

Minutes for WSAQM Area Meeting November 16th 2019 at Taunton Meeting House, Bath Place Taunton TA1 4EP

Clerks: Martin Wall Anna Mullett

19/72 A reading from 'Living our Beliefs' was read in our opening worship today.

19/73 Local Meeting Representatives:

Bridgwater	Rosemary Dagley, Gilly Lee
Burnham on Sea	Unable to Appoint
Ilminster	Russ Chapman, Margaret Stenhouse
Minehead	Unable to Appoint
Spiceland	Ali Dominey
Taunton	Shelia Harvey, John Ainsworth
Wellington	Brian Collingridge
Elder for the Meeting	John Ainsworth

19/74 Membership

We record the death of Wendy Best who died on 21st October. Wendy was a friend and attender of Ilminster meeting for many years and will be much missed.

We record the death of Susan Lamont who died on 28th October. Susan was a much valued member of Minehead meeting and will be much missed.

19/75 Nominations

(a) Martin Wall is appointed to serve as an elder for Taunton meeting from November 2019 until the end of December 2022.

(b) Margaret Stocks is appointed to continue to serve as a Trustee for a further 12 months commencing January 2020.

(c) Faith Cartright is appointed to serve as a Trustee for a further three years commencing January 2020.

(d) Martin Wall and Anna Mullett are appointed to serve as Area Meeting co-clerks, Martin to serve until the end of 2021 and Anna until the end of 2020.

(e) Steve Trelfa has asked to lay down clerkship and eldership of Bridgwater meeting. Correspondence should be sent to co-clerk Phil Parratt until a new clerk is found.

(f) Kate Warren has laid down her oversight of Minehead meeting. Minehead are looking to nominate a new overseer and elder.

(g) Alan Keith of Wellington meeting has been appointed by Meeting for Sufferings as a member of Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC).

Area Meeting have requested that the procedure for accepting nominations be reviewed at a future AM.

19/76 Reports.

(a) Sufferings

We have heard from Fran Hicks that the main areas under discussion at MfS at Woodbrooke in October were the climate crisis, the court and prison register, the issue of assisted dying and Trustees' encouragement of more de-centralised support of local meetings. In considering climate justice those present were asked to recognise the sometimes radical work that is being done by Friends in response to our commitment to stewardship of the planet and how we might all be called upon to act. Quakers need to be part of a whole community in addressing environmental degradation and its injustices. Fran was encouraged by the possible introduction of three eco justice workers who will support meetings and local communities. With regard to the prison and court register Sufferings agreed that a record should be kept both of the costs that some Friends are paying for their faith and witness and of their prayerful support within the Society. We ask that a full report appears in the Newsletter.

(b) Gender Diversity

Kathy Gollin has talked on gender diversity with two local meetings in order to take soundings back to Sufferings. Feedback showed a sense of concern and anxiety from both meetings. Where Friends have a personal or emotional attachment to the issues they should be acknowledged, otherwise we accept that Kathy will report her findings back to Sufferings with the understanding that it is an ongoing concern of our Area Meeting. We need to be aware of the challenges that these issues present to us all.

(c) Quaker Life

We have heard from Lynda Stewart, our representative to Quaker Life, about her weekend course at Woodbrooke on the theme of Quaker Life and Mental Health.

The report began with a simple exercise which gave us the understanding that we are all in this together. Topics covered during the meeting included the importance of language and hearing people's stories, and of listening with an open mind and loving heart. Delegates also considered queries such as: How do we recognise and deal with mental distress in our meetings? How, when, and to whom, do we refer to other professionals? Lynda has offered a 'Games Night' to Area Meeting or Local Meetings to further explore these issues. We thank Linda for her report and a full version will be printed in the Newsletter.

(d) Trustees

We thank Kathy Gollin for giving the report on behalf of Trustees. We note that at some time in 2020 there will be a special AM when Trustees will express their views and concerns about the future for this AM. Trustees are advised to consult with the stewardship committee at Friends House. The Business Team will arrange a date for this meeting and Trustees are asked to circulate a briefing document prior to the meeting.

(e) Taunton MH Management Committee

Peter Burgoine reported on the management of the Meeting House garden with regard to 'rough sleepers'. The committee proposes to increase the security of the garden with additional fencing and the installation of a gate.

We undertake to look at creative ways to engage with those that have been making use of the garden. We agree these changes with a profound sense of sadness and regret.

19/77 Elders and Overseers.

AM Elders and Overseers have suggested a residential weekend at Othona from 4th-6th September 2020. This has been met with enthusiasm from Friends with the AM. It was agreed that a Quiet Day could also be arranged during the year.

19/78 AM 2020 Calendar

Additions and Deletions

Additions:

- . Britain Yearly Gathering – Bath – 1st to 7th August.
- . AM Residential Weekend – Othona - 4th to 6th September.

Deletions:

- . Quaker Camp - Spiceland – 11th -13th September

19/79 Notices

(a) A Memorial Service for Jeanne Brown will be held at 13:30 on Sunday 19th January 2020.

(b) After MfW on 24th November Wellington Meeting will be looking at Group Oversight and Eldership. All are welcome. Provisional timing - Pip Harris will start the meeting at 12:00 this will be followed by a shared lunch at approximately 13:00.

(c) The Earth Action Group ask West Somerset Friends either individually or as local meetings to ask questions of the general election candidates in their constituencies to ascertain their views on climate justice.

19/80 Closing Minute

We thank Taunton Friends for their hospitality today. We hope to meet again as an Area Meeting on Saturday January 25th 2020 at Taunton Meeting House. The next AM Business Team meeting will be on Monday December 2nd at 7pm at Taunton Meeting House.