

Young Friends General Meeting

20 - 22 October 2023

Lancaster

Minutes

Those Present (57):

Al Boliver-Brown, Anya Nanning Ramamurthy, Arden Chandler, Arjun Nanning Ramamurthy, Artemis, Becky Shirley, Bobby Cooper, Ceridwen Jenkins, Chloe Scaling, Dan Dickson, Echo Gillespie, Eliza Martin, Ella Booth, Elliot Mears, Em Poulter, Frankie Austin, Freddie Brasher, Georgia Campbell, Gray Wood, Hannah Stranex, Izzy Hepburn, Jacob Webb, Jane Ditchfield, Jasmin Higgs, Jenni Ainger, Jennie Atherton, Jenny Baines, Juno Lee, Kaden Foley, Kenneth MacIver, Kes Ward, Kevin McNamara, Kim Edwards, Leilani Rabemananjara, Lexi Llewellyn, Liam Brighton, Liam Lawson, Matthew Burnell, Matty Ferguson, Mike Forde, Rachael Booth, Romy Neale Guasch, Rowan Q, Sally Kikaya, Samuel Gilbert, Samuel Cooper, Sasha Lawson-Frost, Tas Cooper, Theo Whitlock, Tim Rouse, Tim Hall Farthing, Zoe Badrick, John Waterworth, Sasha King Smith, Kale Lapsley, Aiden (non-member), Wilfred (non-member)

Co-Clerks:	Tim Rouse, Hannah Stranex
Trustees at opening of meeting:	Gray Wood, Leilani Rabemananjara, Georgia Campbell, Bel Ingham, Sammy Gilbert
Trustees at close of meeting:	Leilani Rabemananjara, Georgia Campbell, Bel Ingham, Liam Lawson, Kevin McNamara
Area & Local Meeting Representatives	Gray Wood - Hampshire and Islands AM Alexandra Boliver-Brown - East Kent AM Hannah Stranex - Surrey and Hampshire Borders AM Juno Lee - North East Thames AM Will Reed - York AM

2023.10.01 [Minute of record: Business Method](#)

Our elders and clerks have introduced the Quaker business method, the way we make decisions together in a spirit of worship.

2023.10.02 [Minute of record: Nominations](#)

Sam Cooper, the convenor of our nominations committee, has introduced us to YFGM's approach to making nominations. All members of the community are encouraged to suggest names to the Nominations Committee for the roles we seek to appoint to this weekend. The Nominations Committee will speak to the individuals suggested and discern who is the right person to nominate for this role at this time. We expect to consider the nominations that they bring, and make any resulting appointments, on Sunday morning.

2023.10.03 [Appointing a representative at the FWCC World Plenary Meeting](#)

We ask the Nominations Committee to bring forward a nomination for one Friend to attend the World Plenary Meeting in 2024 as a representative of our meeting and of Britain Yearly Meeting. We expect to consider this nomination on Sunday morning. We have considered the potential environmental, personal and energetic cost of sending a Friend in person, and will return to this later in the weekend.

2023.10.04 [Length of service for Logistics Committee](#)

Chloe Scaling, from the Nominations Committee, has introduced the suggestion to change the length of service for the Logistics Committee. This would mean that members of the logistics committee are appointed with the expectation that they will be released from service after three years, rather than the current two. As previously, it will be possible to seek early release from a role if personal circumstances change.

This change is welcome, allowing Logistics members the timespan needed to become comfortable and confident in their role before handing it to the next person.

We agree to make this change and will update documents and policies, including Appendix 1 of the constitution, accordingly.

We also note that Quaker Gender and Sexuality Diversity Community has changed its name to Quaker Rainbow, and will update the name of our representative role in our documents and policies accordingly.

2023.10.05 Report from Trustees

Leilani Rabemananjara, the convenor of our trustee committee, gave a report which will be appended to this minute. The report covered the financial activities of YFGM, the services we have hired Mindful Business Solutions to provide, and building links with the Deputy Recording Clerk and other staff members of BYM regarding the Memorandum of Understanding that has been proposed. They also spoke of the relative inexperience of trustees currently on the committee, and the Woodbrooke course they will shortly be taking to learn more about their roles.

2023.10.06 Report on Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee

Hannah Stranex spoke about the recent meeting of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee. YFGM was one of fifteen groups invited to visit YMAC and feed into the development of the agenda for Yearly Meeting in 2024, and beyond.

Hannah and Tim, our clerks, attended on our behalf, and Hannah read out the written report submitted on our behalf (Appendix 1). We warmly welcome this report which captures the often complicated conversations we have at YFGM.

We have been invited to send a representative to the next meeting of YMAC and will seek to find a representative to take part, as neither of our clerks can attend.

2023.10.07 Annual Report and Accounts

Georgia Campbell, one of our trustees, introduced the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022.

During 2022, we continued our work on social justice matters close to our heart, including trans rights and the war in Ukraine.

A major theme for 2022 was the continued recovery from Covid, and we were able to hold two YFGMs in person, up from one in 2021. We continued changing the roles that we appoint to, laying down temporarily roles such as outreach, and setting the groundwork for the establishment of Switchboard in early 2023.

Georgia spoke to the accounts for the year which show income of £19,791 against expenditure of £6,048, giving a net income of £13,743. We have reserves of £92,512, of which £18,439 is restricted.

Georgia noted that the Annual Report has been updated since the version included in Documents in Advance.

We approve the accounts for the year ending 31 December 2022. We receive and accept the annual report of trustees for 2022, and thank them for their work in preparing this.

The annual report, incorporating the accounts, is appended to these minutes.

2023.10.08 [How we use our money](#)

Juno Lee (fundraiser), Georgia Campbell, and Tim Rouse gave an introduction to where YFGM's funds come from, and how we use them. There has been substantial change in the last few years, with the end of our previous admin support arrangement with Britain Yearly Meeting, and a decline in donations income. We have accumulated substantial reserves, and despite budgeting to spend these on training and on running YFGM events, we have continued to generate surpluses, in part due to grant funding from BYM.

We have considered how we can make an effective use of our financial resources, bearing in mind constraints on our time and energy. We have heard a range of ideas, particularly around improving our outreach, and actively facilitating training opportunities for young Friends (rather than just having the funds available).

We want to find creative ways of using money to support rest and rejuvenation, and acknowledge that we may need to invest in further admin support. We welcome the contribution of more ideas between now and February 2024.

We ask our finance committee, with support from trustees and others as needed, to reflect on these ideas and bring a budget to our February 2024 gathering, and to take steps to ensure that our reserves are ethically held in accounts bearing appropriate levels of interest.

2023.10.09 Report from Meeting for Sufferings

Tim Rouse, one of our clerks, reported on Meeting for Sufferings, one of which since our last meeting took place on the 1st of July as an open session, and the second of which took place in Leeds from 6-8 October. On the 1st of July the meeting received our minute on the loyal address to Charles Mountbatten-Windsor, called king, with interest and appetite for further discussion. In October the meeting considered the future for membership within British Quakerism, agreed to recommend that Meeting for Sufferings be replaced with a series of continuing Yearly Meeting sessions, and recommended the signing of an MoU between trustees of BYM, area meetings, and general meetings such as YFGM.

2023.10.10 Minute of record - Planning Weekend

Our Planning Weekend Newcomers have been prevented from attending this weekend, but have sent a written report which will be appended to these minutes.

We received a verbal report from Sasha Lawson-Frost about what happened at Planning Weekend in Leeds from 8-10 September, including planning for the individual sessions this weekend. We do come together, worship together, and take decisions together.

We expect to plan our next gathering at our planning weekend in Scarborough between 12-14 January. Suggestions for sessions, possible concerns that the Meeting should consider adopting, or other items for the agenda of future YFGMs are welcome and Friends are encouraged to speak to Elders about how to bring these forward at a future Planning Weekend.

2023.10.11 Report from Switchboard

The Switchboard is a committee consisting of representatives from different committees, to ensure that communication between committees is strong and to offer

support where needed. Georgia Campbell, one of our trustees, convenes the committee, and gave a report on its activities since the last YFGM.

Georgia spoke of the strength of being able to take the troubles from within committees to a wider body, but also of the need to have representatives from all committees at Switchboard meetings. We share her hope that Switchboard will become a really strong function of YFGM when it is fully matured.

2023.10.12 [Special Interest Groups](#)

Special interest groups this weekend were:

- Singing - Jenny Baines
- Repair Café - Gray Wood
- Dance - Rowan Queerly
- Jesus Prayer - Jaz Higgs
- Welcome Pack - Dan Dickson & Ceridwen Jenkins
- Big SIG: Challenging Transphobia in Quaker Spaces - Chloe Scaling and others

We thank those who facilitated Special Interest Groups, and encourage anyone who would like to run a SIG at a future YFGM to speak to the Logistics committee.

2023.10.13 [Appointing to representative roles](#)

Our Deputy Convenor of Nominations, Chloe Scaling, introduced this item.

While we generally make appointments through our standard nominations process, it isn't always possible to use this approach. This can include where opportunities arise between gatherings, and a name must be found before the next gathering; or where an appointed representative is unable to attend at short notice. In recent years we have either found names informally, sent existing role-holders, or missed opportunities to be represented.

In our previous considerations of how to appoint representatives and other roles, (*minutes 2019.2.7, 2019.10.1, 2021.2.2*), we considered the creation of a role with responsibility for finding and appointing reps at short notice, but did not proceed with this. Our Nominations Committee have now suggested that they could take on this work within the committee.

Information about representatives opportunities will be communicated through Discord, and through other platforms where possible. Any appointments made in this way would be recorded at the next YFGM.

We know from experience that sometimes, we are asked to nominate or appoint someone because a representative of YFGM is needed. Other times, we are simply approached because there is a need for a young person. In these latter cases, we are mindful of the need to bring the opportunity to as many young Friends as possible, including those not currently part of the YFGM community.

We gratefully accept this suggestion and ask Nominations to take on this work going forward, and will update documents and policies as necessary. We are mindful of adding to the workload of Nominations, and particularly that the burden does not fall solely on one member of the committee, and can be handed on and shared sustainably.

2023.10.14 Co-options

We note that the following friends have been co-opted to serve on committees this weekend, and thank them for their service. We remind committees to inform trustees at the first opportunity of any co-options they wish to make.

- Juno Lee - Nominations
- Anya Nanning-Ramamurthy - Elders

2023.10.15 Nominations Returns

We appoint the Friends named in the below table to the roles specified. We release Friends as indicated in the table and thank all those named below for their service.

Role	Released	Appointed	Until
Planning Weekend Newcomer	Morgan Gasson Mikolaj Halber Dominic Rawlinson	Kenneth Artemis Rosie Gilbert	February 2024
Trustee	Gray Wood	Kevin McNamara	February 2027 (handover)

Quaker Rainbow Representative	Rebecca Hickman	Juno Lee	October 2025
Logistics	Jaz Higgs	Jane Ditchfield	October 2026
Treasurer	Tom Bell	Tim Hall-Farthing	February 2027 (handover)
Finance Trustee	Sammy Gilbert	Liam Lawson	February 2027 (handover)
Representative to FWCC World Plenary 2024	n/a	Hannah Stranex	October 2024

2023.10.16 [Change of signatories](#)

As a result of the appointments and releases we have made, the signatories on our bank accounts will need to be updated.

We would normally expect to have three signatories; the Treasurer, Finance Trustee, and one further trustee. To allow for handover periods and additional capacity in making payments, we have previously appointed Hannah Stranex as an additional signatory, but we now expect to release Hannah, as well as Sammy Gilbert, as signatories at the next gathering.

The signatories for our bank accounts are:

- Tim Hall-Farthing, Treasurer
- Liam Lawson, Finance Trustee
- Sammy Gilbert, Ex-Finance Trustee (handover)
- Hannah Stranex, Co-Clerk
- Bel Ingham, Trustee

2023.10.17 [FWCC Rep](#)

Earlier in the weekend, we considered the invitation to appoint one of Britain Yearly Meeting’s representatives to the World Plenary Meeting in South Africa next year. We felt a profound discomfort at the environmental impact of sending a representative to

fly to South Africa, and were mindful of the spiritual and social differences that exist within the world family of Friends.

Although we see this as a big opportunity to build relationships with the Quaker community around the world, as well as within our yearly meeting, we recognise the importance of pastoral, spiritual, and practical support for our representative. We are grateful for offers of support from QCCIR, QWRC, and from within YFGM, and will seek to uphold our representative as they prepare, during the event, and after they return.

We send them with our love.

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- Mindful of spiritual difference. Many of us belong to minoritised groups. Ensure strong pastoral case offer for someone who we send. Their presence could be confronting for other Friends, and difficult for them.
- Conflicted. Flying bad. Have organised climate justice gathering online, but no corridor conversations; not being with people over a longer period of time. These relationships can be beneficial in building understanding across borders, and we can take things that we learn from other Quaker backgrounds and bring them back into our space. Is there a commitment to do things after the gathering?
- Would BYM send someone anyway? They have asked us to appoint someone, they trust us to do so, and want their representative to be a young person. They want a representative who has the values that Quakers in Britain of the future are going to have.

2023.10.18 [Nomination Committee minute](#)

We note the receipt of the below minute from our Nominations Committee:

Minute from nominations 22/10/2023:

Nominations has become increasingly aware that there is a pattern of Friends who are willing and able to serve on our logistics and pastoral committees being disproportionately women and/or femme-presenting. We feel the need to address this as a community. We recognise that there is a higher proportion of women and femme-presenting people in our community and so some skew in this direction is to be expected; but the difference remains noticeable. We ask male and masc-presenting YFGMers to seriously consider if they can bring something to these roles and if these roles can bring something to them.

2023.10.19 Our next gathering

We hope to gather again for our next YFGM which will take place from 23-25 February 2024 at York Friargate Meeting House, should nothing occur to prevent.

2023.10.20 Clerks' Offering

It was a dark and stormy night; as we assembled in the meeting house (for it is in Lancaster that our gathering took place) for our final YFGM of the year, the winds rattled across the country, fiercely agitating the national rail network, leaving many Friends struggling against the darkness (of being stuck in Preston).

The turbulent start soon gave way to more familiar rhythms - the food order arrived, the bag room was assigned, and help began to be coordinated for the people who were stuck somewhere part way between their homes and Lancaster. New arrivals were met with jubilation and cries of 'You made it!' which felt like soul-soothing balm after stressful journeys. The sincerity of love at YFGM makes all the difficulties of travel here worthwhile. There are many friends who would be here who have been prevented by Storm Babet; we miss them, and we care about them, and we hope to see them again soon.

We talked a great deal this weekend about topics interesting and controversial. Some of us went to a march in support of peace efforts in Palestine and Israel. We had an epilogue focused on peace, and full of difficult but powerful worship. Our spirituality session looked at the variety of ways and words YFGMers use to understand God, and whether God as a belief is important to who we are as Quakers and as a community. The answers to these questions and others presented were varied and fascinating, leading to deep discussions and deeper understanding of ourselves and each other as spiritual beings.

One of our great joys as a fellowship of seekers is that we can trust one another, and be trusted. Our worship, including our meetings for worship for business, has been deep and rich and gathered. We have been able to look ahead to the future, anticipating regrowth and rebirth of our community and of our passions, and we are excited to contribute to our Yearly Meeting's voice in the wider world.

Signed, in and on behalf of Young Friends General Meeting,

Hannah Stranex & Tim Rouse
Co-clerks

Appendices & Further Information

Appendix A: YMAC Report

“In this broken world our systems don’t always work how we imagine that they should, but we mend what we can and make do. We get to at least try to make better systems, and a better world.”
- Clerks’ offering, YFGM Feb 23

1. Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) is the national community for young adult Friends between 18-35. We gather three times a year at meeting houses around the country, and maintain online community links in between. Like Area Meetings, we are a separately constituted charity but are nonetheless part of the Yearly Meeting.

Since our last report, we have met at York, Brighton, and Bristol, and have considered the meaning and nature of Quaker membership; changing the roles which we appoint to within our community, including reform of the trustee committee; the ‘loyal address’ made to Charles Mountbatten-Windsor; and the future of our broader concern for social justice. We have also welcomed Adwoa Burnley as a visitor to our Brighton gathering.

2. Challenging transphobia in Quaker spaces

YFGM has long recognised and asserted the need to be inclusive of trans and gender-diverse people within our own community, within Quakerism and within wider society; our 2019 public statement [yfgm.quaker.org.uk/trans-non-binary-statement] made it clear that this inclusivity is a living part of our faith.

Despite the Yearly Meeting in 2021 recognising that being welcoming and supportive to trans and non-binary people is what love requires of us, transphobia is still too common in Quaker spaces. In 2020, a visitor from another meeting travelled to YFGM specifically to harass trans Friends and disrupt our work against transphobia. In 2023, a transphobic group continues to seek the status of a Quaker Recognised Body, and meetings continue to allow trans-exclusionary groups to use Quaker meeting houses, bringing the church into disrepute by doing so - and, for YFGM, reducing the pool of venues where our members feel safe to meet.

We would like to celebrate the progress that has been made within Quakerism, but on the whole we have a feeling that Quakers in general are not good enough on this. Too often, attempts at neutrality and tolerance in our meetings can lead to our spaces being open to trans Friends in name only and transphobes in practice - one cannot accept both the oppressed and the oppressor into a safe space and expect it to remain safe for long.

Several YFGMers don’t feel that they can tell trans friends that they will be safe going to a Meeting that they don’t know - because what BYM has said so far is not enough, and because

even in an LM that shares our views we can't be sure that if something happens there will be adequate response and support.

Our process and procedures need to be robust enough to stand up to intolerance, not just let it go unchallenged. At one recent event, we engaged with local meeting elders ahead of time about how to handle a perceived risk of transphobic ministry. It was not easy, running up against the limits of Quaker process and what different people felt was appropriate, but it was worthwhile.

3. Anti-racism, social justice and social witness

We have welcomed and joyfully participated in the work of BYM staff and others in confronting racism, and the Yearly Meeting's work to become an anti-racist church.

We know that racist thinking is not limited to individuals' attitudes to other individuals; the work that the Yearly Meeting has begun on making reparations for historic injustice epitomises this. But Quakers do not always recognise racist thinking in all its forms.

We have come to be deeply worried by conversations among Friends about 'population control', usually focused on denying people in the Global South the reproductive, economic, and social freedoms which people in Britain and other countries have enjoyed.

The burden upon the planet's resources comes from the overuse of resources by an already privileged global minority. As Quakers we must recognise this is a problem of distribution, not one of overpopulation, a favourite narrative of the far right.

The Earth was made a common treasury for all; our duty of stewardship means that we are tasked with ensuring that everyone has equal access to the bounties of the world, and supporting those, including ourselves, who are accustomed to having more than their fair share, in choosing to live simpler lives.

4. Living faithful lives in public

In January we were invited to participate in giving a 'loyal address' to Charles, called king, along with others from the Yearly Meeting. Our clerks declined the invitation, and this decision was subsequently reaffirmed by the Meeting in session.

We reject the institution of the monarchy as being incompatible with our testimony to the equality of all; but more than this, we felt that our presence - as Quakers, and as young Friends within a Quaker delegation - would be tokenistic, done to cling to ancient privilege rather than as a faithful adherence to the movement of the spirit.

Our minute on the matter went to Meeting for Sufferings on 1 July and we look forward to further conversations within the Yearly Meeting.

5. Membership

We have engaged with Meeting for Sufferings' consultation on membership and found that, by and large, we don't have that much to say - yet.

Although there seems to be a widespread perception among Friends that YFGM 'does membership differently' and that we must surely have something to say to the Yearly Meeting on the topic, the truth is that we treat membership very differently.

Within YFGM, 'membership' is a simple administrative function; membership does not connote a religious commitment to the Society of Friends, or a financial obligation; it is acquired simply by being 18-35 and asking for it, or simply by turning up to an event. It is a different 'thing' than membership of the Society as held by Area Meetings.

Our experiences of that kind of membership vary widely. In our sessions considering this, several of us have spoken of the importance that our membership in Area Meetings has to us; of providing an anchor into a community; of being a ritual and public profession of faith in a religion that has very few such rituals.

Others have spoken about their caution or distrust of an expectation of formal membership; or of their hesitancy at coming into membership in a geographically-based Area Meeting into which they have only recently moved, or in which they do not expect to stay.

Looking ahead, we welcome a wider conversation in the Yearly Meeting about what membership might mean; how it might be more suited to those who are young, geographically dispersed, and geographically mobile. We want to be in that conversation, and to be part of finding solutions; but we want to be clear that we don't have a ready-made solution to offer.

The religious commitment to membership is clearly an important part of membership, and YFGM has not considered whether that could be or whether we would even want it to be part of YFGM's own membership process. That would be a large piece of discernment that we haven't embarked upon.

6. Discovering for ourselves

A final strand in our work this year has been our ongoing process of looking inward, at our structures and processes, attempting to simplify them and make them fit for purpose within the constraints of our resources.

This year we have changed radically the role of trustees, refocusing the committee on their governance responsibilities and setting up a new cross-committee group to fill a reactive, problem-solving role. This has allowed us to release clerks from their role of trustee and make our co-clerks our regular representatives at Meeting for Sufferings.

We are, like many Quaker charities, burdened by administration. Our membership is time-poor, many with full-time jobs and/or caring responsibilities, and many of those who take on roles have never held a Quaker role before. This can be challenging, particularly in finance, and we have continued to explore options for administrative support since the end of our arrangement with Quakers in Britain. Nevertheless, we live by QFP 21.04; that *each generation of young Friends by its experiments must discover for itself the truths on which the Society is built*; this is no less true organisationally than spiritually (and what's the difference, after all?).

7. Conclusion

Whether or not YFGMers hold membership in an Area Meeting, most who come to YFGM consider themselves to be Quakers.

Perhaps being Quaker simply means knowing what Quakerism is, wanting to be a Quaker anyway, and committing to doing what love requires of you.

As a community of Quakers, we can take joy when we hear of the successes and joys of Quakers; we also feel pain and misery when we hear of their failings and cruelties.

This report begins by calling out transphobia and racism within our church because we are Quakers, it is our space, and we feel let down when Quakers aren't good enough. We feel sorrow at being excluded, anger that these people speak in our name, shame that we are associated with them.

We know that the spirit can lead us to be better, but we must make the choice to follow - we should not mistake passive inaction for expectant waiting.

[Appendix B: Annual Report & Accounts](#)

[The Annual Report & Accounts are also on our website as a standalone document here.](#)



Young Friends General Meeting

ANNUAL REPORT,
INCLUDING FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS FOR THE
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER
2022

Charity
Number:
1064763

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AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE CHARITY

Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) is a registered charity which provides a national community to young adults (individuals of 18 to 35 years of age) who are members or attenders of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) or individuals who are interested in the principles and practices of Quakers.

The overall aim of YFGM is the advancement of religion in accordance with the principles and practices of the Quakers. As part of this work, we seek to advance any corporate concerns adopted by our meeting, and charitable objectives, as defined by the charity commission, undertaken at the discretion of the meeting.

Through a shared life and worship YFGM seeks to give our members and attenders a space to explore and develop our faith, and our ways of living out the principles and testimonies of Quakerism in practice; equality, peace, simplicity and integrity.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The principal objective of Young Friends General Meeting is "The advancement of religion in accordance with the principles and practices of the Religious Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers".

The primary activity of YFGM is the running of three residential weekends a year, predominantly within Quaker meeting houses around the UK. In these meetings, attenders gather to worship together, attend sessions led by external speakers and special interest sessions, discuss and work on concerns that members hold, develop their spirituality, talk about their experience of the divine, socialise and build community and attend the business sessions. The business meetings keep the General Meeting running and allow it to serve its function as a representative body within Britain Yearly Meeting, the overarching organisation of the Religious Society of Friends in Great Britain.

Special interest meetings and more informal gatherings supplement these residential meetings. Through the activities of the General Meeting, our members help one another to deepen their understanding of Quakerism, and to live out the Quaker testimonies of equality, simplicity, integrity and peace. When planning our activities, the trustees maintain a level of oversight to ensure public benefit is considered, in line with the Commission's guidance on the benefit created by charities for the advancement of religion.

COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING

As Quakers, the members of YFGM share responsibility for the wellbeing of the community. Major decisions which concern the life and projects of the meeting are undertaken by the General Meeting in accordance with the Quaker Business Method described in Chapter 3 of our church's book of discipline, Quaker Faith and Practice. Young Friends assemble in silence and stillness and seek to discern what the community should do.

We have specific weekends dedicated to the planning of YFGM business meetings, usually six weeks before the relevant general meeting: any member of the community may bring an item of business to a planning weekend for threshing (consideration). YFGM encourages all members to take an active part in meetings for worship for business; the procedure and its spiritual and practical background is talked through, and actively taught, at every general meeting, so that every attender may understand it and take a full part in the process.

ROLES AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS

YFGM functions with the support of its members that serve within roles voluntarily to help achieve the organisation's aims and objectives and support the work required to hold three residential gatherings a year on behalf of the community.

Current committee areas that members currently serve in include:

- Trustees
- Pastoral
- Elders
- Logistics
- Finance
- Nominations

The process by which members are appointed to roles within each of these committees are in accordance with the principles and practices of the Religious Society of Friends. Appointments to and releases from roles are made by minute of the General Meeting. The charity in general meeting shall appoint a Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee shall be responsible for bringing forward nominations to appointments due to be made by the General Meeting. The members at a general meeting need not accept the nomination made by the Nominations Committee, but may make any appointment they deem fit.

TRUSTEES

Trustees are appointed by YFGM to maintain a strategic vision for YFGM and ensure that YFGM comply with relevant legal obligations, reporting duties to the Charity Commission of England and Wales, and is acting within YFGM's constitution.

Their work can include period review of policies to ensure legal compliance, signing off policies and budget to be presented to the Meeting, representing the charity to Britain Yearly Meeting and other charity bodies. Trustees can also convene in emergencies of the Meeting where there is no policy in place, and make decisions on behalf of YFGM that may need to be made between general meetings.

Trustees are appointed via a process in accordance with the principles and practices of the Religious Society of Friends as detailed in the "roles and appointment process" section of this report, found above.

As of 18th October 2023 the trustees are:

- Convenor of Trustees (chair): Leilani Rabemananjara appt. Feb 2022, expected release May 2025
- Finance Trustee: Samuel Gilbert - appt. October 2022, expected release Oct 2023
- Gray Wood - appt. May 2022, expected release Oct 2023
- Georgia Campbell - appt. Feb 2023, expected release May 2026
- Bel Ingham - appt. May 2023, expected release Oct 2026

The following trustees also served within the reporting period (1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022):

- Alexandra Boliver Brown
- Jenny Herbert
- Tim Hall Farthing
- James Davies
- Samuel Gilbert
- Gray Wood
- Row Bashforth
- Sasha Lawson-Frost
- Liam Brighton
- Zoe Marquis
- Leilani Rabemananjara

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCES

ONLINE AND IN PERSON GATHERINGS

In the past year YFGM held three gatherings with a mix of online and in person. All planning weekends were held online for all gatherings this year. The first gathering was online and was attended by 32 people. At this general meeting we considered ways in which we could take forward our ministry on social justice, including conversations about trans rights, anti-racism, peace and climate justice. In our business meetings we discussed practical issues with nominations and the filling of roles in the face of the struggles of the pandemic and the creation of a reunion style event for those reaching the upper age limits of YFGM. At the end of April we held an in person YFGM in Liverpool which was attended by 37 people. There were further discussions around roles to be filled and a reorganisation of roles was presented with roles being laid down to provide a more streamlined approach to the running of YFGM. We considered practical actions around the war in Ukraine and celebrated the wedding of two friends within the gathering. In October we held our final gathering of the year in York and this saw a rise in people attending with 59 people gathered together. We heard a report from Meetings for Suffering regarding the issue of membership in the wider Society of Friends and this was also discussed within a special interest group. Other special interest groups ranged from discussing trustees for YFGM to a repair cafe amongst others. Business meetings discussed our budget, accounts and nominations as well as plans for future gatherings.

CHALLENGING TRANSPHOBIA IN QUAKER SPACES

YFGM has long recognised and asserted the need to be inclusive of trans and gender-diverse people within our own community, within Quakerism and within wider society; our 2019 public statement [yfgm.quaker.org.uk/trans-non-binary-statement] made it clear that this inclusivity is a living part of our faith. Despite the Yearly Meeting in 2021 recognising that being welcoming and supportive to trans and non-binary people is what love requires of us, transphobia is still too common in Quaker spaces. In 2020, a visitor from another meeting travelled to YFGM specifically to harass trans Friends and disrupt our work against transphobia. In 2023, a transphobic group continues to seek the status of a Quaker Recognised Body, and meetings continue to allow trans-exclusionary groups to use Quaker meeting houses, bringing the church into disrepute by doing so- and, for YFGM, reducing the pool of venues where our members feel safe to meet. We would like to celebrate the progress that has been made within Quakerism, but on the whole we have a feeling that Quakers in general are not good enough on this. Too often, attempts at neutrality and tolerance in our meetings can lead to our spaces being open to trans Friends in name only and transphobes in practice- one cannot accept both the oppressed and the oppressor into a safe space and expect it to remain safe for long. Several YFGMers don't feel that they can tell trans friends that they will be safe going to a Meeting that they don't know- because what BYM has said so far is not enough, and because even in an LM that shares our views we can't be sure that if something happens there will be adequate response and support. Our process and procedures need to be robust enough to stand up to intolerance, not just let it go unchallenged. At one recent event, we engaged with local meeting elders ahead of time about how to handle a perceived risk of transphobic ministry. It was not easy, running up against the limits of the Quaker process and what different people felt was appropriate, but it was worthwhile.

ANTI-RACISM, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SOCIAL WITNESS

We have welcomed and joyfully participated in the work of BYM staff and others in confronting racism, and the Yearly Meeting's work to become an anti-racist church. We know that racist thinking is not limited to individuals' attitudes to other individuals; the work that the Yearly Meeting has begun on making reparations for historic injustice epitomises this. But Quakers do not always recognise racist thinking in all its forms. We have come to be deeply worried by conversations among Friends about 'population control', usually focused on denying people in the Global South the reproductive, economic, and social freedoms which people in Britain and other countries have enjoyed. The burden upon the planet's resources comes from the overuse of resources by an already privileged global minority. As Quakers we must recognise this is a problem of distribution, not one of overpopulation, a favourite narrative of the far right. The Earth was made a common treasury for all; our duty of stewardship means that we are tasked with ensuring that everyone has equal access to the bounties of the world, and supporting those, including ourselves, who are accustomed to having more than their fair share, in choosing to live simpler lives.

LIVING FAITHFUL LIVES IN PUBLIC

In January we were invited to participate in giving a 'loyal address' to Charles, called king, along with others from the Yearly Meeting. Our clerks declined the invitation, and this decision was subsequently reaffirmed by the Meeting in session. We reject the institution of the monarchy as being incompatible with our testimony to the equality of all; but more than this, we felt that our presence- as Quakers, and as young Friends within a Quaker delegation- would be tokenistic, done to cling to ancient privilege rather than as a faithful adherence to the movement of the spirit. Our minute on the matter went to Meeting for Sufferings on 1 July and we look forward to further conversations within the Yearly Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

We have engaged with Meeting for Sufferings' consultation on membership and found that, by and large, we don't have that much to say- yet. Although there seems to be a widespread perception among Friends that YFGM 'does membership differently' and that we must surely have something to say to the Yearly Meeting on the topic, the truth is that we treat membership very differently. Within YFGM, 'membership' is a simple administrative function; membership does not connote a religious commitment to the Society of Friends, or a financial obligation; it is acquired simply by being 18-35 and asking for it, or simply by turning up to an event. It is a different 'thing' than membership of the Society as held by Area Meetings. Our experiences of that kind of membership vary widely. In our sessions considering this, several of us have spoken of the importance that our membership in Area Meetings has to us; of providing an anchor into a community; of being a ritual and public profession of faith in a religion that has very few such rituals. Others have spoken about their caution or distrust of an expectation of formal membership; or of their hesitancy at coming into membership in a geographically-based Area Meeting into which they have only recently moved, or in which they do not expect to stay. Looking ahead, we welcome a wider conversation in the Yearly Meeting about what membership might mean; how it might be more suited to those who are young, geographically dispersed, and geographically mobile. We want to be in that conversation, and to be part of finding solutions; but we want to be clear that we don't have a ready-made solution to offer. The religious commitment to membership is clearly an important part of membership, and YFGM has not considered whether that could be or whether we would even want it to be part of YFGM's own membership process. That would be a large piece of discernment that we haven't embarked upon.

DISCOVERING FOR OURSELVES

A final strand in our work this year has been our ongoing process of looking inward, at our structures and processes, attempting to simplify them and make them fit for purpose within the constraints of our resources. This year we have changed radically the role of trustees, refocusing the committee on their governance responsibilities and setting up a new cross-committee group to fill a reactive, problem-solving role. This has allowed us to release clerks from their role of trustee and make our co-clerks our regular representatives at Meeting for Sufferings. We are, like many Quaker charities, burdened by administration. Our membership is time-poor, many with full-time jobs and/or caring responsibilities, and many of those who take on roles have never held a Quaker role before. This can be challenging, particularly in finance, and we have continued to explore options for administrative support since the end of our arrangement with Quakers in Britain. Nevertheless, we live by QFP 21.04; that each generation of young Friends by its experiments must discover for itself the truths on which the Society is built; this is no less true organisationally than spiritually (and what's the difference, after all?).

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Within the reporting period, YFGM had a net income of £13,743 and carried forward funds totalling £92,512 of which £18,439 relates to restricted funds.

YFGM was able to keep its expenditure low within the year as due to continual covid precautions, all planning events were held remotely and only two in-person events were held, rather than the regular three. Total outgoing costs amounted to £6,048.

The charity's reserves policy dictates the charity should hold six to twelve months' worth of capital. With funds carried forward being grossly in excess of this goal, trustees consider the charity to be operating as a going concern.

Even while considering the expected increase in expenditure as YFGM transitions to operate in a post-pandemic environment, trustees believe that YFGM will remain solvent and do not foresee any issues in meeting financial liabilities well into the future.

DECLARATIONS

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' annual report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



Signature:

Full Name: Leilani Rabemananjara

Position: Convenor of Trustees / Charity Commission Contact

Date: 18/10/23

Young Friends General Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Charity No. 1064763

Statement of financial activities for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
		2022	2022	2022	2021	2021	2021
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:							
Grants	2	9,095	4,905	14,000	6,350	8,000	14,350
Donations	3	5,747	-	5,747	10,365	-	10,365
Other Income		43	-	43	8	-	8
Total		14,886	4,905	19,791	16,723	8,000	24,723
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	-	-	-	-	605	605
Charitable activities	4	3,249	2,799	6,048	9,947	3,155	13,102
Total		3,249	2,799	6,048	9,947	3,760	13,706
Net income/(expenditure)		11,637	2,106	13,743	6,776	4,240	11,016
Net movement in funds		11,637	2,106	13,743	6,776	4,240	11,016
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		62,435	16,333	78,769	55,659	12,093	67,752
Total funds carried forward		74,072	18,439	92,512	62,435	16,333	78,769

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
		2022	2022	2022	2021	2021	2021
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Current assets							
Stocks	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Debtors	6	58	-	58	227	-	227
Cash at bank and in hand		75,012	18,439	93,451	81,008	16,626	97,635
Total current assets		75,070	18,439	93,510	81,235	16,626	97,862
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	7	-	999	-	18,801	293	19,094
Net current assets/(liabilities)		74,072	18,439	92,511	62,435	16,333	78,768
Total assets less current liabilities		74,072	18,439	92,511	62,435	16,333	78,768
Total net assets less liabilities		74,072	18,439	92,511	62,435	16,333	78,768
Funds of the charity							
Restricted funds	8	-	18,439	18,439	-	16,333	16,333
Unrestricted funds	8	74,072	-	74,072	62,435	-	62,435
Total funds		74,072	18,439	92,511	62,435	16,333	78,768

Notes to the Financial Statements

Statutory Information

Young Friends General Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), commonly known as Young Friends General Meeting or YFGM, is an unincorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales as charity no. 1064763. The registered office address is YFGM Office, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

Note 1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of accounting

Young Friends General Meeting constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), and

with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and with the Charities Act 2011.

1.2 Going concern

These accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis. The trustees consider that, in view of the charity's significant cash reserves and forecasts for the next twelve months, there are no material uncertainties as to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

1.3 Changes of accounting policy and estimates

In previous periods, the charity has made additional disclosures beyond those required by the SORP, relating to reimbursement of expenses to trustees and closely connected persons. Due to the low number of claims this year, these additional disclosures have been omitted this year to prevent the disclosure of amounts paid to individuals.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) in the period in which the charity is entitled to receipt; it is more likely than not to be received; and where the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty. There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the FRS102 SORP or FRS102.

The charity has received no government grants during the reporting period, or in the prior reporting period.

The value of voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

1.5 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Expenditure is included in the statement of financial activities when incurred and is inclusive of VAT.

1.6 Assets

Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £500. They are valued at cost and depreciated on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful economic life.

The charity does not at present hold investments.

The charity does not at present hold stocks held for sale.

Stocks held for distribution as part of charitable activities are recognised where the value of the line of stock at purchase exceeds £500, and are measured at net realisable value based on the service potential provided by items of stock. Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Note 2. Grants Received

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
Britain Yearly Meeting	£ 5,095	£ 4,905	£ 10,000	£ 2,000	£ 5,000	£ 7,000
North East Thames Quaker Trust	-	-	-	-	3,000	3,000
CB & HH Taylor 1984 Trust	4,000	-	4,000	2,000	-	2,000
Other Grants	-	-	-	2,350	-	2,350
Total	9,095	4,905	14,000	6,350	8,000	14,350

Note 3. Donations Received

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
Meetings	£ 2,783	-	£ 2,783	£ 3,450	-	£ 3,450
Friends	2,143	-	2,143	6,850	-	6,850
YFGM Contributions	822	-	822	65	-	65
Total	5,747	-	5,747	10,365	-	10,365

Note 4. Expenditure

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
Raising funds	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 605	£ 605
Charitable activities						
Cost of running YFGMs	2,031	1,610	3,641	867	227	993
Cost of running Planning Weekends	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cost of other events	-	-	-	165	-	165
Office costs	1,566	-	1,566	8,915	120	9,035
Exceptional item: Reversal	- 2,105	-	- 2,105	-	-	-
Provision of bursaries	-	1,189	1,189	-	2,808	2,808
Grant-making	1,500	-	1,500	-	-	-
Other expenditure	257	-	257	-	-	-
Total	3,249	2,799	6,048	9,947	3,760	13,606

2021 figures are restated.

The exceptional item shown is the result of an over-accrual for office costs in the prior year.

This is disclosed separately so as not to show a negative figure for office costs in the year.

Office costs were lower in 2022 due to the end of the administrative support arrangement with BYM.

Note 5. Stock and fixed assets

The charity does not hold stock for resale or distribution to beneficiaries.
No fixed assets are held with a cost value over £500.

Note 6. Debtors

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds		Total	
	2022	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Prepayments	58	-	-	-	58	-
Other debtors	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	58	-	-	-	58	-

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds		Total	
	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Prepayments	58	-	-	-	58	-
Other debtors	169	-	-	-	169	-
Total	227	-	-	-	227	-

Note 7. Creditors

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds		Total	
	2022	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Trade creditors	999	-	-	-	999	-
Accruals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	999	-	-	-	999	-

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds		Total	
	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Trade creditors	16,696	293	-	-	16,989	-
Accruals	2,105	-	-	-	2,105	-
Total	18,801	293	-	-	19,094	-

Note 8a. Movement in funds (current year 2022)

	At 1 January 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers, gains and losses £	At 31 December 2022 £	
Restricted funds						
Britain Yearly Meeting Outreach Grant	12,163	4,905	-	2,799	-	14,269
North East Thames Quaker Trust	4,170	-	-	-	-	4,170
Total restricted funds	16,333	4,905	-	2,799	-	18,439
Unrestricted funds						
General reserve	62,435	14,886	-	3,249	-	74,072
Total unrestricted funds	62,435	14,886	-	3,249	-	74,072
Total funds	78,769	19,791	-	6,048	-	92,512

Note 8b. Movement in funds (prior year 2021), restated

	At 1 January 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers, gains and losses £	At 31 December 2021 £	
Restricted funds						
Britain Yearly Meeting Outreach Grant	9,093	5,000	-	1,930	-	12,163
North East Thames Quaker Trust	3,000	3,000	-	1,830	-	4,170
Total restricted funds	12,093	8,000	-	3,760	-	16,333
Unrestricted funds						
General reserve	55,659	16,723	-	9,947	-	62,435
Total unrestricted funds	55,659	16,723	-	9,947	-	62,435
Total funds	67,752	24,723	-	13,706	-	78,769

Description of Restricted Funds

Britain Yearly Meeting Outreach Grant

Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), charity no. 1127633, provides us with a grant to facilitate YFGM's outreach within and beyond the Quaker community.

North East Thames Quaker Trust

North East Thames Quaker Trust, charity no. 212164, has provided funding for the relief of young Friends in financial hardship, to be distributed as bursaries.

Note 9. Trustees & related party transactions

No trustee received any remuneration in respect of services given as trustee in 2022 or 2021.

The charity's trustees are appointed from among the membership of the charity, and as such are among the beneficiaries of the charity.

Trustees are entitled to reimbursement of expenses incurred in fulfilling their duties, including the cost of travelling to YFGM events. Additionally, bursaries to make travel and accommodation accessible to all may be applied for by any of the charity's beneficiaries and where grants to trustees are included in this amount.

In 2022, the amount reimbursed was £782 to 2 trustees. (2021: £493 to 2 trustees)

Donations received without conditions from Trustees during the year were £180 (2021: £380).