

**CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS
MEETING FOR CHURCH AFFAIRS
by ZOOM April 2021
on 22.04.2021 at 18.00 hrs**

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

Agenda

1. Opening Worship
2. Representatives
3. Membership Matters
4. Accomplishment of Marriage
5. Memorial Minutes
6. Report from Old Peoples Fund Trust and draft Memorandum of Understanding
7. Minutes Received:
 - a) from Kings Heath LM
 - b) from Selly Oak LM
 - c) from Peace Committee
8. Birmingham Churches Together: Anti-Racism Charter
9. Trustees Report
10. Es / Os Triennial Nominations Committee Appointments
11. Nominations and Appointments

CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS AREA MEETING

Record Sheet 04-2021

DUTY ELDERS:

Cathy Khurana and Fiona Waterhouse (SUT)

DEATH

Sheila Wilde (SOL) 23rd October 2020 aged 90

Heather Le Dieu (BOU) died on 28th March 2021 aged 80.

Anne Peasgood (SOL*) 29th December 2020 aged 88

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF MARRIAGE

Rhiannon Emma Louise Grant (BOU) a member of Central England Area Meeting and Piangan Naksukpaiboon (Angela) not in membership was solemnised at Bournville Quaker Meeting House/place on Saturday, 10th April 2021.

MEMBERSHIP:

Accepted Out:

Helen Rowlands (COT) by Pickering and Hull Area Meeting

Transfer Out:

Gill and David Grimshaw (WAR) to Banbury and Evesham Area Meeting

Journey Into Membership:

- Sarah Jones (COT)

Changes in Details:

- Gill and David Grimshaw (WAR).
- Doreen Daw (BOU)
- Edward Creasy (WAR)
- Bill and Joy Evans (WAR)
- Dorothy Parry (WAR)

**If there are any names on the nominations list that would not occur
please contact Alison Ironside (Clerk this time)**

by 21st April or as soon as possible on

☎ 0121 475 1179 or ✉ clerks@centralenglandquakers.org.uk

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE SUGGESTS:

Will follow as soon as possible

RELEASE FROM SERVICE

- Kris Turner (WAR) from AM Property Committee
- Bob Jeays (SAM) as a Trustee/Director of the Woodlands from the end of April 2021.
- Fiona Waterhouse (SUT) as an Area Meeting Trustee
- Simon Best (COT) from AM Nominations Committee

CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS AREA MEETING

TRIENNIAL NOMINATIONS REPRESENTATIVES

Hall Green Rep - Mina Tilt alternative - Judith Millington

Hartshill Rep – Clare Barnett alternate - Paul Hewitt

Selly Oak: Rep - Nessa Grimes; alternate - Barnaby Waters

Walsall: Rep - Barbara Groombridge; alternate - Jim Green

(Awaiting nominations from other local meetings)

Area Meeting is reminded that when asking Nominations Committee to bring forward the names of Friends to serve Area Meeting the following information should be given in writing:

1. The details of the work to be undertaken
2. Length of the appointment
3. Frequency, times and the location of the meetings.
4. Any other relevant information

Nominations committee meets in the week following Area Meeting

**ALL CONVENORS OF COMMITTEES ARE ASKED TO CONFIRM APPOINTMENTS
WITH NEW MEMBERS AND GIVE THEM THE DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS**

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

☎ 0121 236 2644 Email ceqam@quaker.org.uk or secretary@ceaqm.org.uk

Internet www.centralenglandquakers.org.uk

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

Memorial Minute for Lizzie Lloyd Philipps 1932 -2020

Elizabeth Jean Nathan was born in Sible Hedingham, Essex on 25th August 1932 from a long line of non-conformists. She spent her first seven years on her parents' small poultry farm, but the onset of World War II saw Lizzie and her older sister, Myrtle, being sent to live with their grandparents in Swanage, Dorset and subsequently to Monkton Wyld, a progressive boarding school near Axminster. Their parents moved to Hills Farm, Axminster, and Lizzie stopped boarding at Monkton Wyld, eventually going to Shaftesbury County High School for Girls, where she later became Head Girl.

Lizzie was working as a Library Assistant in Epsom when she met Simon in the Epsom Congregational Church choir. They married in 1958, living first in Oxford and then in Shenfield, Essex, where Martha was born in 1960, followed by Rachel in 1961. They became members of Brentwood Meeting at this time. Simon's work took them to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania from 1963 until 1965, and during this time Daniel was born (1965). They returned to Essex at the end of that year, and moved to Bristol in November 1967 where Lizzie and Simon settled, playing a full and active part in the life of Horfield Meeting. This was a difficult time in Lizzie's life. Her mother died suddenly in 1969 and she spent the next few years caring for her father who came to Bristol to live with the family. In 1973 her marriage with Simon ended and Lizzie experienced for herself what it was like to be a divorced, single parent. Although she experienced much kindness from her Meeting, she felt that they could have no idea of how isolating the experience was and how different she felt. Nor did she feel entirely at home with other single parents because she had supportive friends and an allowance which made her financially secure; something many others in her position lacked.

In 1979 she married Dafydd, an artist and teacher, but after 17 years this marriage ended and Lizzie became Warden at Bradford-on-Avon Meeting House. She started writing poetry again, joining the Dandelion Poets group and going to writing courses and workshops. Lizzie always loved to read and write, and could recite appropriate lines of poetry, mid-conversation. Her daughter, Martha, writes 'She seemed to have the complete works of Wordsworth and Shakespeare – and more – to draw from, and often delighted friends and family by reciting lines, even into the final months of her life, when her memory for most other things was failing.'

Lizzie was at the heart of the Meeting, living in the flat above the Meeting House and lovingly tending the garden. She was a warm, friendly and hospitable person, who loved making and keeping friends. She had a great sense of fun and participated enthusiastically in the life of the Quaker Meeting (and in every Quaker Meeting where she lived) and her love of flowers led to her providing beautiful arrangements for the Meetings to which she belonged.

Hazel Jones of Bradford on Avon Meeting writes 'I always thought she was a good example of what a Quaker should be, and she was an ideal person for the role of Warden.'

Lizzie joined Walsall Meeting in 2001, having moved there to live near Rachel and Elle. She is still remembered as an enthusiastic and caring Member and for befriending two families of asylum seekers.

She cared deeply about people who were marginalised; people who felt shut out from the rest of society. Lizzie herself wrote with typical humility 'I have always felt that I had inherited a predisposition to be concerned about people, especially those less fortunate than me, or in any way in difficult circumstances. I can't say I have been strikingly active in this but the concern has always remained.' It so happened that Lizzie arrived in Walsall at a time when there was a steady stream of people coming to the UK to seek asylum and she befriended two families for whom she felt a sense of kinship due to her own experience of feeling estranged. She wrote: 'Befriending two

families, one from Kosovo and one from Angola, has been a privilege, an enriching experience. Their courage and fortitude has been inspiring, especially in the face of the Home Office's treatment of - and the tabloid press's general hostility towards - those who have fled here for sanctuary.'

Lizzie was also concerned about prisons and prison visiting. When a friend of her family was sentenced she was present in Court and was shattered by the verdict as 'it seemed such a wholly wrong way to treat him, or indeed anyone.' It was after this that she took up writing to prisoners.

She felt that the Society of Friends lacked sufficient experience of what it was like to be disadvantaged to be truly welcoming and accepting, in contrast to early Friends who experienced dreadful suffering and unspeakable conditions in prison and who could therefore relate on a deep level to those around them who lived on the margins of society. She was mindful of the life changing experiences of George Fox, James Naylor and John Woolman and she took comfort from the way Woolman 'became a beacon of love, steadfastness, honesty and truthfulness, and yet he never antagonised other people, because he 'knew where they were coming from' as we might say nowadays.'

In 2007 Lizzie moved to live in Selly Oak, where she enjoyed belonging to Selly Oak Meeting, going to courses at Woodbrooke and being with her friends. Not long after this move, she wrote a brief summary of her life called 'My Life and Concerns' from which the quotations in this testimony have been taken, as a way of helping local Friends get to know her. During her final years Lizzie showed courage and a determination to make the most of life, despite being physically infirm and losing her memory. She continued to write poetry, received a regular supply of books from the Library, and maintained a lively interest in her friends and family who were supporting her, alongside Blessing, her Carer.

Even in hospital after a fall a few months before she died, she was cheerful and interested in the other patients in the Ward. Referring to a lonely and sad looking woman in the bed opposite her, she told one of her visitors, her eyes twinkling, 'I have made it my mission to help her to smile!' There could be no more fitting epitaph for Lizzie. She died peacefully.

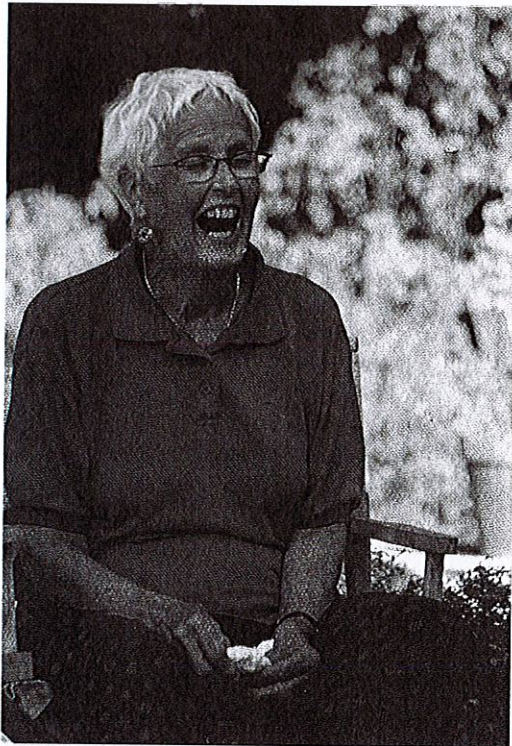
David Pulford and Gay Pilgrim
Selly Oak Quaker Meeting

Memorial minute to the grace of God as shown in the life of

Elizabeth Collins 23rd August 1931 – 11th July 2020

Elizabeth Collins grew up in Leamington Spa. She was a practising Anglican in her early life, but later found her spiritual home with the Quakers, becoming a well-loved member of Warwick Meeting.

Elizabeth had a twin brother and two sisters. She attended Leamington Spa Girls' College, and after she left worked in the Inland Revenue office and then in the Post Office. She married Bern in 1953, and they had two children, Deborah and Paul, and some years later a surprise baby, Tim, was born. Tragically, Tim was killed in a motor accident at the age of 21. Tim's death had a huge impact on her. She spoke of him often and felt his presence throughout her life. She was thankful for the time they had together, which she felt was a real blessing. Unfortunately, the strain of losing a child was too much for the marriage, and Elizabeth and Bern parted, although they stayed in close touch until his death and her love for him never died.



After Tim's death Elizabeth felt led to look for a different spiritual path. She found it first in Sufi meetings, but soon found her way to Warwick Quaker Meeting. She served as an Elder and an Overseer. These offices she undertook with a very strong commitment, influenced always by her empathic approach to relationships and a deep spirituality. For many years she organised the Quaker presence in the Chaplaincy at Warwick University, always arriving early so that she could have a short supportive talk with first arrivals. Elizabeth was also involved with Quaker outreach, serving faithfully as a volunteer with our Community Cafe for many years. In addition to faith related concerns, she enthusiastically attended several courses, some held in the Meeting House, in creative writing, art and yoga, and she loved knitting. Another outcome of Tim's death was that

Elizabeth trained as a counsellor. Her work as a counsellor was to become central to Elizabeth's life. She was "person-centred" in her life as well as her work – and also as a Quaker. She was very empathic, whilst also being, as many Quakers are, often very direct. Initially, she trained with Cruse, a charity which provides counselling for bereaved people, and worked as a volunteer for them for 25 years. She did great work for them. When her daughter Debbie helped to set up a complementary therapy practice in Leamington, she became its manager. To progress her counselling career, which she was passionate about, she undertook further training, first at Solihull College, encouraged by a faithful friend, and then at the University of Warwick. She then set up a person-centred private counselling practice, and eventually became a clinical supervisor for other counsellors, which was very much appreciated. She also worked as a volunteer for the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

All of Elizabeth's family were important to her: her daughter Debbie, with whom she shared her Counselling concerns, her son Paul, who kept very much in touch after he moved to France, and her niece Kath who helped to support her when she became frail; also her grandchildren (to whom she became "Supergran"), nieces and nephew, some in the UK others in New Zealand and Canada.

Elizabeth lived for many years in her Leamington home with her beloved (and fierce) cat "Rocky". In 2016 her health made it necessary for her to move into Care, and she was well looked after at Adelaide House in Leamington. When visitors came to see her, she always said in her gracious way that she was happy and fortunate to be there. She remained a beloved member of Warwick Meeting, which she attended as she could until she became too frail to do so.

To family, friends and colleagues Elizabeth left a legacy of love. She will be remembered by Warwick Friends for her considerable contribution to the life of the Meeting, for her grace, gentle humour and her spiritual presence.

Marilyn Biles, and Rob Hooper

(Ref: Minute 21/11 of Warwick Business Meeting)

Report of the clerk of the Central England Quaker Old Peoples Fund Trust

6th April 2021

11th August 1952 Warwickshire Monthly Meeting established a bare trust, the 'Warwickshire monthly Meeting Old Peoples Fund Trust'. The objects of the trust were established as:

The trustees shall hold the trust fund upon trust to apply the same both capital and income for charitable purposes having a preference for such charitable purposes as are for the benefit of the aged and in particular of the aged who are members of the Society of Friends within the Warwickshire Monthly Meeting of that society...

The trustees may in furtherance of the primary trust but not otherwise acquire any premises to be used as a home for old people and carry on the same support any existing homes for old people and make grants to any aged persons who may be in need.

A trustee shall cease to hold office...if he ceases to be a member of the Society of Friends or of the Monthly Meeting.

Any monies forming part of the trust fund which shall not immediately be required for the purposes hereof may be invested by the trustees...

27th April 1964 the trust entered into a lease for Oak Tree House, Oak Tree lane, Bournville that expires end of September 2062.

11th November 2009, the trust deed was amended:

The name of the trust changed to the Central England Quaker Old peoples Fund Trust....Any new or additional trustees shall be appointed by Central England Quaker Area Meeting and for a term of up to 6 years.

From 1964 to today the main activity of the trust has been the provision of a home for the aged at Oak Tree House. (In the 1970-1990s the OPFT used to give grants to The Woodlands and to Selly Wood House and possibly to other elderly people and Quaker projects). The charity has throughout this time performed well, maintaining a friendly, safe and well provisioned home much loved by the tenants, some of whom have lived happily there for many years and some to end of life.

In 2020 the current trustees reflected on the role of trustees over the successful history of Oak Tree House and whilst comforted by the past achievements of the trust they recognised that significant changes had taken place in the area of regulation, standards and compliance in housing and food provision and expectations in the social provision for later life over the long lifetime of Oak Tree House, both in the home itself and in consideration of integration with wider social provision (especially in care services).

26th May 2020 OPFT Trustees at a general meeting agreed:

We ask our clerk and deputy warden to work with the help of Anne and Peter Ullathorne to produce a report to our next meeting styled Oak Tree House – A Governance and Operations

Review. The report should indicate, explain, and detail possible ways ahead for Oak Tree House and facilitate trustees to decide in August their future plans. (2020.12)

July 2020 the working group reported back to trustees that they had undertaken a comprehensive desk top study to better understand the needs of Oak Tree House and the benefits and disbenefits of a range of possible options for the future of the house (including 'extra care', 'regulated social housing', 'sheltered housing', 'alms house', 'partnerships and 'agency provision':

We seek to find a way ahead for Oak Tree House that (our objectives):

- Secures an affordable and sustainable long-term home for our tenants, and a safe and rewarding environment for staff.
- Provides a homely environment in a community context, that empowers tenants independent living, (recognising that individual needs change over time).
- Enables tenants to maintain and also improve, the current services they enjoy.
- Positions the house favourably within, and increases beneficial opportunities to share with, the local community.
- Ensures that Oak Tree House has open access to sources of helps and support in times of need (e.g. pandemic)
- Recognises and is open to sectoral reforms and standards. (These have been developing rapidly over the last few years and are likely to both widen and deepen in the near future).

The working group was then asked to engage in confidence with other providers in the local community to determine how best to achieve the objectives and to identify opportunities for working with others.

In October 2020 the working group reported back to trustees that they had considered discussions with a wide range of local providers and had then engaged in comprehensive discussions with four local providers. These discussions identified Sir Josiah Mason Trust as a likely and good candidate to pursue the objectives by working together. The working group recommended:

Engage in trust to trust discussions with SJMT immediately. Such discussion should be about how SJMT and OTH can work together, and talks would be explorative in nature.

In January 2021 the working group facilitated a trust to trust meeting between the trustees of OPFT and SJMT to discuss a paper offered by SJMT setting out their vision for Oak Tree House. The OPFT trust minuted:

We welcome the paper, and share much of its vision and wish to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with SJMT which will accomplish this:

We instruct our clerk to work with our legal counsel Shivaji Shiva of VWV to work with SJMT legal counsel in the drafting of the MOU between OPFT and SJMT and bring a draft to us for our consideration.

We note the appointment of Emma Macpherson as Transition Manager and ask her and our clerk to work with David Healey, CEO of SJMT to prepare for a smooth transition of OPFT operations at Oak Tree House from the current Quaker trustees to SJMT as corporate trustee during 2021 working within the scope of the MOU.

At a special meeting of OPFT trustees 1st April 2021 we accepted the MOU and minuted our desire to enter into it. We agreed:

- To advise tenants, staff and other stakeholders of our wish to enter into and implement the MOU.
- To ask if CEQ is content to relinquish Quaker trusteeship of OPFT in favour of SJMT as sole corporate trustee. CEQ AM will thereafter cease to nominate trustees to OPFT and also recognise that it would no longer be a condition that a trustee of OPFT must be a member of the Society of Friends.
- To ask CEQ to recognise that the retiring Quaker trustees will form a Quaker Advisory Committee to Oak Tree House and that the Quaker Advisory Committee welcomes nominations to serve as Committee members from CEQ Area meeting.

Mindful of the long tradition of Quaker involvement at Oak Tree House, retiring OPFT Quaker Trustees have sought to ensure that the Quaker ethos at Oak Tree House endures and that Quakers will continue to contribute actively to the life of the home. We believe that this is best achieved if SJMT become corporate trustee as set out in the MOU and in the paper 'Our Vision for Oak Tree House' and the current Quaker trustees form a new Quaker Advisory Committee.

Kelvin Beer-Jones, Clerk Central England Quaker Old Peoples Fund Trust

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

(1) Sir Josiah Mason Trust— a company limited by guarantee (number 11416213), and registered charity (number 1179890) registered in England and Wales, whose registered office is at: Mason Court, Hillborough Road, Olton, Solihull, West Midlands, B27 6PF (**SJMT**), and

(2) The individuals named in Schedule 1 as trustees of Central England Quaker Old People's Fund Trust - an unincorporated charitable trust registered as a charity in England and Wales (number 245977), whose registered office is at: Oak Tree House, 153 Oak Tree Lane, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 1TU (**CEQOPFT**).

1 BASIS

This memorandum of understanding (**MoU**) between SJMT and CEQOPFT has been drawn up to:

- Create a basis for mutual collaboration.
- Outline a 12 month transition period during which it is anticipated that the trusteeship of CEQOPFT will transfer from the existing trustees to SJMT as the sole corporate trustee.
- Ensure that the Quaker history, values and ongoing involvement in the charity is retained and that the future activity of CEQOPFT at Oak Tree House is consistent with those values and that involvement.
- Ensure that existing residents are considered in the plans, that appropriate consultation is carried out with staff and volunteers, and that the transition is as seamless as possible for residents and all those concerned.
- Specifically to protect the tenancies of existing residents for as long as those residents wish to remain at Oak Tree House.
- Achieve a number of agreed objectives and tasks stipulated by the Trustees of SJMT and the Trustees of CEQOPFT in advance of the change in trusteeship.

2 BACKGROUND

The CEQOPFT approached SJMT in the Autumn of 2020 in order to explore potential operational and strategic partnership opportunities. This approach was triggered by the recognition by the Board of Trustees that the restrictions placed on trustee eligibility in the governing document and the shrinking membership of the Society of Friends, together with other societal changes, meant that the charity lacks relevant skills and, vitally, the capacity to strategically and operationally develop the charity and that this had led to a number of challenges which have been unresolved or have increased over a period of time.

SJMT and CEQOPFT entered into very constructive and transparent dialogue and SJMT provided a vision paper which was presented to the Board of Trustees of the CEQOPFT in December 2020 and January 2021. This paper outlined the observations made by SJMT during a process of due diligence and made a series of recommendations, which included that SJMT became corporate trustee of CEQOPFT following a 12 month transition period. All recommendations reflected the CEQOPFT's Quaker roots and current and future involvement of Quakers in the charity.

In January 2020, the Trustees of CEQOPFT unanimously agreed to proceed with the proposals made by SJMT and this MoU outlines this commitment.

3 DECLARATION OF A COMMON OBJECTIVE

SJMT and CEQOPFT declare their common objective is to ensure that both parties are satisfied and happy for the trustees of the CEQOPFT to resign in favour of the appointment of SJMT as the sole corporate trustee during a 12 month transition period, with necessary or attendant constitutional changes being put in place by CEQOPFT prior to the appointment of SJMT.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH PARTNER

Agreed task	CEQOPFT	SJMT
To make appropriate amendments to the governing document of CEQOPFT.	To work with SJMT to take such steps as are necessary to facilitate the proposed transfer of trusteeship, taking into account the suggestions made by the SJMT solicitor, if appropriate.	To seek advice from their Solicitor on this proposal and the timing.
Lease of Oak Tree House	To complete either the: a. Purchase the freehold for Oak Tree House or if this is not viable; b. Extend the lease by a min of 125 years in consultation with SJMT.	To provide access to advice and support from a Trustee with experience of Leasehold law.
Maintenance and Refurbishment Programme	To organise a Stock Condition Survey by an independent surveyor for Oak Tree House which leads to a: a. Planned Maintenance Programme	To provide expertise and advice where appropriate. To support budgeting process.

	<p>b. A 5 year planned programme of refurbishment of units and communal areas</p> <p>c. A budget to support these works</p>	
Staffing structure	To operate a staffing model that ensures Oak Tree House level of service are maintained until the transition takes place, residents continue to be safe and supported, and the model ensure operational flexibility for the future.	To provide HR and operational support
Management time	Will dedicate at least one day of management time a month from the Clerk/Chair and at least one day a week from the Transition Manager.	Will dedicate one day management time per month to support this MoU.
	Each party will meet monthly to oversee the work of the MoU and to address any other issues relating to the partnership.	
To ensure the ongoing involvement of Quakers in the culture and activities at Oak Tree House	<p>The formation of:</p> <p>(a) an Advisory Committee comprising individuals nominated by Central England Quakers (CEQ), the advice of which the governing document of CEQOPFT will oblige SJMT to take into account, and</p> <p>(b) a Friends of Oak Tree House volunteer group (which need not be exclusively Quaker).</p>	

5 GENERAL PROVISIONS

5.1 This MoU is not intended to constitute or infer any contract or binding agreement on or between SJMT and CEQOPFT or any of their successors, save where specified. Any costs incurred by either party will be met by that party save in respect of 5.6 below.

5.2 The effective date for this Memorandum of Understanding between SJMT and CEQOPFT shall be the date of the later signature below.

- 5.3 This MOU shall remain in effect for a period of 12 months from the date of the signature below and can be extended by the agreement in writing of the parties.
- 5.4 If both parties are happy with planned arrangements, then 12 months from completion of this MoU (or earlier if the parties so agree), the trustees of CEQOPFT will resign in favour of appointing SJMT as sole corporate trustee of CEQOPFT, having made any necessary constitutional amendments necessary and completed any necessary minutes, regulatory authorisations or other documentation.
- 5.5 This MoU will remain in place until 12 months after the dates signed below or until it is terminated in writing by either party and may only be modified upon the written agreement by both parties.
- 5.6 This clause is legally binding. If the CEQOPFT decide to terminate this agreement and do not proceed with the common objective (point 4), they will agree to reimburse SJMT for the time they have expended on this project at a day rate of £300 per day inclusive, to be calculated and agreed to reflect the time and energy applied by SJMT as a reasonable expense in advancing the project.
- 5.7 **Confidentiality and Personal Data:** This clause is legally binding. SJMT will treat all material shared with it by CEQOFT as confidential and a binding Non-disclosure Agreement shall be put into place to govern the exchange of such material and, in particular, any personal data which may be shared.
- 5.8 **Application of funds.** This clause is legally binding. SJMT will, as trustee, continue to manage the funds of the Trust in accordance with the terms on which those funds are held (including the terms that apply to each restricted fund).
- 5.9 If any part of this MOU is frustrated, the parties agree to endeavour to develop new provisions that will achieve the common objective set out in 4 above.

Signed for and on behalf of
Sir Josiah Mason Trust (SJMT)

Signed for and on behalf of the trustees
of **Central England Quaker Old
People's Fund Trust (CEQOFT)**

David Healey, CEO of SJMT

Kelvin Beer-Jones, Chair and Clerk of
CEQOPFT

Date:

Date:

Schedule 1
(Trustees of Central England Quaker Old People's Fund Trust)

Name	Address
Kelvin Beer-Jones	
Janet Catherine Blann	
David Cockcroft	
Sarah Evans	
Anne Elizabeth Giles	
Sarah Jones	
Roderick Kenneth Keefe	
Howard John Saunders	

Minutes Received

From Kings Heath Local Meeting

KHLM held a Meeting for Business 14.03.21 : minute 21/1

It was agreed that KHLM request formally laid down and continue in the future as a worship group.

Ruth Livermore as Clerk will sent minute to Clerk of Area Meeting.

From Selly Oak Local Meeting

SEL/21/2 Racial Justice (Stuart Morton)

We have received a report from the Selly Oak Meeting Racial Justice Group, a group authorised in SOQM minute 2020/23 to develop its work. We attach the report to these minutes. Following further discernment, we agree to support the work of the Group so that our Meeting might be open to new light regarding the endemic nature of racism in British society and which BYM is recognising is also part of its own being. We encourage each other to get involved, and start sharing our experiences, being open to changing our views, so that we can uncover our own biases and make real changes individually and corporately. We agree to forward this minute to CEQ Area Meeting, and through it indicate our willingness to cooperate with other CEQ Meetings in the development of this concern. we ask the Group to explore various ways for the community to engage with this issue.

We are keen to work with others on racial justice!
In Friendship,
Nessa Grimes

From Peace Committee

We have taken note of the Home Office's "New Plan for Immigration" and are dismayed by the attitudes and agenda which underpin it.

Unusually, the consultation on this document has been made open to individuals as well as groups and organisations. We note that QARN (Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network) and also the national campaigning network Asylum Matters are each producing guidelines on how to respond.

These guidelines are not yet available but we hope to have them before Area Meeting for Friends to see. Birmingham City of Sanctuary has also alerted its supporters.

The AM Peace Committee would like to commend these guidelines to Area Meeting with a request for an AM response, and also to encourage constituent Local Meetings and individual Friends to respond to the consultation in their own right. The deadline for responding is 5th May.

THE BIRMINGHAM CHARTER
IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE

1. We the churches, Christian organisations and followers of Jesus **acknowledge** the issue of racial injustice and its systemic and institutional nature.
2. We commit to **challenge racism confidently** across Birmingham and see it removed from the church and society.
3. We commit to an honest and open **look at ourselves** and our churches and where we are in relation to the issue of racial injustice.
4. We will **pray**: actively encouraging prayer as a group and within and across our churches and neighbourhoods over the issue of racial injustice and disunity.
5. We **repent** – we have caused or ignored hurt and we pray for a deep healing in our city
6. We will **engage in conversations** - creating the spaces for open, honest and frank dialogue. We will listen to the voices of our black and all ethnic communities, across the generations and the different parts of our city.
7. We commit to **relationship building** with church and city leaders modelling strong supportive relationships across the city. We will build a culture of honour, openness and support within our churches, neighbourhoods and workplaces.
8. We will bridge the knowledge gap, building a **shared understanding** of what it is like to be black, or of other ethnicity in Birmingham today, understanding the historical context and the damage to their psyche by sustained and systemic racism.
9. We aim for **truth, reconciliation and healing** through open discussions across the city that understands and acknowledges the hurts of the past and hopes for the future. We will identify actions to bring healing.
10. We will **advocate**; using our influence and understanding to speak up for racial equality and equity in the church and the city. We will inspire changes in structures and cultures to remove racism. We will engage the city's civic leaders as they address this issue.
11. We will build and strengthen **representative leadership**: Creating systems, structures and processes that encourage representative leadership in our churches and organisations. We will actively mentor and encourage young and emerging leaders.
12. We will **take practical action**, developing short, medium and long term plans to equip the wider church to strengthen unity and collaboration and engage the wider community.
13. We will **equip and engage** the wider church with material on theology, and key principles around justice, equity and equality, testimonies and events. We will ensure our actions and narratives are centred very clearly on Jesus, rooted firmly in the word of God and inspired by the Spirit.
14. We will **communicate and dialogue** regularly and clearly, in an engaging and accessible way to ensure the wider church is kept up to date. We will inspire Christians engaged in business, health, education, arts and media and other spheres to be champions for equity, equality and builders of unity.
15. We commit to **being a welcoming city**, a super diverse community where all peoples, whatever their background or ethnicity see that God's people will always provide a home, a community and a generous welcome. We commit to strengthening unity and harmony across the church that we might be one just as the Father and Son are one.

The work of trustees in 2020

In 2020 the charity was challenged as the country faced a pandemic which changed the way we were able to continue our normal daily lives. Last year I presented the trustees report to area meeting in March just before the first lockdown. We were able to gather in Hall Green Meeting House, share food from the same table and sit quite close to each other, without masks. No one suspected that by the end of the month all meeting houses would be closed. Friends were unable to meet in person for worship for many months and we closed our doors to the many community groups who meet regularly in our buildings. We could not attend committee meetings, study groups or coffee mornings. The Peacemakers' office and the Peace Hub were closed, Priory Rooms directors decided to close their doors on the 24th March, and the Area Meeting office closed from Thursday 2nd April.

During the first few weeks, and in response to the unknown, developing situation, decisions were made 'on the hoof' by the clerk, the treasurer to trustees, the clerks to the employment, property and the finance committees, and other link trustees as was appropriate at the time. The trustee body was informed about these decisions via email as they happened and having ascertained that trustees can hold a Quaker Business meeting using video conferencing the clerk called a special trustee meeting to record the decisions made since we last met, to consider the current financial position and the next steps.

The trustee body is responsible to Friends in area meeting to ensure that the charity is managed as well as possible. Following the March lockdown this meant that we needed to respond to this new and unexpected situation. We are part of Britain Yearly Meeting and fortunately we were not on our own. The staff at Friends House were able to guide us through the information produced by the government, as they were responding nationally to this unprecedented situation. New guidelines and information were issued frequently, and trustees tried to help Friends in the local meetings understand what was relevant to them.

Who are we and what have we been doing in 2020 on your behalf?

Anne Austin (COT), Christine Bagnall (HAL), (from September 2020), Patricia Bradbury (STO), Jim Green (WAL), Janet Hilken (STO) (released from service in July 2020), Judith Jenner (COT), John Kimberley (BUL), Robert Morris (HAL), Tony Pegler (SUT), Gill Smith (WAR), Jill Stow (COT), Sue Thompson (COT), Peter Ullathorne (COT) and Fiona Waterhouse (SUT) (from September 2020) were trustees in 2020. At the end of 2020 there were 13 serving trustees. We held four trustees' meetings in March, June, September and November. There were 2 additional meetings in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. The first in April as we made our initial response and the second in October when we asked the question *How is the charity faring at this stage of the pandemic?* This was after 6 months of restrictions and the gradual easing of lock down during the summer months. However, it was shortly after this meeting that the West Midlands moved into 'high alert' and there were new restrictions but worship in person was permitted. Trustees reported to area meeting in March and November.

How did we respond to the pandemic?

Virtual meetings. Trustees quickly adapted to a new way of meeting, no longer able to travel into Birmingham city centre for trustee and committee meetings we were able to join from the comfort of our own homes and did not have to travel home. Trustees were fortunate because both the Peace Hub and Peacemakers had Zoom licences and were familiar with this technology. For some it was new, and we all had to learn a new way of meeting together. The five service committees: finance,

property, employment, records advisory and governance and compliance were able to meet as planned. These committees comprise Friends from local meetings appointed by area meeting and at least one trustee. Trustees are reliant on these committees to ensure the responsibilities of trustees are covered and keep up to date with any changes in the law. During the pandemic they each had different responsibilities to ensure the restrictions were followed.

Decision making. We became aware that decisions needed to be made between meetings during the course of this crisis and we had no idea what these might be. As far as possible the clerks of the service committees, the treasurer to trustees and appropriate Link Trustees were consulted by email, telephone or a virtual meeting held by the clerk to trustees. Our usual practice is to set up a small task group and ask them to come back to the next meeting. In the early weeks we needed to call on these Friends at any time during this crisis to make decisions.

The first decision was about joining the government's Job Retention Scheme (furlough), primarily for Peacemakers staff team. The second was setting up the COVID 19 Project Group to support local meetings re-opening their premises.

The link trustees offer oversight and support to the local meetings and branches. In 2020 this workload increased when the lockdown was eased and places of worship were allowed to open for public worship. Link trustees were asked to support the preparation for the re-opening to make the building COVID secure.

Throughout the year the committees' routine business continued as usual and in order to cover all of our responsibilities we had to work together, trusting that we were doing what we need to do. The service committees do most of the work and bring to trustees meeting mainly matters for discernment.

Trustees continued to search for a professional staff person to take responsibility for managing the routine work of the charity. During the year this changed from an operations manager role to principal officer. In the summer the recruitment group were ready to work with an agency to find someone to fill the role. However, when trustees met in October it was suggested that the Priory Rooms staff currently on furlough could be used to carry out some of the duties of the principal officer and other tasks to support the work of trustees. The recruitment and appointment of a principal officer was put on hold. By the beginning of November a Service Agreement was in place with the Priory Rooms company. Trustees were able to support them financially until the business is able to start up again and trustees were able to have their support for financial and property work.

Reflecting on the events of the year here is a snapshot of the challenges each of the service committees faced.

Property committee met four times during in 2020 and were pleased that Clare Peat (SEL) took on the role of clerk. The subgroups focusing on different areas of work and reporting to the full committee is working well and taking some of the pressure off the clerk.

There are fourteen meeting houses in the area meeting and as well as Friends holding regular meetings for worship they are hired to local community groups. When the buildings were closed by the government in March the buildings were empty for many weeks. They needed to be inspected regularly to be compliant with the insurers' requirements during the emergency. Advice was given to local meeting premises committees on care of unoccupied property. The property link friends (PLF) were asked to keep in contact with the local meetings. Trustees received copies of these briefings and they were able to support when needed.

Closing the buildings was relatively easy but the preparation for re-opening them was more complicated. The government produced guidelines and these included places of worship. These had to be adapted for our particular form of worship. Sitting in silence is quite different to congregations moving about and singing. Trustees decided to provide briefings for local meetings as well as guidelines to make the building Covid secure. A small team of friends worked on risk assessments for meeting for worship as well as hirers and employees, cleaning guidelines, one-way systems, COVID protection kits, social distancing and so much more. These were sent with Bulletins to local meetings between June and September and posted on the CEQ website. Link trustees were involved in the process to ensure the risk assessments were completed. Trustees also decided to pay for the signage needed in the building and asked local meetings to order what they needed for their building from one firm. The loss of income from hirers at the local meeting houses totalled £109K and this is being taken up with our insurers in 2021.

Routine work on the properties continued and the quinquennial surveys were able to go ahead as planned. The local meetings were not asked to complete the Annual Property Questionnaire in the autumn. Fortunately, the boiler replacement at the Bull Street property was able to go ahead during the summer months and caused little disruption. The Kings Heath building and land transfer, agreed in March, was completed during the lockdown. South Birmingham Friends Institute Trust made a contribution of £40,000 to the CEQ building fund for the upkeep of the building for another 10 years.

Finance committee meet quarterly when they receive and monitor the Management Accounts for 6 central funds. There are many other routine matters including the use of the Selly Wood House Fund. This exercised finance committee members and trustees during 2019 and in area meeting friends discerned that the fund could be used to support essential building work at Oak Tree House and the Woodlands bursary fund.

The committee oversees the consolidation of the Charity's accounts and all Local Meeting and Branches submitted their examined accounts by the 31 March 2020 deadline. The external audit of the accounts was undertaken virtually because of lock down restrictions. The 2019 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 online for all local meetings and branches. This is a key meeting to help the local treasurers preparing for the end of year consolidation of the CEQ accounts. The new CEQ Handbook for Treasurers was launched at the meeting. It is designed to improve the support and training given to new Treasurers. Wendy Wolfendale and James Bradbury collect the local accounts, then prepare them for the auditor to examine and incorporate into the annual statutory accounts ready to send to the Charity Commission in September. Trustees and the treasurer to trustees prepare the written report and notes to the accounts.

The illustrated summary of the Report and Accounts "*Central England Quakers in 2019*" was produced by trustees with the help of Local Meetings providing photographs and their reports on their activities during the year. Distribution was very difficult in the autumn when few Friends were meeting in person. However, this year we put it on the CEQ website where it could be read or downloaded.

During the pandemic trustees were aware that there could be financial losses and during the 9 months the treasurer to trustees took on an additional task monitoring the impact of COVID 19 on CEQ central funds and reporting to the finance committee and trustees. This certainly helped trustees to understand our financial position and the impact of the decisions already made and consider what actions we needed to take. The loss of income in the trustees and salaries accounts was £22,000 for the year. Our treasurer reminded trustees regularly that our reserves policy makes

specific provision for a financial disaster and £100k of the General Fund investments is allocated to this risk.

At the November Area Meeting the treasurer to trustees made his presentation on forecasts for 2020 and draft budgets for 2021. The 2021 budgets for the Trustee and General Funds were approved by area meeting and the spending will be monitored by the finance committee. We are aware that in 2021 there is no gift from the Priory Rooms nor will there be in 2022.

During the year the question ***How we use our financial resources in view of the current risks CEQ is facing as we move into 2021?*** came to the fore. At the October area meeting there was an item, led by members of the finance committee, to engage area meeting Friends in this concern. This is the start of a process which will continue in this year.

Link trustees were asked to report to trustees how the local meetings with property were managing their loss of income from lettings. We reminded them they have a reserves policy for this eventuality. We also wanted to reassure them that if they were worried to speak to the link trustee. All the property belongs to the area meeting and trustees do have the responsibility.

Investment properties. The tenants at 51 and 53 Church Road, Redditch Meeting House and Bull Street car parking were given rent holidays during the emergency recognising that their normal businesses will be suspended, resulting in a loss of income £7,388 to trustees. Fortunately, all the 2020 rent for 1 Colmore Square was received.

Employment Committee held 7 meetings during the year and continued to keep up to date with employment regulations and many policies were reviewed and revised. Staff contracts were also updated and revised and the HR firm Roots HR was contracted to help with this lengthy process. The policies can be found on the CEQ website and local meetings and staff can access them.

The pandemic brought additional challenges. Introducing the new government scheme to pay 80% wages to staff unable to work during the lockdown was one of them. Wendy Wolfendale, responsible for the staff salaries account, was able to set up the scheme online. The employment committee needed to prepare new contracts for staff wanting to be furloughed and contact each of them. Five members of the Peacemakers team and some local meeting staff joined the scheme. Changes in the scheme over the months were responded to.

It was agreed that those on furlough leave should be paid their contractual salary for the time-being as it is important to maintain goodwill, so that as soon as the lock-down is lifted they are ready to return to work. Link trustees were asked to pay particular attention to the welfare of staff at linked meetings and branches. The Peacemakers' director, the AM secretary, and the Peace Hub coordinator were able to work from home. Before they returned to their place of work a risk assessment had to be in place.

Records Advisory Committee. The year of 2020 has certainly been a year of stops and starts. The year started well with a meeting in January and a further meeting arranged for April. Work continued on the next accession which was arranged for 23 March. Unfortunately, Covid-19 lockdown occurred on the same day but in advance of this possibility, the transfer had been cancelled as was another arranged for January 2021. The lockdown meant that the committee could no longer meet in person and no further work was undertaken on processing the records. They did, however, keep in touch with each other by email and had their first zoom meeting in October. Updates were sent to Trustees. A number of local meeting records were received which were placed in the strong room. Enquiries regarding our records continued to be received and some of these could be answered. Other people were directed to the Central England Quakers archive website via

the Library of Birmingham. Some enquiries will be followed up by the committee once the Library archives section is open. Even though the committee were not able to meet in person and carry on the processing work, it continued to have oversight of the records and deal with enquiries.

Governance and Compliance Committee. 6 trustees are members of this committee which met 4 times during the year. In 2020 the committee considered the following matters.

Safeguarding: The co-ordinators are invited to report to this committee and were able to share some of the feedback from the 2019 questionnaire the area meeting was asked to complete. It highlighted some of the weak points in our present system. BYM has produced a new safeguarding policy and the co-ordinators have been looking through this and will advise trustees on its implementation. It will come to area meeting for approval and there will be training for role holders and local meetings. The CEQ Safeguarding Link Trustee keeps in regular contact with the 2 safeguarding co-ordinators about issues of concern and reports regularly to Trustees.

Governing Document: The Charity Commission advised changes should be made to the Governing Document to take account of the use of virtual meetings for our routine business. These are now completed and all business meetings in the area meeting can be held virtually.

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. The reports from all local meetings and branches were received early in the year and at the end of the year we started work on the 2021 version.

Risk Register: all service committees are asked each year to check their section of the risk register and it is updated. This year the committee produced a **Risk Management Policy**.

IT and data storage: This policy has not been completed and is an ongoing piece of work.

Priory Rooms is part of the trustees' responsibilities and the Directors of Priory Rooms (Bull Street) Ltd reports to trustees each quarter. The directors report to Area Meeting on its business activities and developments each year. The first two months of 2020 were normal and bookings good then the pandemic struck. Conference centres had to close 24th March and only in September were allowed to open, with restricted access. However, customers were hesitant to book. Not only has this resulted in loss of income but affected the staff team. Staff were furloughed and the centre manager and conference and events sales manager continued to work from home. Other staff were called in as required. Trustees were pleased in October that area meeting agreed to have a service agreement with Priory Rooms to employ the staff from November. There is now a conferencing facility in the George Fox Room which allows trustees unable to travel into the city to join others meeting in person at Priory Rooms. I am looking forward to using it in June.

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.

Judith Jenner, Clerk to CEQ Trustees

Central England Quakers (CEQ) 2021

Useful contact information for Local Meeting Clerks

1. The Area Meeting Clerk

Alison Ironside

Contact via:

clerks@centralenglandquakers.org.uk

2. The Area Meeting Secretary

ceq@phonecoop.coop

3. The Area Meeting Office

40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AF

Tel: 0121 236 2644

4. The Area Meeting Website

www.centralenglandquakers.org.uk

5. Area Meetings in 2021

date	venue	date	venue
Sat 16 th January 2.0 - 5.0pm	Zoom (Bull Street)	15th July 6.0 – 9.0pm	Warwick
Sat 06 th March 2.0 – 5.0pm	Zoom Bournville	Sat 11 th September 2.0 – 5.0pm	Barnt Green
Thursday 22nd April 6.0 – 9.0pm	Sutton Coldfield	Sat 16 th October 2.0 – 5.0pm	Stourbridge
Sat 12 th June 2.0 – 5.0pm	Cotteridge	Sat 27th November 2.0 – 5.0pm	Bull Street

6. Elders and Overseers

Convenor of Elders & Overseers Support Group: Jane Holt

Clerk of Es & Os Selection Committee: Vic Grainger

Central England Elders and Overseers

June 9th evening

Vic Grainger and Nicholas Paton Philip

Invite you to an informal discussion (online) on issues concerning our Triennial Nominations process, in light of making things simpler. We will address questions such as:

1. Should eldership and oversight roles be combined?
2. Should we re-name Overseers?
3. Should we keep the triennial rotation of names?
4. Should we change the whole system?
5. Could we pair Local Meetings profitably?

This discussion is for current Elders and Overseers in the first instance, with 25 places available - it may be widened depending on enthusiasm and take-up.

Please contact Vic or Nicholas to book or for further information - details in CEQ membership book.

Cotteridge Quaker Meeting

On Zoom: Currently we are holding Sunday morning 10.30am meetings for worship on Zoom. If you wish to attend, email cotteridgequakermeeting@gmail.com or phone our warden (0121 459 0111) before 6 pm on the Saturday before the meeting to obtain our Zoom link.

Face-to-face: Between 11th April and 20th June we will also be holding person-to-person meetings on some Sunday afternoons at 3 pm. These are planned for: 11th April, 25th April, 9th May, 23rd May and 20th June. They will be held in our classroom or in the garden.

As social distancing limits our space, you will need to register in advance by 6 pm on the preceding Saturday if you wish to attend. To book, go to <https://cotteridgequakermeeting.eventbrite.co.uk> or telephone our warden (0121 459 0111). Essential details of your registration will be retained for 21 days to support the government's track and trace programme.

We hope that subsequent to 21st June we will be able to meet in person again on Sunday mornings. Please check this website again nearer the date just in case there are any restrictions,

We may continue a parallel Zoom meeting to ensure we are as accessible to those unable to attend in person.

On the days we are holding a meeting for worship in the afternoon, our car park will be opened to allow worshippers only to park between 2.30pm and 4.30pm.

Community Behaviour Agreement

If you are attending a face-to-face meeting before all restrictions are lifted, please:

- Do not attend if any member of your household has symptoms of coronavirus (amongst which could be fever, cough or loss of smell/taste).
- Follow advice from the test and trace process to self-isolate if you have had any contact with people suffering from the virus
- Follow Government guidance on vulnerable groups, including current advice to over 70s to minimise contact outside your household.
- Keep a safe space (currently two metres) between you and other households.
- Avoid public transport and wear protective face covering if you do use it.

For attending Meeting for Worship in the Meeting House: -

- Use hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the building. Follow cleaning instructions. Wash your hands regularly
- Proceed to take a seat, preferably as far into the Meeting House as space allows. Once you are seated in the Meeting House, do not change your position or use other seats
- Do not make physical contact with Friends beyond your household group, and observe distancing protocols
- Follow any one-way systems and queuing procedures.
- Do not stand in the corridor. Move through without delay.
- Give way to people exiting.

- Toilet facilities are only accessible by one person/household at a time. Observe the rules for controlling this. Paper towels will continue in use. Please dispose of carefully.
- Follow instructions given by those responsible for the building.
- Take care for children and vulnerable adults in your care.
- Please take any used tissues etc home with you for disposal. If necessary, use litter bins provided.
- Consider others and follow advice and instructions on signs.
- Do not go into any taped-off areas
- Leave the meeting in a methodical way to avoid compromising social distancing. 'If asked, please stack chairs in the places requested. Those nearest the door should leave first if possible.
- The garden will be accessible in good weather, so can be used for post-meeting conversations (retaining social distancing). If you use this area, please leave via the back gate behind the classrooms.

General points:

For the time being there will be no books (QF&P, Holy Bible, Advices & Queries) on the table for general use. Friends are encouraged to bring their own copies. There will not be the usual carafe of water or glasses. Please bring your own if you feel you may need them. Tea/coffee will not be served after Meeting until such time as it is safe to do so. The kitchen will not be available.