

Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting at Colchester, 11.01.2015

Representatives

Clacton-on-Sea - Gillian O'Neil, Carl Sage, Hazel Jones (prevented)

Colchester –Robert Parkes, Peggy Lewis, Liz Hurley, Tim Holding, Mary Grocock, Anne Watkinson, Peter Whiteley, Les Wood (prevented)

Sudbury – Betty Scrivener, Jane Carter, Henry Ruse and Sheelagh Ruse

Present were 36 Friends, including 10 Attenders, and all but 2 of our representatives.

2015/01 Friends being met in the presence of God, Advices and Queries 15 was read.

2015/02 Appointments

a) Triennial Appointments

Meeting for Sufferings representative and alternate Carol Holding and Colin Keen will come to the end of their triennium as Meeting for Sufferings representative and alternate, respectively, at the rise of Yearly Meeting 2015. We thank them for their service to the meeting. We appoint Robert Parkes as representative and Carol Holding as alternate to serve from the rise of Yearly Meeting 2015 to the rise of Yearly Meeting 2018. We are asked to forward these names to the Recording Clerk's office by the end of March.

First contact for oversight or eldership at Clacton

Clacton Meeting has forwarded the following minute LM2014/104: "We agree that we will no longer appoint people to act as first points of contact for oversight or eldership. Instead, we will ask Area Meeting Elders and Overseers to notify our Clerk of planned meetings so that our business meeting may appoint a representative at the time."

We thank Ray Attrill for serving as first contact for oversight or eldership at Clacton Meeting for the past five years.

The clerks of Elders and Overseers are asked to convene a meeting of all Elders and Overseers, as well as representatives from Clacton and Harwich Meetings, at the earliest opportunity. We ask these Friends to explore ways in which Clacton and Harwich Friends might access and support eldership and oversight in their meetings.

b) Review of the number of Elders and Overseers for each LM

Further to Minute 2014/55(c) Elders and Overseers were asked to review the number of appointments for their local meetings. Colchester wishes to retain nine Elders and nine Overseers. Clacton has laid down the role of first contact for oversight or eldership. Sudbury wishes to have one Elder and three Overseers. Earls Colne wishes to have one Elder and one Overseer.

c) Representatives

QPSW Annual Spring Conference - We appoint Christopher Samuel, attender at Colchester Meeting, as our representative at the QPSW Annual Spring Conference, to be held at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire from 13 - 15 March.

2015/03 Membership matters

Application - Jet Grommel

An application for membership from Jet Grommel, an attender at Colchester Meeting, was received in November 2014. Overseers appointed Carol Holding and Peter Whiteley to visit and report to this meeting. We thank Carol and Peter for their report and the Meeting is pleased to accept Jet into membership. Alison Bush and Peter Whiteley are asked to visit and welcome Jet.

2015/04 Tabular Statement - Liz Hurley reported on the tabular statement which the clerk has signed. The total membership of Area Meeting at 31 December 2014 was 143 with 74 attenders. We thank Liz for carrying out this task on behalf of the Area Meeting. Liz has agreed to complete the Tabular Statement for 2015.

2015/05 Area Meeting website

Further to Minute 2014/52, the Clerk Alison Parkes, Asst Clerk Ann Webb and Colchester LM Clerk John Hall met recently with Kall Kwik of Bury St Edmunds. Kall Kwik designed the Bury St Edmunds Meeting website and also Ipswich Meeting website.

John Hall reported on this meeting and presented the Kall Kwik quotation for designing and producing a website for us, as well as providing training for a website manager, who would be appointed by the Area Meeting. John described how our proposed website would be a place where the public could find out about Quakers in our area. The aim would be for a modern, attractive and fully-responsive website, which would nevertheless convey an impression of simplicity. It could also provide a place where AM documents, such as the Safeguarding Policy, and also AM newsletters could be stored.

The Kall Kwik quotation is for set-up costs of £1446 (including VAT) and annual fees for subsequent years of £234 to include the domain name, hosting fee and back-up of website. We accept the quotation from Kall Kwik and agree that they design and produce a Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting website. We ask AM Nominations Committee to bring forward the name of a Friend to be the website manager. John's report and the Kall Kwik quotation are attached to these minutes.

2015/06 Meeting for Sufferings Report

Carol Holding presented a report of Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) held on December 6, 2014. We heard about a concern brought to Meeting for Sufferings for tax justice; Area Meetings are asked to consider how they might get involved. Friends at all levels are encouraged to strengthen the bonds of friendship with the Muslim community and stand up to Islamophobia. Carol reported about MfS consideration of the Transparency of Lobbying Act.

We heard about the work of the Retreat in York. There is a film and speaker available to go to Area Meetings on the topic of mental health. We ask Carol to invite a speaker here on our behalf. We were reminded that "each one of us is unique, precious, a child of God" (Advices & Queries 22).

We thank Carol for her report, which is attached to these minutes and will appear in the February newsletter.

2015/07 Inequality Conference report

Les Wood attended the Inequality Conference hosted by Central England Area Quaker Meeting in Birmingham on November 29, 2014. Les prepared a written report of the conference, which will be printed in the newsletter.

We heard key points from Les's report. The speaker, Suzanne Ismail (QPSW), reminded everyone that the UK is one of the most economically unequal countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The conference asked what we as Quakers can say and do. Suzanne suggested four points, including action on social security, the tax system, living wage, and fair markets for goods and services.

2015/08 Alternatives to Trident report

Robert Parkes reported that the Alternatives to Trident work group, of about a dozen Friends, has met several times. The aim of the group has been to recognise the genuine worries people may have and to offer valid arguments for alternatives to the use of nuclear weapons in the pursuit of maintaining peace. We had hoped to meet with a friend of Pat Brown's, who had been active in CND, but sadly he died shortly before he was due to meet with us. Pat's own ill health since then has also been a timely reminder that taking forward this issue is a responsibility that now rests with younger generations.

Friends have written letters to local newspapers and online national newspapers, as well as to MPs and the Prime Minister, though the responses have been, not unexpectedly, disappointing. We have become aware of other LMs and AMs, as well as QPSW, sharing our concern about Trident, including nearby meetings such as Billericay. We hope to raise questions about Trident at local hustings and increase awareness of Trident as an election issue. Mervyn Carter has prepared an excellent web page about Trident on the Colchester Meeting website. Some Friends plan to attend the Anti-Trident demonstration to be held in London on Saturday, January 24.

The next meeting of the Alternatives to Trident group will take place at Colchester Meeting House on Monday January 19 at 7.30 pm in the Committee Room.

2015/09 AM Safeguarding Policy update

Further to Minute 2014/30, Friends House has recently published a new version of the document 'Meeting Safety'. Our Safeguarding Officers have examined the updated document. Our Safeguarding Policy and procedures are in line with the updated guidelines. The policy is available in the Files section of the Colchester Quakers Yahoo group, and from the Safeguarding Officer, Jane Wolton, and Trustees.

2015/10 Bursary Application form

A few amendments have been agreed by Trustees to help clarify the bursary application form, guidelines for applying, and guidelines to Elders, Overseers, Clerks and Treasurers. The main amendment will, it is hoped, make it clear that Friends and Attenders applying to go on training courses for Quaker roles, or appointed to attend events as AM representatives, are not required to obtain three signatures from Elders, Overseers or Clerks. The revised (January 2015) application form and guidelines have been uploaded to the

Colchester Quakers Yahoo group and circulated to Local Meeting Clerks for them to disseminate to the relevant committees.

2015/11 Regional Gathering

Our theme and venues for 2015 are not yet confirmed but we shall meet together on:

Saturday February 28th 2015 at a Meeting House in Mid Essex AM

Saturday June 27th 2015 at a Meeting House in Thaxted AM

Saturday September 26th 2015 at a Meeting House in Southern East Anglia AM

We ask LMs to consider whether they would be able to host Regional Gathering on Saturday September 26th and to discuss this with the Clerk so that a decision is made at next AM.

2015/12 Good Economy Workshop

Colchester Meeting is hosting a Good Economy workshop on Saturday 14 March from 1.30-5pm. Susan Holden of *Positive Money* will be coming to run the workshop. All are welcome. Friends are requested to add their names to the list on the Colchester Meeting notice-board if they plan to attend.

Signed,

Alison Parkes

Alison Parkes
Clerk