

**East Cheshire Area Quaker Meeting**  
**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016, Stockport Quaker Meeting House, 1.40pm**

MINUTES

**Minute 16.11.01: Friends present**

All our Meetings except Crewe and Nantwich are represented.

35 Friends are present.

The Trustee present is Hilary Brooks.

The Accompanying Elder is Ian Hamilton.

**Minute 16.11.02: Reading**

We have heard QF&P 25.04 read in our opening worship.

**Minute 16.11.03: Caring for Friends**

We have heard the names of Friends who are in our thoughts. The Assistant Clerk with the help of Liz Morris will write to them on our behalf.

**Minute 16.11.04: Transfer of membership: Elizabeth Backhouse**

We record that Elizabeth's membership has been received by Brighthouse West Yorkshire Area Meeting. She goes with our love and good wishes.

**Minute 16.11.05: Transfer of membership: David McBride**

We have received a transfer of membership for David from Staffordshire Area Meeting. David attends Crewe and Nantwich Meeting. We welcome him into ECAM.

**Minute 16.11.06: Application for membership: Frances McCann**

Frances McCann of Stockport Meeting has applied for membership.

We ask Geoff Thomason and Sally Mendham to meet with Frances to prepare a report for a subsequent meeting.

**Minute 16.11.07: Application for membership: David Glover**

David Glover of Stockport Meeting has applied for membership.

We ask Joan Armstrong and Andrew Backhouse to meet with David to prepare a report for a subsequent meeting.

**Minute 16.11.08: Five Minute Find Out: Ian Hamilton**

We thank Ian for sharing some of his life's journey among Quakers.

**Minute 16.11.09: Nominations**

- Overseers: Nominations Committee have brought the names of Wendy Robinson of Cheadle Hulme Meeting, and Ann Evens of Disley Meeting to serve as overseers until the end of 2019. We are pleased to appoint these Friends accordingly.
- To serve on Nominations Committee until the end of 2019: Stockport Meeting has brought the names of Joan Armstrong and Pat Carlisle, and Marple Meeting has brought the names of Sue Pounder and Hilary Brooks. We are pleased to appoint these Friends accordingly.
- To attend the Young Quakers Participation Day at Friends House on 3<sup>rd</sup> December: We are pleased to appoint Antonia, Scarlett, Amber and Tom to attend the Participation Day.
- We are pleased to appoint Till Geiger to attend the course for custodians at Friends House in March 2017, and agree to fund the costs of the course plus travel.

**Minute 16.11.10: QPSW Spring Conference, “Journeys of Witness”, 24-26 March, Swanwick**

We ask Nominations Committee to identify a Friend to attend this. We agree to pay costs of £190 plus travel.

**Minute 16.11.11: Junior Yearly Meeting, 29 July to 5 August, 2017**

We ask Meetings and/or parents to suggest names of 14-17 year olds who might attend JYM to Nominations Committee as soon as possible, in time for names to come to Area Meeting in February.

**Minute 16.11.12: Quaker Life Representative Council Report**

Sue Pounder attended QLRC in October. The theme was “Being the Change” and focussed on sustainability witness. She reflected on the challenge of bringing the energy back from Rep Council into the Area Meeting. She looks forward to sharing Being Friends Together resources with Friends in their meetings.

We thank Sue Pounder for her report, a copy of which is attached to the minutes.

**Minute 16.11.13: Regional Gathering**

We have heard much appreciation of the Regional Gathering held at Wilmslow, in the Guild and in the Meeting House, on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

We were told there is a plan to develop further work on Peace Education in schools. Friends are invited to contact Gill Alcock with offers of support and expressions of interest.

We were told of the enthusiasm expressed by some of the many young people present at the gathering, including 24 in the Teenage General Meeting group.

In preparation for Regional Gathering, the committee identified a film that would enhance the Gathering. To enable this to be shown, on 20/10/16, the Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Treasurer agreed the following Between Meetings Minute:

*Cost of film about response to Prevent Programme*

*The Planning Committee for Regional Gathering has told us of a film about the Moslem response to the Prevent programme, which they feel would be appropriate to show at Regional gathering. We approve the expenditure of £180 to hire this film, over and above the previously agreed budget.*

However, a collection on the day is expected to cover the cost of this video. Finances are not yet fully resolved, but are expected to come within the £200 budgeted.

We thank the Regional Gathering organising committee for all the work involved in arrangements. This committee is now laid down.

**Minute 16.11.14: Disley Meeting – suggestion to show The Divide**

Ann Lewis has told us of Disley’s hope that the film about inequality, The Divide, might be shown for the whole of ECAM, and/or for others locally.

Disley asks for support in finding the cost of the film hire, and in organising the event, which would include a speaker from the Equality Trust.

Stockport Friends will hope to work with Disley Friends in taking this forward.

We agree to underwrite the £125 required for hire of the film plus further costs up to a total of £250 from the Gifts and Legacies Fund.

### **Minute 16.11.15: Poetry Anthology**

Celia Davies has told us of the anthology created of poems written by local secondary schoolchildren in and following sessions led by John Lindley (Previous poet laureate for Cheshire) focussing on dilemmas and choices that people have to make in times of conflict and war. The first copies were sold at Regional Gathering although the official launch will be at All Hallows Catholic College, Macclesfield on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November, which will include the musical Piece "Cowards" produced by Taylor Giacomina at Regional Gathering.

We have received the following Minute from Cheadle Hulme :

***Worn with Pride distribution.*** *We agree to distribute copies of Worn with Pride to local schools. We ask Evelyn Ingram to purchase copies and coordinate this. We agree to forward this minute to Area Meeting, suggesting that they might encourage other local Meetings to do the same.*

We encourage local meetings to follow this suggestion and buy copies for their local secondary schools.

The Area Meeting agrees to buy copies of this anthology for giving to the 25 or so ECAM teenagers who have participated in this year's Yealand event, TGM, and summer school. We ask Andrew Backhouse and Till Geiger to work together on this.

We thank Celia and all others involved for all the work involved in developing the anthology.

### **Minute 16.11.16: Yealand**

We encourage the Yealand subgroup (Emma Killick, Till Geiger, Rachael Lewis) of CYPC to proceed with planning a Yealand event for next Easter (8-13 April 2017). We agree to underwrite the costs on the usual basis.

### **Minute 16.11.17: Pantomime trip**

On the request of ECAM CYP Committee, we agree to pay the price of tickets for all children who take part in the annual trip to the pantomime (Peter Pan) at Stockport Plaza on Sunday 8th January 2017. This will follow an all age Mf W, shared party lunch and games. Friends are asked to bring contributions of food.

### **Minute 16.11.18: Churches together in Cheshire**

Michael Hennessey has reported on the work of Churches Together in Cheshire Leaders group and specifically, of issues of modern slavery, which several Cheshire groups are working together on, and the "underground railway" run by the Salvation Army to protect vulnerable young women.

We thank Michael for his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, along with the Anti-Slavery leaflet produced by this group.

*This Minute to be copied to Church Leaders' Group and to Cheshire and Wirral Area Meeting.*

### **Minute 16.11.19: Course at Woodbrooke: Forced Migration, how can Quakers respond?**

We have received the names of Anne Baker, Julia Horn and Till Geiger to attend this course. We agree to pay course, accommodation and travel costs.

**Minute 16.11.20: Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB)**

Phoebe Spence has reported on the work of NFPB this year, and of the inspiring speakers at NFPB meetings. The spring meeting is likely to be held at Stockport on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

Friends are invited to contact Christopher Bagley and Phoebe Spence with ideas of local events and groups that might be included in the agenda.

We are encouraged to write to MPs etc in relation to the Peace Tax Bill (Income tax (Non-Military Expenditure) Bill 2016). Links to details have been circulated.

A report by Christopher Bagley is attached to the Minutes. We thank Phoebe Spence for her oral report.

**Minute 16.11.21: Meeting for Sufferings: matters arising**

Andrew Backhouse has reported on some matters coming through Meeting for Sufferings. He has alerted us to the concern coming from Scottish Friends that funds from fines levied on banks are being applied to cadet corps in schools. We have been encouraged to maintain vigilance in respect of actions taken by the Government.

Andrew's written account is attached, and Friends are encouraged to learn more about the Amerdown initiative for peace and security by following the link in the report.

**Minute 16.11.22: Outward Affairs**

We remind Friends of their responsibility for the right ordering of their outward affairs. This involves personal consideration of the proper acquisition and use of income, the stewardship of money held for others, conduct in business, and the importance of making and from time to time reviewing their wills. If contemplating making legacies to the Society, its committees or associated bodies, Friends are advised to take advice from experienced Friends, and to consult the Quaker website or to contact Friends House. We ask Local Meeting Clerks to report to AM clerk in time for our February AM that they have brought this to the attention of their meetings. It may also be appropriate for friends to make known their funeral wishes in some suitable manner. Friends are also reminded that should any help be required towards the amicable settlement of disputes, the Clerk to Elders, Clerk to Overseers and Area Meeting Clerk have been asked to act together to find a suitable Friend or Friends to give their help.

**Minute 16.11.23: Annual Duties**

Local Meetings are asked to report to our February meeting on the completion of their annual duties. These include the regular and right holding of Meetings for Worship, making use of the Advices and Queries and the reading of the Epistle from BYM, the holding of regular meetings for church affairs and compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

**Minute 16.11.24**

We thank Stockport Friends for their hospitality.

Signed in and on behalf of the Area Meeting:  
Frances A Hill, Clerk

**LM Clerks please note minutes 16.11.11, 16.11.15, 16.11.22, 16.11.23**

Reports for ECAM Meeting for Worship for Business  
at Stockport Meeting House, November 13<sup>th</sup> 2016

- Quaker Life Representative Council – 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016, Woodbrooke on sustainability
- Report of Northern Friends' Peace Board Meeting Held on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 at Penrith
- Churches Together in Cheshire Group Leaders' Report
- Meeting for Sufferings Report

## **Quaker Life Representative Council – 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016, Woodbrooke**

### **“More than light bulbs”**

Twice a year there is a wonderful opportunity for Friends around the country to meet together and share experiences and challenges about living as a Quaker today – it’s called the Quaker Life Representative Council. It’s another of the “well kept secrets” of British Quakerism.

Representatives from Area Meetings across Britain meet, for a weekend, to explore practical issues currently affecting Quakers – as individuals and as meetings. Also present are the members of the Quaker Life Central Committee and staff from Friends House.

There are usually around 80 – 100 at the gathering, and this year, as a new deputy rep, I had the opportunity of attending both the spring and autumn councils. In April I went along with Joan Kershaw, our main rep, and in October I attended on my own.

The October theme was “Becoming the change we want to see” with a focus on sustainability – where are we now, as meetings and in our own lives, in making real the commitment to a sustainable and positive future? What have we learned, achieved and struggled with? Can we keep fresh the spiritual basis for our commitment?

A key part of Rep Council is the use of Home Groups (about 10 people who meet together several times during the weekend), and during the first session we noticed how the conversation started with buildings and lifestyle choices, but quickly moved onto broader themes of community building, social justice, peace work and economic justice. All were related in some way to sustainability. In the safe space of the home group we also acknowledged that we felt weary and disheartened at times – meetings feeling bored and losing the impetus – car-sharing had dropped off, environmental issues were being left with a few enthusiasts, people felt criticised and disempowered.

On Saturday morning we heard three speakers who shared their insights and experiences – powerful stories of connection with the physical, global world, but also across time – having a “sense of the company of our ancestors” and of future generations. Alex Wildwood spoke of an evolving consciousness – a collective spiritual awakening and new cosmology that is both scientifically and theologically true. Bryony spoke of her experiences of work and motherhood, and underlying sense of God’s presence in all of life; she now works in education, especially nurturing the spiritual life of very young children. Rachel told us of her sense of deep connection and community in very simple environments, and also her understanding of death and deep listening.

For me, listening to the speakers was a powerful reminder of just why we, as a religious community, need to witness to sustainability – we do it because we care. And because what we care about is vast and complex, our expressions of caring are equally varied. It does include light bulbs... but so much more.

The final element of the weekend are the workshops; these may be closely linked to the theme or more general. I took part in “I do not need more” in the garden – just beautiful on a fine autumn afternoon, and the session about the early Quaker vision. Both deepened my sense of connection and community with other lives – difficult to put into words, but for me, the garden session especially reminded me that truth speaks to us on many levels.

A Rep Council weekend is quite intense – go along prepared to be challenged, but also energised and excited. I talked to several other reps about how they carry that energy and enthusiasm back to

their local and area meetings – and there is also a handy 10-point guide on the BYM website!

One suggestion is to offer an “experiential report” – which I cannot do this time, but I’d love to contact other East Cheshire friends who would like to take the theme further. Specifically, would someone like to work with me to find resources on Being Friends Together that might be used in local meetings or at an Area Meeting next year?

I am very grateful to Area Meeting for giving me this opportunity to attend Rep Council and spend a weekend right at the centre of Quaker Life. Thank you Friends.

Sue Pounder  
Quaker Life Deputy Rep

## **Report of Northern Friends Peace Board Meeting Held on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 at Penrith Meeting House**

### ***Place for Hope***

Ruth Harvey from Penrith Meeting introduced the work of Place for Hope, the project for which she is Director. She welcomed us to Penrith Meeting House and opened our minds to the breadth of the journey towards peace in which we are all involved. Ruth asked us what 'conflict' as a word made us think of – most of our words were negative. Our involvement continued in a stimulating way as an exercise drew out our diversity, together with our relationship with conflict from avoidance to a recognition of the variety of our attitudes. Ruth pointed out that there is a spectrum of approaches which is rich in possibilities.

Place for Hope began in 2008 in Scotland in response to the changes which churches were facing such as lack of people joining ministry and older congregations. Change was leading to disagreement and the project sought to find ways of addressing such conflicts with respect. The aim is to have a network of people who would work to help all congregations reach a place for hope. Increasingly this includes congregations of other faiths. Mediation in a faith context is recognised as different from the more common forms: it can involve large groups and sometimes conflict is not openly acknowledged because of fear and from a failure to recognise that faith groups can experience conflict. This forms an additional layer – 'cotton wool' – which needs to be part of the work of the project. Opening differences can lead to greater understanding if not agreement.

The project is growing and opening up. There are two members who are Quakers and members of another Christian denomination. Referrals are relatively informal and the training is open to all who have some sort of leadership role in faith communities. The subjects of conflict are widely varied: we were given some examples of the conflicts – of which there are three levels – facing the team members. At present the work is directed at domestic conflict but this is seen as part of a wider agenda: national and international peace, and a journey to a culture of grace, hope and transformation.

We reflected on our experiences of conflict in a faith context. This led to Ruth explaining the moves which Place for Hope have made towards shifting the concept of 'a safe place' for dialogue to take place in order to recognise the impossibility of establishing emotional safety. The absence of open recognition of difference and the constraint which politeness can lead to was a common experience.

Place for Hope facilitators are encouraged to focus on their own personal transformation, starting with finding his or her place on an inventory of conflict styles. The aim is to recognise that we can make use of more than one style as appropriate.

At the end we thought about where we stand in relationship to Brexit at the present time which effectively drew out our wide differences of perspective.

We hope we will be able to develop our own work supporting Friends and others in nurturing peace in our communities, providing spaces for dialogue and listening.

## **Activities**

Jette Howard, Clerk to Trustees, has introduced a written report of NFPB activities and other aspects of the work of the Executive since our last meeting.

We have received a proposal from our Executive that we might financially support one or more workers from BAE Systems in Barrow to attend the Climate Jobs! Not Bombs conference on 26<sup>th</sup> November in Birmingham, looking at the possibilities of conversion from military production today, 40 years after Lucas Aerospace shop stewards' work on this. We agree the expenditure of up to £200 to enable this, if our Barrow/Trident concern working group is able to identify such people who may wish to attend.

Jette will be completing her term as Clerk to the Executive at the end of 2016 and, since she will be prevented from attending our meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November, we are pleased to record our thanks at this meeting for her service.

## **QPSW update**

We were pleased to welcome Ellis Brooks, part of the staff team in Quaker Peace and Social Witness working on peace education, campaigning and networking. Ellis has given an update on some of the work in the department beginning with a story about a daughter of a Quaker who had a conscientious objection to visit an Army Base which demonstrates the obstacles which face actions on militarism. In small ways efforts to challenge militarism have been successful, for example pressing for peace education in schools.

Ellis has referred to some upcoming events such as the activists' gathering that QPSW is organising, to take place in York on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. He encouraged us to send in local activities and events to the Britain Yearly Meeting website. We can find on the website a toolkit for action. He drew our attention to Turning the Tides sessions on the impact of Brexit. On Trident we are encouraged to continue our advocacy for instance on the UN Nuclear Ban Treaty and the Marshall Islands challenge to failure to comply with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The war in the Yemen is another conflict where lobbying is relevant, for example on the sale of arms.

On the Prevent Strategy Ellis spoke of the concern relating to the Government's policy. The policy is intended to prevent people becoming involved in violent extremism but in its implementation is very problematic, exacerbating some tensions and putting teachers and other professionals in a position of having to monitor behaviour in a way which is not conducive to peace. Quaker concern is being expressed about the closure of debate and children being branded. There is lack of clarity about the focus on peace but rather an emphasis on control and closure. There is a suggestion that non-violence leads to violence which is particularly opposed to Quaker thinking. Ellis would welcome receiving information about our experiences of Prevent; some were offered by Friends immediately.

## **Peace Tax Bill**

Ursula Sharma offered observations on the second reading of the Peace Tax Bill [Income Tax non-military expenditure Bill], which will be taking place on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. It allows for diversion of tax destined for the military to another place. Manchester and Warrington Area Meeting's Peace Action Group has prepared briefing materials to support Friends in writing

to the MPs on this concern and these have been made available today.

Ursula pointed out that similar bills have been presented in the past. There has been little publicity on the Bill so there is a vital task for all of us, for instance writing to our MPs: there is a model letter available.

### **Julie Ward, MEP**

We welcomed Julie Ward, one of the Labour Members of the European Parliament for North West England. Julie talked about her entry into political activity, her work, recent political developments and some of the current issues of particular concern at the moment relating to peace.

She started by emphasising her strong commitment to peace; she has been active in the peace movement for many years. She sees the EU as a forum for peace, and has an assistant, Omri, who works with her in Brussels who is especially involved in peace. He is Israeli so has experienced a society in conflict first hand.

Julie has given us a brief background to the structures of the EU. When she was elected in 2014 as one of a larger number of Labour MPs for the North West. There are 20 committees in the Euro Parliament; Julie is on three committees, one of which is the Culture and Education Committee.

Intergroups are set up as the result of the efforts of the MEPs and result in strong alliances which work on the basis of consensus. Julie co-founded a Children's Rights Groups and is a member of others such as Common Goods which promotes debates about the value of common ownership and to defend the open nature of the Internet.

As an example of her peace work, Julie has told us of a Resolution to the Parliament about the Yemen that was put forward recently by MEPs with Labour MEPs in the forefront. She has worked to get a resolution on Non-Proliferation on the agenda of the Parliament: this will require persistent effort. In December 2015, Julie attended the conference in Vienna on nuclear weapons. One thing that became clear at the conference was the impossibility of aid agencies being able to cope with any use of a nuclear weapon. The UK was only reluctantly involved and the US stated their case early on. But the Austrian pledge signed by 130 has made good traction. Since then Julie has been working on building bridges between groups from different nations. She is also involved with the work of the Nuclear Transparency Watch.

Julie is aware of the link between nuclear civil power and nuclear weapons and described her visit to Fukushima: she was shocked by the continuing impact of the disaster. She pointed out that her constituency includes Sellafield and Barrow, but also nuclear free Manchester.

Arts and Culture have become more important in the work of the Parliament because MEPs have come to realise some of the current social sources of conflict. Julie has presented a report to the Parliament on the importance of education which draws attention to the possibilities of intercultural dialogue and understanding (*Report on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values*). The report emphasises the contribution which young people can make towards better understanding.

Julie's work with the Women's Committee draws attention to the need for women to achieve powerful positions in the EU. The Committee's work includes a commitment to

work for peace; she referred to the work of the Parents' Circle from Israel and Palestine and in particular the efforts of Robi Damelin who has spoken all over the world and has also set up a project with the sale of goods made by Palestinian women. She is also involved in post conflict work in countries of the former Yugoslavia. She told us stories which illustrate the possibilities for peaceful change inherent in the EU.

In the UK she works with anti-racist organisations, and also the European Grassroots Anti-racism Movement. This will take her to Dyarkebir to connect with Kurds in Turkey. She has appeared in the House of Lords after meeting young refugees in Calais and elsewhere.

Julie requested that NFPB send a submission on actions for peace to the Labour Party as it develops its policies.

(This document, edited by Christopher Bagley, is based on the Minutes taken by the NFPB Recording Clerk).

## CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CHESHIRE CHURCH LEADERS' GROUP: A REPORT

Friends may remember that last year, I was appointed by the area meeting to represent Quakers on the church leaders' group on behalf of both East Cheshire and Wirral and Chester Area Meetings. The group is made up of the Anglican Bishop of Chester, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Shrewsbury, regional representatives of the Baptist, Methodist and United Reform Churches, a Salvation Army Major and myself. As Friends will appreciate, I feel a bit out of place, neither being a church leader nor having the ecclesiastical role or onerous responsibilities of others in the group – but I have been made most welcome and the group seems pleased to have a Quaker representative.

What do we do? The basic function of the group is to foster understanding and ecumenical co-operation amongst the leaders of the member churches. We meet four times a year for a morning meeting and lunch together, moving round the churches. We share worship together, sometimes have a discussion and then do the business of the group. We hear reports about churches involved in local ecumenical partnerships, hear reports from the full time County Ecumenical Development Officer, Andrew Taylor, about his work. Andrew represents Churches Together in Cheshire on a variety of bodies.

Members of the church leaders' group are the trustees of Churches Together in Cheshire – which is a charity - and part of that work involves responsibility for the work of the agricultural chaplaincy team that works, as the name suggests, with the farming communities in Cheshire, communities that are under severe pressure. That team has recently been re-formed following the retirement of a long serving chaplain.

One focus of our considerations has been the work of the churches in connection with modern day slavery in Britain. Churches Together in Cheshire, the Anglican Diocese of Chester and the Cheshire Anti-slavery Network are working together on this and have produced a leaflet which will be sent out with the AM minutes. The leaflet encourages congregations and meetings to become much better informed about this contemporary issue and gives guidance about spotting evidence of such slavery and how to respond to it. Given our major involvement in the anti-slavery movements of the past, this is something about which Quakers ought to be better informed. One link with our past is an 'underground railway' run by the Salvation Army which helps young women to get to place of safety.

Last January, the church leaders' group led the worship in a special service in Chester Cathedral during the week of prayer for Christian unity. Feedback from the large congregation (300+) indicated that the experience of sharing in worship led by representatives of a number of different denominations was well received. The service this coming January will be held in Frodsham Parish Church and the preacher will be the President of the Methodist Conference. Part of that service will focus on work being done by the Frodsham churches on modern slavery.

Complementing the work of our group is a group of Denominational Ecumenical Officers, of which Peter Speirs of Chester Meeting is the Quaker representative. He, like me, represents both his own area meeting and East Cheshire AM. I was invited to join that group for an away day in the summer when a wide ranging discussion was held.

More information about Churches Together in Cheshire can be found on the website:

[www.cheshire-churches-together.org.uk](http://www.cheshire-churches-together.org.uk).

Michael Hennessey 4/11/2016

## **Meeting for Sufferings Report October 2016– Key items to report on:**

**Vibrancy in Meetings:** We were introduced to the 5 staff members for this trial project, and Wendy Hampton will be working in the NW, but not covering Wirral and Chester or East Cheshire AM. They are hoping to act as facilitators, information givers and gatherers, and supporters for big projects.

### **From Area Meetings:**

Brighthouse West Yorkshire AM has raised the value Ammerdown initiative for peace and security, encouraging us all to read up about it and think about, as they are, organising events which put it on a more public stage. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/ammerdown-invitation/security-for-future-in-search-of-new-vision> Quakers and others are involved in the organisation of it, which is trying to get more people to discuss/have conversations about peace and security. This may be something for a future AM talk, open to others, or for us to work with UNA/Churches Together and others to run.

General Meeting for Scotland has identified that money from the fines on banks is being used to fund the creation of new cadet forces in Scottish and English schools, without it being discussed in the Scottish Parliament, which looks after education in Scotland, or in the British parliament. This has gone to QPSW but sounds like a letter to our MPs might be possible.

### **QPSW:**

We had a report from QPSW on their work where Helen Drewery has just moved to be head of Quaker work and witness – to try and help Quaker Life and Quaker Peace and Social Witness staff work more closely together. It appears that work on the Ecumenical Accompanier for Peace Programme is getting more challenged by the Israeli government, but that this might be a positive sign that it was effective. QUNO in Geneva is losing funding from the Swiss and Norwegian governments, and from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and so QPSW are looking to how to help.

### **Visit of YM Clerk and Recording Clerk to USA**

Deborah Rowlands (Yearly Meeting Clerk) and Paul Parker (Recording Clerk) travelled to Philadelphia and Baltimore YMs and fed back several useful things. PYM has scrapped most standing committees and instead has encouraged meetings to work together on short term ‘collaboratives’ and ‘sprints’ to work on issues that concern them. There were ideas on how we can involve/bring in young adult Friends, which in a way, Friends House has taken up by having many more young Quaker interns, racism – which is wrestled with far more there than in British Quakers, and Quaker Faith and Practice revision – which has taken over 10 years in each of the YMs – and 15 years plus in New England! It reminded me of the importance of travelling in the in ministry....Baltimore YM spends half its budget on young people’s summer camps....

### **Sustainability**

We were asked to approve a questionnaire to AM clerks about whether our meetings had a) disinvested for companies engaged in fossil fuel extraction b) committed to using fair trade products, c) switched to green energy suppliers – and decided that was not appropriate to ask at this time – but what would your answers be? Good Energy are offering a cheaper tariff for Quaker Meetings.

Andrew Backhouse 1.10.16