularly at our trustees' meetings. Throughout the year there is a steady flow of business trustees are engaged in and in order to cover all of our responsibilities we have to work together, trusting that we are doing what we need to do. The service committees do most of the routine work in their meetings and bring to trustees meeting matters for discernment.

Finance committee receive and monitor the Management Accounts for 6 central funds every quarter. At the November Area Meeting there was a presentation on forecasts for 2019 and draft budgets for 2020. The 2020 budgets for the Trustee and General Funds were approved by Area Meeting and the spending will be monitored by the finance committee. The committee oversees the consolidation of the Charity's accounts and all Local Meeting and Branches submitted their examined accounts by the 31 March 2019 deadline. The external audit of the accounts was undertaken, with a satisfactory outcome. The 2018 CEQ Report and Accounts were approved by Trustees and submitted to the Charity Commission in September. In November the Annual Briefing for Treasurers and examiners was held at the Priory Rooms for all Local Meetings and Branches and they were all represented.

Following a minute from Area Meeting in December 2018, Finance committee reviewed the CEQ Ethical Investment Policy. After much consideration we decided to maintain our investments in the CCLA COIF Ethical Investment Fund, but to move our broker-held investments to a different stockbroker (Rathbones) able to offer more rigorous ethical screening of our portfolios. This move was completed by the end of 2019, and Rathbones are managing our portfolios in accordance with our revised ethical investment policy.

During the year trustees have been challenged when considering the right use of one of our historical investments – the Selly Wood House Fund. Trustees were approached by a sister trust, Old Peoples Fund Trust, for a grant to do some refurbishment work at Oak Tree House. Area Meeting approved this request in July and since then trustees have been working with our solicitors to determine whether we can use this fund for this purpose.

Trustees were approached by South Birmingham Friends Institute Trust and asked to consider the transfer of Kings Heath Miting House to CEQ. After ensuring that the Area Meeting can accept this transfer the matter will be considered by Friends at a future Area Meeting.

Property committee met four times during in 2019 and were pleased the Clare Peat (SEL) offered to convene the meetings during the year and agreed to continue into 2020 as clerk. The new arrangement of having subgroups focusing on different areas of work and reporting to the full committee is working and taking some of the pressure off the clerk.

The Local Meeting Premises Committees manage the upkeep of the Meeting Houses and supported by trustees through the property committee's work. One of the tasks of the committee is to decide on grants or loans from the Building Fund and during the year Local Meetings have been supported. As well as this financial support members of the committee are appointed as Property Link Friends and each Meeting House has a Friend to offer support on property matters and any work needed. The investment properties are supported by James Bradbury who is Treasurer to Trustees and co-opted to the Property Committee. This year we asked our solicitor to prepare an Advice Note which covered key points relating to the Bull Street site 1 Colmore Square/Temple Court. There is now a plan of the overall site showing the plots either owned and leased by CEQ or over which we have restricted covenants. This large file is now deposited in the Strong Room for future reference. The

Bull Street Properties are managed by the Bull Street Premises Group made up of representatives from Priory Rooms, Bull Street Meeting, Peace Hub and Trustees. Historic England visited three Meeting Houses in the spring and now Edgbaston Meeting House is a Grade 2 listed building and Stourbridge Meeting House is now listed 2*.

Employment Committee held four meetings during the year and keeps up to date with employment regulations and keeps policies under review and revised when required. These can be found on the CEQ website and Local Meetings can access them.

The committee supports Local Meetings when they recruit new staff and will give advice and guidance. In 2019 they decided to review the current staff contracts with the intention of moving to a standard CEQ contract which is compliant with current legislation, equal and fair to all staff members. This requires professional advice and trustees use an HR firm Roots HR to make sure this work is done properly. Each year in December the committee recommends to trustees the staff pay increase for the following year. There is also the concern for lone workers at our Meeting Houses and the stress employees sometime experience in their work. This year trustees agreed to offer a telephone counselling service to employees and their families. Local Meetings were informed of this facility and employees given the detail of the service they can access 24/7. On-line safeguarding training by the NSPCC was also provided for any staff member wishing to do the 3-hour introductory course.

Records Advisory Committee has met 4 times in 2019 and often combines the committee meeting with a session in the strong room. Friends Trusts Ltd – they look after Area Meeting property – asked for a list of all the deeds and leases and this has been quite a task. The committee has continued to process the records held. Following the renewal of the metal shelving, the records are now held and labelled in meeting and committee order. Sensitive records are kept in locked filing cabinet. Accessions of older records are prepared and taken to the Library of Birmingham archives as necessary.

The committee continues to receive records from local meetings and committees but is aware that there are some which still need to be sent in. We would hope that everyone sees the strong room as a resource for the Area Meeting in which records, which no longer have to be referred to, are kept in a secure place rather than homes and meeting houses. The committee will be happy to discuss any queries that may arise. Access to the records in the Library of Birmingham is not onerous and they are viewed in a good environment in the Wolfson Centre. We would point out that some records are closed for specified periods of time for confidentiality reasons and require special permission or examined by members of the committee on behalf of the enquirer.

Governance and Compliance Committee has met 4 times and the matters the committee has considered include:

Safeguarding: Britain Yearly Meeting was asked to contribute to an Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in faith communities and our Area Meeting was selected to complete this survey. The safeguarding coordinators had to do this in the autumn on our behalf. Trustees hope that we can use this piece of work to check that trustees are doing the best we can in this area of our work. The safeguarding coordinators arranged a training day in November and the focus was on our policy for Vulnerable Adults. The current policy is being updated and will come to Area Meeting for approval. The CEQ Safeguarding Link Trustee keeps in regular contact with the 2 safeguarding co-ordinators about issues of concern and reports regularly to Trustees

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR): The IT and DP Committee was laid down by Area Meeting and trustees have continued to oversee GDPR. A paper copy of the Membership Directory was published in 2019. This involved the Area Meeting Secretary in a lot of work collecting the permission forms and creating the database to comply with the new policies on collecting, storing and sharing contact details of Members and Attenders in the Area Meeting. The Data Leads in the Local Meetings had to collect the permission forms and check all of those on their lists. Distribution of the printed Membership Directory also had to be controlled and only those who requested a copy through their overseers/data leads in Local Meetings could receive them. Friends serving the Area Meeting in key roles also received a copy.

Memorandum of Understanding: This is the agreement between Trustees and the Local Meeting that all legal requirements are being met: financially, with the upkeep of the property, in employment practice, keeping and storing records and personal data, health & safety as well as safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. For trustees it is important we have the assurance that the charity is working well and is compliant. I am pleased to report that all MoU checklists were received and have been read by the service committee members. The information gathered will be used to update our Risk Register 2020 and consideration given to how the risks have changed since last year. One of the areas of risk is the difficulty Area Nominations Committee is having finding Friends to serve as trustees and on the four trustee service committees.

Other concerns:

Producing the **2018 CEQ Report & Accounts** is another shared responsibility with our auditors doing the financial reporting. The accompanying written report is from trustees and the treasurer to trustees. The illustrated summary of the Report and Accounts "*Central England Quakers in 2018*" is produced by trustees with the help of Local Meetings providing photographs and their reports on their activities during the year. Your contribution is important to the content as well as circulating it widely in the autumn when it is produced.

Priory Rooms is part of the trustees' responsibilities and the Directors of Priory Rooms (Bull Street) Ltd will report for Area Meeting on its business activities and developments in 2019 later in the year. During 2019 trustees reviewed the Management Agreement we have with Priory Rooms as a routine requirement every 5 years or so. Included in the review was an update of the Priory Rooms Principles and Purposes.

Operations Manager: in May Area Meeting supported a proposal from trustees to recruit an Operations Manager to do some of the routine work especially in finance and property management and to cover some of the work presently undertaken by James Bradbury. Unfortunately we were not able to appoint anyone to this post and trustees are looking again at the post before re-advertising.

During the year trustee work is undertaken by the five Service Committees to ensure we are doing things properly and I hope you get a flavour of how varied this is. Each trustee does not have to have expertise in every aspect of the work – it is a shared commitment and very much built on trust. The other side of the coin is that a trustee is able to learn new things and maybe discover an interest in something they never knew about – it is a learning opportunity. You will see from the list of serving trustees there are quite a few Local Meetings not represented. I encourage you to talk to Friends in your meeting about this way of serving the Area Meeting and talk to a trustee to find out more. I am grateful to all Trustees for their hard work and support during the year.

Briefing on the proposed transfer of Kings Heath Meeting House to CEQ.

Kings Heath Meeting House is owned by the South Birmingham Friends Institute Trust (SBFIT) and discussions have taken place over the last year between CEQ trustees and SBFIT trustees regarding the possibility of transferring the property to CEQ.

This would resolve a long-standing anomaly, with Kings Heath being the only Meeting House occupied by a CEQ Local Meeting that is not a CEQ property. CEQ Trustees have now reached a point when a decision needs to be made - they meet on 5 March 2020 and will send a minute to the Clerks of Area Meeting following their discernment.

This briefing paper provides background to the decision before Area Meeting and if there are further questions it would be helpful to the clerks if these can be sent to either Judith Jenner or Robert Morris before Area Meeting in March. It is quite a complex question and CEQ trustees and SBFIT trustees have spent quite a lot of time during the last year looking at it.

1. Kings Heath Friends discussed the changes and CEQ trustees received the following minute:

Minute from Kings Heath Friends 18/45

SBFIT trustees came to discuss the possible transfer of ownership of the Meeting House; there were no major concerns raised. Ruth Livermore will send minute to Bob Morris re this item and thanking them for their time.

2. Legal Advice

Both CEQ and SBFIT have taken legal advice, and the Charity Commission has been consulted. In May 2019 CEQ trustees considered the Advice Note SBFIT received from their solicitor which set out possible ways forward for them. One was SBFIT continue as a charity as before, but it may be possible for the Meeting House to be transferred to the Area Meeting to be held as part of the Area Meeting. ***This is not possible if the property is held on separate trusts as designated land / functional permanent endowment*** and so this option may fall away on further investigation.

3. CEQ Trustees minute May 2019

C Kings Heath Meeting House proposed transfer to CEQ. (T2019.02F, G & CC minute 2019.10 & Finance Committee minute F19.05.10a refers)

The Advice Note from the solicitor (VWV) was received on the day of our last meeting and the Governance and Compliance Committee considered it. They reported in their minutes that they recommended trustees consider option 2 as the way forward. However, it requires that South Birmingham Friends Institute Trust (SBFIT) trustees ascertain whether the property is free of restrictions or whether it is held on separate trusts as designated land/functional permanent endowment.

SBFIT trustees need to instruct another solicitor to do this piece of work for them as there is a conflict of interest for VWV.

4. Investigation

Theses searches were carried out, the Charity Commission consulted. Both the solicitors representing SBFIT and VWV are confident that the property is **not** held on designated land so there

is no legal impediment to the transfer. In February 2020 the following minute was received from SBFIT trustees.

2020/03 Transfer of ownership of Kings Heath Meeting House

Following minute 2019/41(a), we have heard from the Clerk to Trustees to Central England Area Meeting that AM Trustees will be discussing this matter at the beginning of March with a view to making a recommendation to the Area Meeting itself that meets on March 7th. The Trustees of SBFIT are clear that they want to proceed along the lines of option 2 in the advice note prepared by solicitors VWV on 27 February 2019.

5. Area Meeting decision

In accordance with the CEQ Governing Document, the transfer will require formal approval by area meeting. The property will be transferred at nil value, as CEQ functional properties are treated as “heritage assets” and are not valued in the CEQ Balance Sheet.

If the transfer is agreed,

1 The property will become the responsibility of CEQ Trustees, with delegated authority to Trustees Property Committee.

2 The Local Meeting will continue to be responsible for repairs, maintenance and improvements, but will have access to the CEQ Building Fund for expenditure which is beyond the Local Meeting’s resources (at the moment this financial support is provided by SBFIT)

3 Property Committee will nominate a Property Link Friend to provide support and guidance to the Local Meeting on property matters.

4 The Local Meeting will need to comply with CEQ procedures, such as completing the APQ, and we hope they will attend future gatherings of Premises Committee Representatives.

5 In recognition of being released from future liabilities for the upkeep of the Property, SBFIT are likely to offer a one-off payment to CEQ - the amount of which is to be negotiated between the parties. It has been agreed that the quinquennial inspection of the property will be undertaken as soon as possible, and the surveyor will be asked to advise on whether any major repairs are likely to be required over the next 10 years. This information may influence the value of the negotiated payment. Note that the property and its contents are already insured by CEQ (under the block policy) with the premium paid by the Local Meeting.

Any transfer or sale of property is the responsibility of the Area Meeting and this matter will be brought to the March meeting.

Judith Jenner, Clerk to CEQ Trustees

Robert Morris, Clerk to South Birmingham Friends Institute Trust

24 February 2020

Central England Area Quaker Meeting
Tabular Statement for Year ending 31 December 2019
(Member and Attender numbers)

Members

In line with our agreed data protection policy and members' privacy statement we no longer hold data on gender. The total number of members at the end of 2019 was 453. This is 36 fewer than the 489 reported last year. Some of this fall can be accounted for by the GDPR consent gathering at the end of 2018 in which some members were uncontactable.

Losses in members were:

Deaths	12
Transfers to other AMs	0
Terminations of membership	
Resignations	9
Lost contact	22

Increases in members were:

Personal application	8
Transfers in from other AMs in BYM	3

Adjustments made to the previous tabular statement:

Overall	-6 (-10 from Penn meeting)
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Adult Attenders

At the end of 2019 there were 234 recorded adult attenders. This is 22 fewer than at the end of last year.

Children (under the age of 16)

46 children were recorded at the end of 2019. This is 8 less than at the end of 2018.

Dave Rawcliffe
David Brayley-Wilmetts, area meeting secretary
Special Adviser: Chris Martin

February 2019

Summary of Tabular Statement Numbers by Local Meeting

	31 December 2019			
	Members	Adult attenders	Children	
Barnt Green & Redditch	20	9	0	29
Bournville	47	23	0	70
Bull Street	26	9	0	35
Cotteridge	74	19	9	102
Coventry	35	36	0	71
Dudley				
Edgbaston	19	10	0	29
Hall Green	15	9	0	24
Hartshill	7	12	6	25
King's Heath	11	5	0	16
Penn				
Selly Oak	51	23	8	82
Solihull	21	5	0	26
Stourbridge	33	22	7	62
Sutton Coldfield	17	20	4	41
Walsall	12	8	0	20
Warwick	59	24	12	95
West Bromwich				
Unattached	6			6
<i>Net Adjustments</i>				
TOTAL	453	234	46	733

2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
30	33	31	37	34
74	75	72	73	77
44	48	48	47	46
116	129	133	142	137
73	85	85	84	86
				12
41	34	37	36	33
25	34	37	39	40
30	30	32	38	42
15	22	24	22	23
	5	7	8	8
82	86	87	69	71
27	27	25	28	28
58	57	57	59	53
46	47	47	37	37
24	20	22	22	22
107	143	147	145	150
3	3	3	3	3
4	2	3	6	
		0		+2
799	880	897	895	904

Triennial process for nomination and appointment of elders and overseers for Central England Area Meeting in 2020

Introduction: Elders and Overseers are appointed by Central England Area Meeting every three years to serve for 3 years (a triennium). The process of nominating those to serve is handled by the AM Triennial E/O Nominations Committee. AM initiates the process, after which LMs are asked to provide representatives to the Triennial Committee, and to set up LM sub-committees to discern names for Elders and Overseers from among their meeting, and to examine their practices of Eldership and Oversight. The Triennial Committee meets in full for 3 times during the year, and shares different LM practices and successes and problems. During the year LMs discern names of Elders and Overseers, and these are brought to AM at the end of the year for discernment and appointment. AM notifies all who are appointed. The full Triennial committee then disbands, leaving two clerks nominated from AM Nominations Committee, who form the Interim Triennial committee which handles interim changes to Elders and Overseers and supports LMs with Eldership and Oversight matters, liaising with AM Elders and Overseers Support group.

Throughout this process we should all remember the importance of caring for each other.

Space has been left in this document for notes..

March 7th	<p>Process initiated by AM on the advice of the current clerk of the Triennial Committee.</p> <p>The Triennial clerk then sends letters to local meeting clerks asking them:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">to nominate one Friend, and an alternate, to be a representative on the Triennial Committee.to appoint a LM sub-committee for the nomination of elders and overseers from their meeting. <p>Included is a copy of the process and guidance notes.</p> <p>At this stage and throughout the process the clerk of the Triennial Committee should bear in mind the needs of smaller meetings.</p>
March-June	<p>Local meetings appoint their own nominations sub-committee, and nominate one Friend and an alternate to serve on the AM Triennial Committee and to receive correspondence. The LM sub-committee could be the standing nominations committee, a special committee appointed for the purpose, or whatever suitable arrangement best suits the local meeting. The nominated Triennial Committee representative and alternate should also be members of the LM sub-committee.</p>

June 13th	The full Triennial Committee is appointed at AM. AM also asks the AM nominations committee to find the names of Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerk of the AM Triennial E&O nominations committee for the new triennium. 2021-2023. The clerk of the Triennial Committee circulates guidance to all representatives of the Triennial Committee and to LM E/O nominations sub-committees, along with the current list of elders and overseers. Local nominations sub-committees meet as soon as possible after they have received the guidance. They may feel ready to draw up a provisional list of Elders and Overseers or there may be questions and concerns about which they wish to seek advice or support.
June 24th	The full Triennial Committee has its first meeting. Each LM representative shares their particular ways of Eldership and Oversight, and the thinking of their LM subcommittees, and brings a provisional list of names if they have one. The needs of each meeting will be considered in turn. Representatives return to LM nominations sub-committees with the advice and guidance of the Triennial Committee. The LM nominations sub-committee should begin to approach Friends and draw up lists.
June-Sept	Local Meetings consider the names of those approached by the local nominations sub-committee as Elders and Overseers. If they are able to confirm the nominations, send these to the clerk of the Triennial Committee with a LM minute.
Sept 2nd	The full Triennial Committee meets for the 2 nd time to consider the lists of nominations for elders & overseers received from local meetings. Issues with the process that have arisen in LMs may be considered.
October	Names circulated to local meetings with October AM minutes, asking for any concerns to be raised with Clerk of the Triennial Committee in good time before November AM.

Nov 4th	The Triennial Committee meets for the last time. It finalises the list of E/O nominations; considers the names of Friends to serve on the Elders and Overseers support group; and reviews the Triennial Nominations process.
Nov 28th	<p>It reports to AM with nominations of elders and overseers, and subject to the AM's agreement they are appointed. The LM representatives and alternates stand down.</p> <p>AM clerk sends letters to all appointed and released Friends. The AM clerk also sends a letter to local convenors of existing elders and overseers to ask them to convene a local handover meeting.</p>
1st AM in 2121	<p>The 2020 Clerk of the Triennial Committee presents a report to AM on the process. The Elders and Overseers support Group is appointed by AM.</p> <p>During 2021 and 2022, the Triennial Committee is in its Interim phase consisting of the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.</p>

March 2020 (issued by Vic Grainger clerk and Nicholas Paton Philip assistant clerk of AM Triennial E&O nominations committee,)