

# Young Friends General Meeting

YOUNG ADULT QUAKERS IN BRITAIN



## Young Friends General Meeting

### Leicester Meeting House

22-25 May 2015

### Minutes

#### Those Present:

Holly Alcock, Jenny Baines, Sam Barnett-Cormack, Jessica Beck, Andrew Bibb, Ella Booth, Liam Brighton, Hannah Brock, Toni Carmichael-Harris, Tas Cooper, Carla Denyer, Peter Doubtfire, Kim Edwards, Ellen Elliott, Rachel Evans, Toby Freeman, Claudia Fry, Joseph Fuller, Rajit Gholap, Ian Goggin, Cáit Gould, Naomi Haigh, Laurence Hall, Thomas Hancock, Rachael Harrison, Owen Jennings, Edward Owen Jones, Francesca Loise, Iwona Luszowicz, Rici Marshall, Jenny McCarthy, Maria Mulvany, Haifa Rashed, Rhiannon Rees, Andrew Rendle, Angharad Rhys, Becky Riddell, Tim Rouse, Anne Seilly, Beatrice Shelley, Kristin Skarsholt, Ericka Smith, Alyn Still, Brigid Stoney, Rachael Swancott Boon, Christopher Tedd, Kellie Turner, Julian Wood

Total: 48

**Co-Clerks:** Brigid Stoney & Peter Doubtfire

**Trustees:** Peter Doubtfire, Jenny McCarthy, Ericka Smith, Alyn Still, Brigid Stoney, Rachael Swancott Boon

**Coordinator:** Tim Rouse

#### **2015.08 Representative to Quaker LGBT+ Fellowship**

We have been asked to consider appointing a representative to the committee of Quaker LGBT+ Fellowship. We feel that this role will offer an exciting opportunity to both deepen YFGM's connection to the wider Quaker community and also to help ensure that the views of Young Friends are represented within this fellowship. We ask nominations committee to add this role to our existing opportunities, initially with a length of service of 2 years, to be reviewed in May 2017. A role description is attached to these minutes.

#### **2015.09 Preparing a Testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the Life of Hilary Botwright**

We have heard the sad news of the death of our Friend Hilary Botwright, and taken time to remember her during this weekend. It is clear that the light shone through Hilary's life and we feel that it would be appropriate to formally remember this as a

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community. This is a process that needs time, and we are aware of the importance of other Quaker communities in Hilary's life, alongside our own.

We ask our nominations committee to find the names of a small group of Friends to prepare a testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of Hilary Botwright. We ask that this group find ways to allow all members of the community to contribute to the process of preparing the testimony, and also that they seek to collaborate with local meetings that Hilary attended, in whatever way is appropriate. We ask that in the fullness of time, a written testimony be brought before a future YFGM for discernment.

## 2015.10 Changes to Finance Policy

We have heard from Alyn Still about suggested changes to finance policy, detailed in a document written by Finance Committee, attached to these minutes. We agree these changes as per this document.

## 2015.11 Nominations Returns

Role	Released	Appointed	Until
<b>Quintessential</b>	Thomas Hancock Carla Denyer	Toni Carmichael-Harris Christopher Tedd	May 2018
<b>Overseer</b>	Rici Marshall Anthony Ridge-Newman	Francesca Loise Liam Brighton	May 2017
<b>Convenor of Trustees</b>	<i>None (handover)</i>	Kellie Turner	October 2018
<b>Planning Weekend Newcomers</b>	Francesca Loise Toni Carmichael-Harris	Naomi Hooke Claudia Fry Liam Brighton	October 2015
<b>Nominations Committee</b>	Owen Jennings	<i>None (carried forward)</i>	
<b>YFGM Representative to Living Witness</b>	<i>None (brought forward)</i>	Ellen Elliott	May 2017
<b>YFGM Representative to Northern Friends Peace Board</b>	Freya Blyth	Laurence Hall	May 2018
<b>YFGM Representative to Quaker LGBT+ Fellowship</b>	<i>None (new role)</i>	Naomi Haigh	May 2017

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Role	Released	Appointed	Until
<b>YFGM Representative to <i>Towards a Quaker View of Mental Health</i> conference</b>	Rhian Blades	<i>None (one-off role)</i>	

Having heard the sad news of our Friend Hilary Botwright's passing, we remember the contribution that she made as a planning weekend newcomer, *The Young Quaker* editor, and as a member of the Mental Wellbeing Working Group.

## **2015.12 Reports**

We have heard from Francesca Loise and Toni Carmichael-Harris about their experiences as Planning Weekend newcomers, and from Jenny McCarthy and Rhiannon Rees about the European and Middle East Young Friends (EMEYF) Spring Gathering in Georgia. Jenny McCarthy provided feedback about the review that she has been carrying out about the joint internship with BYM.

We heard about the progress of our concerns with reports from Becky Riddell about our Mental Wellbeing concern and from Rachael Evans about the YF(GM Free) in March for our concern regarding Nuclear Disarmament.

## **2015.13 Thanks from Wheel Stop Trident group**

We have received a minute of thanks from Owen Everett and the members of Wheel Stop Trident group, who visited the YF(GM Free) in Reading in March, on their way from London to AWE Burghfield.

"Thank you YFGM for letting us join the YF(GM free) in Reading. It was really nice to connect with it, see old f/Friends and meet new people, sharing stories. Thanks for being flexible with our arrival times."

## **2015.14 Special Interest Groups**

This weekend we have enjoyed a wide variety of special interest groups:

- Worship Sharing – Becky Riddell
- Quotes and sayings in your spiritual journey – Julian Wood
- Mental Wellbeing Weekend with Woodbrooke – Becky Riddell
- Native American and Tribal Human Rights Abuses – Simon Marcus Caines
- Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs – Helena Chambers
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Ethics of Sex – Liz Chambers
- Games in the Garden – Cáit Gould

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## 2015.15 Catering

We thank Hereward Mills for helping with catering this weekend.

## 2015.16 Co-opted members of committees

This weekend the following people have been co-opted to serve on the named committees for the duration of the weekend:

Committee	Co-opted
Overseer	Ian Goggin
Overseer	Angharad Rhys
Nominations Committee	Francesca Loise

## 2015.17 Clerks' Offering

We have come together in Leicester Meeting House for May YFGM. It has been a difficult weekend for many of us as we remembered our friend Hilary Botwright and celebrated her life, friendship and valuable contribution to the community. As a community of Young Friends, the loss of one of our members is fortunately not something we are confronted with often and we hope that for those who knew Hilary the weekend and community have provided some support and comfort.

There was time this weekend to hear about the progress of our concerns. The working group for our concern for Nuclear Disarmament reported on their YF(GM Free) event in March, which involved learning valuable skills for campaigning. The group led us to explore our more extreme feelings towards nuclear weapons, and challenged us to use these feelings positively, be they anger or hope to strive for change.

Our working group for our concern for Mental Wellbeing gave an open and honest report of their progress so far and the challenges they have faced. We heard how they have been working with the wider Quaker community and plans for an event at Woodbrooke in 2016.

Both of our concern working groups this weekend reminded us that these concerns were adopted by the whole of YFGM and as such we all need to ensure that we engage with generating ideas, supporting actions and upholding all those who strive for change.

Our theme this weekend has been simplicity: through epilogues, prologues and spirituality sessions, Quintessential have provided us with space to worship, meditate and creatively reflect. At a difficult time for our community, the opportunity to praise and simply be together in the Light has been a comfort and a gift. Outside of our formal

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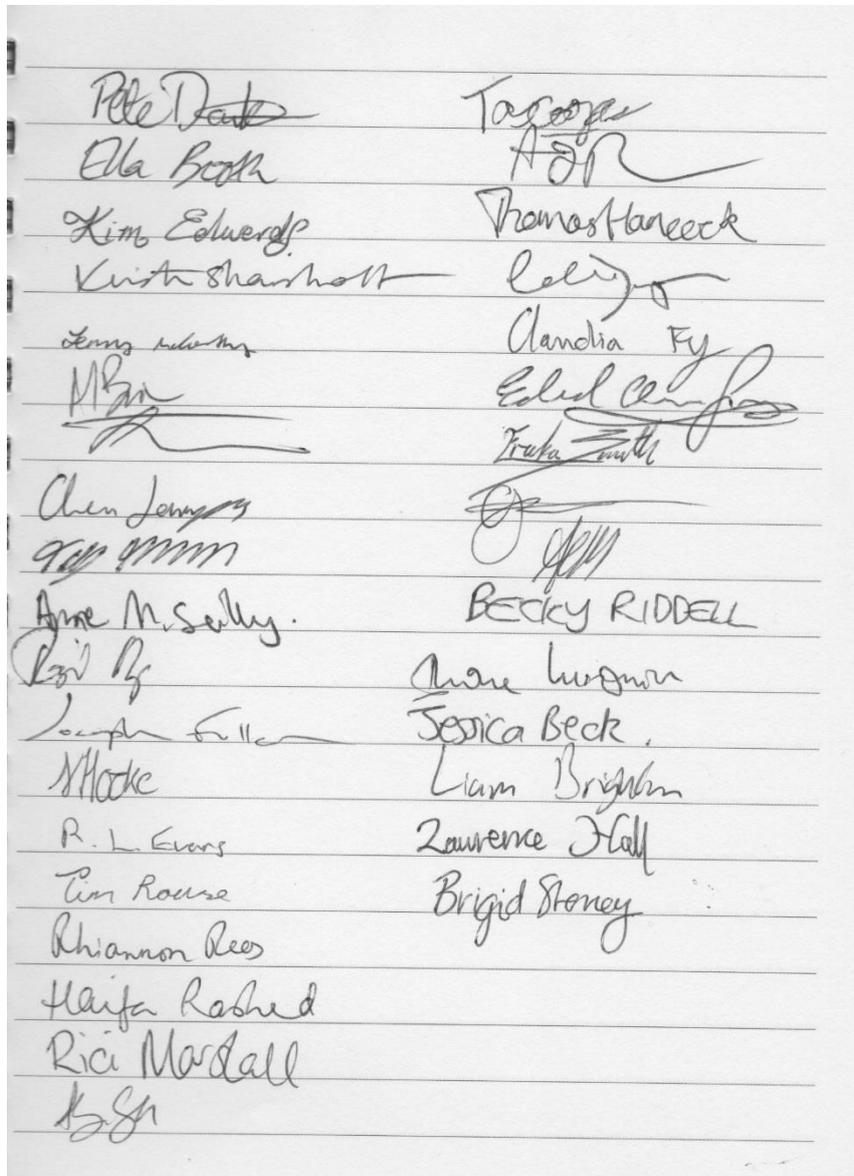


activities we have lived simply as a community, cooking and eating together; sharing conversation and enjoying the wonderful garden here at Leicester.

Several of us are soon moving on to the next stage of our lives, including Tim Rouse who has served as our intern this year. We are grateful for the energy and ideas that Tim has brought to YFGM through this role, and wish him well in his next challenge.

We will gather again in October in York, but the life of our community exists beyond these meetings. As we depart from Leicester, we carry all Young Friends in our hearts and walk with each other in spirit.

Brigid Stoney & Peter Doubtfire, Co-clerks



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## Attachment 1 – Role description for YFGM Representative to Quaker LGBT+ Fellowship

Up to 2 years

### **Purpose**

QLGF was for many years the Quaker Lesbian and Gay Fellowship, but at a time of increasing diversity is now better known as “QLGF the Quaker LGBT+ Fellowship”.

The purpose of this representative is to serve as a liaison between YFGM and QLGF in support of the work of both groups, particularly in areas of common concern.

### **Duties**

- Representing YFGM’s views on matters of common interest to QLGF
- Reporting back to YFGM on QLGF’s views and on progress with any liaison proposals
- Generally doing everything reasonably possible to facilitate liaison between the two groups, within the Society of Friends and more widely
- Attending QLGF committee meetings, national gatherings, and other events as appropriate.

### **What you could gain from the role**

- Experience of working on a committee outside YFGM
- Experience organising events

### **Skills required**

- An interest in the concerns of LGBT+ Friends (and others)
- Communication skills

### **Time commitment**

3-4 committee meetings per year, optionally up to 2 national gatherings per year, and communication between meetings. Reporting to YFGM annually.

### **Reporting timetable**

Reporting to YFGM once per year at General Meeting, precise time to be determined.

The report could take the form of a presentation in person or a written report in documents or advance or *The Young Quaker*.

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## Attachment 2 – Changes to Finance Policy

YFGM's Finance Policy sets out what we can do with our money and how we do it. Some parts of it are a few years behind our current practice; other parts would benefit from being made clearer.

These changes are presented here showing the old text and the amendments we're proposing to update & clarify.

<b>Changes to clarify treasurer roles:</b> In 2008 the role of Treasurer was split into two separate roles – a General Fund Treasurer and a trustee. Where the finance policy referred to “Treasurer” we’re proposing updates to make it explicit which role they relate to.		
	Old text	Proposed new text
Account signatories (1i)	<i>Except for the Employment Fund Petty Cash Account,</i> accounts shall have three signatories, the Treasurer and the Co-Clerks.	Accounts shall have three signatories, the General Fund Treasurer and the Co-Clerks.
Budget setting (2b)	The Treasurer shall present a budget for the forthcoming year...	The Treasurer (Finance Trustee) shall present a budget for the forthcoming year...
Finance Committee membership (2f)	In addition to the Treasurer, the Finance Committee shall be made up of all other treasurers appointed by General Meeting detailed in this document ...	In addition to the Treasurer (Finance Trustee), the Finance Committee shall be made up of all other treasurers appointed by General Meeting detailed in this document ...
Bursaries for YFGMs (3a)	... Young Friends who need help with travel expenses may apply to the YFGM Treasurer, preferably at the time of registration...	... Young Friends who need help with travel expenses may apply to the General Fund Treasurer, preferably at the time of registration...
Bursaries for Events (7c)	... The YFGM Treasurer should also be consulted in good time about making bursary help available ...	... The General Fund Treasurer should also be consulted in good time about making bursary help available ...
Handling overspends (5c)	... Overspends can be set against their next year's budget or met from the General Fund contingency allowance, by negotiation with the YFGM Treasurer...	... Overspends can be set against their next year's budget or met from the General Fund contingency allowance, by negotiation with the YFGM Treasurer (Finance Trustee)...

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**Catering Expenses:** Catering expenses are mentioned in a few different parts of finance policy, relating to YFGM gatherings, planning weekends and other committee meetings. Some of these have been updated over time, to simplify the way catering budgets are calculated and to remove fixed prices from the policy – where it’s harder to keep them updated with inflation. We’re proposing the changes below to apply these to the other sections.

	Old text	Proposed new text
Catering (3c)	<i>new text</i>	The costs of catering for General Meeting and planning weekends will be planned on the basis of an expected cost per-person, per-meal. This amount will be reviewed by Finance Committee and the catering coordinator when setting the annual budget.
(4c)	Food costs of Planning Weekends will be paid from the General Fund. The suggested food allowance per person is £8.	Food costs of Planning Weekends will be planned on the same basis as those for General Meetings (Section 3.c)
(5b)	If appointed groups or committees need to meet between business meetings, reasonable expenses of the meeting including food, travel costs and donation for the use of a Meeting House may be paid. <i>Suggested food allowances per person are £12 for a weekend meeting, £6 for a one day meeting (3 meals) and £3 for a single meal. Section 3(dc) applies. Sometimes it is necessary to meet at Woodbrooke in which case their charges for food may be paid.</i> Any further costs should as far as possible be met by the Young Friends at the meeting.	If appointed groups or committees need to meet between business meetings, reasonable expenses of the meeting including food, travel costs and donation for the use of a Meeting House may be paid. Any further costs should as far as possible be met by the Young Friends at the meeting.

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**Events arranged between YFGMs:** Special Interest Gatherings like YF(GM-Free)s can now be taken up between business meetings. We're proposing the change below to the section of finance policy handling expenses for these wasn't updated to reflect this.

	Old text	Proposed new text
Special Interest Gatherings (7e)	General Meeting shall appoint an Events Financial Oversight Person to oversee the financial affairs of each Special Interest Gathering.	When a Special Interest Gathering is agreed by either the Events Coordinator or General Meeting they shall appoint an Events Financial Oversight Person to oversee the financial affairs of each Special Interest Gathering.

**Other name changes:** The names for some other roles & organizations have changed over time. We're proposing the changes below to use the current names for area meetings, "The Young Quaker" and trustee roles (which were formerly referred to as "Officers")

The Quintessential trustee was not explicitly included in the list of trustees, we propose including it.

	Old text	Proposed new text
Area meetings (3f)	If a Monthly Meeting or Friends' School representative to General Meeting cannot claim from that body, then General Meeting will meet their expenses.	If an Area Meeting or Friends' School representative to General Meeting cannot claim from that body, then General Meeting will meet their expenses.
Trustees (1c & 4a)	In addition to those specified in the Constitution, the following Trustees shall be appointed by General Meeting: Overseers Trustee, Convener of Officers and Management Officer	In addition to those specified in the Constitution, the following Trustees shall be appointed by General Meeting: Overseers Trustee, Quintessential Trustee, Convener of Trustees and Management Trustee
	The people whose travel will be paid from the General Fund to attend Planning Weekends will be: Officers; ...	The people whose travel will be paid from the General Fund to attend Planning Weekends will be: Trustees; ...
Young Quaker (3d & 12a-d)	...the publication of YQ ...	... the publication of The Young Quaker ...
	... Young Quaker ...	... The Young Quaker ...

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**Budget timetable:** Finance policy asks that the budget be presented at the first YFGM of the year. This currently comes to YFGM in October so that it can be approved before the start of the year. We are proposing to amend finance policy to reflect that.

	Old text	Proposed new text
Budget (2b)	The Treasurer shall present a budget for the forthcoming year at the first business meeting of the year.	The Treasurer (Finance Trustee) shall present a budget for the forthcoming year for discussion at the last business meeting of the preceding year, or where this is not possible at the first business meeting of the year.

**Removing references to old/laid-down roles & groups:** Some groups and roles no longer exist, so we're proposing to take out the sections of finance policy that relate to them.

	Old text	Proposed new text
Pardshaw (3d)	The running of YFGM should break even over the year. This excludes events and Pardshaw, which should break even themselves...	The running of YFGM should break even over the year. This excludes events, which should break even themselves...
Jamboree	Jamboree, Jamborette and Young Friends National Gatherings shall be regarded as Special Interest Gatherings of General Meeting.	<i>removed</i>
Employment Account	An Employment Account shall be set up to meet the running costs of employing a Co-ordinator. A Young Friend shall be appointed as Employment treasurer and shall be a member of the Management Group. The Employment treasurer shall be responsible for paying the Co-ordinator. The Employment Account shall pay for the expenses of the Management Group, Co-ordinator's Support Group and the running costs of the office.	<i>removed</i>