

## **Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting at Clacton, 12.03.2017**

### **Representatives**

Clacton-on-Sea - Liz Prockter, Karl Sage, Margaret Ahmed

Colchester – Phyl Reid, Eliza Jones and Julia Usher

Sudbury – no representatives

Earls Colne – Jenny Kay

Harwich - Hazel Jones

Present were 22 Friends, including 3 Attenders.

**2017/14** Friends being met in the presence of God, *Quaker faith and practice* 25.02 was read.

### **2017/15 Death of a Friend**

We record with sadness the death of Mary Farquhar, a Friend of Clacton Meeting, who died on 22 December 2016. Mary was in her 90s.

### **2017/16 Membership matters**

#### **2017/17 Appointments**

##### **Triennial Appointments**

Assistant Clerk - We appoint Charles Bather to serve as Assistant Clerk from March 2017 to end February 2019.

Overseers - Lola Barnes has completed her first triennium as Overseer and Ellen Cohen will complete her first triennium in April. Both Friends are willing to continue. We reappoint Lola to serve from March 2017 to end February 2020 and Ellen to serve from April 2017 to end March 2020.

AM Nominations - Alison Parkes completes a term on Nominations Committee in June. We ask Colchester LM to bring forward the name of a Friend to take her place.

### **2017/18 Conference on Forced Migration report**

John Lewis and Robert Parkes attended a Woodbrooke weekend conference in February on the subject of Forced Migration. In John's absence, Charles Bather read his report. John reported that there were 90 participants and that the conference covered the huge field of migration problems.

John was part of a group of Friends who re-stated that the sufferings of refugees are universal, probably from the beginning of human history, and that they are properly viewed as a permanent Quaker concern. He came to some personal conclusions about how to take

forward his involvement in our AM befriending group with Syrian families in Colchester; these included becoming better informed about the legal status of our befriended families, the rules concerning paid work, and other ways.

We thank John for his report, which will appear in the newsletter and on the Business page of the AM website. We hope to hear Robert Parkes's report on this conference before deciding on further action.

#### **2017/19 Refugee working group update**

Peggy Lewis reported that she and Jayne Meleschko have helped support the Harrah family by taking Khadija to hospital appointments at Ipswich.

We had hoped that the two families we've befriended might establish links with one another. However, this has not happened, possibly because of age differences. We need to increase the support we offer the Kurkej family and ask Friends to consider appropriate ways to support them. There remains an urgent need for English language teaching to enable Khadija to widen her horizons.

We thank Peggy for her report, and all the befrienders for their efforts on our behalf. If the support group could be enlarged it might be possible to arrange more trips out. We ask any Friends willing to join the befriending group to speak with Peggy or Alison.

We note John Lewis's conclusions (just minuted) about the importance of being better informed in order to appropriately support the families we are befriending.

#### **2017/20 Support for the Mulanje Hospital in Malawi**

Colchester Meeting has asked us (LM Minute 17.12) to consider adding to the support it is giving to the Mulanje Hospital in Malawi, where the medical director, Dr. Ruth Shakespeare, is a Quaker and where a young doctor from Colchester, Dr. Isabel King, is working. A group of Colchester Friends studied information about the hospital and put together a report. In the light of the report and Colchester's budgetary situation, Colchester LM agreed to support the hospital for the next three years in a sustainable project with £3,000 for the first year and £2,000 in the following two years; a total of £7,000.

There is an ongoing hospital project to alleviate malnutrition in newborns and young children. Background information about the hospital is on the Issues and Concerns page of the AM website and on the Malanje Hospital website.

We endorse the suggestion that AM authorise the funding of the project as agreed by Colchester LM. We ask Trustees to consider how AM might effectively give further support to the hospital and to bring their recommendations to the AM.

#### **2017/21 Trustees Report on current matters**

Peter Whiteley, Clerk of Trustees, reported that we have made a second donation of £30,000 to Glebe House.

Some issues arose with our current book-keepers and their involvement has been terminated. Sue Dowden will undertake this work in future and the process of handing over the work is proceeding satisfactorily.

Our financial support for Britain Yearly Meeting will be expected to average £250 per capita for the next year. The average contribution from individual Friends does not amount to this and AM Trustees would welcome our guidance on how much they should draw from our resources to make up the shortfall.

We ask for more detail about the amount AM will request of Friends to support the work of the Area Meeting.

### **2017/22 Meeting for Sufferings Report**

Carol Holding attended Meeting for Sufferings on February 3, and gave her report. The broad theme of the meeting related to the sustainability of our planet. Carol referred us to Qfp 25.02, which was read at the start of this AM and begins, "Our planet is seriously ill and we can feel the pain..." There were several important issues considered by MfS, with implications for AMs as well as individual Friends.

Friends of our Meeting support renewable energy. We ask Trustees to request that questions of sustainability are included in the quinquennial surveys of our Meeting Houses.

We commend Carol's report to Friends, which will appear in the newsletter and on the Business page of the AM website. Friends may also wish to read the full MfS reports which appear in *the Friend* and on the Quakers in Britain website. We thank Carol for her report, which is attached to these minutes.

### **2017/23 Quaker Life Representative Council report**

Eliza Jones presented her report from the Quaker Life Rep Council held at Woodbrooke on the weekend of October 14-16, 2016, where the theme was "Becoming the Change we want to see". Eliza reported that the work of our AM refugee befriending group was seized upon as a good example of social sustainability.

Eliza was moved by Alex Wildwood's "Vision to Sustainability", suggesting that that we "treat the earth as if we mean to stay": "Now is the time to hear within us the sound of the earth crying." We need to think not *of* the planet but *as* the planet. We are all interdependent and all connected. The Quaker contribution to sustainability challenges us all.

We thank Eliza for her report, which is attached to these minutes and will appear in the newsletter and on the AM website.

### **2017/24 Responsibilities of Local Meetings**

We have received the minutes from Earls Colne, Colchester and Sudbury Meetings confirming that they have endeavoured to carry out the duties laid upon them in Qfp 4.33.

Colchester Meeting asks its LM Friends to consider being more proactive in asking those who do not usually attend AM to do so, by, for example, offering lifts or asking those eligible to be representatives. This could equally apply to the other LMs in our Area.

Colchester has also minuted that it is unclear about financial procedures involving the LM and AM, and they have asked the AM Treasurer to visit them to explain how things work.

We note that Colchester LM is supporting the AM Archivist with deciding which records need to be preserved, and we hope this exercise may extend to the rest of the AM.

We joyfully record that we now have two newly active Local Meetings in our Area Meeting, namely Harwich and Earls Colne.

Further to Minute 2016/57, whether and how the responsibilities of the LMs in our AM are met are subject to a Memorandum of Understanding between the AM and each LM, which are currently being developed by Trustees. We ask Trustees to continue with this task, in conjunction with Friends of each LM, and to inform us of progress.

Signed,

*Alison Parkes*

Alison Parkes  
Clerk