

# **HARDSHAW AND MANN AREA MEETING MINUTES**

**Held at via Zoom on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 12 noon**

**Present - 13 Friends.** At the table are Julia Cadman and Liese van Alwon, AM Co-Clerks.

**29/2021 Reading.** The following passage was chosen and read by our Friend Linda Gibbs during our opening worship.

*Our diversity invites us both to speak what we know to be true in our lives and to learn from others. Friends are encouraged to listen to each other in humility and understanding, trusting in the Spirit that goes beyond our human effort and comprehension.*

## **30/2021 Representation**

The following Friends have been appointed by their Local Meetings to represent them today:

Isle of Man – None appointed

Liverpool – Linda Gibbs

St Helens – None

Southport – Gerard Hughes and Richard Melling

Wigan – Eric Silk and Vicky Miles

Minutes have been received from Liverpool, Southport and Wigan Local Meetings, *[appendices 1, 2 and 3]*.

## **31/2021 Minutes of our last Area Meeting for Worship for Business**

The minutes of our meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021 have been circulated. There are no matters arising from these minutes.

## **32/2021 Update from Local Meetings**

**Liverpool Meeting** has decided not to open the Meeting House for in-person meeting until the government guidelines are relaxed. Weekly online meetings are ongoing, and Friends are meeting monthly at Arundel Avenue on Sunday afternoons, weather permitting.

**St Helens Meeting House** reopened some weeks ago, with between 7 – 14 friends attending each weekly meeting. All Meetings for Worship are now in person.

**Southport Friends** started in-person Meetings for Worship on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and are holding half-hour blended meetings, currently using a lap top. Progress towards holding MfW at Wymott prison is ongoing. Currently Gerard is serving as both Clerk and Treasurer which is not ideal. Southport Friends hope to address this by nominating a friend to take on the Treasurer role.

**Wigan Friends** are hoping, with the agreement of trustees, to open for in person meetings from next week.

With reference to Wigan LM minute number 7 *[attached below – Appendix 3]* we ask all Local Meetings to consider the contents and to report to Area Meeting in September.

## **33/2021 Meeting for Sufferings**

We thank Richard Melling our MfS representative for his report on the meeting held in May. A copy of the report is attached *[appendix 4]*.

### **34/2021 Safeguarding**

An issue about children climbing the wall into the burial ground at Arundel Avenue has arisen. Our Safeguarding Coordinator Christine Tate has spoken to The Avenues Neighbourhood Network (a local residents' group which uses and helps to maintain the burial ground) to provide advice to their volunteers on ensuring that safeguarding measures are put in place when children are included in activities at the burial ground. BYM has been informed of the potential risk and steps that are being taken to mitigate it.

We are reminded that any safeguarding concerns should be reported to Christine Tate and that she is available to provide advice as needed.

### **35/2021 Merseyside Quaker and Probation Trust**

Our Friend Eric Silk presented the report from the working group (*previously circulated and attached below - Appendix 5*). After investigating a number of options, the working group recommends that the funds of £35,364 held by H&M Area Meeting on behalf of MQP Trust are transferred to PSS (a well-established and reputable registered charity based in Liverpool), with the stipulation that the funds are used only for activities and individual payments that are in line with the original aims of the MQPT. Area Meeting upholds this recommendation and asks our AM Clerks to write to PSS outlining the conditions of the grant and to ask for an annual update from PSS on how the funds have been used. We ask our AM Treasurer to transfer the funds.

### **36/2021 Trustees Matters**

Trustees last met on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Linda Gibbs, Clerk of Trustees, drew our attention to the following minute:

***Trustees are concerned that our Friends from Isle of Man Local Meeting have not been worshipping either in person or remotely for some time and we ask Area Meeting Elders to investigate the reasons for this and to see how we can support them. [H&M Trustees' minute: 47/21]***

### **37/2021 Treasurers Report**

Our AM Treasurer, Shanthini Cawson, report that there is currently c. £17,000 (net of the MQPT funds) in the Area Meeting bank account.

AM upholds the request to increase the annual donation to Summer School to £400 per year.

We note that executors of the late Jonathan Griffith's will are expected to repay any monies due to Area Meeting funds in due course.

We ask each Local Meeting to nominate a representative, or representatives, to attend an area-wide Finance and Property Committee (working name) to be in mid-July, date to be agreed once representative have been identified.

### **38/2021 Membership**

We have received a letter from our Friend Ian Jones informing us of his resignation from the Religious Society of Friends. We note with concern and sadness the content of Ian's letter which raises issues to which we will give serious and deep consideration. We accept Ian's resignation with love, and hope that Ian will continue his association with F/friends through any appropriate route. We thank Ian for all the service he has given over the years in many roles.

We have also received a resignation letter from Chris Norbern, formerly of Wigan Meeting, and have heard from Wigan Friends that Chris has now moved away to Lancaster and is no longer able to attend due to the distance. We accept Chris's resignation from H&M AQM.

### **39/2021 Nominations**

We support our Friend Gerard Hughes in the role he is currently performing at the prison. We ask nominations to go through all necessary formal procedures to enable our Friend to carry out the formal role of Quaker chaplain to the prison, representing Hardshaw & Mann Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.

Further Nominations are carried forward to our next meeting.

### **40/2021 Hardshaw Estates AGM**

Linda Gibbs and Shanthini Cawson will represent H&M Area Meeting at this meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July.

**The meeting closed following a short period of Worship at 2.25pm.**

### **Appendices:**

1. Liverpool Local Meeting Minutes June 2021
2. Southport Local Meeting Minutes June 2021
3. Wigan Local Meeting Minutes June 2021
4. Report on Meeting for Sufferings
5. Report recommending the transfer of the Quaker and Probation Trust residual funds

## APPENDIX 1

### **MINUTES OF LIVERPOOL QUAKER MEETING HELD ON 6<sup>th</sup> June 2021** **BY VIDEO CONFERENCING**

There were 11 Friends present, hosted on Zoom by Margaret Smith

At the table Gareth Evans and Anna Aiston.

The Prayer of St. Francis was read in Meeting for Worship.

Advices and Queries paragraph 10 was read during opening worship.

#### **23/2021 Representatives to Area Meeting.**

We thank our Friends Linda Gibbs and Aidan Childs for attending Area Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

We appoint our Friend Linda Gibbs to attend Area Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

#### **24/2021 Jonathan Griffith.**

Since our last Business Meeting, Area Meeting has recorded with sadness the death of our Friend Jonathan Griffith on 7<sup>th</sup> April at the age of 83. A small number of members of our Meeting were able to attend Jonathan's funeral at Greenacres Woodland Cemetery in Rainford.

Anna Aiston has been given 12 folders of Jonathan's personal correspondence and 20 landscape and portrait paintings. We hope that the paintings will be able to be placed around the Meeting House. It is Jonathan's wish that any income raised from reproduction should go to Britain Yearly Meeting.

We will decide the future of the folders when we have more information on their contents.

#### **25/2021 Meeting for Worship.**

Local Meeting continues to monitor the covid situation and will decide when it is appropriate to re-open the Meeting House for worship. We ask trustees to set in motion the risk assessment and processes for Meeting for Worship in person, once lockdown restrictions have been lifted. There is a lot of work involved in re-opening Meeting. We ask members of the Meeting to think how they can help and get in touch with Shanthini Cawson.

#### **26/2021 Arundel Avenue CCTV.**

In May we received a request from "The Avenues Neighbourhood Network" who look after Arundel Avenue Quaker Burial Ground and Wildlife Garden, to install a cctv camera to monitor the bee hives which are being interfered with. The clerk, convenor of FSPC, line manager for our staff, and our TANN liaison Friend, provisionally agreed to the installation of a camera subject to the agreement of the Meeting. This was conditional on the camera looking at the hives and the wall area only, and not recording Meeting for Worship or people generally using the garden legitimately.

At the National Gardens Scheme day, local councillors agreed to fund a motion sensitive camera to monitor the hives. We ask that any information gained is kept confidential and deleted after an appropriate time. We feel if anyone was found to be interfering with the hives they should be spoken to sensitively if it were local children.

We agree to the camera being installed for 6 months and will review the situation then.

Gareth Evans and Anna Aiston, co-clerks

## APPENDIX 2

### Southport Local Meeting for Worship for Business 6/6/21

Present 4 Friends

35/21 Advices and Queries 26 have been read since our last LMfWB

36/21 Gerard and Richard were nominated as the Southport representatives for the Area Meeting for Business to be held on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

37/21 Our MfW has continued during May meeting online with faithful Friends holding a half hour MfW followed by sharing of support. On 23<sup>rd</sup> May and subsequent Sundays the Meeting House has reopened for Meeting for Worship face to face whilst connecting with Friends online through Zoom at the Meeting House. A Blended Meeting. Trustees have approved the Covid risk assessment. Our thanks to Mike Parr for his efforts in this matter.

38/21 The Meeting House now has Internet and a telephone Landline. Two blended meetings have been held with limited equipment. Gerard has now identified a second audio visual company to quote for a more sophisticated arrangement, Acclaim AV from Liverpool. Next week an improved sound system will be used. Gerard will ask Active AV and Acclaim AV to quote for a full system using a simpler fixed camera (rather than the rotating camera).

39/21 Gerard reported that he is going through the process of seeking a higher level of Clearance with HMP Wymott in order to be able to hold a Meeting for Worship in the prison. No further progress as yet.

40/21 There was a discussion about roles held at Southport. This can be considered further at the next local meeting for business after further consideration of what is required. Gerard continues to act as treasurer and clerk, but will improve accountability by giving a short report on finances at each local meeting for business.

Signed Clerk

GT Hughes

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Minutes of Wigan Local Meeting 11.06.21 Held via Zoom 6 Friends present**

#### **Minute 1: Representation at Area Meeting**

We appoint our Friends Eric Silk and Vicky Miles to be our representatives at the upcoming Area Meeting on 13.06.21

#### **Minute 2: Invitation to Hardshaw Estates AGM**

We note the invitation made to Area Meeting members to attend what may be the last Hardshaw Estates AGM (via Zoom, Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7pm) and the requirement for the constituent Area Meetings to send representatives who are not trustees of Hardshaw Estates. Our Friends Alison Parker and Rosslyn Halliday are willing to attend this meeting.

#### **Minute 3: AM Finances and Premises Committee update**

Our Friend Eric Silk updated the meeting on the progress of the committee to date. The proposed structure has been distributed via email. We thank the members of the committee for their work on this issue to date.

#### **Minute 4: Re-opening of Wigan Meeting House for Meeting for Worship**

We are happy to note that Area Meeting Trustees are currently reviewing the latest risk assessment for the re-opening of Wigan Meeting House for Meeting for Worship. We are hopeful that we will be able to meet together, in person, on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June at 11:00am.

#### **Minute 5: Update on sale of Wigan Meeting House**

We note that the sale of the Swinley Road building has been delayed due to a previously unknown legal issue concerning the previous change of use application for the building, leading it to be registered solely as a place of worship rather than as mixed-use premises (place of worship and residential). We are relieved that this matter is now in hand. We ask that Area Meeting continue to support us during this difficult time, particularly as we begin the search for suitable premises for our Meeting.

#### **Minute 6: Quake!**

We thank our Friend Eric Silk for continuing to forward emails from Quake to members of the Local Meeting. We value this publication and are grateful that he is willing to continue to do this.

#### **Minute 7: General concern re: balance between politics and spirituality in recent Quaker mailings, booklets etc**

We note that some Friends across Area Meeting have expressed concerns that various Quaker publications have become rather political of late, perhaps at the expense of more spiritual concerns. On balance, we do not particularly share this concern providing that political content reflects social concerns stemming from our Quaker spirituality and is not party-political, but we ask that this matter be raised at Area Meeting for wider discussion.

Alison Parker  
Local Meeting Clerk  
11.06.21

## APPENDIX 4

### Meeting for Sufferings 10 April 2021 (attended for H and M area by Richard Melling)

#### Notes taken from Margaret Bryan's follow up letter:

[mfs-2021-04-follow-up-package \(quaker.org.uk\)](#)

"...the meeting [*was able*]to hear from trustees at some length about action they are taking following our minute of December 2020, which committed us to becoming an **Anti-racist Church**. There have been further press releases since our meeting, see:

[One step to tackle racism | Quakers in Britain](#)

Trustees also sought our guidance on two other matters. The first of these concerned the steps they are taking to connect the work of area meeting trustees with that of BYM trustees in a supportive relationship; the second relates to their initial soundings about simplification of our structures. Both matters will be followed by workshops for further discussion and Friends will receive information about this separately. Please contribute if you can and encourage others in your area to get involved.

In returning to the matter of **Assisted Dying** we attempted to get to the very heart of what we believe and no one will have come away untouched by the personal experiences that were shared. The consideration had been sparked by minutes received in October 2019 about the law on Assisted Dying, and meetings across the country have all had the chance to contribute to the discernment. We were unable to reach unity on the question of possible changes to legislation, but when you report back to your area meetings I urge you to look not at what we didn't do but at the things we all can do. For some of us this will remain personal – talking openly in our meetings, with our family and friends, about death and dying; thinking about our own wishes, quality of life, the importance of compassion, the need (or not) for medical intervention. Others will want to take a more campaigning, public position, deeply concerned for current legislative change, the social inequalities exposed by the availability of good palliative care, the funding for hospices. We uphold all Friends acting under concern in this matter. I have included a link to the Big Voice London report mentioned in the meeting to add to the information you already had in your papers. We received a minute from Manchester and Warrington AM about the plight of the Uighur community in China, and Friends are urged to inform themselves. Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture (Q-CAT) has produced a briefing (see link below) which you may find helpful.

Quaker Life Central Committee has been taking soundings about the word '**Overseer**'. Whilst there is a widely-held view that this terminology is completely inappropriate in 21st century Quaker meetings, there is no common consensus on which word to use instead to describe the responsibilities given in Quaker faith & practice chapter 12. The role is more important than the word however, and it remains fundamental in the building of our Quaker communities. Area meetings are asked to experiment with terms to describe the way in which, in Isaac Penington's words, we help one another up with a tender hand (Quaker faith & practice 10.01). We will return to the matter by the end of 2022 in the hope that 'way will open' to finding a word or phrase that can be used in the new Book of Discipline."

Papers of relevance to these issues:

- Assisted Dying [517d7f\\_4de4005cbfc645b488b8a8362d43c080.pdf \(filesusr.com\)](#)
- Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture briefing on Uyghur Genocide in China [Q-CAT-Briefing-No-67-January-2021.pdf \(qcat.org.uk\)](#)

#### CONTINUED on page 2

- Information about people who were enslaved by William Penn

[William Penn kept enslaved people. These are some of their names. - On top of Philly news \(billypenn.com\)](#)

- A recent statement on Rowntree colonial histories

[The Rowntree Society | Statement on Rowntree Colonial Histories - The Rowntree Society](#)

- An article about Lancaster Quakers and the Slave Trade

[Documenting Dissent | Lancaster Quakers and the Transatlantic Slave Trade](#)

**Report from the small group of Friends tasked by AM to  
consider the finance remaining from  
The Merseyside Probation and Quaker Trust**

For a number of years our Area Meeting supported a charity originally known as The Merseyside Probation and Quaker Trust for the Assistance of Offenders. Through this trust Friends worked in conjunction with the Probation Service to support recently released prisoners and their families by way of small financial grants to help in various ways to ease ex-prisoners into stable and positive future lives. Area Meeting appointed trustees to work with members of the Probation Service and grants were made according to set guidelines to support ex-prisoners and their families across Merseyside through a difficult but crucial period of their lives.

Because of changes in the law regulating the Probation Service it was, in effect, privatised. The name of the charity changed to Merseyside Community Rehabilitation Quaker Trust but it was found that the cooperative arrangement between local Friends and members of the Probation Service could not continue. With the closure of this charitable arrangement Friends were left with a sum of money which, otherwise, would have provided the investment base from which grants would have been made.

The matter was brought to Area Meeting in 2018 which was recorded in the following minute:

*56/18 Merseyside Probation and Quaker Trust*

*We are sorry to hear that since the privatisation of the Merseyside Probation Service the trust has been unable to find a secure way of making payments to potential recipients of assistance. Accordingly the trustees have taken the painful decision that the charity should be wound up, with any remaining capital being distributed to another charity or charities. We hope that Area Meeting will be given some say in the choice of recipient(s). We have heard that there are other similar charities around the country in the same position and are greatly saddened by the commoditisation of those on probation (ie through outsourcing of their probation services to the lowest bidder).*

The funds of the trust were transferred to Area Meeting for safekeeping as explained in the following minute:

*1019 Merseyside Quaker Probation Trust*

*Trustees of this independent charity have now agreed that the fund should be transferred in accordance with Governing Documents as they are unable to administer the Trust without the support of the partner organisation.*

In order for an alternative charity to be found to use the funding that was being held in trust the matter again came to Area Meeting and the following minute was written.

*05/20 Quaker Probation Trust*

*We ask Lisa Hoyle, Eric Silk and Liese van Alwon to examine options for re-distributing the income arising from the closure of the Merseyside Community Rehabilitation Quaker Trust in order to continue the objectives of the charity which has now closed. We ask Friends to pass on relevant information about work of possible interest to the Working Group. We ask that the Group report back to Area Meeting in April with their recommendations.*

Although our Friend Lisa Hoyle is no longer a member of the group we feel that the investigation and discussion undertaken since we were tasked with the assignment has led us to a clear choice. A number of charities have been considered and the one we recommend matches the aims and

objectives of the Merseyside Probation and Quaker Trust closely and makes provision within Merseyside.

The recommended Charity is PSS which was founded more than 100 years ago by Eleanor Rathbone. It provides small grants to ex-offenders and their families across Merseyside according to strict guidelines which are closely similar to those of the Merseyside Probation and Quaker Trust. We currently have £35,364 in reserve in our Area Meeting account (Source: H&M 2019 independently examined accounts) and we recommend to Area Meeting that it be transferred to PSS in order that the work that Friends have undertaken in the past may continue across the region. We hope that Area Meeting Friends will accept our recommendation and instruct our AM treasurer to transfer the funds accordingly. PSS was founded in 1919 and the original name was Liverpool Personal Services Society but is now known officially as PSS(UK).

Liese van Alwon and Eric Silk