

Minutes of Central England Area Quaker Meeting held by Video Conferencing on 13th June 2020

Clerk: Alison Ironside
Assistant clerk: Helen Rowlands

Elders on duty: Jo Hindley, Hilary Johnson

2020.032 Meeting by Video Conferencing

We record that we are meeting by video conferencing. The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has resulted in restrictions on travel and gatherings in person so that we are unable to meet at Cotteridge Quaker Meeting House as planned.

Our Meeting began with a period of silent worship during which part of § 29.15 was read:

We recognise and celebrate what we as Black, Asian and mixed-heritage Friends [in Britain] bring to the Society and with pride we affirm our rich positive contributions. However, we find spoken and unspoken assumptions that because we are Black people we are economically needy, socially deprived, culturally disinherited and spiritually in need of Quaker instruction. We experience isolation both physical and spiritual within our meetings. It is not just a matter of numbers but without the active commitment to promote diversity within the Society of Friends it will continue to be difficult to foster a true experience of a spiritual community.

We need to look honestly and openly at the structure of our meetings and seek to broaden our experience of other enriching forms of worship. Quakerism enables us to face both the glory and the seemingly unfaceable in ourselves. Let us do so now – together.

Epistle of Black, white, Asian and mixed-heritage Friends, 1991

2020.033 Representatives

The following meetings were represented here today:

B&R; BOU; BUL; COT; COV; EDG; HAL; KIN SEL;SOL;STO; SUT; WAL; WAR;

The clerks have given permission for the following attenders to join us today:

Gavin Regnart (BUL), Yasuharu Nakano (SEL).

2020.034 Membership matters

a) Journey into Membership:

We have heard the report of the journey into membership of Robert Sprake, an attender at Barnt Green & Redditch LM. We welcome him into membership of the Religious Society of Friends and Central England Quakers. We ask his visitors to welcome him and the clerk to write to him.

b) Transfer Out:

Gill Pennington (SEL) to Worcester & Shropshire Area Meeting

c) Accepted Out

Gill Pennington (SEL) by Worcester & Shropshire Area Meeting

2020.035 Memorial Minute

We have received a memorial minute from Cotteridge LM for Howard Boyd, which we have had read to us.

2020/06 Memorial Minute for Howard Boyd

Our Friend Howard Boyd died on 17th October 2019. We have considered in worship how we have witnessed the Divine Grace through Howard's life.

His life exemplified the belief that faith without works has no value.

We have heard of Howard's loving kindness and quiet perseverance. He demonstrated a sense of solidity, reliability and steadiness. He was self-effacing and did not seek to impress others, but got on with tasks that were needed even to checking a friend's wheelchair tyres each Sunday.

He was devoted to his family and played his part in partnership throughout his life even in the final stages of his illness doing whichever tasks he could. He was always courteous even in the last stages of his dementia when he was frequently anxious. He was consistently grateful for the care he received.

He championed cycling throughout his life from his student days and later in his professional life.

We are grateful for the Light Howard has shown us at Cotteridge Meeting and we send this minute to Area Meeting.

We forward this minute to Elders / Overseers Support Group.

2020.036 Minutes Received

a) We have received the following minute from **Trustees**

T2019.20 B Application from the Woodlands (F19/09/23, G&CC2019.20)

An application from the Woodlands for a grant of £50,000 to use to top up their residents' support fund was received in July and considered by the Finance Committee and the Governance and Compliance Committee.

The Support Fund is used to assist residents whose relatives are unable to afford the difference between Woodlands fees and the local authority rates. This is classed as a 'third party top up and details of the tops up needed to cover these differences was presented in the application.

The costs of running a care home are rising and local authority support decreasing and having this support fund is necessary. The fund relies on donations to the fund and investment income. At present the fund is healthy but the demands made on it are increasing and it will help the Woodlands to manage and sustain this fund if CEQ can make a grant of £50,000. We have been reassured that Woodlands will not be seeking an annual grant.

We ask the clerk to reply to Andrea Mason application for funding saying that trustees have agreed in principle but we are waiting to hear from the Charity Commission about the use of this particular fund.

We recognise that this is similar to the grant from the Selly Wood House Fund we agreed to support to the Old Peoples Fund Trust for renovations at Oak Tree House (our minute 2019.073 refers). Since trustees have agreed in principle to a grant, we support this grant for the Woodlands Residents Support Fund (*Woodlands Quaker Care Home, Penn, Wolverhampton*).

b) We have received the following minute from **Warwick LM**

Minute 20/20 Room Hire for Kenilworth Meeting - Wendy Edwards

A group of Friends has been meeting for worship informally in people's homes in Kenilworth for some months now. We agree to formally adopt it as meeting under the care of Warwick Meeting.

Prior to Covid 19 lockdown, we were asked to pay £12.50 for the hire of a room for Kenilworth Meeting to meet during May 2020, with a view to potentially hiring the room going forward once a month. Kenilworth Meeting cannot go ahead with this in May due to the lockdown but we record that we are happy to pay for this room hire for the first month after lockdown ceases.

We also record that we are happy to pay this amount on a monthly basis going forward subject to consultation with our treasurer.

We ask our Clerk to send this minute to Area Meeting.

We are pleased to recognise that there is a Kenilworth worshipping group under the care of Warwick LM.

2020.037 Proposed new constitution for Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture (Q-CAT)

We have had before us a proposed new constitution for Q-CAT together with a supporting paper from John Cockcroft, one of their trustees, and a document explaining the role of a supporting Area Meeting of which we are one of the four current supporting Area Meetings. We confirm our continuing role as a Supporting Area Meeting, first agreed by our minute 2014.088.

We hereby minute our acceptance of our relationship with Q-CAT as indicated by the proposed new constitution, which we agree should be forwarded by the Q-CAT trustees to the Charity Commission for ratification.

2020.038 Nominations

Nominations committee have the following suggestions for service:

- Outreach Committee: Mina Tilt (HAL) and Diane Stobbs (COV) to serve a further triennium from June 2020 until the end of May 2023
- Susannah Cole and Others Trust: Hilary Topp (COT) to serve from June 2020 until the end of May 2023
- The Talking Friend: Cathy Khurana (SUT) to serve from June 2020 until the end of May 2023
- Area Meeting Ecumenical and Interfaith Coordinator: Claire Bowman (BOU) to serve a further triennium from June 2020 until the end of May 2023

- Bursaries Committee: Jane Holt (WAR) to serve a further triennium from July 2020 until the end of June 2023
- Communications Committee: Dave Rawcliffe (WAR) and Donald Whitlock (SOL) to serve from June 2020 until the end of May 2023
- Sibford School General Meeting: Diana Biddlestone (WAR) to represent the Area Meeting at Sibford School General Meeting 2020.
- Bob Morris(HAL) and Peter Fishpool (COT) to serve a further triennium on the Trustees Finance Committee from October 2020 until the end of September 2023.
- Old People’s Fund Trust: Roderick Keefe (COT) to serve as an Old People’s Fund Trust trustee from July 2020 until the end of June 2026, and David Cockcroft (COT) to serve as an Old People’s Fund Trust trustee from June 2020 – May 2026.
- Sarah Evans (COT). to continue on the Westhill Endowment Trust from August 2020 until the end of July 2023.

We approve these names and appoint them accordingly

Release from Service

The following Friends have asked to be released:

- Stella Roberts (COV) as an AM co-clerk
- Diana Williams (BOU) as an Elder
- Anne Austin (COT) from The Talking Friend

We agree to these requests and thank the Friends for their service and ask Nominations Committee to find replacement names if required.

2020.039

We are mindful that over this period of lockdown and looking forward to an easing of restrictions, many of our Trustees and Friends have been working hard on our account to offer advice, guidance and support to our Meetings and Branches. We thank them for their ongoing service.

2020.040 Next Meeting

We hope to meet again on July 14th from 6.00 p.m. at either Warwick QMH or by video conferencing.

Alison Ironside

Clerk this time