

YOUNG FRIENDS GENERAL MEETING (YFGM)

Brighton Friends Meeting House, 15th –17th October 2004

Minutes

Present:

Co-Clerks:	Nessa Grimes & Nick Sturge
Treasurer:	Jenny Moy
Co-Convenors of Overseers:	Hannah Leavett & Guy Milner
Management Officer:	Naveed Moeed
Coordinator:	Ellie Colyer

Monthly Meeting Representatives:

Banbury and Evesham:	Benedict Goodwin	Bangor:	Rowan Burrough
Bristol and Frenchay:	Amanda Headley-White		
	Andrew Rendle	Cambridge and Peterborough:	Lucy Baines
Cheshire:	Darrel Spence	Colchester and Coggeshall:	Jez Smith
Darlington:	Sally Nicholls	Hardshaw East:	Sarah Donaldson
Hardshaw West:	Simon Shepherd	Lewes:	Sophie Elliot
Middle Division of			
Somerset:	Dorothy Lovell	Notts and Derbys:	Marie Drouin
Reading:	Naveed Moeed	South East Scotland:	Suzie Warden
South Wales:	Becky Herring	Southwark, Lewisham and Bromley:	John Bacon
West Devon:	Hannah Jones	Westminster:	Ellen Marshall
West Scotland:	Cait Gould	Worcestershire and Shropshire:	Dawn Filtness
York:	Hannah Spiers		

Adam Boardman, Anne Norton, Ben Maher, Candia Crosfield, Christie Brown, Dzifa Afonu, Eloise White, Eudora Pascall, Fran Lane, Hannah Eiseman-Renyard, Heather Rowlands, Helena Wren, Hereward Mills, Hugh Williams, Hugo Finley, Huw Still, Irene Ono-Macdonald, James Barnard, James Doering, Jennifer Brett, Jenny Ramell, Jessica Thatcher, Jonathan Doering, Juliette Sturge, Kate Coole, Katy Turquoise, Louise Mitchell, Lucy Mason, Luke Spiers, Marion Penn, Mark Russ, Mary Estall, Mike Stokes, Nick Rendle, Paddy Uglow, Paul Levy, Peggy Brett, Pip Johnson, Richy Rushmer, Thomas Rowlands, Tom Minor, Vivian Barty-Taylor

TOTAL: 71

04/24 Opening Minute

We welcome each other this weekend to our October YFGM in Brighton.

We would particularly like to welcome Louise Mitchell, who is joining us this weekend from the Council for Christians and Jews.

04/25 Testimony to the Grace of God as shown through the Life of Stephen Wolfenden

Further to minute 02/18, Jess Thatcher has read a testimony to us during our opening worship. A copy is attached to these minutes. We warmly thank Jess, Richy Rushmer and Rachel Phillips for their work in preparing this testimony. We ask our clerks to forward this testimony to Britain Yearly Meeting.

04/26 Report and Minutes from the Planning Weekend

We have listened to Eudora Pascall and Helena Wren's report from the YFGM Planning Weekend. With reference to P04/03 we ask that Pardshaw Committee and the attenders of the January 2005 Planning Weekend have further discussions about Pardshaw Committee's attendance at future Planning Weekends.

We adopt the minutes from the weekend as YFGM minutes. They will be attached to the minutes from this meeting.

04/27 Quaker Lesbian and Gay Fellowship (QLGF)

We have heard that the QLGF would welcome meetings becoming supporting meetings of QLGF. We would like to become a supporting meeting, and we ask our clerks to make the necessary arrangements.

We are keen to develop this area further, with QLGF and other gay and lesbian organisations. We ask that ways to achieve this be considered at the next Planning Weekend, and encourage anyone to feed ideas into this process.

04/28 2003 Accounts

Jenny Moy has presented the accounts for YFGM in 2003. We agree that with some minor amendments the accounts presented will be an accurate record of our finances for 2003. When the examiner of the accounts has made some technical changes to the way they are presented, and when all other changes have been made, we ask our trustees to approve the accounts and send them to the Charity Commission.

04/29 Living With Our Conscience

We have talked about the challenges that face us as we let our lives speak our faith. Quakerism calls us to think about difficult moral issues, and sometimes to step out from the crowd and justify our moral position. This gives us a chance to grow and learn, and also to talk about our faith with the people around us.

Sharing our stories about living as Quakers in the world – 'seeking to know one another in the things that are eternal' – is inspiring. We can draw strength from these stories to know that we are a community of people who do live what they believe. When we have to make a difficult or controversial decision at work or in our life, we are not alone as we carry it out.

04/30 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>
YFGM Treasurer	3 years		Huw Still
Leavers Management Committee Rep	3 years		Fran Lane
Quaker Peace and Social Witness Representative	3 years	Rachel Barker	Jonathan Doering
Council Representative			
Outreach Financial Overseer		Hannah Pennock	
Co-ordinator's Support	2 years	Nick Perks	Mark Russ

Group		Robyn Kearns	Matthew Arnot
Overseer	2 years	Chris McCartney	Julie Ward
		Anna Dicker	
		Hannah Leavett	Hannah Jones
Management Group (Line Manager)	3 years	Tom Lightowler	Dorothy Lovell
Children and Young	3 years	Heather Rowlands	Hannah Leavett
People's Committee		Blair Hunwick	Blair Hunwick (reappointed)
Planning Weekend	Until Feb	James Barnard	Suzie Warden
Newcomers		Emily Maddison	Dorothy Lovell
		Sally Nicholls	Sally Nicholls
		Helena Wren	Lucy Mason
Britain Yearly Meeting representatives for the World Gathering of Young Friends	Until October 2005		Richy Rushmer
<i>Young Quaker</i> Editor	3 years	Jess Thatcher	Jez Smith
Outreach Committee	3 years	Hannah Pennock	Hereward Mills
Catering Co-ordinator	3 years	Marion Penn	Adam Boardman
Appeal Group	1 year	Naveed Moeed	James Doering
Appeal Treasurer		Jennifer Brett	
Pardshaw Committee		Matthew Gee	
Convenor of Nominations Committee	2 years	Ellie Colyer	John Bacon
Co-Convenor of Overseers	2 years	Hannah Leavett	Mike Stokes

04/31 Minute of Record – New Trustee

Further to Minute 04/30, we have appointed Mike Stokes as an Officer and a Trustee of YFGM for a period of 2 years.

04/32 Minute of Record – Changes of Signatory

We authorise the following people to be the signatories of the General Fund accounts:

Nick Sturge
Nessa Grimes
Jenny Moy
Huw Still

04/33 Volunteers

We thank the following people for volunteering to help in the following ways at the next YFGM in Newcastle 18th–20th February 2005:

Pan Transport: James Doering
Jonathan Doering
Catering: Benedict Goodwin
Suzie Warden

04/34 Rollover: Quakers and the Lottery

As a response to the reissued statement of the Quaker position on the National Lottery, we have spent some time considering gambling, the Lottery and financial speculation. We recognise that all money in a capitalist system is at some stage involved in

speculation. We also recognise that we have a moral and ethical responsibility to think carefully about what we do with the money we have and earn.

We have shared with each other the different ways we take on this responsibility and have found thinking about the complexity of these issues challenging and rewarding.

04/35 Closing Minute

We thank each other for the fellowship and community we have shared and built together this weekend. We have appreciated having a lot of time for special interest groups and sessions focused on aspects of our lives. Our Quakerism challenges us to be true to ourselves and our ideals in all parts of our lives, and we have gained strength and energy to live up to that challenge through the consideration and sharing we have taken part in this weekend.

Hearing the testimony about Stephen Wolfenden has also reminded us of our humility and fragility, that our idealism must be grounded in reality.

Since our last meeting in May we now have a new Co-ordinator. Ellie Colyer is now serving YFGM in this role. We welcome her to the post and wish her luck.

Simon Best has been YFGM Co-ordinator for 3 years, and has glued YFGM together through difficult transitions, as he took on the General Fund then all the YFGM bookkeeping, and when the Planning Weekend structure was introduced. Throughout his time as Co-ordinator Simon has been efficient, friendly, helpful and dedicated far beyond what we could have asked. We send him our enormous thanks, wish him well, and look forward to seeing him back at YFGM in the future.

Hannah Leavett has now finished her service as Co-Convenor of Overseers. We have valued her enthusiasm, her commitment and her sense of fun. We thank her for her hard work towards making YFGM run smoothly.

We hope that the warmth and inspiration we take with us from this weekend will help sustain us through the winter months. We look forward to new opportunities to share in each other's light in the new year.

Signed in and on behalf of Young Friends General Meeting

Nick Sturge and Nessa Grimes

Co-Clerks

A Testimony to the Grace of God in the life of Stephen Wolfenden

Steve wasn't an easy person. Grace was shown through his life in what he was able to give despite being broken, allowing others to be. He was not comfortable with himself but he could make other people feel better about themselves. Life just seemed to be like this for him and many people found his articulation of their emotions bonded them to him. He couldn't set boundaries for himself but he encouraged his friends to step towards being more responsible for theirs. He made people laugh despite being deeply unhappy inside. He was very ill most of his life, often very frightened and confused, struggling to cope with his eating disorder and yet he still exhausted himself to help his friends. He was physically weak but there was something very tough and strong about him. Steve had a passion for writing, and was an artistic person with a deep sense of style and an appreciation of words, colours, shapes and sounds, especially dramatic and dark ones. Stephen had so many different sides to him, all of which actually were him. He used them to relate to each of us in different ways – the ones which suited us best.

Serious illness prevented Steve from paid work for much of his adult years. A chance meeting with Harry Kingham, an old school friend, had brought him first to New Year Gathering in 1999/2000 and then to YFGM so although most of us had not known Stephen for long, some of us were privileged to share in bits of his journey. It feels precious that he trusted us with the fragility that he was. He contributed to concerns within YFGM, co-facilitating a session about same sex marriage and in February 2001 he was appointed to the editorial team of Young Quaker Magazine. Despite his service to YFGM he never realised that he was a significant part of our community.

Born on 29th February 1972 in Glasgow, he had moved with his mother & sister to Bath when he was an infant to live with his grandparents. He had lived most of his life in Bath and this was a distinct part of his identity, he had a great deal of knowledge about the place and enjoyed laughing at all the tourists.

At age 29 he suffered a brain haemorrhage and died two days later on 20th February 2002. His ashes were scattered on Solsbury hill, a place which he could see from his mother's flat. In 1999 he had changed his name by deed poll to Stephen Ethan Ker Wolfenden, a new name for a new start and when he died he had been striving to recover and to make life better for himself, renting a flat of his own and attending an eating disorders clinic in Bristol.

What Stephen had done with his short time, his achievements, are of little importance, it was his spirit, the person he was, which touched our lives and that is what he will be remembered for.

He had an amazingly kind, sensitive nature and was very witty, with a dry but wonderful sense of humour, laughing at obscure things and sometimes at his own hurts. He was proud of and yet troubled by many aspects of himself, an explorer into the bewildering and painful territory of his own life. He would sometimes lash out at friends: he could hide his pain extremely well and would snap unexpectedly. His anger was entirely understandable: it came up as he recognised bits of the compromises he'd made throughout his life to survive.

Although he was anorexic Stephen liked to eat and he had a great love of food.

At times he seemed to be striving for acceptance, lacking confidence and at others the defiant strength of Steve's expressive, outgoing personality shone through. He was truly moved by honest affection and by being shown friendship, and he had a strong generosity of spirit. People found they could talk with him and he would understand their feeling experiences. He was very good at giving compliments in a way that the person could handle. Steve has been described as a beacon. Not in the sense of a light house protecting from harm on the rocks but a beacon radiating clarity.

Through knowing Stephen, through trying to allow him to just be himself and find his own solutions to his brokenness, and through his death a gift has come to us, to YFGM as a community, to the relationship between ourselves, learning to extend what his life brought to us and take it out into the world, expressing ourselves. Every time we lose someone, whether we ever got to know them properly or not, we gain a little bit more insight into the world. Sometimes this may be something we thrive on and sometimes we may resent it and that's ok because we're not called to be superhuman, only to do our best. We are left with a wonderful legacy and we are that legacy: changed, stronger people.

by Richy Rushmer and Jess Thatcher
with support from Rachel Phillips
and many others

YOUNG FRIENDS GENERAL MEETING (YFGM) PLANNING WEEKEND

Reading Friends Meeting House, 3rd September – 5th September 2004

Minutes

Present:

Quintessential	Eudora Pascall, Vivian Barty-Taylor & Ben Maher
YFGM Treasurer:	Jenny Moy
Co-Convenors of Overseers:	Guy Milner & Hannah Leavett
Co-ordinator:	Ellie Colyer
YFGM clerks:	Nick Sturge & Nessa Grimes
Management Group:	Naveed Moeed, Heather Rowlands
Special Interest Coordinator:	Juliette Sturge
InterChurch/Faith Secretary:	Mark Russ
Outreach committee:	Leon Spence, Jane Osborne & Mark Russ
YQ Co-editor and Financial Oversight Person:	Jess Thatcher
Employment Treasurer:	Dawn Filtness
Newcomer to Planning Weekend:	Helena Wren

Minutes from YFGM Planning Weekend in Reading 2004

P04/01 Peace Tax

We have heard from our employment treasurer, Dawn Filtness, about the situation regarding withholding of Peace Tax. Dawn commented on the respectful nature of the dialogue that had taken place, with the Inland Revenue responding to correspondence. The money was paid after the threat of court action.

P04/02 YQ Report

We thank Jess Thatcher as YQ representative for her report at this Planning Weekend and are pleased to hear of the proposal that YQ will be attending the April Planning Weekend on an annual basis in future. The next YQ board meeting will take place at YFGM in Brighton.

P04/03 Pardshaw Committee attending Planning Weekends

A letter will be sent by Quintessential to Pardshaw Committee on behalf of the Planning Weekend, explaining why we feel it is important that they attend the January Planning Weekend annually.

P04/04 Nominations Convenor

A small group, including a member of Quintessential and the outgoing Convenor of Nominations met to discern the next Convenor of Nominations. Nominations Committee requested external support

for this process, as four of the seven members of the committee were willing to serve as Convenor. The name of John Bacon was discerned.

P04/05 Crèche

We have considered the questions written by Guy Milner, Co-Convenor of overseers that will be forwarded to the coordinator on the issue of crèche facilities and children at YFGM. This is a matter, which has concerned YFGM for some time. It is a legal issue because it relates to child protection, an area with stringent guidelines. We attach the amended document regarding the issues involved in bringing children to YFGM.

We ask the Co-Convenors of overseers to ensure that Ruth Todhunter, our Crèche Coordinator, is in possession of a current police check.

P04/06 Management group report

We thank Management Group for their report. Management Group highlighted the importance of copying the YFGM Coordinator into all communication between and within committees unless inappropriate and ensuring that job descriptions are kept up to date. We thank them for their work in supporting our new coordinator, Ellie Colyer.

P04/07 RECAST

We thank Jenny Moy, YFGM representative on RECAST for her report and look forward to hearing how this matter develops at February YFGM. We recognize the hard work put in by Jenny and offer her prayerful support.

P04/08 Accounts

Jenny Moy, YFGM Treasurer has expressed her hope that accounts will be available by YFGM in October, also highlighting that the YQ account examiner has changed: In a previous minute, (P0404) it was agreed that Alice Drewery would undertake this task subject to consent. Nick Sturge has undertaken this work over the course of this weekend.

P04/09 World Gathering of Young Friends

YFGM has been asked to select the two BYM representatives for this event, which will be funded by BYM. The nominations process for the BYM Representatives will take place at YFGM in Brighton. Additionally, YFGM will create an initial bursary fund of £5000 to enable participation and we invite any Young Friend in BYM, who has been accepted for an open place to apply for this help.

We ask WGYF logistics group to place an advert in the Friend regarding this minute. Jess Thatcher will advertise it in Young Quaker.

P04/10 YFGM not breaking even

We thank Jenny Moy, YFGM treasurer for her analysis of why YFGM Business Meetings are not breaking even, factors include the cost of travel and food. We feel knowledge about the cost of both travel and food may help Young Friends think more about cost cutting. We thank Jess Thatcher for offering to write a letter detailing ways of saving money, which will be sent to subsidized YFGM

participants. We agree that if the majority of food bought is organic, then the budget will be raised by a third.

We will continue to raise awareness about the full cost of YFGM and will review this issue in September 2005.

P04/11 Bursary policy

We thank Jenny Moy, our YFGM treasurer, for the proposed bursary policy and approve it as our bursary policy with the suggested amendments made. A copy is attached to these minutes.

P04/12 Security

We have discussed the issue of security as a group, noting the difficulties entailed in protecting property at YFGM in the light of two recent thefts as well as other security issues. Hannah Leavett has agreed to consult with Guy Milner and produce a set of guidelines covering security to be presented at the next planning weekend in January.

P04/13 Catering

We have raised the issue of appointing a named person to co-ordinate the catering at planning weekends who will take overall responsibility for food. It was felt that having an extra person would be against the spirit of planning weekends. Secondly, giving one person the task of spending an entire weekend catering was deemed inappropriate. As a consequence, it is felt that the shopping and menu could be performed by an individual who lives near the meeting house where the next planning weekend is to take place. The YFGM Co-ordinator would identify this name.

P04/14 BYM Agenda committee

BYM agenda committee has asked YFGM whether we have any proposals we wish to be taken to BYM in York 2005. We will send a YFGM representative to Agenda Committee in September to present a proposal related to our work and appeal on the issue of mental health.