

**London West Area Quaker Meeting**  
**Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts 2015**

## **References**

### **Registered Name**

London West Area Quaker Meeting

### **Reporting Period**

1st January 2015-- 31st December 2015

### **Charity Commission Registration Number**

1134215

### **Principal Office**

London West Area Quaker Meeting,  
c/o Westminster Friends Meeting House,  
52 St Martins Lane,  
LONDON, WC2N 4EA

### **Names of all those acting as trustees on the date that this Report was approved**

John Dalton Banks  
Sue Flemons  
Vernon Frost  
Richard Lasson  
Margaret Rhoads  
Gill Sewell  
Loveday Shewell  
Stephen Wright

### **Names of all those acting as trustees during 2015**

Debbie Abel  
Matthew Biggs  
John Dalton Banks  
Neil Jameson  
Richard Lasson  
Jo McLuskey  
Margaret Rhoads  
Stephen Wright

### **Names of key officers in 2015**

Area Meeting Clerk: Caroline Nursey  
Clerk of Trustees: Debbie Abel  
Treasurer: Jo McLuskey  
Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Clare Scott-Booth

## **Names and addresses of other relevant organisations**

**Bankers** CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue WEST MALLING Kent ME19 4TA

**Independent Examiner** Jayne Brassington, 24 Castlebar Park, Ealing, London W5 1BX

**Investment Brokers:** Rathbone Investment Management 10 Queen Square BRISTOL BS1  
4NT

**Custodian Trustee** Friends Trust Limited Friends House 173 Euston Road LONDON NW1  
2BJ Registered Charity: 188362

**Property Managers** Six Weeks Meeting Friends House 173 Euston Road LONDON NW1  
2BJ

## **1. Introduction**

The London West Area Quaker Meeting (LWAQM) of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is the basic unit of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in west London and it is within LWAQM that Quakers in west London hold their membership.

LWAQM has seven constituent Local Quaker Meetings (LQMs) (i.e. local worshipping groups): Brentford & Isleworth, Ealing, Hammersmith, Harrow, Staines & Egham, Uxbridge and Westminster.

LWAQM is constituted as a charity under a Governing Document which was adopted on 15 March 2009 and the charity was registered by the Charity Commission for England and Wales on 9 February 2010. The charity is managed by trustees appointed by the seven Local Meetings who, together with the Treasurer of LWAQM ex officio, constitute the London West Area Quaker Meeting Trust.

LWAQM meets regularly to consider those matters on which its opinion is sought by Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM: the final constitutional authority of the Society in Great Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) and Meeting for Sufferings (the central body which acts for the Society between Yearly Meetings).

The Quaker understanding of worship and of the right ordering of meetings makes no distinction between meetings for worship and meetings to transact the business of the Society: therefore, all meetings of LWAQM are meetings for worship both in principle and in practice.

When referring to individuals, the terms Quaker and Friend are interchangeable.

## **2. Governance**

The Governing Document was adopted by the members of the Area Meeting on 15th March 2009 and the decision was recorded in Minute LW/09/44. It was briefly reviewed in 2012 and no changes were proposed to it. The Area Meeting conducts its proceedings in accordance with the Governing Document and the Book of Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, currently known as Quaker Faith & Practice, Fifth edition 2015.

### **2.1 The methods adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees**

Each Local Quaker Meetings (LQM) within the Area has a local Nominations Committee. The name of a Friend who worships at that LQM is brought forward to the LQM for discussion and approval by its local Nominations Committee. Once approved, the LQM forwards that name to the Area Meeting in session for further discussion, approval and appointment.

The Area Meeting Treasurer is ex officio a trustee.

One trustee is appointed by the Area Meeting in session to be the clerk of the trustees.

In line with the Trust's Governing Document, trustees may serve for up to two three-year terms. At the conclusion of those two three-year terms, the trustee must be released from service and may not serve again as a trustee until a clear three -year period has elapsed

between serving again and the trustees previous period of service in that capacity. Only in exceptional circumstances may a trustee remain in post continuously for more than six years. It is the duty of the clerk of trustees to receive trustees' statutory declarations and to ensure that the Charity Commissioners are promptly notified of new appointments.

## **2.2 Policies for the induction and training of trustees:**

There was one new trustee appointed in 2015.

On appointment, trustees are issued with copies of: The 2009 Governing Document, The 2009 Trustees Terms of Reference; The Charity Commissions Essential Trustee: What You Need To Know (CC3) Minutes of the previous three years of trustees meetings, and Trustees Annual Reports & Accounts for the previous three years.

The clerk of trustees briefed all trustees individually and as a group on their duties and responsibilities. All new trustees are encouraged, and fees are paid, to attend the Woodbrooke Quaker study centre residential course for new Quaker trustees.

## **2.3 The organisational nature of the charity**

### *The nature of the Quaker Business Method*

Quakers understand that no priestly intermediary is needed between the individual and God. Quaker business method is therefore rooted in the belief that everyone can be led by the inward teacher. To work with others in listening and allowing ourselves to be that intermediary between the Holy Spirit and the life as we know it on earth is worshipful business.

The role of the Clerk in Quaker decision-making is to capture in words the sense of the meeting or the agreed expression of collective discernment. The Clerk is the servant of the meeting and may need to step aside from the role if they wish to contribute to the discussion.

### *The holding of Area Meeting in session.*

All Quakers who are recorded as being in formal membership of LWAQM are entitled (and are encouraged) to attend when the Area Meeting meets in session to conduct business. Attenders (i.e. people who attend Local Quaker Meetings without being formally registered as members of the Religious Society) are welcome to attend provided that they have sought permission from the Area Meeting Clerk in advance, which is invariably granted. Meetings specifically dedicated to the discernment of issues and problems are known as Meetings for Worship for Business or as Meetings for Worship for Church Affairs, (as opposed to the usual Meeting for Worship held in stillness in accordance with the Quaker tradition).

Each LQM within the Area holds its own Meeting for Worship for Business approximately each month. Resolutions from each LQM are communicated to the Area Meeting - and vice versa - by the sending and receipt of formal minutes.

The Area Meeting met in session on nine occasions in 2015 when any LQM minutes were considered, along with any other business which came directly to the Area Meeting (e.g. marriage applications, membership applications). The minutes of the Area Meeting were sent to LQMs for information or action or, if appropriate, onward to Meeting for Sufferings for further consideration and discernment.

### *The holding of trustees' meetings*

The trustees met as a Trustees Meeting on five occasions in 2015.

A quorum of trustees for the proper ordering of business is half of the number of trustees appointed (rounded up) or half of the number of trustees plus one (if the number of trustees is even) and is set out in the Governing Document under Clause 17 (iv). Every meeting of the trustees was quorate.

The manner of working through the business was in accordance with the Quaker business method. At the Trustees Meeting itself, every Meeting began with a period of silent worship followed by the acceptance by the meeting of the draft agenda. In the course of the meeting, Trustees considered each agenda item and agreed a minute before moving to the next agenda item.

At the conclusion of the Meeting, the Trustees' minutes for that Meeting were signed in the presence of the trustees by the clerk (Governing Document, Clause 17(v)). Typed versions of the minutes were then circulated by the clerk to all trustees, the area meeting clerk, and all Local Quaker Meetings for their records in accordance with Trustees Terms of Reference. The Governing Document (Clause 17 (vii)) requires the trustees to report to the Area Meeting in session at least once each year in order to share their Annual Report and to discuss matters of concern to members of the London West AQM. This report took place in September 2015 when the 2014 Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts was laid before the meeting.

#### **2.4 The relationships between the charity and related parties, including its subsidiaries**

London West Area Quaker Meeting consists of itself and seven constituent Local Quaker Meetings; viz. Brentford & Isleworth, Ealing, Hammersmith, Harrow, Staines & Egham, Uxbridge and Westminster.

Each of these LQMs has its own treasurer and bank accounts. The Area Meeting also has its own treasurer and bank account. In preparing the 2015 Annual Accounts, individually examined LQM accounts are consolidated to produce an Account for the whole charity. Trustees are accountable at law for the proper use of all the resources throughout the Area Meeting; although the practical day-to-day oversight is delegated to individual LQMs and their treasurers, trustees are conscious of the need for vigilance.

There are currently (2015) seventy Area Quaker Meetings covering the countries of England, Wales and Scotland. Each of the AQMs registered with the Charity Commission is autonomous. Each AQM's trustees bear final responsibility for everything that occurs within their Area Meetings.

Delegates from each of the Area Meetings link together via a representative body known as Meeting for Sufferings which represents the views and concerns of Quakers across Britain. The final constitutional authority for Quakers in Britain is known as Britain Yearly Meeting. All Quakers who are recorded members of their Area Meeting are, ipso facto, members of Britain Yearly Meeting. All Quakers in Britain are entitled to attend Britain Yearly Meeting in session which gathered in Friends House, London in May 2015; many from London West did so.

Friends Trusts Limited is the custodian trustee and has the limited responsibility of holding the physical assets (e.g. the title deeds of the Area Meeting's meeting houses and associated property) in safe-keeping on behalf of the Area Meeting.

Six Weeks Meeting is made up of representatives from the seven Area Meetings within Quakers in London (of which London West AQM is one). Its main objective is to maintain,

preserve and insure the places of worship of the constituent area meetings, and their contents. It is accountable to the constituent meetings for the funds and assets it holds on their behalf. Each LQM within LWAQM paid a set fee quota to Six Weeks Meeting in 2015 as their contribution to the overall maintenance costs of Quaker Meeting Houses in London. All LQMs in the seven Area Meetings in London subscribe to Six Weeks Meeting's supervision and maintenance of their premises in similar manner. The level of the quota is set by Six Weeks Meeting with regard to the number of members in each LQM.

## **2.5 Risk assessments**

The major risks to which the charity was exposed, as identified by the trustees, were reviewed and systems or procedures were established to manage those risks, for example, through taking out appropriate insurance, ensuring that appointments were made to fill key roles, examining local meeting and area meeting accounts and monitoring compliance with appropriate legislation.

Trustees are aware that many roles within the Society are undertaken by a limited number of people and that it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill all roles. For a number of years difficulties have been experienced in filling the role of treasurer within Local Meetings (with some Local Meetings sharing the services of a single Member) and also at Area Meeting level.

Enquiries have been made, and are ongoing, into the possibility of paid-for services of outside agencies who would undertake the substantial book-keeping work of the treasurers. Such action may reduce the work-load of the appointed treasurers.

## **3. Objectives and Activities**

### **3.1 The objects of the charity**

Through its constituent LQMs, London West AQM advances religion for the public benefit primarily by holding public worship at its meeting houses and supporting the outreach and mission of the wider Society, both financially and through the active involvement of its Members and Attenders: the primary purpose of the Religious Society of Friends is religious. Within LWAQM, income and property are used to further the Area Meeting's object by work such as:

- strengthening the life and witness of Quaker meetings both within London West Area Quaker Meeting and beyond;
- spreading the message of Quakers and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Religious Society;
- undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad;
- helping to fund the concerns that constituent Local Meetings in the area of LWAQM or beyond have adopted or agreed to support and where those concerns are in accordance with LWAQMs charitable objectives;
- providing for the pastoral care of individual Members and Attenders and for casual visitors to meetings for worship, including assistance to those in need;
- providing opportunities for education in the wider concerns of the Society;
- maintaining and developing Quaker meeting houses as places for public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world and

- maintaining the organisation of LWAQM and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting.

Individual Local Quaker Meetings and individual Friends undertake a range of outreach and charitable work on behalf of the Society

### **3.2 Grant-making policies**

Funds are collected (largely but not entirely by Direct Debit and Standing Orders) from individual Friends as part of their contribution to the work of the Society. Individual Friends decide for themselves what proportion of their offering/ donation is kept for spending within their LQM and/ or is passed on to the Area Meeting. They also decide for themselves what percentage of their contributions should be forwarded to Britain Yearly Meeting to support the centrally-managed work. There is no Area Meeting policy: it remains entirely a matter for individual Friends.

There are no policies which decide whether support should be offered by the Area Meeting or its constituent local meetings for non-Quaker organisations. The LQMs and the AQM decide on a case-by-case basis whether they wish to support non-Quaker causes and if so what level of support that should be; any support offered is reviewed annually. Non-Quaker causes are expected to resonate with the Quaker experience and Quaker values.

## **4. Achievements and performance**

### **4.1 Membership**

The membership statistics for the preceding year are drawn up annually. The 2015 figures were published to all Quakers in London West AQM in January 2016. During the year we had 15 new members (by convincement and by transfer) with 8 members leaving the Area Meeting due to deaths and transfers to other area meetings. Our overall membership is 293 (in 2014 it was 286, subsequently adjusted from 285 as reported in our 2014 report). We note that we have a further 247 Attenders. Our membership has remained stable and part of the fall in the number of Attenders, 261 reported in our 2014 Report, is due to Local Meetings removing from their lists the names of Attenders who have not attended Meeting for Worship at the Local Meeting for a significant period of time.

### **4.2 Changes to Meetings**

No new meetings were established.

No existing meetings were laid down.

### **4.3 Changes to Premises**

#### **New Hammersmith Meeting House**

It was reported in our 2014 Annual Report that the building of the new Meeting House for Hammersmith Local Meeting would start in the autumn of 2015 and be finished by the autumn of 2016. It has been agreed that the developers will build the new Meeting House,

which shifts the responsibility and risk to them instead of Quakers managing a building project for which there is no internal expertise.

As a consequence, the design must be very specific and agreed between the developers and the Quakers. The specification of the design has been reviewed by many professionals (structural engineers, cost consultants, architect, sustainability experts, etc.) from the developers and the Quakers which has resulted in some revisions to the original design which received planning consent. The re-design reflects the budgetary constraints due to the cost increasing over the period of years this project has been pending. It is anticipated that the project will proceed in December 2016, but this date could change.

#### 4.4 Public Meetings for Worship

Each of the seven Local Meetings held Meetings for Worship on Sunday mornings and, in addition Westminster held regular midweek Meetings for Worship throughout the year and Harrow held midweek meetings for worship once a month during the year. Three local Meetings, Ealing, Hammersmith and Harrow, held Meetings for Worship on December 25<sup>th</sup>. During 2015, Ealing, Hammersmith and Westminster held regular Children and Young People's meetings. Staines and Egham held a public Meeting for Worship on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at Royal Holloway College.

The Area Meeting maintained its practice of appointing elders and overseers to provide spiritual and pastoral care to local meetings and to the Area Meeting itself.

LQM	Location	For Whom	When	Frequency	Duration
Brentford & Isleworth	Friends Meeting House Quakers Lane London Road Isleworth TW7 5AZ	Adults	Sunday at 10.30am	Weekly throughout the year	One Hour
Ealing	Friends Meeting House 17 Woodville Rd London W5 2SE	Adults	Sunday at 10.30am  December 25 <sup>th</sup>	Weekly throughout the year	One Hour  30 minutes
		Children	Sunday at 10.30am	First three Sundays each month	50 minutes then 10 minutes with the adults
		All Age Meeting for Worship	Sunday at 10.30am	Three times a year	One Hour

Harrow	Friends Meeting House 456, Rayners Lane PINNER Middlesex HA5 5DT	Adults	Sunday at 10.30am  December 25th	Weekly throughout the year	One Hour  45 minutes
Hammersmith	Friends Meeting House 20 Nigel Playfair Ave, London W6 9JY	Adults	Sundays at 11am  December 25th	Weekly throughout the year	One hour  One hour
		Children	Sundays at 11am	Weekly throughout the year	50 minutes then 10 minutes with the adults
Staines & Egham	Friends Meeting House 9 Limes Road Egham Surrey TW20 9QT	Adults and children	Sundays 10.30am	Weekly throughout the year	One hour
Uxbridge	Friends_ Meeting House, York Road Uxbridge UB8 1QW	Adults	Sunday at 10.30am  December 25th	Weekly throughout the year	One hour  40 minutes
Westminster	Friends Meeting House, 52 St Martins Lane London WC2N 4EA	Adults	Sunday 11am  Tuesday 1pm  Wednesday 6.15pm	Weekly throughout the year	One hour  Half hour  45 minutes
		Children	Sunday 11.00am	First and third Sundays in the month	50 minutes then 10 minutes with the adults

## **4.5 Significant activities undertaken for spiritual development**

### **(1) Area Meeting Gathering 2015**

This one day event held at Ealing Meeting House brought together members and attenders from across London West Area Meeting and was felt to be a great success as indicated in the feedback forms received from 50 of the attendees. The theme for the day was 'Connections' and opportunities existed during the day for those attending to make new connections with other attendees. It was considered that the highlight of the day was the session during which each Local Meeting gave a short presentation on its interpretation of the theme of 'Connections'. During those presentations great emphasis was placed on the efforts made by Local Meetings to make connections in their localities and with other nearby worshipping groups. Each Local Meeting learned what other Local Meetings in the Area Meeting were doing and left the day inspired to take up the theme of 'Connections' in their own Meetings. Around 80 people were present at some stage during the day with 32 Friends and 8 Attenders present for the meeting for worship for business including 6 who had never attended an AM meeting for worship for business previously.

Arrangements were made to include children and young people as well as adults throughout the day. The semi-programmed, all age meeting for worship was a positive experience of moving vocal ministry and silence including some provided quiet table activities.

The additional opportunity of silent meeting for worship was appreciated.

People enjoyed taking part in the parachute game and connections game, both enabling attendees to make new personal connections, as well as time to sit and chat in the garden. The decision to bring and share a lunch of finger food worked well.

The event was again favoured with fine weather but nevertheless the marquee was useful and would have been essential in the event of rain.

### **(2) Local Meeting activities**

The clerks of the seven LQMs have supplied the following information regarding their LQMs significant activities for the spiritual development of Members and Attenders in 2015

#### **Brentford and Isleworth**

We find a 45 minute study session after Meeting for Worship works well for us and held seven sessions during 2015, most of them followed by a shared lunch. At a number of these sessions we looked at Advices and Queries in detail. We also discussed the 2014 Swarthmore Lecture and considered the Spiritual Review that we were preparing for presentation to Area Meeting. In the session held in November the topic discussed was 'Early Quakers.'

In July we had a meeting outing to the Chelsea Physic Garden where one of our members is a guide. In September a member held a bring and share supper in her home.

Brentford and Isleworth Local Meeting has a burial ground available for use by Friends in the Area Meeting and beyond. During 2015 there were two burials, both in August. The first was John Marshall of Hammersmith Local Meeting and the second was Geoffrey Riddle. Geoffrey was buried in the grave of his grandfather, Frederick Riddle who had been employed as our grounds man in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century. Geoffrey was not a Member, but as a child he had played in the grounds and assisted his grandfather. Geoffrey shared some of his memories of this time with us and it is hoped that this record can be given to Friends House Library along with Frederick's cash book which was, coincidentally, found in our hall table. At the same time the ashes of Geoffrey's father and wife were interred in the same grave.

In May 2015 Marian Wishart died and the funeral took place in the manner of Friends at Mortlake Crematorium.

An Attender serves as the link with churches in Brentford taking part in the annual Christian aid collections. Some Friends helped with the collection and attended the Christian Aid lunch at Brentford Free Church.

During the year it was decided not to renew the contract for our Resident Friend and she left in October. A new business case was made to Six Weeks Meeting and the post was re-advertised.

## **Ealing**

Activities held by the Local Meeting during 2015 were:

- Shared lunch at the Meeting House once a month after Meeting for Worship – an opportunity to get to know each other, and four lunches with Quaker conversation are held at the homes of two of our Members.
- Bible study sessions
- Study sessions on chapters of *Quaker Faith and Practice* (QFP) and the start of the systematic reading of QFP.
- Christian Aid lunch – a frugal lunch was provided by our catering group and a collection was taken for Christian Aid.
- A Newsletter is published 4 times a year. This active, lively newsletter provides as significant means of communication/sharing among local Friends/Attendees which includes those who are not able to attend Meeting for Worship regularly. As well as providing information about what is happening locally at Ealing Meeting, it also informs us of corporate activities of Friends and in so doing reminds us of many aspects of Quaker testimonies and values – sharing the witness in the world of Members/Attendees from Ealing Meeting and beyond.
- Preparing for Britain Yearly Meeting – one session was held, open to all whether or not attending Britain Yearly Meeting.
- Spiritual Review of the life of the Meeting – several events were held and a report was sent to Area Meeting in the autumn.

## **Hammersmith**

We hold a monthly discussion group, 'Openings' which focuses on social issues and topics of interest (recent ones have included Dementia and Eating Ethically).

A monthly Quaker Study Group has been following the national reading of *Quaker Faith and Practice*. There is a newly established virtual prayer circle which elicits requests for prayer and healing.

We have a shared lunch on the first Sunday of each month after Meeting for Worship.

As part of our spiritual preparation for Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) we invited individuals to share elements of their spiritual journey. This was a powerful and moving experience for many of us.

### **Harrow**

Advices and Queries are read fortnightly during Meeting for Worship and we had shared lunches after Meeting for Worship on a few occasions during the year. The books in our library have been re-categorised and reorganised and new seats have been purchased for the library.

A prayer for healing group meets monthly.

We held our annual 'Away day' in Jordans in June, with presentations by two prominent Quaker organisations, QCEA and QSA in response to requests by attenders for wider information about the Society. We also held a Foodbank event for National Quaker Week and had a collection for them.

### **Staines and Egham**

Shared lunches were held in the Meeting House on three occasions during the year and study groups were held on two occasions.

One Friend attended a course at Woodbrooke on the subject of 'Premises' and on another occasion a Friend attended a course there on 'Library Maintenance.'

### **Uxbridge**

A study group is held each month and talks are given on an occasional basis. Both events are usually followed by a shared lunch. A working bees group maintains the building and the garden and a regular newsletter is produced and there is active maintenance of our website, library and scrapbook/archive.

We held an open day on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> September and there is regular participation in Churches Together in Uxbridge and in Hillingdon Inter-Faith Network.

### **Westminster**

Activities undertaken were:

A Sit-in come and go as you please on each Friday

A Wednesday Social with Saturday socials exclusively for young people

Buffets for attenders twice a year  
Regular use of our library with extensive information on all topics placed on our notice boards.

#### **4.6 Significant corporate activities undertaken to witness to the Society's Testimonies.**

LQMs Clerks were asked to identify their LQMs corporate witness to the values and testimonies of the Religious Society within London West Area Quaker Meeting. Their comments are published here:

##### **Brentford and Isleworth**

In October 2015 we invited Ruth Cadbury MP, a Member of our Meeting, to tell us about her experiences so far as an MP, having been elected to Parliament at the General Election in May 2015.

In December we were pleased to record that the local Inter Faith group were using our Meeting House to host an event. This enabled the small Jewish community to share the festival of Hanukah with members of other faiths. Two of our Members serve on the committee of this group.

A day nursery rents our Meeting House from 8am to 6pm five days a week. It is run as a business and our rent reflects that while at the same time providing children with a safe and comfortable environment including the use of our garden. We consider that we have a good relationship with the nursery owner who has been with us for well over 20 years. We review rent, fuel and other costs annually and the nursery owner accepts the rent requested and the regular reviews.

We had hoped this year to have greater use of our allotments and Garden Room during the week following the redevelopment of the area by the charity Groundworks. Three families from the nearby Housing association flats initially expressed interest in taking an allotment and two signed contracts. However, in the end, none found the time to take this on.

We have a baroque music group and a small branch of Seventh Day Adventist Church both meeting weekly. Our Meeting House is regularly hired by families particularly during the summer for children's birthday parties. We consider that our charges reflect the demand in the local area. We have had occasional other users, e.g. a writing group.

##### **Ealing**

Public meetings of the Ealing Quakers Economic Justice Group were held during spring and autumn which included speakers, a workshop activity, a pre-election panel and opportunity for discussion. The planning group was set up in the autumn of 2013

‘to inform ourselves and the public about the effects austerity measures are having in our borough’ – an aspect of Quaker testimony to equality.

For Earth Hour on 28<sup>th</sup> March we opened the Meeting House for a silent meditation and invited members of Ealing Churches.

The community plant swap was held in Ealing Meeting House garden on a Sunday afternoon in June to share and exchange seedlings/plants with the local community.

In June we welcomed a group of girls from a local school to hear about Quaker worship and to see the Meeting House.

In October we hosted a performance of *Red flag over Bermondsey*, a play about the life of the social reformer and Quaker Ada Salter, open to the public.

In November we hosted a afternoon and evening of activities linked to the UN Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and welcomed many visitors.

A Member of Ealing Meeting continued to be the Quaker Prison Chaplain at Wormwood Scrubs prison until May 2015.

Ealing Friends took our Ealing Quakers banner to demonstrations in central London against austerity and to welcome refugees, in accordance with our testimony on equality.

We appoint representatives to Ealing Racial Equality Council (where one of our reps serves the organising committee), Churches Together in Ealing and Ealing Foodbank.

Ealing Meeting provided financial and organisational support for 2 young people to attend Summer School and Senior Conference in 2015.

Ealing Meeting has a strong link with Ealing Transition, bringing our religious group into meaningful relationship with a secular group sharing our environmental concerns – examples of joint activities are:

- Edible Ealing organic food box packing
- Joint Quaker and Ealing Transition book Group
- Reciprocal publicity events.

Ealing Meeting makes clear in the terms and conditions of its room hire that ‘Quaker meetings encourage the use of their meeting houses to serve the benefit of the local community. Quakers have a testimony to equality – an unshakeable conviction that there is ‘that of God’ in everyone and that all people should be treated equally. You will be asked what are the aims and principles of your organisation before we are able to accept your booking’

Hirers at Ealing include the following groups: meditation, yoga including yoga for those with disabilities, humanists, Buddhists, local authority training sessions, WEA, art therapy for children, speech therapy, opera appreciation, a mental health group, counselling, individual therapy.

With agreement from Six Weeks Meeting, Ealing Meeting continues to use the services of Mindful Business Services to administer lettings with a view to reducing the burden on our premises committee and increasing the regular use of our Meeting House within the local community.

We registered our premises with the Equality Register.

### **Hammersmith**

We have accompanied benefit applicants and been involved in peer mediation. Both of these are ongoing. One of our Members represents us at Churches Together in Hammersmith and Friends took part on the anti-Trident march and several standing outside court when the climate change activists were being sentenced.

Hirers of our Meeting House include a meditation group, a book club, a group of spiritual Baptists, a music school, an Islamic prayer group and Subud (Buddhist) group. We aim to support these small, spiritually inclined groups by setting rental rates at an affordable level. Our lettings have been frustrated by the uncertainty over how long we will be in the premises owing to the proposed redevelopment of the site and our planned move to a new Meeting House.

The proposed move has been hanging over us and has disrupted our lettings for more than a decade. For example, we cannot arrange a long-term weekday letting e.g. to a nursery school, because we are continually being told that we are only a few weeks/months away from being required to move out. In particular, the Hammersmith Friend in charge of lettings was required to tell renters that they had to find other premises because we were told that we had to vacate the Meeting House by the end of January 2016. Then, the redevelopment and move were put on hold yet again.

### **Harrow**

We are members of Churches Together in Harrow and contribute to, and receive its monthly magazine. Two of our members are active on the Harrow Interfaith Council with two of their events being hosted in our Meeting House.

We hold an ongoing Foodbank collection in the Meeting House and there was a collection of clothes and money for QHA's Christmas at which three people from Harrow Meeting helped.

Our Meeting House is used by two meditation groups on a weekly basis, a children's nursery is held on a daily basis (for which we have subsidised their hiring fee in order for it to continue).

Our clerk, on behalf of our Meeting, wrote to our two MPs on the subject of Palestinian statehood and we issued a monthly bulletin to all Members and Attenders informing them of forthcoming events at local, area and national levels.

A Member of Harrow Quaker Meeting took over the responsibilities of Quaker Prison Chaplain from May 2015.

## **Staines and Egham**

We are represented in the Churches Together in Egham and held an event 'Tea and Cake with the Quakers' as an interfaith open afternoon during Quaker Week. We supported the Walk of Witness and the Open Air Nativity.

Hirers of our premises are groups whose ethos is in line with our Quaker testimonies or are spiritual in nature and include Playbox – a pre-school play group – and meditation, yoga, healing and counselling groups. We charge special rates for hirers that are charities or involved with education.

During the year, following much thought and consideration, we designed and had constructed a new sign for the front of our Meeting House.

## **Uxbridge**

The main hirer of our premises continues to be the day nursery which is a commercial enterprise. Other users of our premises, some of whom support our testimonies, are Sanctuary of the Silver Cross, British Association for the Person-centred approach (BAPCA), Heruka Buddhist Group, Labour History Group, Alcoholics Anonymous and Amnesty International.

## **Westminster**

Activities undertaken:

Food Bank flourishes (but Soup Run for the homeless has been discontinued due to local objections.

Vigils at Hyde Park Corner and Trafalgar Square, mainly on peace issues.

Groups hiring the Meeting House include:

Alcoholics Anonymous

Life Drawing class

London Quaker Services

Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs

Groups promoting healing, psychiatric help, Yoga, and meditation.

## **5. Financial review**

### **5.1 Annual Accounts for 2015**

The 2015 examined and consolidated accounts are attached to this report.

London West AQM's Total Funds (including those of its constituent Local Meetings) increased during the year from £855,648 at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 to £1,026,589 at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

This £170,941 increase in funds was largely due to receiving the balance of a significant legacy left to one of our constituent Meetings, despite a fall in other voluntary income during the year.

## **5.2 Reserves policy**

Reserves policy continued in 2015 to be determined by each Local Meeting because they hold a high proportion of both assets and funds. These policies vary with factors such as the size of the Local Meeting, amount of income, assets and future plans:

### **Brentford & Isleworth**

Our reserves have built up over years when funds, usually legacies, have been given by local Friends to support B&I Meeting specifically. While there is some uncertainty about the ability of SWM to provide sufficient resources to maintain the Meeting House, we wish to keep these historic reserves. Our current financial policy is to make a donation usually to BYM in respect of any surplus made in the previous year, so these reserves will not increase.

### **Ealing**

Ealing Meeting's money is used to further our Quaker work and sustain the life of the meeting. We find it prudent to keep a level of reserves to deal with unexpected fluctuations in our income and liabilities. Our current practice is to keep a level of reserves of between six months' and one year's anticipated expenditure.

### **Hammersmith**

Hammersmith Friends would have a policy of retaining our reserves in anticipation of expenditures related to the new Meeting House. Friends will continue to support relevant charitable giving on a case by case basis.

### **Harrow**

We agree that Harrow's reserves policy should be that we ' earmark ' £100,000 for dispersal to such Quaker and other causes as the Meeting itself discerns over the next 10 years. The remaining £30,000+ can be held for future ' closure ' or other demands.

### **Staines & Egham**

As a small local meeting, we feel that we need to hold the current level of reserves in case of any emergencies which would not be met from centrally held funds.

### **Uxbridge**

Our expenditure currently exceeds our income from Friends (members) so we rely on legacy/reserve funds for our ongoing survival. All our legacies have been left to Uxbridge Local Meeting. Our Reserves Policy is: an agreed buffer of £30,000 to keep for our ongoing regular costs as LM, some for spiritual well-being of the LM, including grants to local Friends for study etc., some for our MH upkeep, our venue and some for local charities/worthy causes and Quaker organizations we have direct involvement in.

### **Westminster**

We currently hold three types of reserves: endowment, designated funds and general reserves. The endowment fund is the Douglas and Doris Lee Memorial Fund. Under the terms of the endowment, the income generated by the capital is used to help international Friendship and Peace. Designated funds are legacies received where a particular purpose was specified. The majority of designated funds have been received since 2010 and recently

approximately £235,000 has been spent on renovations. A further legacy was allocated for spending on the Westminster Meeting House premises. With regards to general funds, they benefit from receiving all the income from investments and bank interest so we have a practice of not asking Friends for direct contributions to the running of local meeting. As a result, a large proportion of “where most needed” contributions goes direct to BYM.

### **London West Area Quaker Meeting**

London West AQM itself aims to maintain a reserve equivalent to one-year’s expenditure (inclusive of the levy payable to Six Weeks Meeting) which is kept to enable it to meet Area Meeting’s financial needs in the short term.

There are no special funds.

### **5.3 Deficits**

At the end of the year 2015 no Local Meeting accounts were in deficit. The total funds of London West Area Quaker Meeting were £1,026,589.

Consolidated and externally examined accounts are attached to this report.

### **5.4 Principal funding sources**

Income largely comes from Friends in membership of the Religious Society and Attenders who are encouraged to contribute money to support the Area Meeting, its concerns and its business, but only at a level at which individuals can afford.

Voluntary donations of this nature gathered in 2015 total £269,799– an increase of £159,750 from the previous year (£110,049 in 2014) mainly due to legacies.

The Area Meeting itself has income from investments but the majority of investments are held by Local Meetings.

Income from investments for 2015 amounted to £10,112, an increase of £366 from investment income received during 2014. (£9,746 in 2014)

London West AQMs funds are largely unrestricted though there are some restricted funds and endowment funds, mostly acquired as legacies over many years and connected to the maintenance and support of specific meeting houses, including the replacement of Hammersmith meeting house, whose building fund (restricted) at the year-end stood at £131,395. (£69,674 at end 2014)

### **5.5 How expenditure has supported the Area Meeting’s objectives**

Apart from passing on quota contributions from local meetings to Six Weeks Meeting for the upkeep of all Quaker meeting houses London-wide, expenditure in 2015 continued to consist mainly of sending Friends and Attenders to conferences, training courses and other Quaker events. This included enabling children to attend the latter.

Trustees are pleased to note that a one day, non- residential area meeting gathering took place in July 2015 for spiritual refreshment, worship and business sharing.(see 4.5(1))

Total costs were £824 (for portaloos, marquee and refreshments). £25 (including gift aid) was donated on the day so the net cost to London West Area Quaker Meeting was £799.

LWAQM has continued to support financially the Bolivia Quaker Education fund which pays bursaries for two students to attend university who otherwise could not afford to do so. The present commitment ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

As in 2013 and 2014, an annual subscription was made in 2015 to London Link and to London Citizens.

## **5.6 Investment Policy**

London West AQM subscribes to the principles of investing in a socially, environmentally and ethically sound manner and retained Rathbone Greenbank Investment Management Ltd as its investment broker; Rathbone Greenbank invests the trust's money on behalf of the trustees. The trustees' predecessors completed an ethical questionnaire from Rathbone Greenbank in 2007 and those preferences were reviewed by Rathbone Greenbank. A portfolio of investments was then generated which offered sound financial prospects whilst reflecting London West AQM's values. This arrangement has served London West AQM well in previous years, and trustees reviewed the portfolio's performance as part of the annual accounts production process; trustees saw no reason to interfere with or change the current arrangements. The portfolio balance will be reviewed again during the preparation of the annual accounts for 2016.

## **6. Key Plans for the Future**

### **6.1 Hammersmith Friends' Meeting House Redevelopment Project**

This project, begun in 2008, continued throughout 2015 with developments and unavoidable delays as noted in 4.3 above.

Trustees expect building work to commence in 2016/7.

### **6.2 Revision to the AQM Governing Document**

London West AQM's Governing Document has been operational for five years and was due to be reviewed in 2014 in line with Charity Commissioners guidance. London West AQM Trustees were also aware that Six Weeks Meeting had proposed some changes to the London West AQM Governing Document in order to assist with the decision-making required in paragraph 6.3. Six Weeks Meeting has not been able during 2015 to finalise documentation with the charity Commission and so the review of LWAQM Governing Document has not been completed in 2015. A meeting has been proposed between representatives of Six Weeks Meeting, Trustees of London West AQM and London West AQM in order to progress this matter. The meeting is scheduled to take place in October 2016.

### **6.3 Changes to the AQM Data Protection regime**

London West AQM Trustees continue to be mindful of their statutory responsibilities towards data protection. In 2015 it was agreed by London West AQM in session to prepare a list of members and attenders at local meetings within our Area Meeting. Written authority was requested from all members and attenders for their contact information to be contained in the list and that information is only being held for those members and attenders who gave their written consent. This complies with the requirements of Data Protection Act 1998 and offers

a secure and valuable service for use by Quaker meetings. Trustees look forward to the publication of this list during 2016.

## **7. Public Benefit Statement**

In pursuance of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, the Trustees of London West Area Quaker Meeting confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which that guidance is relevant.

## **8. The Reporting of Serious Incidents**

Pursuant to the Charity Commissioners' guidance on reporting serious incidents, the Trustees of London West Area Quaker Meeting declare that, during the reporting year 1st January 2015 - 31st December 2015, there were no serious incidents which they failed to bring to the Commissioners' attention.

## **9. Safeguarding**

All seven Local Quaker Meetings within London West Area Quaker Meeting have appropriate safeguarding policies in place. No incidents were reported to our Safeguarding Coordinator.

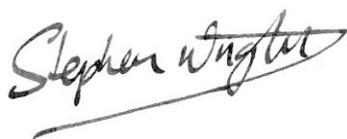
## **10. Acknowledgements**

The trustees acknowledge with gratitude those Friends whose contributions made this annual report possible and whose work and upholding sustained the Area Meeting throughout 2015.

## **11. Approval**

The trustees have approved their 2015 Annual Report to the Charity Commission on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

Stephen Wright, Trustee of London West Area Quaker Meeting, was authorised to sign this Report on behalf of the Trustees.

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

Stephen Wright  
Trustee