



About NFPB

revised 2017

Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB)

is a body set up by Quakers in the North of Britain. Our members are representatives of all Area Meetings in the North (from Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire to the North of Scotland), along with Friends co-opted to serve in a variety of capacities.

Our members number around 60 people in total and we employ a full-time Coordinator and a part-time Administrative Assistant. Our office is currently based in Bolton.

Funding comes chiefly from Northern Area Meetings and Local Meetings, with additional support from grant-making trusts, legacies, sales of resources and donations from individuals.

A bit of history

Initially a concern just of some of the Northern English Quarterly Meetings (we were set up in 1913), our supporting membership soon expanded to include Friends in Scotland, in North Wales and in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire. The Quarterly Meetings were replaced by General Meetings in 1967 and at this point the responsibility for providing Representatives to, and funding for, our work was passed onto the Monthly Meetings in the area covered. In 2007/8 these became Area Meetings.

The conference that set us up minuted that the Board was to....

'advise and encourage Friends in the North, and through them their fellow Christians and citizens generally, in the active promotion of peace in all its height and breadth.'

The work of the Board has inevitably varied over this time, but **common threads** throughout are:

- Provision of information, comment and thinking on topical peace concerns, including work on exploring the conditions necessary for building peace in the world.
- Publicising peace-building as an alternative to prevailing military-orientated thinking.
- Supporting individuals and organisations in responding to current challenges — including those people facing compulsory military service, both during times of war and afterwards.
- Making Quaker peace concerns visible and bringing Quakers together to reflect and to develop insights and thinking.
- Building bridges between individuals and groups.
- Being a forum for the sharing of local experiences and information peace action and peace promotion.

What we do

The following is a short list of the type of activities undertaken by NFPB over recent years:

- Organising conferences, workshops and other events, for Friends and others.
- Producing written publications, from printed to web-based materials.
- Publicising opportunities for engagement and action on peace concerns, through our membership, through our links with Quaker meetings and through our web-resources
- Organising and participating in acts of witness.

Since the mid-1980s NFPB has committed itself to:

- serving as a resource for supporting Friends in Meetings
- acting as a catalyst for action and thinking on peace, from the international to the personal levels
- developing ways of working that reflect our Quaker foundation and commitment to peaceful means and ends.

In 1985 NFPB minuted that “we need to be both realistic and visionary”, reflecting on the gifts that individual Friends can each give to the endeavour and to the corporate discipline and clarity that need to be nurtured and developed.

Framework for Action

This grid – agreed by NFPB in November 2013 - maps out the broad themes of our work and, in very general terms, the type of activity we do and might undertake. Any work we do should fit into at least one part of this grid.

		How we work			
		Raising awareness and speaking out	Promoting alternatives	Supporting action	Nurturing a community of change
Broad Areas of concern	Challenging Militarism				
	Roots of conflict, roots of peace				
	Quaker peace testimony				
	Promoting a Culture of peace				

Our Current concerns

Some of our work is responsive, acting and reflecting on particular current concerns, whilst at other times we develop work over a more sustained period.

Specific issues we're working on (as of Spring 2017) include:

- **Sustainable security** - promoting peace and security based on economic and social justice and the right relationship with the earth and its resources., and in particular encouraging people to both explore the nature of security and find ways of engaging and communicating this.
- **Promoting peace building and peace action in our communities** – developing and offering workshops for Quakers and others that support reflection and action, recognising that peace is rooted in justice, respect and communication.

- **Nuclear disarmament and arms conversion** – witnessing and advocating moves towards nuclear disarmament, both at the local, national and international levels, as opportunities arise, and raising awareness of how people can contribute to this.

Networking and communications

We aim to develop and maintain appropriate and effective communication – to and with Friends and beyond – and to build relationships and partnerships with other organisations, networks and key individuals. Through our membership being rooted in different parts of the UK, we have explored the differing perspectives, experiences and opportunities in England and in Scotland.

We maintain working links with a number of other bodies, Quaker and non-Quaker. For example, we are members of the Network for Peace, the International Peace Bureau, Scotland's for Peace and the Network of Christian Peace Organisations. Particularly important is our relations with Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW), where we have cross-representation on its Peace and Disarmament and Peace Education programmes. We also attend the annual Peace and Service Consultations of the Europe and Middle East Section (EMES) of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). Other relationships with individuals and organisations arise through our work.

We have a regularly updated and well-used website, linked with other web-based resources. We produce periodic mailings each year, to Northern Quaker Meetings, to individual Quakers and interested organisations and people. We also try to ensure a visible presence at meetings of Britain Yearly Meeting and other Quaker events when appropriate.

Our structure

Our meetings

The meetings of the Board and Executive are held in the manner of Friends, with quiet worship being the context in which discussion takes place and decisions are made. Decisions are minuted at the time, with some additional notes appended to minutes on occasion where a detailed minute is not needed. The Board and the Executive each have Clerks to facilitate this process. Sometimes one person has Clerked both bodies, but more recently the roles have been divided. Our Treasurer is another key member of the Executive, with responsibilities for financial oversight, in consultation with other Executive members and the Co-ordinator. There are normally three or four meetings a year for Representatives, taking place at different parts of the North, usually held at Quaker Meeting Houses.

The role of Representatives

Representatives are appointed by Area Meetings and key parts of their role include:

- Being a two-way channel of communication between Area Meetings and NFPB
- Being aware of Friends' peace concerns and guiding the direction of NFPB's work.
- Contributing to the work of the Board by serving in a range of capacities, on various sub-groups and committees in partnership with the Co-ordinator to implement our work.

Charitable status and trustees

We became an independent charity in 1996, registered in Scotland as Charity Number SC 024632. We report annually to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) (the equivalent of the Charity Commission for England and Wales and with similar reporting and accounting requirements). There is not currently a requirement that we also register with the Charity Commission for England and Wales but do try to work within its requirements as well as those of OSCR.

Our Executive Committee serve as our Trustees, who in their turn meet four times a year. Six Friends currently serve on our Executive Committee, these being appointed for up to two terms of three years. Financial administrative tasks are currently undertaken by staff in our office,

Sub groups

In addition to the Board and Executive, we appoint sub-groups to undertake particular tasks. These range from our Nominations Committee to project groups. These report regularly to both the Board and Executive.

Office

The Board's current Co-ordinator and its Administrative Assistant work from an office in Bolton, Lancashire, in a town-centre Methodist building. This office is also used from time-to-time for meetings of sub groups. Rental for the office is less than the market-rate for a similarly sized space, reflecting the supportive nature of the landlord-tenant relationship. Executive Committee members carry out regular Health & Safety and Fire Safety inspections of the office and have been involved in practical assistance in the office from time to time.

Finance

Sources of funding

The core of our funding comes from Quakers in the North of Britain. Most of this is contributed by Area Meetings, although some Area Meetings have devolved the responsibility for financial contributions to NFPB to their Local Meetings.

Friends also provide funds through collections and through individual donations. A smaller amount of funding comes from grant-making charitable trusts that donate on an annual basis, and a smaller amount still comes from sales of our publications and from fees for events.

We do apply for and have, over the years, secured additional funding from charitable Trusts for specific areas of project work. This has given us scope for developing our resources and activities that would not otherwise be practicable.

Over the past five years we have received generous legacies from a small number of Friends.

Budgeting and planning

Our Trustees agree a budget each autumn, our Financial Year running from January to December. On the basis of this budget, we propose a suggested amount per member that Area Meetings might use as a guideline for their financial contributions to NFPB. Whilst some Meetings are not able to use this figure, due to insufficient funds locally, in general terms it has proved to be a very effective way for us to plan our financial affairs, with the support, generosity and cooperation of Area Meetings.

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