

## **Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting at Colchester, 14.01.2018**

### **Representatives**

**Clacton-on-Sea** - no representatives

**Colchester** – Robert Parkes, Julia Usher, Sylvia Jeffcock, Phyl Reid, Rosalind Kaye and Helen Lewis

**Sudbury** – no representatives

**Earls Colne** – Jenny Kay, John Kay

**Harwich** - no representatives

Present were 20 Friends, including 1 Attender.

**2018/01** Friends being met in the presence of God, Qfp 29.13 was read.

### **2018/02 Death of a Friend**

Our Friend Denys Rendell died on September 16, 2017. His funeral was held in the manner of Friends on October 18 at Colchester Crematorium, where Charles Bather and Helen Lewis served as elders. Denys was a quietly inspirational Friend who led his life simply and drew strength from regular attendance at Meeting. He devoted a great deal of time to a charity which refurbished old tools to send to third-world countries.

We ask Colchester Friends to prepare a testimony to the grace of God in Denys's life for the AM Book of Memorials.

### **2018/03 Membership matters**

#### **2018/04 Appointments**

##### **Triennial Appointments**

##### **Meeting for Sufferings**

We reappoint Robert Parkes as our representative at Meeting for Sufferings, to serve for the triennial period Yearly Meeting 2018-Yearly Meeting 2021. Carol Holding has come to the end of a triennium as Meeting for Sufferings alternate, and we thank her for her service. We ask Nominations Committee to bring forward the name of a Friend to act as alternate.

##### **Membership Database**

Sylvia Jeffcock completed her appointment as Membership Database Manager in December 2017, and we thank her for her service. Nominations Committee and the Assistant Clerk are drafting a job description for this position before proceeding further with a name.

### **Representatives**

#### **Summer Schools representative**

Cathleen Chabo has completed a triennium and we thank her for her service. As we now have few children attending our meetings, we agree to lay down this appointment.

Information about Friends Southern Summer Events is available on their website [fsse.org.uk](http://fsse.org.uk).

#### **2018/05 Tabular Statement**

Jenny Kay reported on the Tabular Statement for 2017 which has been completed, with help from Charles Bather, Assistant Clerk. At the end of 2017 there were 126 members (43 men and 83 women), a decrease of 11 from 137 in 2016, and 54 attenders, including 9 children. Two meetings were opened at the beginning of the year, leading to internal transfers between meetings.

We thank Jenny and Charles for carrying out this task. The Tabular Statement is attached to these minutes and will be sent to Friends House following this meeting. We ask Jenny to forward the figures about membership to John Kay for the newsletter.

#### **2018/06 Trustees update on current matters**

Jenny Kay, Clerk to Trustees, gave a personal overview of the role and current work of AM Trustees. We thank Jenny for her report, which is attached to these minutes and will be published in the newsletter and on the AM website.

#### **2018/07 Refugee working group update**

The clerk reported that she was approached in December by Maria Wilby and Iman Mortagy of Refugee Action Colchester, which had received funding from Colchester English Study Centre (CESC) for two refugees to attend a short English Language course; this opportunity would be available to other refugees in 2018. Refugee Action Colchester asked if we could support the scheme with funding for travel expenses and books for the two refugees, amounting to a maximum of £200 per month.

We believe we are putting our faith in the future, as our BYM document expresses. We agree to supporting the CESC scheme and our two befriended families, to a total of £300 per month, as needed, to be reviewed after one year.

#### **2018/08 Sanctuary Meeting**

Further to Minute 2017/51, Hazel Jones offered to be one of two Friends, along with Robert Parkes, to coordinate our involvement as a Sanctuary Meeting. Hazel wishes to lay this down, and we appoint Simon Banks to take her place.

#### **2018/09 Area Meeting Gathering 2018**

Further to Minute 2017/13 and 2017/44, our Friends Anne Watkinson, Peter Whiteley, Sylvia Jeffcock and Kate Powis have agreed to begin planning the next AM Gathering, which will take place at High Leigh Conference Centre over the weekend of October 12-14, 2018. Peter reported that the planning group has discussed with Woodbrooke the possibility that Simon Best, Head of Learning (and possibly another colleague) join us for the weekend and lead us in discussions which we hope will be stimulating and inspiring. We agree to this proposal, at a cost to AM of £1000 plus accommodation for each Woodbrooke tutor. We also agree for AM to cover the costs of deposits, and to make bursaries available.

Friends who would like to help with planning are asked to contact Anne, Peter, Sylvia or Kate.

#### **2018/10 Meeting for Sufferings report**

Robert Parkes reported on MfS held at Friends House on December 2, 2017. We heard in particular about the Sanctuary Everywhere manifesto, which can be found on the Quakers in Britain website and will be uploaded to our AM website. We are also invited to respond to the draft 5-year strategy for Quaker Life, which is structured around the document "Our Faith in the Future". Friends are asked to contact Robert if they have any comments.

We thank Robert for his report, which is attached to these minutes and will be published in the newsletter and on the AM website.

#### **2018/11 Report from AM Elders and Overseers**

Julia Usher described the work of Elders and Overseers in Colchester and how it might be more widely shared across the AM. At a meeting in December, Elders and Overseers considered how they might meet their challenges without being overstretched. They are keen to include newcomers while drawing on the strengths of experienced Friends.

An Attenders and Enquirers Day, open to all across the AM, will be held on Saturday February 10. The aims will include sharing and deepening our understanding of meeting for worship and exploring the reality of Quaker experience, its formal traditions and any questions arising. Two other meetings are planned for later in the year.

We thank Julia for her report, which is attached to these minutes and will be published in the newsletter.

#### **2018/12 Support for American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)**

John Lewis brought to our attention the recent decision by the Israeli government to ban certain organisations from admission to the country, including the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). The AFSC is effectively the Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) equivalent for American yearly meetings.

We agree to send a message of spiritual support to AFSC and we ask QPSW, who may be more familiar with circumstances, ways and means, to consider offering whatever practical help is deemed appropriate while this ban is in force.

Signed,

*Alison Parkes*

Alison Parkes

Clerk