

**East Cheshire Area Meeting for Worship for Business
Sunday 11th November 2018, 1.45pm, Cheadle Hulme Quaker Meeting House**

MINUTES

Minute 18.11.01: Friends present

All of our Meetings are represented.
33 Friends are present.
The Trustee present is Peter Eccles.
The Accompanying Elder is Geoffrey Clifton.

Minute 18.11.02: Reading

In our opening worship we have heard read the Testimony to the Grace of God in the life of Stephen Doncaster

Minute 18.11.03: Caring for Friends

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

Minute 18.11.04: Death of Marjorie Hendley of Stockport Meeting

We record with sadness the death of Marjorie Hendley of Stockport Meeting on 13th October. We thank Stockport Meeting for the following minute:

Marjorie exemplified faith in action and was gifted with the ability to inspire others to follow her example. She had a great belief that ideas and projects could be realised. Marjorie was a driving force in the Stockport United Nations Association and was a founding member of Stockport Peace Forum, which became Stockport for Peace. This gave rise to such initiatives as the schools project Poems for Peace, an Art for Peace installation at Stockport Art Gallery and Music for Peace events at Stockport Town Hall. Marjorie was a Liberal Democrat councillor for Stockport and was active locally as a member of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Minute 18.11.05: Death of Joyce O'Brien

We record with sadness the death of Joyce Vernon O'Brien of Wilmslow Meeting on 29th October. Her funeral will be held at Macclesfield Crematorium at 11.20 a.m. on Friday November 16th.

Minute 18.11.06: Death of Alan Ingram

We record with sadness the death of John Alan Ingram of Cheadle Hulme Meeting on 2nd November. A Memorial Meeting will be held at Grove Lane Baptist Church on Friday 23rd November at 2.30p.m.

Minute 18.11.07: Testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of Stephen Doncaster

We have received a Testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Stephen Doncaster, prepared by Disley Friends.

We are pleased to endorse this as a testimony from the Area Meeting and forward it to Yearly Meeting.

Minute 18.11.08: Application for membership: Jennifer Dale

Further to a BMM which reads as follows:

We have received an application for membership from Jennifer Dale of Disley Meeting. We appoint Margaret Wood and Julia Clements to meet with Jennifer and look forward to a report at a future Area Meeting.

Margaret Wood has read their report of the meeting she and Julia Clements had with Jen Dale. We are pleased to accept Jen's application and ask Annique Seddon to welcome her into membership.

Minute 18.11.09: Nominations

Nominations Committee has brought the names of the following Friends to serve in these roles:

Nominations received for:			
Role	Local Meeting	Nomination	Dates to serve
Trustee	Disley	Ann Lewis	1/1/19 – 31/12/21
Elder	Disley	Jennifer Dale	1/1/19 – 31/12/21
Elder	Cheadle Hulme	Geoffrey Clifton	1/1/19 – 31/12/21
Elder	Cheadle Hulme	Peter Eccles	1/1/19 – 31/12/21
Overseer	Disley	Morwenna Brooke	1/1/19 – 31/12/21
Overseer	Disley	Hilary Owen	1/1/19 – 31/12/21
Overseer	Disley	Linda Sharp	1/1/19 – 31/12/21
Overseer	Cheadle Hulme	Mike Nash	1/1/19 – 31/12/21

These names being acceptable the Friends are appointed accordingly. We agree to release Wendy Robinson from service as an Overseer.

We note that our Clerks and treasurer agreed a BMM: *“As agreed by our Clerks and treasurer between meetings (as a BMM), We have been pleased to hear that Mike Nash is keen to attend the online Woodbrooke course on Oversight (starting 1st October) with a view to appointment as an Overseer, and agree to support this financially.”*

In the absence of names of Friends from Macclesfield Meeting to serve as Elders

and Overseers we ask Denise Renshaw and Elizabeth Lees to meet with Macclesfield Friends to establish what arrangements should usefully be made for the Eldership and Oversight of this Meeting.

QPSW Spring Conference – March 2019, Swanwick

Nominations Committee has also brought the names of Anne Whitehead of Frandley, and Keith Braithwaite of Marple Meeting to attend the QPSW Spring Conference. Disley Meeting has asked if we might also send Liz Fletcher. We are pleased to appoint these Friends.

Intervisitation Clerk

Nominations Committee and the AM clerks have discussed the role of Intervisitation Clerk and recommend that it be discontinued as a separate role. AM Clerks will send out the Intervisitation Schedule at the end of each year.

Minute 18.11.10 Summer School

We have heard several reflections of young people attending Summer School on the considerable value Summer School has given in their lives.

Sue Dixon and Richard Taylor of Friends Summer School Committee have told us of the reducing numbers and the resultant danger of Summer School becoming unviable. One difficulty is in making contact with the many young people around Friends and in the families of Quakers, and in communicating this exciting opportunity. Further use of social media is intended, and taster days will be offered in the New Year.

Teenage General Meeting (TGM) is experiencing the same difficulty.

We ask Nominations Committee to identify someone to be appointed as a conduit between Summer School and TGM and our local young people.

We ask all Friends in their Meetings to consider all children of 10 or 11-17 who they know who might be interested; this could include relatives and neighbours as well as those we see at Meeting.

Minute 18.11.11: Intervisitation Schedule

We approve the Intervisitation Schedule to be circulated.

Minute 18.11.12: Sanctuary

A meeting was held at Wilmslow Meeting House on October 14th, where Tatiana Garavito, who is from Columbia and working at Friends House, led an exploration of the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in UK, with input from Justine from Congo. Reports of this meeting have been circulated.

We have explored and identified quite a wide range of actions we each feel we could do, sharing experiences on the way. We encourage Local Meetings to repeat this exercise locally (list of actions and instructions attached) and establish how mutual support may enable Friends to become active in a variety of large and small ways.

We encourage Friends to post ideas on the ECAM website of activities they might like to link with Friends in other meetings to pursue. LM Clerks are asked to remind Friends to check for actions suggested on the website.

Minute 18.11.13: Quaker Life Representative Council Report

Sue Pounder has presented her report (circulated) on QLRC. She has reminded us of the many valuable resources we have received in our Meetings, in hard copy, and videos available on the website (list circulated with Minutes). We are reminded that young Quakers are not a race apart, but to work to embrace them as: "All are welcome".

Minute 18.11.14: Sustainability - Conference and letter/questions from Quaker Stewardship Committee

Andrew Backhouse has presented his report (circulated) on the Sustainability Conference and the questions on local Quaker sustainability sent out by the Yearly Meeting Sustainability Committee.

We encourage as many Friends as possible to attend the Spring Gathering on Sustainability on February 16th at Central Manchester Meeting house.

A letter of questions on actions for sustainability in our Local Meetings has been sent to Trustees and LM Clerks.

Minute 18.11.15: Five Minute Findout – Taylor Giacoma

We thank Taylor for giving us 50 "random facts" about her life.

Minute 18.11.16: Northern Friends Peace Board

Till Geiger has presented a report on recent activity of NFPB (circulated with the Minutes). A series of workshops and further ideas for action are listed on the NFPB website.

Minute 18.11.17: Meeting for Sufferings report

Jacqui Moore has presented her report (circulated) on the October meeting of

Meeting for Sufferings.

We are keen to pursue the idea of inviting one of the BYM Trustees to speak to us, and ask Jacqui with our clerks to explore possible dates in 2019.

Peter Eccles will contact Keith Walton of the Quaker Website Project Steering Group.

Minute 18.11.18: Mental Health Conference, Mental Health and Young people

Rachel Lewis has presented her report (circulated) on the Mental Health Conference which she and Jacqui Moore attended.

The following minute was compiled for AMs to consider:

*Are we as Quakers aware of the pressures on mental health in our modern world?
How can we work to meet the needs which arise, particularly in developing ways to respond to the lack of provision for young people?*

We must listen to young people and encourage approaches which promote good mental health.

We urge all Friends to get involved.

How do each of our Meetings provide oversight for our young people? Does each Meeting's safeguarding officer have a useful relationship with the young people?

We ask Rachel to raise with CYPC the question of what support might be useful to them from ECAM or ECAM Elders and Overseers in their support of our young people, and to come back to us.

We remind Friends of the value to young people when we as adults show we value them and their angle on the world.

Minute 18.11.19: Yealand – not at Yealand

While Yealand Old School is out of action for refurbishment next spring, CYPC hopes to be able to book room at the Bamford Community for the Easter YP event. Next Easter school holiday dates vary widely across local authorities. The only weekend all children would be free from school is Easter weekend itself. Currently YP numbers are low, which could make it more expensive per capita to run. CYPC is wondering about inviting YP from neighbouring AMs. Children in school years 6-11 are welcome. Rachel Lewis is the point of contact.

At the request of CYPC we approve the names of Till Geiger, Emma Killick and Rachel Lewis to work on the leadership team for this event. We ask our Clerks to consider, and if appropriate, approve further names and financial support in due course.

Minute 18.11.20: Pantomime trip – agreed as BMM

On the request of ECAM CYP Committee, we agree to pay the price of tickets for all

children and young people who take part in the annual trip to the pantomime (Sleeping Beauty) at Stockport Plaza on Sunday 6th January 2018. This will follow an all age Meeting for Worship, shared party lunch and games. Friends attending are asked to bring contributions of food.

The Meeting for Worship will be at Stockport QMH at 10.30am.

Minute 18.11.21: Building the Peace

We have heard of the strong impression the display and concert had on visitors. We thank all those involved in organising, creating and running the event.

Minute 18.11.22: Outward Affairs

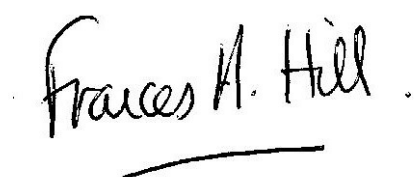
We remind Friends of their responsibility for the right ordering of their outward affairs. This involves personal consideration of the proper acquisition and use of income, the stewardship of money held for others, conduct in business, and the importance of making and from time to time reviewing their 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 January 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 18.11.23: Annual Duties

Local Meetings are asked to report to our January 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 18.11.24

We thank Cheadle Hulme Friends for their hospitality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frances A. Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Signed in and on behalf of the Area Meeting:

Frances A Hill

Clerk

LM Clerks please note minutes : 05,06,10,12,13,14,18,19,20,22,23

Nominations Committee please note minutes: 09,10

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Quaker Life Representative Council 12th to 14th October 2018 at Woodbrooke



“All Are Welcome: transforming our Quaker communities with younger Friends”

This Rep Council was, as always, a joyful, challenging and encouraging weekend. The Council meets twice a year, and is a gathering of Friends from over 85 Area Meetings. We spent time in supportive home groups, plenary sessions and workshops, with time for reflection and quiet conversation throughout.

This time we considered the contributions that we - as individuals and as meetings, might make to building a more diverse Quaker community. Specifically, a community where children and younger people are fully part of all areas of Quaker life.

During the weekend I was aware of a flip-flopping between thinking of children and young people as “others” – a distinct subgroup with specific needs and preferences, and recognising that our calendar age is remarkably irrelevant when it comes to building a thriving and spiritually alive community.

Of course there are practicalities to think about when a community includes children and young people and Friends House have amazing resources to help us with these. We heard Helen Stevens speak about the “All are Welcome” project, with the exhortation to:

Reach out – Connect – Enrich

Last year all meetings were sent a copy, and I hope you will find some time to look at the nine queries it contains. This definitely isn't just something for Disley and Frandley, where there are already regular children's meetings – I would urge every meeting to consider these important questions.

For me, the highlight was Saturday morning, when four Quakers spoke to us about their faith and practice: *“It's just part of who I am”, “I have lots of friends who care about the same things as me, but they're not Quakers”, “I feel most Quaker when I'm coaching tennis”, “Going to the events is really important to me – I've made such good friends”.*

They spoke passionately and boldly about feeling part of the Quaker family, and were aged between 14 and 24. A video of their contribution will be on the Quakers in Britain website shortly – I am sure you will find this joyful viewing. We also saw film clips of young people's events. It was clear how much the children valued these, and good to hear the variety of responses to questions like “What do you like about going to meeting?” Asked what a Quaker meeting should look like, one boy responded “A swimming pool!” Now that's a challenge...

New! **Quaker Life Live** – sharing learning and fellowship through a series of monthly on-line discussions; facilitated by BYM staff. www.quaker.org.uk/QLNetwork

Not so new! **Being ready for children in your Quaker meeting** – a really helpful guide from the CYP team, with action points, additional resources and where to go next.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend this wonderful weekend as ECAM rep.

Resource links from Quaker Life

1. Being ready for children in your Quaker meeting

<https://quaker-prod.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/store/0a3019c4cd629cbb3ced5246183d54b3133e2d77c9c1e4e9183c4f831b10>

2. Journeys in the Spirit

A fantastic range of ideas and resources for working with children and young people.

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/children-and-young-people/work-quaker-setting/resources-children/journeys-child#heading-1>

3. All Are Welcome - Growing an all-age community

<https://quaker-prod.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/store/b1b24550b88e5fc4e06d315fdfa3b00bae683f01c8ea0dad8b80537ba543>

4. Videos and photos about children and young people's events

<http://www.yqspace.org.uk/events>

click on "past events" - you may recognise some faces!

5 Quaker Life video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bKz4RWspPY&feature=youtu.be>

This is one to dip into! Scroll forward to 18 minutes for the video of young people talking about what Quakerism means to them, and then the interviews with the 4

BYM Sustainability Gathering 2018 – Report to East Cheshire AM

It was really good to get to this year's Swanwick Gathering, to be linked up with other active Quakers, to be inspired, motivated, and learn, particularly after the International Committee on Climate Change's recent report. 12 years to take major action to reduce the rise in global temperatures by only 1.5 degrees one might hope was a real driver for governments.

There were so many simple examples of good sustainability practice from local meetings, from those signing up to Eco church credentials as part of their witness, to those with action plans for elders, overseers and premises committees. I was really moved by the Friend from Llanidloes who seemed to feel she was achieving so little, but had the local community picking up litter along the river Severn from source to Llanidloes., and hoping to get it done further towards the sea, the Friend from Norwich meeting whose meeting had organized a proper procurement policy for the meeting house, the one who was using a simple exercise to see if she could move one further step along the way to lower her carbon emissions,. It was obvious that we need to live our lives as patterns and examples. It is no use expecting people to do something if we do not ourselves. What is your next step? What is stopping you?

It does help to have the right speakers. Paul Hoggett, of the Climate Psychology Alliance talked of his experiences of the importance of listening. Just like issues around immigration/refugees, we need to listen to the other person's story, rather than tell them where they are wrong. How easy it is to feel victims of complacency and denial – and feel virtuous, trying to persuade and argue. When did you last listen to someone with a different point of view and hear their stories – or then share yours?

I was reminded of how successful I seem to be when I have used a tipping point as a lever – setting up plastic free Wilmslow, getting the town council on board, businesses, people in the street, has been much easier than talking of climate change as a whole. Promoting a simple step – reducing our meat consumption for example, is much easier than changing our entire way of living, and gets people started on the journey.

Susanna Mattingly, who works for Friends World Committee for Consultation on climate change, showed us a video of Evangelical Friends and unprogrammed Friends from the Philippines and Kenya talking about what climate change was doing to them and their communities, and the spiritual background to them to take action.

And one young doctor and parent from Norwich talked of how she, as a quiet shy person, had been pushed to work with others to take the government to court over its lack of climate action (Plan B Earth), with lots of local actions with the local Climate Hope Group, for children and families.

I was pleased to hear that Manchester and Warrington are organizing a gathering on sustainability in February next year – which I hope will count as a regional gathering; and that we are all being encouraged by Sufferings to try to show what we have done in our annual reports, to monitor our improvements.

At the end of it all, I know that only governments can turn things round – but they need letters, encouragement, whether from WIs, Churches, or individuals. But to help this process, we need to work in our communities. And that means listening and telling our stories.

Or as the Friends said, who had gone round listening to conversations and tried to pull the key points together:

- Be joyful
- Envisions that world you want, - what might a zero carbon world look like?
- Share stories of inspired individuals. (I look forward to more of these in The Friend)
- Reflect – is our role to bridge gaps, or be in them?
- What we apply to others we should apply to ourselves.
- Engage spiritually – build right relationships
- Love must be the bedrock our actions.

And how I think I might start that next individual conversation:

“What have you noticed about changes in climate/weather over your lifetime? Is there anything happening that you can see? How has it affected you or your family? How do you see the world for your children or grandchildren? What have you done already? What might you do next?”

Andrew Backhouse

Northern Friends Peace Board 2018

This is a joint report by Till Geiger and Phoebe Spence. Till has just joined the NFPB as ECAM representative and Phoebe serves as NFPB trustee and treasurer. Till attended the meetings in Huddersfield, Lancaster and Glasgow; Phoebe the meetings in Lancaster, Glasgow and Lincoln.

Meeting in Carlisle at beginning of March cancelled due to bad weather and advice of local Friends, we hope to meet there next year. We certainly have to add climate change on our risk assessment. Therefore, Philip Austin and the clerks organised two informal gatherings instead – at Huddersfield and at Lancaster. These worked well as a good setting to introduce new representatives, and slightly smaller numbers to get to know each other better.

We met in Glasgow in June for our first regular meeting in June. The meeting coincided with undersea defence arms fair being held in Glasgow. Some representatives joined in the protests against the arms fair and the meeting for worship at Faslane the following day. The meeting upheld the protests against the arms fair. Quakers had a strong presence at Faslane. The meeting had a deeply felt session on identity, inclusion and peace after Brexit, which will be taken further. This session built on the NFPB's previous work on national identity in the 1990s. General Meeting for Scotland's Parliamentary Engagement Officer Mairi Campbell-Jack told the meeting about the important work Scottish Quakers are doing to stop the military's involvement in Scottish schools and to promote peace education more general. Mairi urged Friends to petition their local authorities to raise these issues South of the Border.

Our Lincoln meeting in September drew a good number of local Friends. One local Friend talked to the meeting including about her experiences as a volunteer at the local Bomber Command Centre museum. She stresses the reconciliation aspect of her work, but reports that children enjoy the experience of targeting bombs. She also meets the pilots who control the drones from RAF Waddington, and commented how pleasant they were. However Veterans for Peace members and mental health social workers remind us of the personal cost and tragedy of this asymmetric and remote warfare that we inflict.

Members forum always gives an opportunity to share info and activities across the North and Scotland as well as to build links and supportive networks for each other.

Work that NFPB is involved with:

- Rethinking Security (organise events in the north),
- Populism – a follow up event to the clear and powerful talk at the QCEA conference – see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDcRVzGx8HE>
- Nuclear disarmament to gain support for the UN Treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons
- Quaker Committee on Christian and Interfaith Relationships on the theme of Religion and Violence
- Workshops – adapting various themes to suit the needs of meetings – see leaflet

It is encouraging to see the NFPB (re-)engaged in peace work after a period of sorting out financial implications of its pension fund liabilities.

Meeting for Sufferings Report 6th October 2018

It was **Young People's Participation Day** with this MfS and it was good to have A M with me in the opening and closing worship sessions as well as beforehand and at lunch. Thirty young people attended and their sessions focussed on considering the diversity of Quakers.

At MfS we also received a report from Edwina Peart on **Diversity and Inclusion**. Edwina is the Co-ordinator appointed to progress work on YMs 2017 call to examine our diversity, particularly in our committee and organisational structure, locally and nationally. So far it seems we are diverse in terms of gender, sexual orientation, and age, but not always in terms of race, socio-economic status and young people's participation. Edwina commented that it was possible to make inaccurate assumptions about class and at MfS it was mentioned that it was likely there was some diversity of national origins within a broad 'white' category.

There will be a **national gathering on the topic at Woodbrooke in January and further information and Minutes from Meetings are welcome before February**. We were asked to consider carefully how we welcome newcomers to our Meetings. MfS has agreed that, as an experiment, four extra places will be allocated on MfS to young adult Quakers for the rest of this Triennium.

We had a report on the **Vibrancy in Meetings Project**. This pilot project is half way through and it covers 18 AMs and 100 LMs with its regional staff available "to nurture and nourish the spirit – help ground practice and process in worship and enable leadings to spring up". We heard how the workers are a resource to Meetings, responding to varied needs, able to strengthen the use of Quaker processes and increasingly taking a more proactive role. Its evaluation is continuing.

More work has been done on taking forward our commitment to **Sustainability**. A meeting was held in July of representatives of all BYM Committees and further consideration has been undertaken by Quaker Life and Quaker Peace and Social Witness. The July meeting proved very useful and it was suggested such meetings should be held regularly under MfS oversight. Current and proposed work on sustainability has now been mapped. Woodbrooke is to be approached about running national and regional courses to nurture our testimony to sustainability. MfS needs to look further into how it can best monitor all the work on sustainability to report to YM annually.

The question of whether a target such as becoming 'carbon neutral' or 'net zero' was raised, but much more work needs to be done on the implications and practicability of such a target for the Society as a whole.

Another major issue considered at MfS was **BYM's Investment Policy in Israel and Palestine**. December MfS had received AM Minutes asking BYM to consider adding companies profiting from the occupation of Palestine to be added to BYM's list of exclusion for investment purposes. We were informed that at present there are no such investments. Churches in Palestine have requested that Churches consider taking this action. Points considered included concern to protect the EAPPI (Ecumenical Accompaniment Scheme): the general likely effect of such action, particularly how it would be communicated and understood: and indeed, whether such companies could be identified.

MfS reaffirmed the 2011 decision to boycott settlement goods, until Israeli occupation of Palestine is ended. BYM Trustees were encouraged to amend their investment policy to

retain the current position of no investment in such companies. This may be more practicable when the United Nations Human Rights Council issues a database they are compiling to identify these companies.

There are **Two Matters ECAM may wish to consider for action**

1 – We were encouraged to invite one or two BYM Trustees to an Area Meeting to talk and answer questions about their work.

2 – Keith Walton of Kingston and Wandsworth AM is working with a group looking at how Quaker websites for Local Meetings might best be provided, managed, and linked to the central BYM website. The aim is to simplify things and provide a useful facility for a small charge, which Meetings can opt into.

We are invited to contact Keith Walton to join or link with the Project Steering Group.

Keith.a.walton@gmail.com

Jacqui Moore

ECAM MfS Representative

Mental Health Forum, Mental Health and Young People 3rd November 2018, Priory Rooms Meeting, Birmingham

The day was introduced and co-ordinated by Alison Mitchell, Development Officer for The Benevolent Fund with support from other Quakers both working in and with an interest in Mental Health. Attendees were drawn from Meetings across the country. Many were psychotherapists, community workers, mental health practitioners as well as Friends who have a personal interest or experience, many whom were responsible for CYP provision in their AM.

1 in 10 CYPs will have a mental illness.

Transition times of life are often trigger points, therefore care should be offered to at least 24 years old.

One YP spoke about YPs often making out they had mental health issues to gain attention which negated the real problems others had. This was driven by the social media age with a need to be seen and given attention.

It was generally agreed that CYPs are under intense scrutiny, both by each other via social media and the world at large, which is exacerbated by increased use of drugs and alcohol.

Following introductions the morning was structured with 3 personal experiences/stories about involvement with Mental Health and how their faith had affected their experiences. A young woman spoke about living with bipolar, a mother about caring for a daughter with severe anorexia and a counsellor about her role as coordinator for Mental Health and Wellbeing on a University campus.

The themes that flowed within these stories were that of missing signs of mental health difficulties in early life, lack of support especially in the community, others misunderstanding about the condition leading to loss of job, isolation, belittling, strain on family life, feeling out of place. All 3 speakers spoke of their faith as being grounding, strengthening, a haven, offering stillness and the value of silence.

Group discussions raised questions and comments;

What helps a person with a mental illness or family supporting a CYP with one? The need for carers to be supported. Importance of having one trusted significant person

One YP raised a concern that Quakers need to look to themselves to recognise and improve their faults and increase the quality of support. The YP felt that Quakers have a capacity to think they are 'doing good' and getting it 'right' which is not always the case.

The afternoon was split into workshops and then response groups. Workshops were on Social Media, Compassionate eating, Addiction and cannabis, Using the environment and Developing therapeutic skills.

I attended the therapeutic skills workshop run by a Quaker who is a Psychotherapist aiming to train practitioners to work in schools, community groups and families to support CYPs and understand what they are carrying with them on a daily basis. Response groups included singing, walking a labyrinth, craft, writing and a discussion group.

It was evident across the whole day that those attending had a strong urge to raise awareness of mental illness in CYPs. The discussion group raised two ways we as Friends could be

active, by giving support within Meetings and looking beyond, to campaigning nationally for improvements in care and resources for CYPs and their carers.

The following minute was compiled for AMs to consider:

Are we as Quakers aware of the pressures on mental health in our modern world? How can we work to meet the needs which arise, particularly in developing ways to respond to the lack of provision for young people?

We must listen to young people and encourage approaches which promote good mental health.

We urge all Friends to get involved.

Personally I was profoundly moved by the courage the speakers had to tell their stories. Having worked both in the health service and education for many years I have a deep rooted belief that the more we speak about mental illness the less scary and intimidating it will become to the general public. It is an illness just like any other physical illness and yet it is not accepted by many in the same light. Mental health problems could happen to any of us given a perfect storm of circumstances.

I would urge AM to consider the minute proposed, and if seen fit, to refer it to Meeting for Sufferings to bring pressure to bear nationally. On a local level, I plan to feed back to CYPC and to discuss with them whether we can put some support structure in place for ECAM CYPs.

I am personally very interested in the therapeutic skills which could be used to support both CYPs and older Friends in Meetings. With my Peace Pathways (PP) hat on there are crossovers with the work PP does. Offering sessions to CYPs to help them understand who they are and how they can be resilient can give them strategies to cope and deal with challenging situations.

Thank you Friends for supporting me in attending this day. Not only was it valuable for both myself and I hope AM, it was important to acknowledge the work done by the Benevolent Fund and The Retreat in York.

Rachel Lewis 7th November 2018