

YOUNG FRIENDS GENERAL MEETING (YFGM)

Newcastle Friends Meeting House, 18th – 20th February 2005

Minutes

Present:

Co-Clerks:	Nessa Grimes & Nick Sturge
Treasurers:	Huw Still & Jenny Moy
Co-Convenors of Overseers:	Mike Stokes & Guy Milner
Coordinator:	Ellie Colyer

Monthly Meeting Representatives:

Banbury & Evesham:	Benedict Goodwin	Cheshire:	Darrel Spence
Colchester & Coggeshall:	Hannah Leavett	Cornwall:	Sowena Nelson
	Jez Smith	Darlington:	Sally Nicholls
	Maud Grainger	Dundee:	Paul Dodwell
Hardshaw East:	Sarah Donaldson	Leicester:	Peter Dixon
Kingston & Wandsworth:	Annabella Krol	Middle Division of Somerset:	Dorothy Lovell
Notts & Derbys:	Marie Drouin	Reading:	Jane Osborne
South East Scotland:	Susie Warden		Léon Spence
	Vivian Barty-Taylor	Warwickshire:	Anna Dicker
Worcestershire & Shropshire:			Kris Turner
	Dawn Filtness	York:	Hannah Spiers

Adam Boardman, Adam Lee, Alyn Still, Andie Barlow, Anna Sharman, Aron Ellefson, Brett Lombardi, Chris Hanning, Emily Maddison, Emma Loader, Eudora Pascall, George Bardsley, Heather Rowlands, Hereward Mills, Hugo Finley, Ian Nicholls, Jake Spence, James Barnard, James Doering, Jennifer Batten, Jennifer Brett, Joe Anderson, John Fitzgerald, Jonathan Doering, Joseph Coffin, Juliette Sturge, Luke Spiers, Marion Penn, Mark Russ, Nick Rendle, Nicola Higgins, Oliver Robertson, Paul Levy, Paul Sladen, Rachel Xerri, Roanna Heller, Ruth White, Ruth Wood, Sam Barnett-Cormack, Simon Best, Simon Gray, Thomas Rowlands, Tom Harris, Tom Spence

Total: 72

05/01 Opening Minute

We welcome each other to a new year and to YFGM here in Newcastle. We look forward to getting to know one another and having fun on several different levels. We particularly welcome the participants on our Enquirers' Gathering and wish them a fruitful weekend.

05/02 Planning Weekend minutes

We have listened to Eudora and Juliette's report from the January Planning Weekend. We will discuss P05/05 further during the weekend. With the exception of this minute, we adopt the minutes from the weekend as YFGM minutes. They will be attached to the minutes of this meeting.

05/03 Our Faith

Nessa Grimes and Mark Russ have introduced an interactive session giving us space to share and discuss what we believe and what prophecies we would like to make.

We will have the opportunity to see what each other have written.

Our beliefs are very personal to us and although we are each unique, as Quakers there are a lot of beliefs we share. YFGM hasn't spent much time recently contemplating such basics, and we have valued this activity.

05/04 Who do you think we are? YFGM and BYM

Nick Sturge and Simon Best facilitated a session exploring the nature of the links between YFGM and Britain Yearly Meeting. We used imaginary scenarios to help us think about how YFGM relates to Britain Yearly Meeting and vice versa.

05/05 2005 Budget

Huw Still, our Treasurer, has prepared us a budget for 2005, a copy of which is attached. We approve this budget and thank Huw and Finance Committee for their work in preparing this on our behalf.

05/06 Exploring Sexuality

Anna Sharman has led us in a consideration of sexuality. Sexuality is more than just sexual orientation, it can be described as 'whatever turns you on'. Whilst our sexuality is not under our control, our responses to it are.

We have heard some Young Friends' stories, and done a brainstorm on what influences, pressures and messages we receive about sex and sexuality. We have continued this consideration in small group discussions.

Our sexuality has close links with our spirituality, and this theme has shone through in our session, with our thoughts resting on love, tolerance, choice, and how we treat each other; all strong facets of our Quakerism.

We have greatly valued this chance to openly share a subject that is very personal, important to us, and seldom spoken aloud. Our Quaker way is to be open, accepting, and explore our individual responses for ourselves, finding much common ground. We feel that if this approach were taken more often towards sexuality, then many of the troubles associated with this subject would be diminished.

05/07 Recast report

Further to minute 05/02, a special interest group has met to consider issues that have arisen resulting from P05/05, which appears indented below.

P05/05 RECAST report

During our YFGM Planning Weekend 7th-9th January 2005 we have struggled with the report by the Working Group on Representation, Accountability and Communication in our Structures (RECAST) and have spent much of our session time considering this matter.

The RECAST report has been sent out to Meeting for Sufferings, however our RECAST representative Jenny Moy was not able to agree the report as she felt it lacked enough detail on the proposals on central structures. This may seem like a minor problem but we have greater concern regarding the way RECAST arrived at its decisions.

We have heard from Jenny about the procedure in completing the report and feel it did not uphold the Quaker business method as we understand it;

such as asking RECAST to agree the entire minutes of the meeting en bloc at the end of a meeting. This has happened repeatedly including in a residential meeting in February 2004 and on 7th January 2005. The meeting on 7th January included a minute agreeing the RECAST report. Some members of the group had already left at his point.

With a heavy heart we feel we must forward our concerns on this to Meeting for Sufferings, BYM Agenda Committee and RECAST.

This minute was not received by Meeting for Sufferings or Britain Yearly Meeting agenda committee because it was not a minute of YFGM in full session. However, key people involved in taking the RECAST report forward have heard the concerns the Planning Weekend minute raised. Esther Boyd and Gavin Burnell from the RECAST group talked to the special interest group to respond to our concerns.

We will discuss the relationship between YFGM, Planning Weekends and other parts of BYM at the next Planning Weekend with a view to being more clear about what the Planning Weekend can do. We look forward to considering the RECAST report's proposals in detail at our May YFGM.

We will send this minute to the recording clerk's office and to RECAST for information.

05/08 Nominations

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

<u>Position</u>	<u>Period of Service</u>	<u>Person Appointed</u>	<u>Released from Service</u>
Co-clerk	3 years	Guy Milner	Nick Sturge
Line Manager	3 years	Jonathan Doering	Hannah Leavett
Management Officer	3 years	Ruth Wood	Naveed Moeed
Overseer	2 years	Hannah Spiers	Sarah Castle
		Luke Spiers	Guy Milner
		Ian Nicholls	
Co-convenor of Overseers	2 years	Tom Rowlands	Guy Milner
Quintessential	3 years	James Barnard	Aidan McCartney
YFGM Treasurer	-	-	Jenny Moy
Special Interest	-	-	Juliette Sturge (was Stoller)
Co-Ordinator			
Pardshaw Committee	3 years	Sam Barnett-Cormack	Nick Perk
Outreach Committee	-	-	Laura Wirtz
			Léon Spence
Outreach Financial Oversight Person	Until Feb '06	Mark Russ	
<i>Young Quaker</i> Editor	3 years	Annabella Krol	Becky Herring
<i>YQ</i> Financial Oversight Person	Until Feb '06	Jez Smith	Jess Thatcher
Member of WGYF Appeal Group	-	-	Léon Spence
Iona Conference Rep	Until Oct '05	Ellie Colyer	
Planning Weekend Newcomers	Until May '05	Aron Ellefson	Dorothy Lovell
		Lucy Mason	Sally Nicholls
		Emily Maddison	Emily Maddison (reappointed)
Members of Nominations Committee	2 years	Hannah Leavett	James Barnard
		Jennifer Batten	

05/09 Minute of record – New Trustees

Further to minute 05/08 we have appointed Guy Milner and Ruth Wood as our Officers and Trustees of YFGM for three years, and Thomas Rowlands as an Officer and Trustee of YFGM for 2 years.

05/10 Minute of record – Changes of signatory

We authorize the following people to act as signatories for the following accounts:

General Fund Current and Deposit Accounts: Guy Milner

Nessa Grimes

Huw Still

Employment Fund Current and Deposit Accounts: Guy Milner

Nessa Grimes

Dawn Filtness

05/11 Volunteers

We thank the following people for volunteering to help in the following ways at the next YFGM in Bournemouth 27th – 30th May 2005:

Pan Transport: Darrel Spence

Catering: Peter Dixon

Marion Penn

Kris Turner

05/12 Closing Minute

We have enjoyed our time here at Newcastle, and had time to consider our beliefs, our spirituality and our sexuality. We have felt the simple truth that we need to be loved, and to love, the people we are.

We have been blessed with the magical wonder of falling snow as we have met together.

Our Outreach committee has run a parallel Enquirers Gathering during this weekend. We have valued the input that the enquirers have given to the weekend, both in session time and through enriching our community.

We have enjoyed having Brett Lombardi visiting our meeting and hope he will carry our greetings back to Australia Yearly Meeting.

Three YFGM Officers have finished their periods of service this YFGM and we thank them deeply for their dedicated commitment to making YFGMs happen.

Jenny Moy has been an outstanding treasurer, looking really thoroughly at our financial affairs, proactively revising policies and taking a fresh look at how we do things. She has presented her thoughts clearly and accessibly, allowing us to make informed decisions on our finances. We have also appreciated her sense of fun and her passion about important things.

Guy Milner was appointed as an overseer on his first YFGM and has spent the following years honing his overseeing skills to a fine art. He has dealt with intruders, burglary, entertainment compèring and silly game facilitating with patience, humour and without getting in a flap.

Nick Sturge has clerked our meetings with great wisdom and commitment. He has worked hard with others to bring about a new way of doing business at YFGMs. He has

been an instrumental part of this process and of our community as a whole. We will miss his enthusiasm, his smile and his gentle kindness.

We look forward to seeing each other again at our May YFGM in Bournemouth.

Signed in and on behalf of YFGM,

Nessa Grimes

Nick Sturge

Minutes from Ealing Planning Weekend 7-9 January 2005

P05/01 Pardshaw Report

We thank Andrew Rendle for his report and look forward to the Summer Gathering to be held the week before WGYF (4th – 16th August 2005). The Pardshaw building is in good order. The Committee is in need of an additional member; we hope this position will be filled at February YFGM. It has been valuable to have Pardshaw Committee at our Planning Weekend and we hope they will join us at the Planning Weekend in a year's time.

P05/02 Outreach Report

We thank Mark Russ for his report and anticipate an informative Enquirer's Gathering running alongside February YFGM in Newcastle. He has told us of his concerns about the functioning of the committee but feels much clearer following their meeting this weekend. We have benefited from Outreach Committee joining us at this Planning Weekend. We look forward to their participation in next January's Planning Weekend.

P05/03 Peace Tax

The YFGM Coordinator Ellie Colyer has reported to us regarding this issue. She has decided not to ask YFGM trustees to withhold a portion of her tax on her behalf. We thank Ellie for her careful discernment on this and support her decision. Ellie intends to take the same amount that would be withheld from her own salary and donate it to a charity involved in peace work.

P05/04 Letter from Iona

Britain Yearly Meeting has asked YFGM to suggest 2 names of Young Friends to attend a conference at the Iona community entitled 'Breaking down dividing walls in the 21st Century' in September 2005. We feel this is a great opportunity to participate in this conference. To ensure as many Young Friends as possible can consider attending we will make appointments at February YFGM. We ask Nominations Committee to take this forward. We ask Nick to inform BYM and the Iona community that we will be appointing names at February YFGM, and to ensure details of the conference are in the YFGM documents in advance and on the YFGM announce e-mail list.