

Young Friends General Meeting

(Registered charity no. 1064763)

Annual Report 2010

Officers

Management Officer	Tom Rowlands – until October 2010 Jessica Metheringham-Owlett – from June 2010
Co Clerks	Siobhan Haire Cait Gould - until June 2010 Sally Nicholls – from June 2010
Co Convenor of Overseers	Hugh Williams – until October 2010
Treasurer	Eleanor Coss – until June 2010 Bryony Elias – from February
Convenor of Officers	Maud Grainger – until June 2010 Hannah Spiers – from June 2010
Quintessential Officer	Rebecca Mattingly – from February 2010
Overseer Officer	Andrew Williams – from October 2010

Structure, Governance & Management

Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) is the national organisation of young adult Quakers in Britain. It is constituted as an unincorporated registered charity and is governed by its constitution adopted 26th May 1997. The trustees are Young Friends appointed by general meeting and comprise a minimum of two clerks and a treasurer and then such additional officers as the members at a business meeting shall decide. YFGM business meetings take place on three weekends a year, enabling us to plan a variety of other gatherings and activities. YFGM as a whole makes decisions using the Quaker Business Method. A large number of volunteers, joining together in small groups, put our ideas into practice.

Objectives and Activities

YFGM provides an opportunity for young adult members and attenders of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and people interested in Quakerism to meet like-minded people of a similar age, to share our interests, to explore the bounds of spiritual community and to get to know each other 'in the things which are eternal'.

YFGM has a constitution, which defines its objectives as follows:-

The advancement of religion in accordance with the principles and practices of the Religious Society of Friends commonly called Quakers. Such other purposes recognised as exclusively charitable according to the laws of England and Wales as the trustees in their absolute discretion think fit and in furtherance of these objects the advancement of "concerns" that have been adopted by the General Meeting according to the principles and practices of yearly meeting of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. Advancement can include promotion of informed discussion among Young Friends and elsewhere, provision of resources where appropriate, and the taking of action.

Looking Inwards

One focus this year has been strengthening our community. Each meeting we explore our spirituality together with sessions looking inward at our own beliefs and opinions, and outward at broader social justice issues and ways to live our Quaker faith in the 21st Century. We've been grateful of the huge range of speaker sessions we've had, including looking at Quaker attitudes to alcohol and drugs, conflict and the environment in Palestine, exploring the concept of 'home',

holding interfaith discussions to mark interfaith week in the autumn and a creative "Naked Voice" workshop.

Our meetings have been joyous and full of good humour. We value the community time at our weekends and having created the new role of Events Co-ordinator in late 2009, we enjoyed 3 social and spiritual gatherings throughout 2010 in addition to our 3 general meetings. We hope to support a range of events in 2011 and to prioritise time for connecting with each other in our busy meetings.

Our magazine, 'Young Quaker' has been restructured and relaunched and has increased its subscribers considerably. We continue to welcome newcomers and organise an annual Newcomers gathering alongside our February YFGM.

In the last year, we've also looked at making our systems and support structures clear and effective. A new trustee role was created – a representative from our Eldership committee – and this has been a successful step in creating further connections between trustees and committees, aiding communication.

Looking Outwards

After a period of reflection since our last appeal we felt happy to adopt a new appeal, Firefly, a youth reconciliation project in Bosnia. We see the appeal as opportunity for YFGM to raise awareness and funds to make positive changes to the lives of people around the world.

The committee which oversees our sessions and Quaker Business Method has started sharing our working methods with the wider Quaker community running a series of workshop across the country. We anticipate the development of this work in 2011.

We have begun to plan our involvement in Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering in 2011 and look forward to celebrating our 100th birthday with Quakers nationally at this event. We have become the nominating body for the Transitional Group Coordinator, a group for Young Quakers at Britain Yearly Meeting events. We look forward to seeing how this link develops over coming years.

In accordance with Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, we would like to highlight the following activities from 2010:

- Events, open to all, an opportunity for community development
- Our appeal project, raising awareness and funds for Firefly, a youth reconciliation project
- Running Quaker Business Method workshops nationally to share our experience

We are investing in our volunteers, and ensuring training needs are met for those roles that require particular skills. In 2010 this was a priority for YFGM.

Byrony Elias

Hannah Jones