

**CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS  
MEETING FOR CHURCH AFFAIRS  
by ZOOM March 2021  
on 06.03.2021**

**Clerk: Alison Ironside  
Assisting: Stella Roberts  
Assisting: Vic Grainger**

**Agenda**

- Opening Worship
- Representatives
- Membership Matters
- Memorial Minute
- Testimony
- Report from Quaker Christmas Parcels
- Minutes Received
  - a) from Trustees
  - b) from Northfield Development Committee
  - c) from Clerks Advisory Committee
- Triennial Appointment Process for Eldership & Oversight
- Community Justice Group
- Nominations Committee Report
- Meeting for Sufferings Report
- Nominations and Appointments

# CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS AREA MEETING

Record Sheet 03-2021

## DUTY ELDERS:

Robin Bowman and Donald Stubbings (BOU)

## DEATH

William Rowley (WAL) on 10th January aged 87.

## ORDER FOR BURIAL: SCATTERING OF ASHES

Audrey May Holding at Stourbridge Friends Meeting House on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2016

## MEMBERSHIP:

### Application For:

- Cathy Tuckett (COT)
- William Whiting (STO)

### Journey Into Membership:

- Margot Williams (SUT)
- Gavin Regnart (BUL)

### Internal Transfers:

- Abigail Barrow to Bull Street LM
- Shelia Barrow (a) to Bull Street LM
- John Binch to Selly Oak LM
- Brenda Tanner (a) to Bull Street LM
- Victoria Jeff (a) to Bull Street LM

### Transfer Out:

- Helen Rowlands (COT) to Pickering & Hull AM

### Changes in Details:

- Phil Dahl email
- David Sargeant (BUL)
- Sean Beag (B&R)
- Lisa Small (B&R)
- Bal Saini (BUL)
- James Bradbury (STO)

**If there are any names on the nominations list that would not occur  
please contact Alison Ironside (Clerk this time)  
by 05<sup>th</sup> March or as soon as possible on  
☎ 0121 475 1179 or 📧 [clerks@centralenglandquakers.org.uk](mailto:clerks@centralenglandquakers.org.uk)**

## NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE SUGGESTS:

- To continue as an AM Trustee for 1 year in the first instance - Jill Stow (COT) from March 2021 - Feb 2022

Central England Quakers Area Office, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AF

☎ 0121 236 2644 Email [ceqam@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ceqam@quaker.org.uk) or [secretary@ceaqm.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ceaqm.org.uk)

Internet [www.centralenglandquakers.org.uk](http://www.centralenglandquakers.org.uk)

The Central England Area Quaker Meeting Charities: registered charity number 224571



# CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS AREA MEETING

- To serve on Clerks Advisory Committee - Sue Thompson (COT) from May 2021 - Apr 2024
- To serve Northfield Development Committee - Tina Helfrich (COT) from April 2021 - Mar 2024
- To serve on WMQPEP - Ruth Wilde (SEL) from Apr 2021 - Mar 2024
- To serve as Faith Adviser, Warwick University - Jane Cunningham (WAR) from March 2021 - Feb 2024
- To serve as Quaker Life Representative (alternate) Lin Sing-Barrington (SEL) March 2021 - Feb 2024
- To visit Sarah Jones (COT) - Esther Boyd (COT) Nicholas Tully (BOU)
- To attend QCEA Conference online May 20-22 2021 - Ruth Wilde (SEL) Clare Barnett (HAR)
- To serve on Clerks Advisory Committee Simon Best (COT) from April 21 to March 24

## RELEASE FROM SERVICE

Miriam Branson (STO) from Clerks Advisory Committee

David Fish (COV) Old Peoples Fund Trust

Rob Hooper (WAR) Faith Adviser at Warwick University

## NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE 2021

B&R	Judith	Chapman	N
BOU	Claire	Bowman	Co-Clerk
BOU	Anne	Giles	N
BOU	Donald	Stubbings	N
BUL	Barbara	Forbes	N
BUL	John	Kimberley	N
COT	Janet	Blann	Co-Clerk
COT	Peter	Ullathorne	N
COT	Simon	Best	N
COV	Andrew	Rigby	N
EXO	AM	Secretary	Ex-Officio
HAL	Ceilia	Morris	N
HAL	Joy	Aldworth	N
HAL	Ruth	Livermore	Co-Clerk
HAR	Claire	Barnett	D
KIN	David	Gough	N
SEL	Alison	Ironside	N
SEL	Vic	Grainger	N
SOL	Janet	White	N
STO	Rosalie	Rider	N
STO	Trish	Bradbury	N
SUT	Barbara	Cockcroft	N
WAL	Barbara	Groombridge	N
WAL	Jim	Green	N
WAR	John	Sheldon	N
WAR	Rob	Hooper	N

Central England Quakers Area Office, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AF

☎ 0121 236 2644 Email [ceqam@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ceqam@quaker.org.uk) or [secretary@ceaqm.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ceaqm.org.uk)

Internet [www.centralenglandquakers.org.uk](http://www.centralenglandquakers.org.uk)



**Memorial Minute to the Grace of God as shown in the life of**  
**Leslie Steed**  
**16.9.18 - 7.5.20**

Leslie lived a long life, always modest, calm and self-deprecating and very private about his faith which was the foundation for everything he was.

Leslie was born into a Staffordshire Quaker family attending Stafford Meeting and from age 10 he went to Ackworth Quaker school. His father was a practical man who advised that *'there's only one way to do the job, and that's the right way'*. Leslie followed this advice throughout his life, always offering practical help with minimal fuss, and he continued to advise the next generation when asked. *'I would get some sensible, down to earth and realistic advice'* said a young family member of him.

He worked in the gas industry all his life, but this was interrupted at the age of 20 by the outbreak of war, when he was in the first group to be called up. He made the unsurprising choice of becoming a conscientious objector and when interviewed by the Quaker Service Memorial Trust for their historical records he said *'there was no hard thinking at all, it was a natural thing [to do]'*, and he never regretted the decision as some others did years later. He served as an ambulance driver and mechanic with the Friends Ambulance Unit [FAU], working in North Africa and Italy.

He and his wife Irene moved to the Midlands, finally settling in a bungalow in Bournville which met Irene's needs after she developed MS. He was a faithful member of Bournville Meeting, serving as clerk in the 1960s, and his practical skills were invaluable as a long-standing member of the premises committee. He always knew how things worked and could explain and solve practical problems. He kept up with technological developments, using a computer and digital camera well into old age, and liked sharing his knowledge of the complicated aids he used for deteriorating sight. He also served on the committee of Oak Tree House, Quaker sheltered housing in Bournville, and in 1993 he and Irene moved there. His devotion to her needs during her years of illness was notable and his love for his daughter Sue and her family shone

through to the end. When the Covid 19 virus was taking a hold in the country in early 2020, the family decided that the only way to continue safely seeing him

was for him to move in with them in Newcastle-under-Lyme. He died a few months later with those he loved around him.

In the living memory of those who knew Leslie, a theme emerges. Leslie knew what interested him, and had little time for what did not. He was not a person to discuss his faith, and he was never heard to give ministry, though we have no direct knowledge of the first 60 years or so of his life. He was never known to attend any group sessions on spiritual matters or religious topics, but he attended Meeting for Worship regularly until his last few years when the building felt too cold for him. His Quaker approach to life was shown in all his actions and in his loving interest in the lives of others, and to the end of his stay in Oak Tree House he remained cheerful and helpful, helping to set up rooms, lay and clear tables, and doing a nightly round to

check that all was safe.

Leslie was consistent in all his dealings with people, and he maintained close friendships with people in the Meeting, and at Oak Tree House. There could be no-one who would disagree with these words said about him: *'he was the best friend you could ever have in terms of wisdom, practical support, loyalty, good sense, fun and being a good ear to bend'*.

We were sad not to celebrate and share his life in the usual way with his friends and family, due to the pandemic restrictions, but Bournville Friends held a memorial meeting via the internet and Oak Tree House tenants were also able to meet so that we could all give thanks for his life.

Anne Giles, Bournville Quaker Meeting

with support from Sue Rowley and Barbara Griffiths [Warden, Oak Tree House]



## Testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of Howard Boyd

Born 24-10-1943

Died 17-10-2019

When he was 19, Howard Boyd cycled on a racing tricycle to Egypt with two friends to see the Temple of Abu Simbel before it was to be submerged by the building of the Aswan Dam. His dedication to cycling had started in childhood and continued until close to the end of his life.

When he was 24, Howard met Esther Morland, a Quaker, on an archaeological dig. They were married in 1969 in Street Quaker Meeting House, and had three children, David, Stephen and Rachel. His devotion to his family was plain for all to see.

When he was 29, Howard was accepted into membership of the Religious Society of Friends, Warwickshire Monthly Meeting, and remained committed to the Society for the rest of his life.

These three pillars of Howard's life - family, the Society of Friends and cycling, illustrate the grace which shone through his life.

Howard was a loving, affectionate and reliable husband, father and grandfather. Unlike many 1970s Dads, Howard did the clothes washing, all the washing up and some of the shopping. He came home from work each day to be with the children; they recall him reading bedtime stories, not ashamed to show that some of the stories moved him to tears.

He loved his grandchildren and was proud to attend first his granddaughter's bat mitzvah, and, just a few months before his death, his elder grandson's bar mitzvah.

He was a quiet man with a dry sense of humour, and could at times be quietly ascerbic.

The family home in Moseley was an open house for the children's friends, some of whom needed temporary refuge, as well as a succession of house guests.

Howard had not had a religious upbringing. His father was a Marxist, a pacifist and a conscientious objector so Howard had heard of Quakers, but it was contact with Quakers through Esther which brought him in 1972 to membership of the Society. His commitment was shown by his service: as Clerk to Cotteridge Meeting; as a director of Priory Rooms, a Quaker conference centre in Birmingham; as a trustee of the Woodlands Quaker (Care) Home and on the Warwickshire Monthly Meeting Peace committee. Friends in his Local Meetings, first Edgbaston and later Cotteridge, recall Howard's reliability and steadfastness. He was self-effacing and did not seek to impress others, but got on with tasks that were needed - this extended to checking a Friend's wheelchair tyres before Meeting every Sunday! He was slow to speak - he ministered very seldom in Meeting for Worship, but added solidity to the Meeting by his presence. He was not keen on 'God language' and bridled at the word spiritual - he agreed with his father-in-law "We are one - we can't separate the spirit from the whole of life".

One of his work colleagues commented that Howard lived his Quaker values. For instance, Howard and Esther decided many years ago to live more simply by giving up their car, and travelled by bike or public transport from then on. The only time they needed help from friends with cars was to go to the recycling centre! A friend, Jill, writes: "In the days when they did own a car, Howard and Esther always gave me a lift home after Meeting, in the opposite direction from their home. They went out of their way to make me feel welcome when I started attending Edgbaston Meeting in 1974. When I went to the Soviet Union with Mothers for Peace in 1984, Howard, with characteristic generosity and kindness handed me his sheepskin coat, saying that in April in the Soviet Union I would need it"

Howard's deep and abiding interest in social justice manifested in his concern for refugees and asylum seekers. Howard and Esther's son David writes "Howard and Esther acted as guarantors for a Nigerian asylum seeker, who went on to become a human rights lawyer in New York, and who visited just before Howard's death to reaffirm his gratitude for what they had done for him. Perhaps their most remarkable friendship was with a Latvian called Oto who came to the UK as a prisoner of war and was then made stateless. Howard (and Esther) helped Oto through some desperate problems and dark times, and ultimately brought his ashes "home" to Riga for his funeral, and were honoured by his family".

Possibly because of his concern for refugees and asylum seekers he was asked by the Charity Commission to act as company secretary to the Midlands Refugee Council to try and sort out some irregularities. When the MRC had to be laid down, Howard said that telling the staff that they no longer had jobs was the worst thing he'd ever had to do.

Howard's integrity and honesty were clear, even extending to insisting on returning to a supermarket where he had just done the family shopping to pay for a cucumber which had been left off the receipt!

Part of God's grace is to follow your bliss - "If you do follow your bliss you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life you ought to be living is the one you are living"



(Joseph Campbell). "Bliss" is probably not a word that Howard would have used, but cycling was certainly a lifelong interest, not to say passion, and moreover an expression of the Quaker testimonies of simplicity and sustainability.

His first degree, at Cambridge, was in Archaeology and Anthropology, and after university he worked in IT, but his interest in cycling came to the fore when he worked for RoSPA (the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) as National Cycling Officer, where he was responsible for the development of the National Cycling Proficiency Scheme. Later he re-trained as a transport engineer and helped many local authorities develop their cycling strategies.

His work with so many local authorities gave Howard a very wide knowledge of cycling policies and projects throughout the country. This evidence base was used to great effect by the Cyclist's Touring Club (CTC) which campaigned and lobbied government to improve the conditions for cycling in this country. Roger Geffen, Policy Director of Cycling UK (CTC's new name) employed Howard once he had retired from fulltime work to give CTC an authoritative voice when in discussion with the Department for Transport. Howard's integrity was clear when discussing evidence and he did not hide inconvenient truths when presenting an argument to support the case to be made. His commitment and service to promoting cycling and cycle safety over so many years was recognised by CTC when he was awarded a certificate of merit by David Cox, chair of CTC, at a public meeting in Birmingham.

As Howard became ill he continued to cycle on a tricycle for a while, and then he and Esther set up a static tandem with a turbo trainer in their garage. With the help of family and friends, Howard could continue to cycle until nearly the end of his life.

In 2011 Howard was diagnosed with Dementia with Lewy Bodies (DLB), a degenerative brain disease causing Parkinson's syndrome and dementia. Howard endured his illness with characteristic grace, always remaining courteous and retaining his sense of humour despite troubling anxiety.

Howard died in hospital with all his family with him. His consultant geriatrician wrote to Esther "Howard was the best example of living well with dementia that I have encountered (and clearly you were a big part of that)." Esther's tender and loving care allowed the grace and courage needed for Howard to live well with this terrible disease.

His daughter Rachel writes "He spoke often of his gratitude: he thanked people who came to cycle with him on the tandem turbo trainer for prolonging his life. He thanked his carers for keeping him clean. He thanked Esther for delicious food. He told his children that they were wonderful". He said to Esther "I wish everyone was as kind as you". To be able to express gratitude and appreciation despite his dementia was another example of how clearly the light of the Spirit shone right up to the end of Howard's life.



## Quaker Christmas Parcels

### Treasurer's report for 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a big effect on this project, as it has on life in general. The situation in the summer was so uncertain that we decided to postpone a decision on our appeal until September. By then, it was clear that we would not be able to assemble a large group of Friends to pack the parcels, and that Sainsbury's would not have the spare capacity to deliver the chosen items. It was also unlikely that the probation services would have unpaid worker groups to collect groceries from Aldi or to deliver finished parcels.

But a couple of probation officers said that they felt that individual officers would be able to buy groceries for the few people that each one dealt with, spreading the problem out over a wider area. To reduce the risk of fraud, we proposed sending store-specific gift vouchers, rather than money. This was supported by the senior officers, who would distribute the vouchers to members of their team and obtain reports on how they had actually been used. The Quaker members of the committee decided that it was worth taking the risk of some misuse in order to help the greater number.

The appeal was made entirely online, and donations were almost all online, too. Pete Doubtfire added a donation button to our page on the AM website, and many of the gifts came that way.

Unsurprisingly, individual donations decreased in number and amount. Happily, giving by trusts held up, despite appeals being sent late or not at all; I was not as active on this matter as I should have been.

We decided to supply three £5 vouchers (ie £15 total value) to be used to purchase food for each parcel. In general, the experience of getting the vouchers was frustrating. The Co-op, for which we had high hopes, proved hopeless: their vouchers were lost in transit and arrived far too late. Sainsbury's and Aldi were better, Sainsbury's giving a small discount, Aldi quickly providing special blue 'non-alcoholic' vouchers. The other supermarkets were unresponsive or excessively bureaucratic. We also decided to supply some refugee and asylum-seeker groups as before, via our trusted Quaker contacts.

To pay for all this we needed to draw down our cash reserve somewhat. We did not sell any of our COIF ethical investment units. The income from them was stable, and the units rose in value.

I do not think it will necessary to reduce spending if the project continues in 2021.

My thanks go to Nicholas and Carole Ronan and to James Bradbury for taking on the task of obtaining the vouchers and transferring the appropriate allocation to each probation area office. We were able to obtain a batch of our own design of greeting card to be added to each parcel at less than 6p each.

We thank our donors for sustaining the project in difficult times, and I thank Peter Ullathorne for examining the accounts.

Because I was diagnosed with a progressive lung disorder last summer, I have asked to be released from the treasurer role. It has been extraordinarily rewarding to serve in this way and I'm grateful to AM and QCP committee for entrusting me with this responsibility.

I hope to be able to support our new treasurer, Mina Tilt, for a transition period. She will, I'm sure, be an able replacement. The functional email address [treasurer.qcp@gmail](mailto:treasurer.qcp@gmail.com) (new last year) will be transferred to her.

JMI 10 Feb 2021



Vouchers being bundled for delivery to the Probation Offices (NPS & CRC)



Seasons Greetings

Greeting card packed in each food parcel

*Local Quakers in the West Midlands area and Quaker trusts have given the money to pay for this food.*

*The probation services have helped by shopping for the food and getting it to you.*



### ***Clerk's comments on the experience of providing "parcels in a pandemic"***

Vouchers were delivered in bulk to 7 main Probation Offices (both NPS and CRSs), for further distribution to Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Walsall, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Coventry, Solihull and all of Birmingham. The individual Probation Officers were responsible for purchasing food items with the vouchers, and for delivering the food parcels to service users.

During a feedback zoom meeting we were told that the Officers were positive about the new arrangement, though it had provided them with challenges, including trying to buy large stocks of food in a pandemic when it looked suspiciously like stock piling! Others said how good it was to be able to tailor-make the parcel to suit the service user, including socks and pants for the children and hygiene products for the women. Different areas had found a variety of ways to use the vouchers, including a member of staff being delegated to bulk buy for the office.

We all agreed that if we are able to go back to packing food items this year at the Selly Oak Meeting House this would be welcome, as everyone is very comfortable about how the system works. However, if we have to revert to vouchers again there would be various ways we could improve on this option.

The Committee is very grateful to William Waddilove, Barbara Forbes and Alison Partridge who in the week immediately before Christmas volunteered to shop and distribute food and vouchers to those who have arrived in this country and have very little means of supporting themselves or their families. In the feedback from these Friends we understand that families from Albania, Congo, Algeria, Russia, Cameroun, El Salvador, Uganda, Ghana and Bangladesh had all received gifts from Quakers.

The Committee is hugely grateful for all the years John Ironside has served as our Treasurer, taking over from his father-in-law John Osborne. We are pleased he is, at least, staying on the Committee and glad that Mina Tilt has felt able to take on his role, to be assisted by Howard Saunders with the shopping.

#### **Committee members:**

Tricia Bradbury (Clerk) John Ironside (Treasurer) Philip O'Shea, Nicholas Ronan, Howard Saunders and Mina Tilt

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS  
Central England Area QM  
Quaker Christmas Parcels Appeal  
Accounts 2020

	2020		2019	
	Qty	£	Qty	£
<b>DONATIONS</b>				
Individuals	86	4,028 see note 1	126	6,484 see note 1
Tax recovery (current year GiftAided donations)		360		994
Quaker Trusts	3	6,500	9	6,930
CEA Quaker Meetings, special collections	1		5	506
Quaker meetings, outside CEA			2	440
<b>Total QMs collections, individuals and Q trusts</b>		<b>10,887</b>		<b>15,355</b>
<b>Total donations, exc grants transferred from CEA QMs</b>		<b>10,887</b>		<b>15,355</b>
CEA Quaker Meetings, grants from meeting funds	3	464	3	675
<b>TOTAL DONATIONS</b>		<b>11,351</b>		<b>16,030</b>
Bank interest		8		18
COIF units dividend		766		749
<b>Investment income</b>		<b>774</b>		<b>767</b>
<b>Other income</b>				
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>12,125</b>		<b>16,797</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Bank charges		60		60
Printing special greeting cards	1,000	56		46
<b>Admin costs</b>		<b>116</b>		<b>106</b>
Plastic bags (inc bag labels)				233
Distributions				
Supermarket £5 Food Vouchers to NPS/CRC, 7 groups	2,700	13,388	21,168	15,785
Cash to refugee/asylum seekers/homeless, 3 groups		1,100	2,112	1,356
<b>Total cost of food parcels</b>		<b>13,388</b>		<b>16,018</b>
<b>Cost per food parcel</b>			<b>1,008</b>	<b>15.89</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>14,604</b>		<b>17,480</b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>		<b>(2,478)</b>		<b>(684)</b>
Unrealised gain (loss) on investment		1,523		3,746
Realised gain (loss) on investment				
<b>INCREASE/DECREASE IN RESOURCES</b>		<b>(955)</b>		<b>3,062</b>
<b>OPENING FUNDS</b>		<b>33,132</b>		<b>30,070</b>
<b>CLOSING FUNDS</b>		<b>32,177</b>		<b>33,132</b>
<b>ASSETS CARRIED FORWARD</b>				
Bank cheque account (CAF)		56		116
Bank deposit account (CAF)		5,660		7,275
Cash at Bank		5,716		7,391
CCLA COIF units		25,735		24,212
		<b>31,451</b>		<b>31,603</b>
<b>Creditors - (QCP payment outstanding at year end)</b>		<b>(76)</b>		<b>(21)</b>
<b>Debtors - Donations not cleared at year end</b>		<b>445</b>		<b>527</b>
- GiftAid not yet recovered		360		1,025
		<b>(76)</b>		<b>1,531</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>32,180</b>		<b>33,135</b>

Note 1 : Included here from CEA schedule distributions

signed

John Ironside

**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 2020 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



**Minute from CEQ trustees** meeting 25 February 2021.

### **T2021.3C.1 Management of finances and property for Local Meetings**

The draft proposal was circulated to trustees before the meeting and some comments have been received. Clarification was needed for some details of the proposal and this was given. Minor amendments were made to the terms of reference. There are concerns about the relationship with the Friends continuing to use the building and section 1.8 in the terms of reference was referred to.

The finance committee discussed the model and are content with the financial arrangements.

This is an interim proposal, and we are aware that the area meeting will change in the next year and hopefully Priory Rooms will return to their normal business. This arrangement will be monitored routinely by trustees and the arrangement will be reviewed after one year. We approve the proposal and will advise Area Meeting.

Trustees can now appoint members of the CEQ Meeting House Management Group, and we appoint James Bradbury, Bob Morris and Clare Peat and ask them to find other Friends with an interest in property management to join them. We agree to appoint new members by email between meetings. Andrew Callan and Wendy Wolfendale will attend meetings ex officio.

Judith Jenner, clerk.

#### **The proposal included the following points.**

At the Area Meeting in January 2021 Barnt Green & Redditch and Kings Heath LMs asked for help with their property and finances and trustees were asked to respond. Since then, the property and finance service committees have considered how these smaller meetings can be supported centrally and the governance and compliance committee considered where this new development would sit in our present area meeting structures.

The area meeting will be considering the future arrangements for smaller meetings unable to find Friends to take on the responsibilities of property and finance until any decisions are made for the way forward trustees have considered how to manage these now. This will be an interim measure.

#### **Finances**

The management of the finances is relatively easy and Wendy Wolfendale is willing to increase her hours and set up and manage one central account with sub funds for each of the properties.

- 1 A new bank account will be opened to hold the LM funds. This account will be administered by Wendy Wolfendale, with Trustee signatories.
- 2 Wendy can set up the cash book using Sage and each of the properties will have a designated fund with all receipts and payments allocated to the appropriate fund.
- 3 The LM fund will be a centrally managed fund, included in the quarterly management accounts presented to finance committee and Trustees.

- 4 The funds of the participating LMs will be transferred to the new account. Once all DDs and SOs etc have been transferred to the new account the current LM bank accounts would be closed.
- 5 The LM fund will receive donations earmarked for designated sub-funds, receive room hire income, and will be used to pay utility, repairs and maintenance, insurance and other property expenses including professional staff costs.
- 6 Any LM investments would come under the care of Trustees, and they will be allocated to the individual designated funds.

The receipt and disbursement of funds from the designated funds will be controlled by the structure in place for managing the properties and lettings. Wendy would implement instructions, and these will require a formal Payment Request Process so that she can be reassured that all expenditure requests are approved.

### **Property**

The management of the property will be undertaken by Priory Rooms staff as part of CEQ's service agreement. A work schedule has been agreed with Andrew and this will be kept under review by the clerks to trustees and Priory Rooms directors.

### **Management**

Trustees recognise that the care of the property will need more oversight than the financial activities and propose that the trustees' property committee will include the new management group in its duties. The committee changed its way of working a few years ago and small working groups take responsibility for the different areas of work. This new group would comfortably fit into this structure. It will be responsible for setting a budget and receiving the quarterly reports.

Currently the property committee receive the minutes of the Bull Street Premises Group and oversee their budget. The trustees appoint friends representing the different groups using the Bull Street premises to the BSPG. Trustees will appoint members of this the new group.

The finance committee will also receive these as it will be a centrally managed fund. The day to day management of the finance administrator will remain with the treasurer to trustees.

Trustees are challenged to set up a new way of working and realise that this system will not be perfect, but this is an interim proposal and will be carefully monitored by trustees.

Terms of reference for the CEQ Meeting House Management Group have been agreed by trustees.

Judith Jenner



## **Minute From Northfield Development Committee**

### **2021.3**

#### **Quinquennial**

The most recent QR highlights the lack of knowledge and expertise in managing and maintaining the building to the current standards required. We therefore ask for support from AM trustees in having this managed professionally.

We would like to retain a Quaker presence in the local area, and to hold events to do this in the meeting house, as well as supporting the Quaker Preschool.

We recognise that Cotteridge Elders are currently struggling with numbers, but we ask if they are able to support a monthly MfW on zoom for Northfield, and in person when possible.

We ask the clerk to send this minute to the Area meeting clerk.

#### **Minute from:**

#### **Central England Quakers Clerk's Advisory Committee**

#### **Meeting to discern how Area Meeting may take the concept of Simpler Meetings forward**

**9/2/2021**

2021:02 At Area Meeting on 16 January we heard that Kings Heath and Barnt Green and Redditch Meetings wish to relinquish responsibility for their premises and finances and become worshipping groups.

Trustees are in the process of organising the management of these Meeting Houses, but AM has suggested that we take a wider look at how to simplify our procedures and structures and premises and finances to support small struggling Meetings (Area Meeting minute 2021.007 refers. Britain Yearly Meeting's Simpler Meetings project also refers).

Today the Clerks' Advisory committee met in response to AM's request: "We think it worth exploring the concept of simpler meetings and ask our clerks and the Clerk's Advisory committee to consider how we may take this forward."

We have discussed this at length and in depth and realise that we are all working hard in our Local Meetings to support each other as worshipping communities during the pandemic. We suggest that AM comes back to a consideration of how to reorganise when we feel more able to do so. We feel that a threshing meeting with this one focus could then be held when possible.

We are pleased to welcome Robert Sprake and Anna Edelsten to CJG, as well as Arthur Lockett as an observer.

Three members of the group were able to attend the Quakers in Criminal Justice Conference at Woodbrooke from 28 February – 1 March 2020 and found great benefit in meeting other Friends from around Britain interested in criminal justice. Our own local Journeymen Theatre performed “Lockdown” on the Saturday evening.

Shortly afterwards, due to the COVID pandemic, the government imposed a lock-down that forced the Priory Rooms to close and our planned open evening (on 18 March 2020) for the Alternatives to Violence Project could not take place. There were a number of agencies and interested Friends who had applied to attend the event and the Clerk, together with Priory Rooms staff, worked hard to try and contact everyone about the postponement. Only one person turned up at Bull Street on the evening and Andrew Callan who was in attendance explained the position. Now one year on the country is still in lockdown and no time has yet been set to re-open the Priory Rooms for conferences. Therefore, sadly this event has to be put ‘on hold’ for the time being. Our CJG meeting planned for 19 April 2020 was also cancelled.

We held a CJG meeting on Friday 19 February 2021, on zoom, (our previous meeting having been on 21 January 2020) to touch base with all the members, and Friends had submitted reports to the clerk regarding their activities. A document was circulated prior to the meeting and there was a full and frank discussion of current issues faced in light of the pandemic. Several virtual meetings had been attended on line and Friends were adapting ways of working in their roles to accommodate the new environment.

The Clerk drew the attention of the group to the latest Howard League for Penal Reform news bulletin, that she receives by email, which asked for support to write to MPs about the government’s plans to build 500 more prison places for women. There was a carefully worded letter suggested by Frances Crook (from HL) and it was agreed that we would all contact our local MPs using the template and the clerk will write on behalf of CJG.

Judith Chapman (who joined us via FaceTime from her hospital bed in Worcester) was warmly thanked for her many years as Treasurer for CJG – 2011-2021. It was always her intention to retire as Treasurer at the end of 2020, and we were pleased to appoint Howard Saunders as our new Treasurer.

**CJG members :** Tricia Bradbury (Clerk) Claire Bowman, Judith Chapman (Treasurer 2020) Anna Edelsten, Peter Fishpool, Roderick Keefe, John Sheldon, Howard Saunders (Treasurer 2021), Robert Sprake, William Waddilove, Arthur Lockett as an observer.



**Central England Area Quaker Meeting**  
**Community Justice Group**  
**Financial Statement 2020 (1st January 2020 - 31 December 2020)**

		2020 £	2019 £
<b>Opening balance</b>	Balances brought forward	<b>4,136.59</b>	<b>6,358.01</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	CEQ Contribution schedule	676.25	768.75
	<b>Total income 2020</b>	<b>676.25</b>	<b>768.75</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	Conference fees and travel	550.00	220.00
	Items for prisoners/chaplaincy expenses	57.97	15.
	Payment to Lucy Faithfull (Circles)	386.00	2524.63
	Expenses for events run by CJG	52.50	0.00
	Refreshments for CJG meetings	25.20	75.24
	Subscriptions paid	<u>105.00</u>	<u>155.00</u>
	<b>Total expenditure 2020</b>	<b>£1,176.67</b>	<b>2,990.17</b>
<b>Excess/Deficit of income over expenditure</b>		<b>(500.42)</b>	<b>(2,221.42)</b>
<b>Balance brought forward 31/12/19</b>		<b>£4,136.59</b>	<b>6,358.01</b>
<b>Balance carried forward 31/12/20</b>		<b>£3,636.17</b>	<b>£4,136.59</b>

**BALANCE SHEET**

**CJG Current Account**

<b>Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2020 in bank</b>	<b>£3,671.17</b>
<b>Less Cheque 264 nyp</b>	<b><u>-£35.00</u></b>
<b>Reconciled balance</b>	<b>£3,636.17</b>

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Judith Chapman - Treasurer

Signed James Bradbury

James Bradbury - Examiner

Date February 2021

## **Report from the Area Meeting Nominations Committee 2020**

During 2020 Nominations Committee has, as most other Quaker committees, met mainly on Zoom. This has had advantages with nearly all Local Meetings having been represented at most of our meetings, and there was the added advantage of not having to travel into the City centre in rush hour.

We have brought forward the names of many Friends and Attenders throughout the year, to serve on a variety of committees, attend conferences, make visits to those applying for membership of the Society and to those who have recently become parents - many of these visits also taking place on Zoom this year. We are very grateful for those who have agreed to serve in all capacities. In June, we were glad to welcome Ruth Livermore (KIN) as a third co-clerk to Nominations Committee.

It has sometimes been difficult to find people willing to serve on committees as it is not simply a matter of finding "someone to do the job." We have recently realised in our search for Co-clerks for the Area Meeting, that perhaps we were asking the wrong question and that at this time it is more appropriate to have a Clerk and two Assistant Clerks – positions we have now managed to fill until December 2021. We expect to revisit this arrangement at a later date, to see if it still the best option. We ask committees to be mindful of their need for purpose and what is required of its members. We all have a responsibility to the Society for its wellbeing, and many of us live busy lives. Appointments usually have a fixed term of service and this opens up opportunities for Friends to serve in a variety of ways.

We do rely on representatives from Local Meetings attending our Nominations Committee meetings and bringing with them knowledge of the Friends in their own Meetings. It is not always easy to ascertain the "hidden talents" and interests of Friends. The agenda is sent out in advance so that representatives have a chance to let local Friends know what opportunities are coming up. If your Meeting is unable to send a representative, the agenda is sent to the local correspondent and information can be shared by them, any suggestions for nominations may then be sent to the Clerks.

We are aware that some Local Meetings have difficulty finding Friends to do all the jobs required locally and the additional demands of finding Friends to serve the Area Meeting as well can prove difficult as we all try to balance work, family and friends as well as Quaker commitments.

It is helpful to hear from Friends if they have interests in a particular area. It has been especially difficult to find Friends to serve on the Woodlands Management Committee and continue to try to find Friends willing and suitable to be appointed. The Woodlands Committee have begun a new approach whereby new recruits will be co-opted for a year initially before being formally appointed, in the hopes of attracting new members.

Please use the Annual Review for 2020 to let Friends know what is happening in the Area Meeting and encourage them to become involved. We look forward to being able to meet again in person and the prospect of holding an Area Meeting Open Day at Woodbrooke again, as this was very useful in informing Friends about the work of the various committees and how they could serve the Area Meeting.

**Co-clerks: Janet Blann, Claire Bowman, Ruth Livermore**



# Meeting for Sufferings Report

Meeting held by zoom video-conferencing on

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## Main items on the agenda:

- Review of Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group;
- Trends in membership;
- Minute from Area Meetings;
- BYM trustees;
- Minutes from Central Committees;
- How the truth prospers in our meetings.

Follow the link to find all the reports and papers of the meeting:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes>

Meeting for Sufferings was attended today by over 100 Friends. We began with a period of worship, during which Quaker faith and Practice 11.08 was read to us.

## Review of the Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group

The role of the Arrangements Group is one of service to the meeting. It works to facilitate and simplify the work of Meeting for Sufferings. It's main duty is the discernment of recommendations for the annual calendar and agenda for Meeting for Sufferings. The review group was tasked with conducting a scheduled review of the terms of reference, and a consideration of the continuation of the group.

The conclusion and recommendations were that the Arrangements group should continue with slightly amended terms of reference; that clear induction, and ongoing learning and development is provided at the start of each triennium; that the group shares its forward thinking more widely; and a recommendation (slightly beyond the remit of the review group) that MfS itself should take some time to explore its understanding of concern, the nature of corporate spiritual leadings, and how these can best be tested, so as to help shape the work of yearly meeting.

The report was accepted by MfS but with a note to the Arrangements Group that the matter of communication should 'soon' return to the MfS agenda.

## Trends in membership

Paul Parker, recording clerk, presented this report on the membership of Quakers in Britain. The data gave a picture to the end of 2019. We have membership data back to 1860, and saw from the presentation that membership peaked in about 1965 at about 20,000; by the end of 2019 we record 12,000 members. These are the interesting facts and figures:

- Around a third of our Local Meetings have 20 or fewer members;
- Very few large meetings (50+ members) have shown growth;
- Around a quarter of LMs have shown significant growth over the last ten years;
- Not many LMs have closed in the last ten years;
- People involved in the governance of the Society of Friends tend to come from the larger meetings;
- The number of office holders currently needed is staggering – eg 1 in 20 Friends needs to be a treasurer!
- We own an awful lot of property, which often weighs us down!



We were encouraged to simplify, declutter and let go! There is much to be hopeful about; quality not size is important.

### **Minutes form Area Meetings**

A minute from South Wales Area Meeting was recorded – they agreed to donate their AM unspent training and education budget for 2020 to Woodbrooke after learning that Woodbrooke is in 'deep financial crisis' as a result of coronavirus. They encourage other meetings to identify a correspondent who can raise the profile of Woodbrooke and encourage friends to attend the online courses, and to make donations.

Minutes from Surrey and Hampshire Border AM and from Luton and Leighton AM concerned assisted dying. This matter will come to a future meeting. We were also sent a set of minutes from several Area Meetings on the subject.

### **Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees**

Caroline Nursey, clerk to trustees spoke to us though trustees have not met since the last Meeting for Sufferings.

Our attention was drawn to the impressive amount of work the staff are doing during a pandemic. Friends House has been closed for almost a year; this has had a significant effect on our income. Staff are variously working from home, furloughed, or furloughed for part of the week; and 35 members of staff have accepted voluntary redundancy – most of these from the Quiet Company.

Several Friends expressed concern that trustees are making decisions which MfS has not had the opportunity to consider. In theory the trustees are responsible for the Charity and MfS is responsible for the 'Church', but it is not quite so simple – we will be returning to the matter of discerning the vision for Quakers in Britain at a future meeting.

### **Minute from Central Nominations Committee**

**'We request that Meeting for Sufferings considers the issue....allowing....more freedom to nominate attenders in good standing to central committees and other roles.'**

As Meeting for Sufferings is a body of members of the Society of Friends it is not surprising that this matter provoked a lot of ministry. A Friend began by expressing his feeling of being very troubled by the proposal, suggesting that without membership there is no Society of Friends; and encouraging, even pleading that Area Meetings look at membership and do something about it!

A review committee is to be appointed.

### **How the truth prospers in our meetings**

- **What has been the effect of coronavirus on Worship, community, Outreach?**
- **How might our Meetings be in the future?**
- **How can Friends support one another?**

This was the last item on the agenda and a good forty minutes was given for it, enabling many of us to contribute. Essentially, we all said very similar things:

Either or both: zoom has been transformative in difficult times; or spirituality has been lost for me/us/our MfW.

For the Meetings and groups who have embraced zoom there has been an expansion often of Quaker activity with contact being made or re-established from Friends in difficult circumstances, Friends living away from their home meetings, visitors from other Yearly Meetings. For some of us worship has deepened, for others it has fizzled. Meetings have continued and expanded their children and young people's work, many friends have worked hard to make this happen; all sorts of Quaker activities and events have transferred to online effectively.

There are Local Meetings which have chosen not to go online but continue to 'meet in the spirit' at the usual time every Sunday in their own homes. Much effort and work has gone on everywhere to keep telephone or email or real letters and cards contact with friends in the meeting.

Tech support has been an issue for many.



The last Friend who spoke of a vision for the future said he looked forward to the day when all our Meeting Houses have professionally installed tech equipment of high quality and it is normal and ordinary to hold blended meetings for worship . It seemed a good place to finish.

Cathy Khurana

CEQ Representative on Meeting for Sufferings

(many activities transferred to online events)