



*Print given to Earls Colne Meeting by John Derring*

# NEWSLETTER

**SOUTHERN EAST ANGLIA AREA QUAKER MEETING**  
**August 2022**

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[GLOSSARY](#)  
[CLICK HERE](#)

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)  
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## Meetings for Worship

(Under COVID regulations)

### CLACTON

Sundays 10.30 am

### HARWICH

### COLCHESTER

Sunday 10.30 am

### EARLS COLNE

Sunday 10.30 am

### SUDBURY

Sunday 10.30 am

### AM ZOOM

Sunday 10.30 am

Contact AM Clerk

## FIRST CONTACT FOR FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Rod Usher, Melanie Read  
Charles Bather

## Meeting for Sufferings

MfS “blended” 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2022

Faith in Action - Quakers and Democracy in Britain.

Are we sleepwalking into authoritarianism? Is it getting harder to engage with law and policy makers through the democratic process? Assaults on our fragile democracy seem to be coming from all directions. Friends sense that longstanding communication channels are breaking down. Our contribution feels more important than ever but what is the distinct Quaker voice and role? Suffering’s discernment is summarised in this minute:

“Following the introduction of the Lobbying Act in 2014 which restricted campaigning ahead of general elections, Quakers in Britain convened the Civil Society Voice network. It has developed into a vital space for organisations to discuss and take joint action on a range of threats to civic space, for example

## Editorial

Hello Friends!

Holiday season is upon us, and we are back from a perfect few nights with friends under canvas in Suffolk surrounded by long grass, trees and big skies. The children ran wild from morning till marshmallow-roasting time, and everyone seemed to come back to themselves.

I sometimes think about camping – how we reach for the apparent inconvenience of loading the car with sleeping bags, calor gas and long-life milk. Of course, in doing so we get to spend extended time outdoors, where we sit, wash, eat and enjoy the view. But a key part for me is that we inhabit a space cheek-by-jowl with others. In our normal lives, we live in big houses, with lots

the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act and criticism of charities who are exploring racism, colonialism, and white privilege.

Democracy matters, and when it is weakened equality, peace and truth all suffer; signs of the divine order to which Quakers testify on the basis of our perception of the Light available to all to which we are called to attend. While individual restrictions upon participation in the democratic process may seem insignificant, the cumulative effect may be catastrophic and have disproportionate impact on those who are already marginalised. Quakers reject the idea that only powerful voices should be heard. Where we disagree, can we keep the argument going, listening to one another, and with mutual respect and love for as long as it takes to discern a way forward?

We have a tradition of speaking truth to power and exercising quiet diplomacy. Sometimes our role may

of rooms and gardens and hedges, but lose something by doing this. Living truly amongst and with each other seems an essential part of us as simple social animals.

With that in mind, I’m taking the kids to the Quaker camp organised by Norfolk Friends next week where we’ll come together for daily Meetings for Worship and communal cooking. Without knowing a soul there, I know the children will thrive. It takes a village to raise a child and here is a little outdoor village for them, and hopefully for me too.



be to minister in compassion to the oppressor as well as to the oppressed. This may be a moment when we can make significant contributions to the public realm in collaboration with other faith groups and secular organisations.

*We have heard expressions of frustration and helplessness, along with anger and fear, and also of hope from Friends. We have also heard a call for assistance for local Friends to articulate and campaign on their concerns around this issue. We have heard appreciation of the Quaker Truth and Integrity Group as well as the involvement of local Friends in public affairs and hope that our central structures can work to support and enhance these initiatives... We ask QPSWCC to consider how to accommodate this concern in their ongoing strategy,*

*working in partnership with other interested parties.”*

More background is in the recent article in the Friend <https://thefriend.org/article/creepin-g-authoritarianism-grace-da-costa-makes-the-case-for-resistance>

**Speaking Out** – we received a presentation from Friends House Communications team explaining how they represent us to the world, and how the world tends to see us. One thing is clear, when Quakers speak out the media listens. The presentation is available in the MfS follow-up papers on the Quakers in Britain website.

### **Emerging patterns for area meetings.**

There is a general recognition that our Area Meetings (AMs) are struggling to fulfil the responsibilities laid upon them as charities. Or, to put it more bluntly, we are running out of Friends to keep the show on the road. We received presentations from Wales and London who are in the process of restructuring themselves, aiming for simpler structures with AMs merging into larger charities that “do the legal and financial stuff,” freeing up Friends to do more of what enriches our lives and at-

## **Pastoral Friends Report May 2022**

for Colchester Local Meeting for Worship for Business 26 June 2022

During Lockdown, and in light of the Black Lives Matter protests, nominated Overseers were renamed Pastoral Friends. It was felt that this was a term that would be better understood in the 21st century and did not have the connotations of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Pastoral Friends are: Jane Herd, Di Naylor, Jenny Linstead and Kate Powis, with the recent, much wel-

tracts people into our communities. There are differences in their approaches and their timescales are different. This is not a one-size fits all exercise. Our discernment is reflected in this minute:

*“Friends recognise the importance of releasing energy for worship and witness, thus allowing their Quaker community to flourish and thrive. We are content in principle to see significant amalgamations of area meetings and other bodies. We noted however that there are implications that may need attention from Meeting for Sufferings or other Yearly Meeting-level bodies, for example – how would local Friends be represented at national level? There was also an appetite for further consideration of the emotional aspects of the hard work of change, and a plea for finding a way to consider the issues facing local meetings as well as their engagement with area meetings”*

### **Reflections on Yearly Meeting 2022**

We heard tremendous enthusiasm for the experience of BYM as a blended meeting, recognising the excellent technical support that enabled it. Regarding the themes, we heard that our discernment on slavery reparations is still at an early stage albeit already attracting media

came, addition of Freya Sandford and Mel Read.

For most of the year Pastoral Friends have met with Elders on a monthly basis to address overall Local Meeting business, which included Covid safeguarding. This met a gap in the Local Meeting, while we were without a Local Meeting Clerk. Susan Rhodes has now been appointed and is supported by a clerking team. One Pastoral Friend, Kate Powis, is contributing to the new Local Clerking team, alongside Susan.

Pastoral Friends Jane Herd and Kate Powis are also part of the

interest. We still may not fully understand the implications of our decision, which must involve work within our own worshipping groups as well as more widely. We know there are Friends who still find this difficult to talk about but that is not a reason to shrink from it. We are not alone among faith groups in looking at this issue. The Yearly Meeting minutes empower and require us to act on anti-racist and anti-oppressive work, uncomfortable though this is bound to be for many. Sufferings will be taking the matter forward in future meetings.

**Ukraine** - Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee keep us updated. We are upholding in prayerful support Friends in Eastern Europe, who, in large measure, are still in a state of shock: this is a war that was not supposed to have happened.

As usual, a full report of the meeting and papers can be found on the dedicated MfS pages on the [Quaker.org](http://Quaker.org) website. MfS also gets good coverage in The Friend

Robert Parkes, July 2022

Quaker Quest group, alongside John Greenwood, Alison Parkes, Phyl Reid, Sylvia Jeffcock.

It’s been a complex matter to address the needs of the Meeting as Pastoral Friends during Covid, given the prevailing circumstances and indeed the personal circumstances of some Pastoral Friends themselves. Now we have increased resources, both in terms of energy and numbers, we are looking to develop a stronger and more diverse network. We have identified Friends who have been attending to the needs of others within the Meeting on an informal basis and we would want to support that as this will be based

on existing relationship. We now see our role as P-Fs in supporting those offering this form of care for others, as well as offering one to one care to those we know of in our own role as P-Fs.

We also acknowledge that we need to identify people who may not be involved in such networks, recognising that some may be happy to be self-sufficient or may find support with others that we're not connected with. This system may be more complex than the old list system that randomly allocated Friends to named Overseers, but we hope that its organic nature is more sustainable and offers fruitful opportunities for genuine friendship.

During 2021 – early 2022 we have been working with a Friend who

## Belonging to a Quaker Community

Q.F & P 10.01

Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.

Isaac Pennington, 1667



## Guardian Angel

This guardian angel has been hanging on the railings of Earls Colne Meeting House for a few weeks now. We have left it thinking that someone will claim it but it remains. Is it a gift to us?

wished to offer financial support to Friends and their families who have been struggling during Covid and its aftermath. People in need were identified and funds have been distributed, but there may still be a possibility of further support. We are very aware of the implications of the current cost of living crisis and remain vigilant for opportunities of offering sensitive, light touch practical support.

To that end, Pastoral Friends have also worked to formalise a system for the provision of small-scale emergency payments, revising the existing Small Emergency Payments Fund. People can now let Pastoral Friends, Elders or Clerks know of a need, their own or others in Meeting, and funds will be made available

## Quaker Governance

From *Governance, the Quaker way* by Judith Thompson in Quaker Quarterly 2022

What is the role of individual Friends in good Quaker governance?

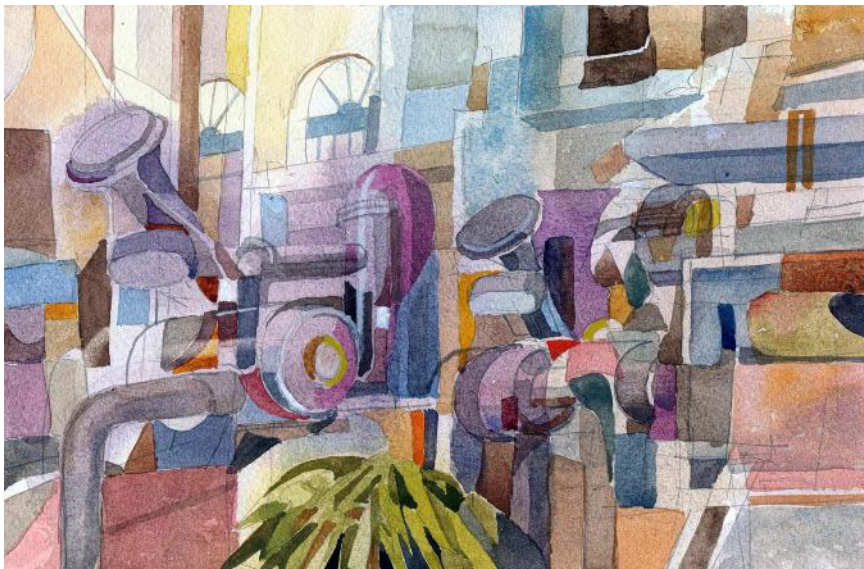
“As Quakers we say that it is not that we have no clergy but that we have no laity. We talk of the ‘priesthood of all believers’. (QFP §27.35) The implication is that each of us has a responsibility for our Local Meeting and the wider Religious Society of Friends. Collectively we are responsible for good Quaker governance. This does not mean that we re-do the work or re-visit all the decisions of our trustees but we do have the responsibility to test those decisions in order to discern that they will contribute to building the

able in a timely way. We also request that Trustees publicise with greater clarity the details of the large funding sources available that require formal application processes. This would be particularly welcome considering the current cost of living crisis.

We are welcoming the arrival of new friends/enquirers/attenders, some of whom come from the University. We have arranged a picnic on the 14<sup>th</sup> June by the Lake at Essex University Colchester campus so that they can get to know each other and as a way of introducing Lizzie Bennett, who is set to become Quaker Chaplain there. In that role, Lizzie will be invited to Pastoral Friends meetings so that we can keep in touch with any issues arising there.

Meeting’s ability to achieve its purpose. We also do have to be knowledgeable enough about the way things work to give support to this aspect of our life together. I am particularly distressed when people divide the ‘boring business bits’ from ‘spiritual matters’. Proper care over the way we conduct our business is as much part of our spiritual life and a witness to our faith as anything else we may do.”p.11

“Good governance is not inimical to the spiritual life of individuals or to Quakers in Britain. It is an enabling activity to help Quaker communities to flourish and fulfil their purpose in their worship, work and witness. The detailed work of good Quaker governance may be entrusted to a group of appointed Friends but all of us should understand that we have a part to play. If more Friends were engaged in understanding the spiritual nature of our governance, we might have not just good Quaker governance but the best.”p.13



*Latest small watercolour, abstracted painting of a workshop converted to a artist's exhibition space.*



## Notes from the Area Meeting

Area Meeting Minutes 09.07.2022

Jenny Kay

Present at Colchester were 27 Friends and Attenders representing Clacton, Colchester, Earls Colne and Sudbury but no-one attended on zoom. We welcomed Bev Smith, our regional support worker.

### Membership Matters

Two attenders were welcomed into membership, one member was transferred in and another released from membership. Colchester Pastoral Friends have been very active in seeking out the wishes of members whom we have not heard from for some time. They reported on four members and will send out new membership books with personal handwritten letters to those who have not responded to their enquiries.

### Living Witness weekend gathering at Woodbrooke

It was agreed that the place offered at this gathering to the AM could be taken up, expenses paid, should Pastoral Friends find someone to go and later to report to the September AM.

**Weekend Residential Gathering at Belsey Bridge** This conference centre has been booked from 20-23 October. Peter Whiteley reported that 12 friends have shown an interest in this to date. He will try to regenerate interest in the autumn. The possibility of this event being organised in house rather than using a facilitator or speaker was welcomed.

### Trustee report

This report was introduced by the clerk reading from the paper by Judith Thompson called 'Governance, the Quaker way' in the latest edition of the Friends Quarterly. The extract can be found on p.4. The Trustees report and accompanying diagram are on pages 6&7.

### Sanctuary working group report

Alison Parkes was thanked for her report which can be read on page 8. An extra £3,000 is to be added to the fund giving grants to refugees.

### Meeting for Sufferings

We thanked Robert Parkes, his report may be found on page 2.

**'Bring and share' lunch.** The meeting agreed to take a break and to resume the business after lunch, taking some of the time allocated to the Quaker Quest team. The last

minute curtailment of this activity due to the agenda over-run was unfortunate. We thank Jane Herd and Sylvia Jeffcock for the preparations they had made.

### Future AM Meetings

The nature of our Saturday all-day style of meeting was considered. The clerk summarised the concerns. We read Quaker Faith and Practice paragraph 4.02 to remind ourselves of the purpose of Area Meetings.

We agreed to continue the pattern of meetings previously agreed for the rest of the year with a start if 10am. for Meeting for Worship and business at 10.30am and with 'bring and share' catering. The Quaker Quest group agreed to discuss the suggestions to take over the role of an Area Meeting community support group and change their name to reflect this. We hope that AMs next year can be held in the other Meeting Houses,

Meeting for Business closed with a short period of worship. Bev Smith gave a short introduction to the nature of her role and members of the Quaker Quest team introduced the nature of labyrinths to prepare for the next session of exploring what nurtures us.

## Trustees Report and Accounts 2021

Report by Jenny Kay, Clerk to Trustees

The presentation and report given to AM on 09.07.2022 was based on the draft accounts. These have now been finalised, agreed by Trustees and signed at Whittles office on 28.07.2022. The Report will be presented to AM for acceptance in September before submission to the Charity Commission. Copies are now available from me or AM Treasurer, Liz Prockter or AM Clerk.

At the year beginning of 2021 we were seven trustees. The AM have been unable to replace Ecky Prolingheuer and Eliza Jones and we ended the year with five, the minimum required by our governing document. Treasurer Liz Prockter agreed to serve a second term and I agreed to do a third, continuing as clerk. When I joined trustees we were nine in number, seven would be ideal, five is too few to share out the responsibilities. I hope that by the end of the year two more trustees will be appointed by the AM.

Trustees met six times on Zoom in 2021. We learned that this was a concession from the Charity Commission and that should we wish to continue a change to our Governing Document would be needed. This was achieved at the last AM. We are continuing to meet online as a convenient and efficient way of conducting the business. We are mindful of the need for a Trustee presence in our Meeting Houses and will plan to make sure that this happens.



Trustees are responsible for the resources of the Area Meeting, those are finances, properties, records, documents, the safety and safeguarding of all who use our premises. We thank Ecky for his service on Trustees until May 2021 as Safeguarding Officer. He continues in that role but with the new policy a Trustee must be appointed to the role and Sylvia Jeffcock has taken this on.

Trustees act for AM as the employer of the two employees in Colchester. Employment is supported by a Wardenship Committee on which Martin Rayner and Sylvia Jeffcock serve as trustee members. Other members of this committee are ex officio Colchester appointments; the committee reports to trustees. Until September 2021 we continued to receive the furlough grant for the Cleaner-care taker. A change was made to add management responsibilities to her role and a Deputy Cleaner-Caretaker was employed this year. The appointment was made with the understanding that support from AM might be needed while the income from hirings in Colchester was recovering.

Trustees continued to hold responsibility for Covid 19 safety measures beyond 19 July when Meeting Houses could legally re-open, recommending that social distancing, wearing masks and sanitising should continue where possible.

Colchester Meeting House and Flat are looked after by the Colchester Premises Committee. Renovations, including the toilets have taken place with the designated £100,000 of which £52,000 was available at the beginning of 2022. This fund has been well managed by the Meeting obtaining grants and reclaiming VAT on the basis of Grade II listing which was inexplicably removed in March this year.

Trustees check on the state of our buildings through Quinquennial Reviews. Colchester's next review will take place when the renovations are completed. Earls Colne is working on completing the suggested works by 2022, Clacton and Sudbury by 2023.

Sudbury is in a special position with regard to hiring and maintaining the premises. Robert Parkes as Trustee for Sudbury oversees this through an agent, Harcourt Powell. This is a financial arrangement based on a percentage of the hiring fee. While the Meeting House was closed we made an agreement for a monthly fee of £50.

Layer Breton burial ground remains in our possession for the time being. Friends are encouraged to visit.

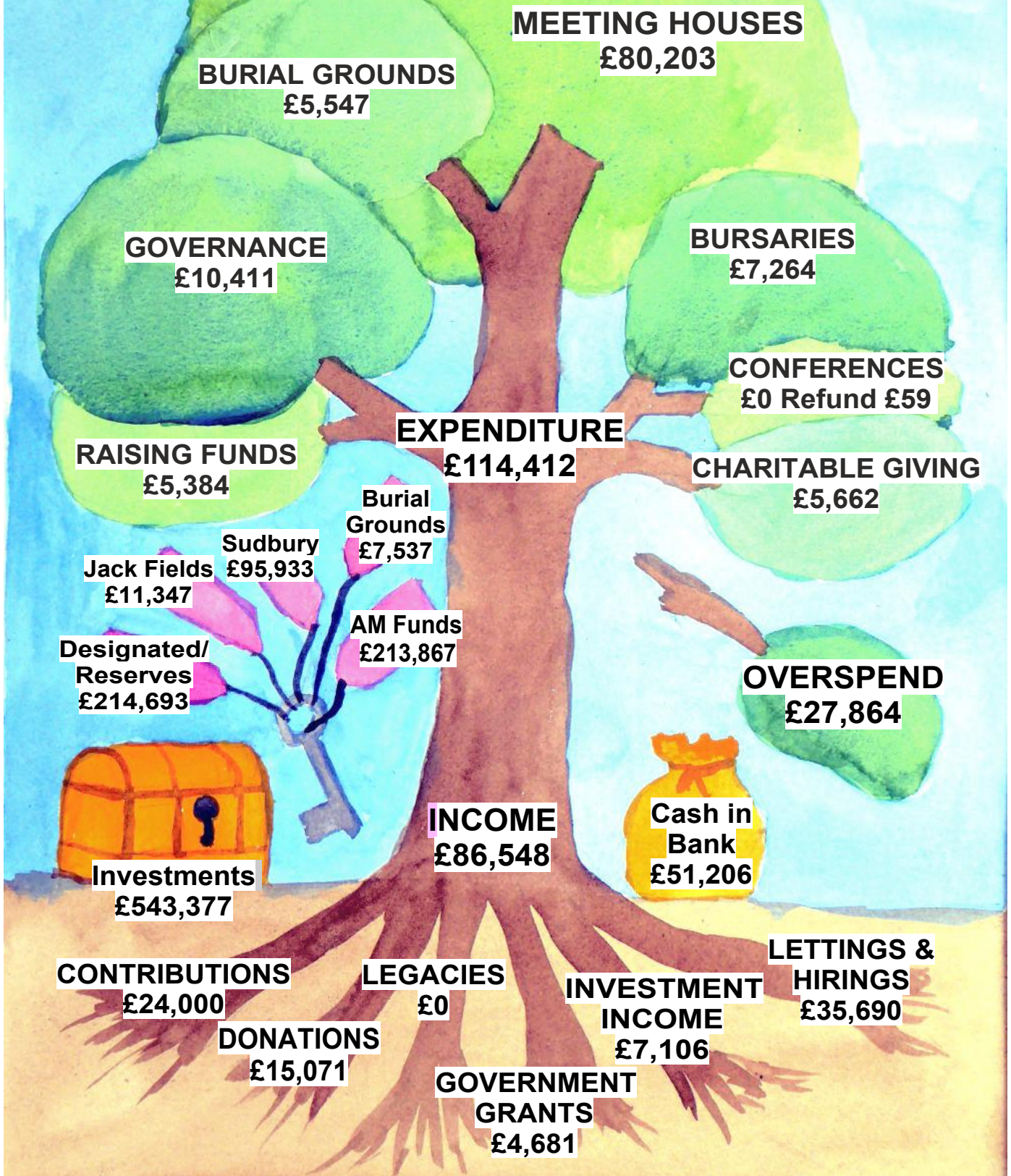
When I gave the 2020 report in July 2021 there was still a possibility that we could be facing some difficult decisions as to the best use of our money and our Meeting Houses. As previously, we are still able to record that 'Trustees are satisfied that our assets are sufficient to cover all contingencies' In September 2021 AM asked trustees to consider a donation to BYM. Trustees decided to

*Continued on Page 7*

# SEAQM

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2021

### An Analysis



The figures used here are all to be found in, or are derived from the SEAQM Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements 2021, independently examined and produced by Whittles, Chartered Accountants. The report will be presented to AM in September for approval and then submitted to the Charity Commission.

wait for the 2021 Trustees Annual Report & Accounts before doing so. It could now be considered at the next trustees meeting.

It is not possible to know the financial position of each of our LMs from the figures in the report. Some years ago Trustees considered the possibility of showing these. Our discernment led us to accept that we are one Quaker Meeting, responsible for each of the LMs and whether they over or under-spend.

From the accountant's yearly statement it is possible to see whether a LM has needed financial support or has generated income. Such figures are the product of the accounting package which we use. As to which costs should be assigned to the AM and which to the LM could be a matter for future discussion.

The memorandum of understanding (2011) on the website, sets out the relationship between the AM and the LMs. Trustees began to update this four years ago but realised that it would need to be different for each LM. That for Earls Colne was completed and agreed by the LM but still needs trustees agreement and AM adoption.

Fixed budgets have not been required by Trustees. Trustees monitor the financial position through the year. The position for each LM is different. Earls Colne uses an AM current account, Sudbury has many thousands of pounds in reserve, Clacton has the income from letting the flat which covers more than LM costs. Colchester is the registered office for the Area Meeting.

Accompanying this report is a pictorial representation of income, expenditure, investments and cash in hand is derived from the figures in the Accounts. In 2021 total income from all sources was £86,548. We spent £114,412, a difference of £27,864; a smaller overspend than last year's £34,325.

Unfortunately we were unable to make an insurance claim for loss of income through Covid. We had changed insurance companies from NFU to Edwards, a broker, a few days after the Covid outbreak was recorded as having started in our area.

Thanks are due to many for the ongoing work to support the activities of SEAQM. These will be recorded by AM in September when there will be an opportunity for comment and consideration of the use of our

## SEAQM Sanctuary Working Group Report

Alison Parkes, Kate Powis, Sylvia Jeffcock, Eliza Jones

from Area Meeting held at Colchester, July 9, 2022

**The Refugee Bursary Application scheme**, working together with Essex Integration (EI), was upgraded as agreed by AM in April. Robert Parkes, an AM Trustee, agreed to administer the applications, liaising with Liz Prockter, AM Treasurer. We are delighted to report that in the first few weeks of the scheme, we received and approved five applications, each for £200.

The first was from a Syrian woman applying for a Diploma in Public Service Interpreting, involving translation from Arabic to English, and the appli-

cant is also taking a module in English Law.

The second was from an Afghan woman for a course to improve her English handwriting, as she is not accustomed to writing in Latin script as opposed to Persian script.

The third was from a Syrian man to pay for a set of mechanic's tools, which he needed for his new job.

The fourth was from a Kenyan man towards driving lessons, to improve his chances of employment.

The fifth was from an Iranian single mother towards driving lessons, also to improve her chances of employment.

As the total fund was £3,000, these applications reduced the money available by £1,000. In the last week of June we received fourteen applications

from young men: 7 from Sudan, 1 from South Sudan, 4 from Eritrea, 1 from Iran. They all wish to improve their English, requesting funding to buy tablets and laptops. Eddie Campbell, Managing Director of Essex Integration, suggested that EI could apply for 20% VAT discount which would reduce our costs, and AM agreed to this, enabling us to honour these applications. AM also agreed to continue supporting the Refugee Bursary Application scheme and approved another £3000 to be made available. We have communicated this to Essex Integration, who are grateful for the additional support for their clients.

It is very satisfying that our money is being put towards the integration into our society of refugees and asylum seekers from poverty-stricken and war-torn countries. In other words, our money is being used for



good, which was something discerned several years ago as an integral part of our purposes as a Quaker Meeting.

**Bedding for Afghan families.** Friends across our Area have generously donated over £760 towards the bedding needed by families from Afghanistan who are settling in Colchester. When we confirmed our commitment as a Sanctuary Meeting in October 2021, we pledged to sustain our commitment to the refugees and asylum seekers in our area. At that time this included individuals and families who were mainly from Syria and Afghanistan. In April 2022, Essex Integration informed us that there was a particular need for bedding in support of Afghan families. We delivered colourful new bedding to Essex Integration for them to distribute. It was very

much appreciated. The cost of the bedding came to roughly £510, leaving a surplus of £250.

**Refugees from Ukraine.** A number of Friends have expressed an interest in supporting refugees suffering the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Ukrainians have been accepted in Britain on a humanitarian sponsorship scheme, which means that local people are providing housing in their own homes. Each Ukrainian family is given a sum by the government, as is the British family providing the housing. Locally (Eddie at EI informed us), Barnardos has provided 50 laptops for their use, and there have been lots of donations from the public. So Essex Integration is there in a support capacity, rather than organising the housing and other services it usually provides. What they

are doing is providing vouchers for, e.g. supermarket shopping, so the Ukrainian families can make choices depending on their clothing or food needs. We propose using the surplus £250 (left over from the bedding for Afghan families) to put towards vouchers which can be used by Ukrainian families.

**Would you like to be involved?** Essex Integration and Refugee Action Colchester are always glad to hear from those interested in befriending refugees or providing English teaching or taking part in conversation classes. Alternatively, if you would like to support the Sanctuary working group, in however small a way, please get in touch with one of us.

## The Trolley Problem

John Hall

We all face moral decisions during our life. The first I remember was when I was called up for National Service. Should I go? (The retired colonel who interviewed me allowed me to serve in the Medical Corps (RAMC) knowing that I refused to carry a weapon, which most RAMC soldiers did “to protect their patients”.)

While reading a book review about whether Artificial Intelligence (AI) would be able to make moral decisions given that it was being promoted by big business for profit rather than by ethical thinkers, I came across the trolley problem first proposed by the moral philosopher Philippa Foot in 1967. You are beside a railway line, next to a lever which will control the route a carriage will take. If you do nothing, the trolley will run over and kill 5 people on the line, but if you pull

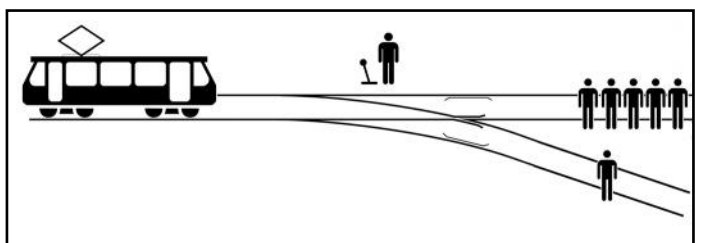
the lever, the trolley will move onto another line and kill only one other person. What do you choose to do?

I dismissed this as a theoretical situation which would never arise in real life. Of course, it is all theoretical as from all the research I have done, whether the switchman or woman would sacrifice his or her own life to save all never seems to have been considered. However, then thinking about it, I realised that there is at least one group of people who may have to make exactly the proposed choice – medical practitioners.

The NHS has been underfunded for very many years now. When a patient comes in who may be saved but at great expense, does a consultant spend all that money on the one patient, or does he or she use it to treat a group of other patients

whose individual treatment will cost so much less?

I shall never have to make this decision, but for those setting up AI, the problem is very real. For example, consider autonomous vehicles where such a problem may arise. Or lethal autonomous weapon systems for which the UN has called a ban but to which our government has not agreed. Given the steady rise of AI around the world, how do we influence its development? As QF&P. 11.01 says, we do not require great moral or spiritual achievement, but it does require a sincerity of purpose and a commitment to Quaker values and practices. How do we apply these to such a task?



## Fear, Ignorance & Silence

John Kay

*'We have nothing to fear except fear itself.'* Franklin D. Roosevelt

Those in absolute power have three powerful tools to maintain their power; fear, ignorance and silence.

A majority vote in national legislature gives the opportunity to pass laws which themselves restrict the freedom of the Judiciary and the fourth estate. If these are suitably disabled any misrepresentation of the facts can be effectively hidden from the ignorant. Any existing class system which is based upon wealth and influence feels more confident and secure.

With the absence of knowledge from the informed deep feelings of insecurity may be developed

into fears which divide loyal voters from other citizens and create sub classes. These then are socially avoided, acquire undesirable qualities, often shaped by fear. Lack of contact means that co-operation becomes impossible. They become blameworthy and suffer badly from discrimination.

This sub group are then a gift to those in power who are then free to use them to blame as scapegoats and even pass discriminatory laws against them as a distraction for all their own evils and greed.

Silence through ignorance is supported by informed supporters who, fearful of their own position stay silent in the face of what they know to be morally unacceptable.

The stronger that the rulers are, the more fearful they become,

knowing how unreliable the silent have become, being reduced the status of 'yes men'. It is inevitable as leaks develop about immorality may come from the government itself.

The subgroups are harassed by unequal laws which target them specifically, secret police thrive and the media are publicly blamed. Public demonstration is rendered ineffective by new laws and union activity is also curbed in the same way.

*Out of fear, we may betray truth; out of bitterness or self-righteousness we may betray love. A desire for peace without truthfulness is worthless and does not bring about peace; without love truth has no effect because it is not heard.* Margarethe Lachmund "Christians in a divided world. 1958".

## A Strange Contrast

John Hall

Like most Friends, I have always found *Quaker Faith and Practice* to be a very useful source of inspiration and advice. Reading through the entire book (before Covid) with a group of Friends and Attenders from Colchester Meeting, I found most of it helpful, although, I must admit, not all. Now that it is up for review, I thought I would investigate the older, well-known quotations, and I was interested to discover that some of them, while helpful standing alone, do not reveal the context in which they were written and conceal things with which I have difficulty. For example, take the quotation from William Penn 23.02, "True Godliness don't turn men out of this world but enables them to live better in it ... Christians should ... not

meanly steal out at the stern of the world and leave those that are in it without a pilot ...". However, reading William Penn's *No cross, No Crown* I discovered that this is just a short part of a long diatribe against the monastic life. Looking for an explanation, I have recently read *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia* (Frederick Tolles 1948) and found that the background was William Penn promoting capitalism in his colony of Pennsylvania. While that was understandable as he wanted settlers who would make his colony a success, it contrasts with the Quaker acceptance of the beliefs of many different churches and First Nation wherever Quakers were in government, such as in West Jersey and indeed Pennsylvania. Moreover, Penn was instrumental in promoting good relations with First Nation peo-

ples and treating them much better than other rulers did.

His objections to the monastic life appeared to be that he thought monks did no work. But that surely is wrong. They worked, and still work where monasteries exist, for as much self-maintained, total material autonomy as they could and can achieve, just like settlers in Pennsylvania. Strange!



## What does good governance look like?

A review of the Friends Quarterly, Issue two 2022

Jenny Kay

Reading the articles in this issue gave me a deeper insight into how our governance is rooted in our Quaker faith. How we do our collective business and how we act in the world flows from this. In the annual Statement of Financial Activities governance costs are spread across our charitable activities; property costs to maintain our places of worship, grants, bursaries donations to support those undertaking our activities. You have to read the notes to the financial statement to find the actual cost of governance, i.e. the total fees and expenses paid to those working on our behalf. When I think in terms of how governance is a shared activity carried out through Meetings held in the spirit and in which we all participate this way of accounting begins to make sense. (Advices 15) Governance is much more than how we spend our money or look after our buildings.

Judith Thompson is currently serving on the Book of Discipline Revision Committee. In her article 'Governance, the Quaker Way' explains what good governance in a charity looks like and how it is different for us as we try to 'live out together the guidance received from the spirit'.

Deborah Rowlands, an associate tutor at Woodbrooke writes on 'Gospel Order' which she sees as 'the life of the Religious Society of Friends, and specifically how we make decisions together'. She explores Gospel Order through the writings of George Fox, Christine Davis and others. She asks us to think about whether our structures get in the way of the 'work we need to do to let our lives speak.' and to consider that we might entwine governance with worship and witness so that each strengthens and enriches the other.

Simon Risley, a past elder at Yearly Meeting and currently elder in his Area Meeting is convinced that the Quaker business method held the key to the early survival of the Religious Society of Friends when other dissenting groups dwindled. Simon writes from his own experience covering a broad range of matters that require discernment, of what bad governance looks like as well as good. He sees the need to emphasise to members that 'the Society isn't magically governed from afar, it's a case of 'do it yourself.'

Tim Gee is general secretary of Friends World Committee for Consultation. As part of his spiritual preparation for this role he wrote 'What I mean when I say I believe in God'. His focus is the words that he and others use to express

belief and how they have changed over time. Most Quakers in the world are from Christ-centred Friends Churches who use more explicit Christian language in prayerful discernment than Quakers in Britain. Among the words he explores are God, Christ, Spirit, Kingdom of Heaven and Gospel recognising that our interpretations may change over time but with the reminder that we share a common root, 'a profound and physical experience of God, understood by the earliest Friends as Christ come to teach us himself.'

This publication is seen as a resource for learning to be used in local meetings. Questions for discussion include 'What would encourage you to take more part in the business and governance of the Society?'

