

# Young Friends General Meeting Online 29th-31st May 2021 Minutes

**Those Present:** Angus Morrice, Chloe Scaling, Grace Roberts, Gray Wood, Gwenllian Shipsides, Hannah Davies, Hannah Cook, Hannah Stranex, Henry Atkinson, Jacob Webb, James Davies, Jennie Atherton, Jennifer Herbert, Katie Turney, Katie Muller, Kim Edwards, Laurence Hall, Leilani Rabemananjara, Liam Brighton, Mary Lea, Rachael Booth, Rowan Langley, Sally Wrenwood, Samuel Cooper, Sasha Lawson-Frost, Tas Cooper, Thomas Bell, Tim Rouse, Tim Hall Farthing, Toby Freeman

**Total: 30**

Co-Clerks	Samuel Cooper and Zoe Marquis
Trustees	Alexandra Boliver-Brown, Liam Brighton, Sam Cooper, James Davies, Zoe Marquis, Tim Hall-Farthing, Sasha Lawson-Frost
Coordinator	None

## 2021.5.1 Accounts Report

James, our Finance Trustee, has presented the YFGM accounts for 2020. We thank James for his work in putting this year's accounts together, and all friends who worked to get the accounts to us in such a clear form.

Due to the effects of the pandemic on BYM, we do not know exactly what our office costs for the year will be; the current value is an estimate, and the true cost may vary, though not by more than £1,000 either way.

On the understanding that this and the minor issues mentioned in the meeting will be ironed out, we are reassured by the state of the meeting's finances, and we approve the accounts.

### 2021.5.2 YFGM Free

We have heard from our friend Gwenllian Shipsides regarding a potential YFGM camping trip, currently intended to take place at Harmon's Cross Railway campsite in Dorset from 20th to the 22nd of August 2021.

We thank Angus Morrice, Liam Brighton, Sasha Lawson-Frost and Gwenllian Shipsides for their help in the organisation of this event. YFGM accessibility funds will be made available for any concerns raised before the camping trip.

### 2021.5.3 YFGM post pandemic

We see the wish and the need for a YFGM in person, and we will try the possibility of holding one in October. At the same time, we accept that it may not be possible to return at once to in-person gatherings being just as we remember them.

We acknowledge the need to clarify our position with BYM on the level of support we will have by the autumn. We also note the need to step up communication within our community as a whole. We recognise the challenges that organising such an event will bring. But we have good hope that friends might be happy to be co-opted to help bring about our first in-person gathering in so long a time.

As we cannot now know what the situation will be in the autumn, we leave the decision of whether to go ahead with an in-person meeting, decide against it, or call for an extraordinary general meeting to discern the matter, with committees and Trustees.

### 2021.5.4 Planning Weekends post pandemic

We approve the idea of holding two planning weekends a year online, and one in person, though recognising that they will most likely remain online during 2022.

### 2021.5.5 Reports

We thank our Friend Katie Muller for reporting her experiences as a planning weekend newcomer at April's weekend. Mention was made of both the

threshing process and the games and worship which surround it, and of the collaborative work which comes together to make YFGM possible: and how nice it was to see and be part of everything that goes on.

Tom, our fundraiser, briefly spoke about an appeal being brought to the Friend magazine.

#### 2021.5.6      [Employing a Co-ordinator](#)

Tim Hall-Farthing, our management Trustee, has presented a report detailing our current relationship with Friends House.

Under our current, temporary arrangement a member of the team covers the work previously performed by the coordinator. This has not worked especially well, with a persistent lack of both clarity and service. A new agreement is being negotiated and we expect further negotiations with Friends House over the next few months.

We approve the formation of a working group made up of co-opted volunteers with the aim of negotiating the new arrangement in detail with Friends House. Any member of our community that wishes to volunteer is asked to contact Tim Hall Farthing, our Management Trustee.

Trustees and the working group are empowered to approve an interim deal, which will be brought back to the General Meeting for the discernment of our community as a whole, when we can see how the new agreement is working.

#### 2021.5.7      [Upper Age Soft Limit](#)

Over the weekend we have considered the age range of YFGM and in particular the upper age limit of our community.

We recognise with gratitude the strengths of YFGM in its current shape, as a community with a range of different ages, which fosters friendship and growth through a long stage of life. YFGM has these strengths because it has its own

identity; it is not just another meeting, not just a catch-all for Quakers who don't feel at home elsewhere. The boundaries of our meeting are part of what makes us the specific thing we are.

We see the advantages of greater straightforwardness and clarity, greater plainness, in defining our own limits. We will replace our current 30-ish with a more defined upper age limit of 35. We ask that future registration forms should ask about this age range, and that appropriate changes are made to our website and other publicity. In setting and choosing to implement this stricter range, we see clearly the need to make clear the steadfast love in which we hold one another, and especially those who are most closely touched by the approach of these boundary-lines.

Guests will always be welcome at YFGM, but we see a need for a clear boundary between guests and the community which YFGM is run by and run for.

While the need for follow-on spaces is recognised, we see this as beyond either the scope or the capacity of our General Meeting, though it may be possible to signpost people to existing support structures. We have however considered the possibility of a reunion style event which will be brought to the General Meeting in October for discernment.

#### 2021.5.8 Nominations Returns

<b>Role</b>	<b>Released</b>	<b>Appointed</b>	<b>Until</b>
<b>Co-Clerk</b>	Samuel Cooper	Tim Rouse	May 2022 (1 year term)
<b>Pastoral</b>	n/a	Row Bashforth	May 2024
<b>Planning Weekend Newcomer</b>	Katie Muller	Katie Turner	October 2021
<b>Media</b>	n/a	Gus Morrice	May 2024

Lucy Baston is released as Treasurer.

Chloe Scaling and Hannah Larn are released from Logistics Committee.

Eleini Burgess and Jane Ditchfield are released from their roles on Nominations Committee.

Teala Dearden is released as Communications Trustee, confirming an earlier Minute of Trustees.

We also release Hannah Stranex from her position as nominations organiser. She continues as a member of nominations committee.

We thank all these friends for their service.

#### 2021.5.9 Co-options to committees

James Davies was co-opted to Nominations Committee this YFGM, we thank him for his service.

#### 2021.5.10 Special Interest Groups

Special interest groups were:

Tactical Empathy with James Davies

Speaking to Thy Condition: Quaker Pamphlets with Gus Morrice

Friends and Fellows with Jenny Herbert

Exercise with James Davies

Ethical Banking with Jacob Webb

Solidarity During the Pandemic with Laurence Hall

We thank all of these Friends for their contributions to this gathering.

#### 2021.5.11 Clerks' Offering

We have been meeting online for what feels like a very long time. We're tired and sick of being apart. There is a general sense of a slack tide in YFGM; though, we have reason to hope, a tide on the turn.

Over the weekend, we looked both inward and outward. Spirituality sessions grounded us with gratitude, and also asked us to consider how

we approach and learn from conflict. We had time to check in with each other, to chat and play games and sing songs and have songs sung to us. We visited Blue Idol meeting and found there a rich birdsong-dappled silence, and a good fellowship.

And most of all, this weekend, we looked to the future. We planned a camping trip, prepared for Yearly Meeting, looked at our arrangements for administrative support, and discerned more about how we will operate after the pandemic. And we were led to try our dear though still all too tentative wish, if it is possible, if it is safe, to gather in person once again.

We also brought our upper age limit to a business session. This ran far over its allotted time, but used its length to bring us and to gather us, difficult and lovely, through some bumps, to an eventual unity.

A common theme in discernment across the weekend was the care that we have for one another. We are here for our community, we help each other and rely on one another. And that's exactly what we all need.

The clerks are very tired, but it's a happy tired: after a weekend most full of business, but even more full of love.