

YOUNG FRIENDS GENERAL MEETING (YFGM)

Liverpool Friends Meeting House, 30th April – 3rd May 2004

Minutes

Present:

Co-Clerks:	Nessa Williams & Nick Sturge
Treasurer:	Jenny Moy
Co-Convenors of Overseers:	Hannah Leavett & Guy Milner
Convenor of Nominations Committee:	Ellie Colyer
Coordinator:	Simon Best

Monthly Meeting Representatives:

Bristol & Frenchay:	Amanda Headley-White	Cambridge & Peterborough:	Lucy Baines
	Andrew Rendle	Guisborough:	Tom Lightowler
Kingston & Wandsworth:	Annabella Kroll	Luton & Leighton:	Claire Morris
Notts & Derby:	Marie Drouin	Purley & Sutton:	Luke Waterfield
Reading:	Naveed Moeed	Southwark, Lewisham & Bromley:	John Bacon
	Leon Spence	Thaxted:	Ben Parker
Warwickshire:	Anna Dicker	Westminster:	Ellen Marshall
West Devon:	Hannah Jones	Worcestershire & Shropshire:	Dawn Flitness
Australia Yearly Meeting:	Francisco Gonzalez		
	Ashwyn Falkingham		
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (FUM):	Betsy Blake		

Adam Boardman, Adam Lee, Aidan McCartney, Ben Maher, Darrel Spence, Dzifa Afoau, Emily Maddison, Eudora Pascall, Fran Lane, Heather Rowlands, Helena Wren, Hugh Williams, Huw Still, Hugo Finley, James Doering, James Barnard, Jennifer Brett, Jennifer Batten, Jessica Fishenden, Jonathan Doering, John Fitzgerald, Joe Coffin, Juliette Stoller, Lucy Mason, Marion Penn, Mike Stokes, Nick Rendle, Paul Levy, Paul Sladen, Peggy Brett, Pip Marshall, Rachel Arnold, Rachel Barker, Robin Bloomfield, Rowan Burrough, Ruth Wood, Sally Nicholls, Sarah Donaldson, Simon Gray, Simon Shepherd, Stan Juin Yih, Thomas Rowlands.

TOTAL: 68

04/12 Opening Minute

We are pleased to be here with one another for our May YFGM in Liverpool. We particularly welcome Ashwyn Falkingham and Francisco Gonzalez from Australia Yearly Meeting. We are looking forward to finding out how our new method for planning YFGMs will affect our meeting this weekend.

04/13 Planning Weekend

Rachel Barker and Huw Still have reported back to us on a very positive note about the Planning Weekend which took place in March. This is still a very new way for us to plan YFGMs so we have heard about changes which will be made for the next Planning Weekend, but on the whole it worked very well. We adopt the minute from the March 2004 Young Friends Planning Weekend as minute of YFGM. They are appended to the main YFGM minutes.

04/14 Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel.

We have heard from Christine Cannon about her experiences as an accompanier in Israeli occupied Palestine. We have heard, through Christine, the voices of people she met, People dreaming of normal lives, of being able to sing about and celebrate living in Palestine, of living peacefully with their neighbours. She also talked of the debilitating fear prevalent in both sides of the conflict.

We must hope and pray that the physical and emotional barriers that are standing can be brought down, through a co-operative response from both sides, a response which will involve a great deal of courage and risk taking.

We split into small groups to share our thoughts and feelings about what is happening. Christine has left us with information about practical things which we can do to work for peace in the region.

04/15 Representation, Communication & Accountability in our Structures (RECAST)

Jenny Moy, our representative on the Recast Group, and Eudora Pascall have led us in an interactive exercise demonstrating the current structures of Britain Yearly Meeting. We have appreciated this lively activity and have noted how it has demonstrated many real issues BYM faces today. We have also heard about the Recast process and the current “Emerging Proposals”.

04/16 Peace Tax

Dawn Filtness and Nick Sturge have explained the different approach that the Inland Revenue took last tax year (2002-2003) in seeking to recover the percentage of our employee’s income tax which would be used for military purposes.

Before that tax year, we made the money available in the office for collection, and the Inland Revenue chose either to collect or not to collect that money. In 2002-2003 they refused to collect the money and threatened court action if we did not send them the money.

We have discussed the options open to us if they should proceed in this manner in 2003-2004. Whilst many members of YFGM feel that they would be prepared to go to court in order to witness to the Peace Testimony, and would be willing to have a criminal record as a result of this action, there is also a strong feeling that it would not be right to force any trustee to do this if they did not feel that this was the right course of action for them. If we are to consider asking our trustees to do this in future, as a corporate witness, we must go into this process with our eyes open, knowing the risks each individual involved will take, and the effect it will have on our charitable status and possible future funding. If a court action is threatened in this tax year (2003-2004) we ask the employment treasurer to pay the employee’s outstanding tax.

Since no request has been made to withhold tax for 2004 –2005, we will not withhold any tax for this tax year unless a request is made by our future employee. If this is the case we will reconsider our position in light of our consideration today.

04/17 Young Friends Appeal

Amanda Headley-White and Juliette Stoller have summed up the work done by the Mental Health Appeal Group. They have raised £13, 544.35 which will go towards

producing a video about mental health issues, and will support the work of the charity 'The Association for Pastoral Care in Mental Health'. They have also worked hard raising awareness of mental health issues in YFGM and the Society of Friends as a whole.

We are now laying the Mental Health Appeal down. We are grateful for all the hard work that the group have put into this appeal and are optimistic that we will be able to continue to raise awareness of the issues it has highlighted.

We have heard from Aidan McCartney, John Fitzgerald and Simon Gray about the exciting opportunity for YFGM to support the World Gathering of Young Friends through our new appeal.

In order for the gathering to be representative of the theologically and culturally diverse nature of the worldwide Religious Society of Friends, the gathering needs to raise £125,000 to allow 2 representatives from each Yearly Meeting in Latin America, Africa and Asia to attend.

We agree that our appeal for this year will help raise money towards this goal, as well as involving YFGM in practical support of the Gathering, such as arranging pre- or post-gathering events.

We ask our Nominations Committee to find names which will form a group to take the appeal forward. We ask this group to publicise the new appeal which will begin on the 1st June 2004. We will review this appeal at our May 2005 gathering.

04/18 Volunteers

We thank the following people for volunteering to help in the following ways at the next YFGM in Brighton 15th – 17th October 2004:

Marion Penn	}	Caterers
Jennifer Brett		

Ben Maher	Pan transport
Ben Maher	Off-floor Accommodation

04/19 Report from The Leaveners

We have heard from Paul Levy from The Leaveners, the Quaker organisation which runs projects based on Drama, Music and the Arts in Britain. The Leaveners are keen to connect more with the age group of YFGM members and ask if we would like to appoint someone to their Management Committee.

We are enthusiastic about this opportunity for closer cooperation between YFGM and The Leaveners. We will aim to appoint someone at our next meeting in October. We are keen to have this representation as long as it feels right for YFGM so we would like to review this post at the end of the first holder's period of service.

04/20 Peace Testimony

Eudora Pascall, Mike Stokes, John Fitzgerald and Robin Bloomfield have shared with us their experience of living out the peace testimony.

Peace begins inside us, resolving our own inner conflicts. Through silence, thinking and sharing, we can become grounded and connected with the reality of conflicts around us. We can accept the challenge to open up to the transforming power of God through our testimony to peace, before during and after a conflict situation, listening humbly to what we are called to do differently to bring real resolution.

04/21 Nominations

We appoint the following people to serve in the following posts for the periods mentioned. We release from service those mentioned, warmly thanking them for their work on our behalf.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Released from service</u>	<u>Person Appointed</u>
Meeting for Sufferings Representative	3 years		Simon Best
Fundraiser	3 years		John Fitzgerald
British Youth Council Representative	3 years	James Barnard	Ellen Marshall
Management Officer	3 years	Heather Rowlands	Naveed Moeed
Northern Friends Peace Board Representative	3 years	Joe Anderson	Jonathan Riddell
Financial Oversight Person for Retreat Event	Until October YFGM		Amanda Headley-White
Appeal Group	1 year	Rachel Arnold	Aidan McCartney (also as Financial Oversight Person)
		Anna Jones	Nick Rendle
		Paddy Uglow	Leon Spence
		Amanda Headley-White	Naveed Moeed
		Sally Knowles	Marie Drouin
		Juliette Stoller	
Planning Weekend 'Newcomer'	Until October YFGM	Darrel Spence	Emily Maddison
	Until October YFGM	Jenny Pacey	Helena Wren
	Until October YFGM	Huw Still	Sally Nicholls
Nominations Committee	2 years		Sally Nicholls
Coordinator's Support Group	2 years	Nick Perks	

04/22 Membership

We have heard from Rachel Barker about the process the Membership Procedures Group is going through in rethinking how we belong to Britain Yearly Meeting, specifically the suggestion that membership could be held centrally.

We broke into small groups to discuss membership issues further and then fed back into the main group.

Rachel will take the thoughts from the small groups back to the Membership Procedures Group to help them in their discernment.

04/23 Friends Africa Interest Group

Roland and Teresa Watts and Nigel Worth from the Friends Africa Interest Group have come to speak to us about British Quaker involvement in Africa and in particular about

the huge problem of HIV/AIDS. Kenya has an especially large Quaker population, with 14 Yearly Meetings. Tuberculosis goes hand-in-hand with AIDS in much of Africa. We also heard how in Swaziland a whole generation has been decimated by this virus and of course this has a dramatic impact on all aspects of day-to-day life in that country. We thank the speakers for an informative session.

04/24 Minute of Record – New Trustee

Further to Minute 04/21 we have appointed Naveed Moeed as an Officer and Trustee of YFGM for a period of 3 years.

04/25 Closing Minute

We thank each other for a relaxing and thought-provoking gathering we have shared in together here in Liverpool.

We have made full use of the additional time Bank Holiday Monday has allowed us to have together, in particular with a much larger number and variety of Special Interest Groups. We have enjoyed the sun, with several activities and discussions taking place outdoors.

We have appreciated the session time freed up by our radically restructured Planning Weekend, and look forward to the greater impact this will have for a two-day YFGM. Our sessions on Israel/Palestine and Peace Tax were particularly lively, and we also look forward to this kind of community engagement becoming more commonplace at our gatherings in future.

The long weekend does also take its toll and many of us will be heading home this afternoon very tired, however we have all been invigorated by each others' fellowship. We wish each other safe travels, and peaceful and enjoyable summers.

We will meet again in Brighton in October when we hope to renew the friendships we have been building this weekend.

Signed in and on behalf of Young Friends General Meeting

Nick Sturge & Nessa Williams

Co-Clerks

Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) Planning Weekend

Northfield Friends Meeting House, Birmingham 26th - 28th March 2004
Minutes

P04/01 Job Descriptions

We discussed the changing of our roles as a result of radical restructuring. Many committees have drafted new job descriptions at this planning weekend. Job descriptions for new roles and individual roles that have changed should be written or updated as soon as seems practicable and sent to the Coordinator. All job descriptions, with the exception of Finance Committee roles should be with the Coordinator by the end of YFGM in May 2004.

P04/02 2003 Accounts and Annual Report

We have heard from Jenny Moy and Dawn Filtness regarding the state of YFGM's accounts for 2003. The accounts are still in the process of being prepared and will be ready for presentation at the September 2004 Planning Weekend.

P04/03 Dates for YFGM and Planning Weekends in 2005

We ask our Coordinator to confirm our proposed dates for 2005 and to book venues for these weekends. We ask him to check with Friends House and EMEYF regarding any possible clashes. The dates are as follows

Planning Weekend	7th-9th January, 2005
YFGM	18th-20th February, 2005
Planning Weekend	15th-17th April, 2005
YFGM	27th-30th May, 2005
Planning Weekend	2nd-4th September, 2005
YFGM	14th-16th October, 2005

P04/04 Examiners of Accounts

We appoint Ian Jackson, subject to consent to examine the consolidated accounts for 2003. The examiners for the individual accounts are appointed as follows:

General Fund Accounts	Ian Jackson, subject to consent
Employment Accounts	Gavin Burnell, subject to consent
Young Quaker Account	Alice Drewery, subject to consent
Pardshaw Accounts	Jennifer Brett
Appeal Account	William Penn
Events Account:	Dawn Filtness
World Gathering of Young Friends Account:	Linda Batten

P04/05 Changes to Financial Policy

Jenny Moy has informed us of a number of changes to the Financial Policy brought forward by Finance Committee. Jenny has described our responsibilities relating to the YFGM Financial Policy and the procedure for amending it. We approve changes to the

following paragraphs. All paragraph numbers refer to the previous Financial Policy last amended 13th October 2002.

1c) In addition to those specified in the Constitution [Co-Clerks and Treasurer] the following Officers shall be appointed by General Meeting: ~~Convenor of Nominations Committee, Co-Convenors of Overseers, Officer of Outreach Committee and one other Young Friend~~ **Management Officer**.

1h) An independent examiner for the consolidated accounts shall be appointed at a Business Meeting. The appointment shall not be for longer than three years. The independent examiner should be independent of General Meeting. ~~Before being sent to the examiner, each of the treasurers appointed by General Meeting shall have their accounts examined by someone independent of the committee with which the accounts are concerned but who may be a member of General Meeting, these people shall be appointed by the Officers.~~ [Note: This item will come into effect from the financial year 2005 by which time all the bookkeeping will be done by the Coordinator.]

1i) The signatories of all accounts held by General Meeting shall be recorded by minute of General Meeting. All accounts shall have three signatories, the Treasurer ~~and two members of the relevant committee or group,~~ or and the Co-Clerks. Two signatures shall be required for withdrawals from the accounts for amounts in excess of ~~£500~~ £700.

~~2d) Finance Committee shall take steps to monitor the operation of the accounts of YFGM to ensure that they are managed with due care. In the event that an account is not being so managed, Finance Committee shall draw this matter to the attention of Officers as the Trustees and may recommend action. Officers may accept or reject such a recommendation or bring the matter before YFGM [This process was felt to be neither necessary nor appropriate once all book-keeping is being done by the Co-ordinator]~~

Subsequent paragraphs will be renumbered following the removal of this paragraph
2g) In addition to the Treasurer, the Finance Committee shall be made up of all other treasurers appointed by General Meeting detailed in this document and another Young Friend appointed by General Meeting to serve as a Fundraiser. ~~Any committee or group of General Meeting, which has its own funds, shall have a Treasurer appointed by General Meeting. The appointment shall be for a period of three years, except the Events Treasurer, which is for 1 year.~~ **Any committee or group of General Meeting, which has its own budget allowance, shall have a Financial Oversight person appointed by General Meeting.**

3a) No fees are payable for attending business sessions and we don't wish any Young Friend to be prevented from attending by financial reasons. Young Friends who need help with travel expenses may apply to the ~~General Fund~~ YFGM Treasurer, preferably at the time of registration. Bursary forms are available from the YFGM office, or ~~from overseers~~ **at YFGM.**

3b) Friends are asked to contribute to the essential expenditure in running a business meeting by making a donation based on ~~two days~~ income after housing costs **for the period of the event**. It is expected that Friends who use the catering or sleeping facilities will make a donation that covers the cost of providing these.

New Section 4 entitled "Planning Weekends" and renumbering of the remaining Sections

4. PLANNING WEEKENDS

4.a) The people whose travel will be paid from the General Fund to attend Planning Weekends will be: Officers; Quintessential; Overseers; Finance Committee; Convenor of Nominations; Special Interest Group Co-ordinator; Newcomers as appointed by YFGM and Caterers as necessary. Other people will get their travel expenses paid if they are required to attend a Planning Weekend by their job description or if invited by an Officer – this may be from the General Fund or from a Committee budget as appropriate. Travel expenses for Management Group and Support Group will always be paid from the Employment Fund.

4. b) The Planning Weekend is an open meeting and bursary help will be available on the same basis as at a YFGM business meeting.

4.c) Food costs of Planning Weekends should be met by contributions by those attending

4c) Unless otherwise specified by minute of General Meeting, when committees, secretaries or appointed groups are given a budget amount in the annual budget agreed each year at a Business Meeting, the intention is that the money will cover the group's expenses, ongoing work and new work specified by a minute of General Meeting and that any remainder may be spent at their discretion to further the aims for which they were appointed. Overspends can be set against their next year's budget or met from the General Fund contingency allowance, by negotiation with the ~~General Fund~~ YFGM Treasurer. Underspends will not normally be carried forward to the next year.

4d) If any appointed groups or committees ~~feel that they~~ have excess funds, the excess funds should be transferred to the General Fund **become undesignated funds**; if they are laid down, then any funds that they have left shall ~~be transferred to the General Fund~~ **become undesignated funds**.

5b) Nominations Committee may appoint representatives, if it feels that General Meeting should be represented, for events which occur before, or too soon after, the next business meeting. **If possible, the nomination should be brought to Planning Weekend.** Nominations Committee, in consultation with the Treasurer, shall be permitted to authorise payment of such a representative's expenses.

6c) Special Interest Gatherings should aim to break even. This includes covering the expenses of speakers and the planning. ~~Any surplus shall be held in the Events Account. If the funds held do not cover any reasonable loss, it shall be met by the General Fund. Any loss which may be thought to be unreasonable should be considered by the Officers, who should bring a recommendation to the next business meeting.~~

6d) When setting the fees payable for attending a Special Interest Gathering, the Event ~~Treasurer~~ **Financial Oversight Person** should give thought to making the event accessible to as wide a range of Young Friends as possible. The ~~General Fund~~ YFGM Treasurer should also be consulted in good time about making bursary help available through the annual General Fund budget. If such help is available, information on how to access it should be included in publicity for the Event.

6. f) General Meeting shall appoint an Events ~~Treasurer~~ **Financial Oversight Person** to oversee the financial affairs of ~~all~~ **each** Special Interest Gathering.

9c) The Employment Account shall pay for the expenses of the Management Group, Co-ordinator's Support Group and the running costs of the office, ~~including equipment, stationary and any costs associated with the Co-ordinator's role as the General Fund book-keeper.~~

9. d) ~~The Employment Treasurer shall present a budget for the forthcoming year for discussion at the first business meeting of the year. [This paragraph to be removed].~~

10c) A Young Friend shall be appointed as Appeal ~~Treasurer~~ **Financial Oversight Person.**

10e) ~~If the co-ordinating group requires a float, it should consult with the Treasurer, any float given should be returned as soon as funds permit.~~

11b) The editors of 'Young Quaker' shall be appointed by General Meeting. A Young Friend shall be appointed as Young Quaker ~~Treasurer~~ **Financial Oversight Person.**

~~11.c) The expenses, including travelling expenses, of the Editors shall be met from 'Young Quaker' funds. [This paragraph to be removed and subsequent paragraphs renumbered]~~

11. d) It is not expected that 'Young Quaker' shall be entirely self-financing. ~~General Meeting shall make an annual grant, from the General Fund and agreed at a business meeting. This grant shall approximately cover the travel expenses of the Editors and costs of any complimentary copies given by General Meeting. The Editors should work out with the Treasurer the amount of grant needed.~~ shall be met from the General Fund.

12c) Pardshaw Committee shall be appointed by General Meeting. A Young Friend shall be appointed as Pardshaw ~~Treasurer~~ Financial Oversight Person.

12d) The expenses, including travel expenses, of the Pardshaw Committee shall be met from Pardshaw Young Friends' Centre funds. The travel expenses for the Pardshaw ~~Treasurer~~ **Financial Oversight Person** to attend ~~Finance Committee Planning Weekend~~ as required shall be met from the General Fund.

The new Financial Policy including all these changes is attached to these minutes

P04/06 Peace Tax

Nick Sturge has given us some general information regarding our Co-ordinator's request to withhold the proportion of his income tax that would normally be given to military expenditure. YFGM has a history of our Co-ordinator requesting this action to occur, with varying responses from the Inland Revenue.

The choices that are facing YFGM and the consequences of our subsequent actions have been elaborated on. It has been pointed out that our Co-ordinator has requested that our actions over this issue should not cause any undue stress.

It was felt that space needed to be made on the YFGM agenda for an update on this topic and Nick and Dawn have agreed to present the issue during Session 5 on Saturday

evening. We hope that YFGM can give the Trustees clear guidelines on the course of action that is desired by the whole group.

We as a group recognise that, while the Trustees and Management Group are directly affected by this issue, this group supports them.

P04/07 Purchase of a Printer

We believe it would be helpful for the Planning Weekend to have a laptop with a printer for documents that are drafted or changed during the weekend. We ask our Coordinator to purchase a portable printer for this use up to £200 in value. The Planning Weekend Clerks will ensure a laptop is brought to the weekend.