

Our activities in 2022

Introduction



NFPB meeting in Leeds

Our activities during the year reflected both continuity and change, with challenges and new openings along the way. The war in Ukraine and the ever-more-visible climate emergency were two of the crises that shaped our work, each in different ways calling for urgent attention. Our work continued to be affected by Covid pandemic, particularly in the earlier part of the year, and also by economic challenges and organisational capacity within and beyond the Society of Friends.

An office move was not expected – and the process of implementing it was time consuming. But the new location at the Quaker Meeting House in Bolton is more suitable than our previous space, and it was good to have the opportunity to clear some of the materials and equipment that were no longer needed.

Two of our members' meetings during the year were held online only; one due to Covid concerns and the other as a result of industrial action affecting rail services. We held two

blended meetings, in Leeds and Glasgow respectively, benefiting from the investment that Friends have made during the pandemic in technology to enable remote participation. There were a few changes in our membership during the year, and it was good to meet some of our newer members in-person for the first time. It has been a great pleasure when we have had opportunities to gather together again in the same physical space.

Whichever ways we have met and worked, with Quakers and more widely, participation and collaboration, and sharing information and concerns have become so important. We reflected throughout the year on the best ways of combining these approaches, responding also to changes within other Quaker bodies' ways of working.

Thank you to all those who have contributed with time, money and in other ways to sustaining and developing our work during the year.

Supporting Friends and Meetings

NFPB Members' meetings

Our Board members had four meetings during the year, with nearly all Northern Area Meetings represented. Alan Frith and Suzanne Wilson served as Co-Clerks. The meetings took place online, and as a hybrid events, with Leeds and Glasgow Meeting Houses being the venues for those able to attend in person in June and September respectively. The war in Ukraine was on our agenda throughout the year, with Friends valuing the opportunities to share concerns and to engage with some of the challenges arising.



NFPB members attending Meeting for Worship at Faslane nuclear base following the meeting in Glasgow

Speakers and themes at our meetings also included.

- John Cooper, from the Fellowship of Reconciliation.
- Olivia Hanks and Lyndsey Fielder Cooke, on the COP27 climate summit.
- Nuclear weapons and disarmament.
- Updates from Quaker Peace and Social Witness and from Woodbrooke.
- The Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign, and Quaker witness at military bases.
- Quaker Roots
- The Brighouse West Yorks AM Ploughshares concern
- Participation and support of young people

During the meetings, and at other events and activities online, NFPB members also had times for reflection and mutual support, exploring the roles of NFPB representatives and future priorities for NFPB. During the latter part of the year, a sub-group began preparation for an online event to enable deeper reflection on the issues arising from the war in Ukraine; the reflection session took place in February 2023.

Talks and workshops

The Coordinator and other Friends contributed talks to Craven & Keighley and to Pickering & Hull Area Meetings, giving information about our activities and concerns. The Coordinator also participated in the residential gathering of North Scotland Area Meeting (at Pluscarden) during August, giving a talk and facilitating discussion on Ukraine and wider issues relating to Rethinking Security. We ran a 'Faith in Action' online workshop for Friends attending Britain Yearly Meeting during May.

Resources and information

We continued to develop and add content to our website, focusing during the year in collating a significant page of links and resources relating to the war in Ukraine. The page was widely used, particularly during the first six months of the year. Material on the Quaker Peace Testimony was also added to the site.

Throughout the year, we produced and disseminated (every 4-6 weeks) a *Peace Round-up*, drawing together resources and links on peace and disarmament issues from a range of sources. We continued to get positive feedback on the value of this resource. An archive of these can be found on our website.

Whilst most of our publishing is now electronic, we updated and distributed printed leaflets and sold a number of our physical resources to Friends and others.

Partnership and networks

Working with others is important for us as a small organisation, as we can contribute to and draw on wider efforts. A number of those partnerships described below have an approach that emphasises the inter-connections between militarism, climate change, and social justice and wellbeing, and advocates for a shift in political and economic priorities. This reflects priorities identified in our own strategic review during 2020.

Rethinking Security

This year was a significant time for Rethinking Security, with its Alternative Security Review project being a ground-breaking piece of work to change the process and content of security reviews in the UK. We were pleased in the early part of the year to be able to deliver, with Rethinking Security, a course during March under the care of Woodbrooke.

Throughout the year we played an active role, through our Coordinator, in the outreach working group and in raising awareness of the resources and opportunities for involvement developed by Rethinking Security.

Military Spending

As an active member of the UK steering group for the Global Campaign on Military Spending, we supported that group in its continuing work, including reviewing priorities for the period after the more recent funding. We continued to promote, during the Spring, the Global DAYS OF ACTION on Military spending, including the use of social media and other resources amongst Friends and more widely.

Our Coordinator supported a group from Brighouse West Yorkshire Area Meeting in their exploration and discernment arising from a concern to redirect resources and policies to a very different approach to building peace and security in the world.

Ecumenical connections

We met throughout the year with other members of the Network of Christian Peace Organisations, and were pleased to welcome John Cooper of the Fellowship of Reconciliation to our members' meeting in November. The Network was able to meet in person again, as well as online, and

members found it of continuing value to reflect, share information, collaborate and offer mutual support. We were also represented at the spring conference of the Fellowship of Reconciliation with Church and Peace.

Quakers in Britain

This was a time of significant challenge and change in the governance and staffing of work relating to peace by Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW). We were involved in concluding meetings of the relevant sub-committee, before that was laid down, and kept in touch with staff as new ways of working were set in place. We took an active role in the QPSW *Ukraine Cluster*, helping in their discernment and in facilitating online sessions for Friends to explore difficult issues.

Quakers in Europe

In January, we collaborated with the Quaker Council for European Affairs in arranging a webinar on “Is COP26 enough? Peace, militarism, and the climate crisis: a missing piece”

(see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gX5_2vOLLFc).

Throughout the year we played an active role in the FWCC EMES Peace and Service Consultation, and attended in-person the weekend meeting in Germany in October. That meeting was valuable in giving space for consideration and of the range of challenges already described, as well as moving to be a Peace and Service Network.



Governance, finance and people

Trustees

Phoebe Spence completed her service as Treasurer at the end of 2021 and in January 2022 Deryck Hillas took on the role. Other trustees during the year were: Peter Speirs (Clerk), Lyn Pardo, Jayne Meadows, Alan Frith and Geoff Fielding. The trustees met four times for formal meetings, with an additional facilitated ‘away day’ that provided stimulus and opportunity to explore at greater depth some issues relating to trusteeship and the role of NFPB in the current context. Board members approved a new governing document that Trustees had prepared during the previous year.

Working arrangements

Philip Austin and Steven Waling continued their work as full-time Coordinator and part-time Administrative Assistant respectively. Their work was undertaken mostly from home during the first six months of the year, with a process of gradually increased working back at the NFPB office in Bolton. We received, however (and unexpectedly), notice to vacate our office at the Victoria Hall by December. An agreement was reached with Bolton Quaker Meeting for us to rent a room at the Meeting House from December 2022. The preparation and implementation of the move was time

consuming, with staff being assisted by Board members in the significant task of reducing our office contents before the move and in setting up the new work space before the end of the year.



NFPB office move to Bolton Quaker Meeting House

Looking ahead

Trustees and NFPB members gave time during the year to considering some priorities for our work in 2023 and beyond. These include:

- Further work to support Friends and others in reflection and action in relation to the war in Ukraine.
- Continued focus on climate issues in relation to peace, militarism and violent conflict.
- Exploration of ways in which we might more effectively involve and support younger Quakers in our work and in peace concerns more generally.
- Arranging a mix of in-person, hybrid and online events, to encourage wider participation and engagement.
- Building and developing links and possible collaboration with other Quaker bodies as they change the nature and location of their activities.
- Working to diversify our funding, through grant applications for specific project activities and more general appeals for our core work.
- Updating our printed resources and website arrangements.

Support for your Meeting

Please do get in touch if you would like ...

- resources about NFPB or about peace issues
- a workshop for Friends (and others) or talk about NFPB or a peace theme
- with news and information about peace concerns and activities
- other requests for support or collaboration

See overleaf for our contact information.

Financial overview

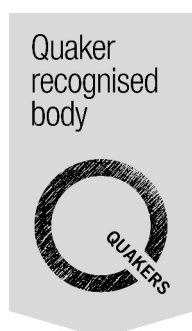
We continued to draw on reserves to supplement the income from Friends in resourcing our work. Trustees agreed to ask Area Meetings, from January 2023, to consider contributions based on £10 per Member. With the first half of the year in particular still being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, expenditure on office, travel and other activity costs remained at a lower level than would have previously been expected. No grant income was received during the year. Quakers – Area and Local Meetings, and individuals – continued to provide the core of our funding through donations. Some income was also generated from invested reserves.

A summary is shown below. For full accounts and trustees reports see:

<https://nfpb.org.uk/resources/updates-and-reports/>

Receipts and payments for the year ended 31 December 2021

Receipts	2022	2021
<i>Donations</i>	35,758	36,993
<i>Grants</i>		345
<i>Gross receipts from other charitable activities</i>	537	128
<i>Investment Income</i>	2,102	1,459
Total Receipts	38,397	38,925
Payments		
<i>Charitable Activities</i>	48,319	46,625
<i>Governance costs</i>	1,488	1,392
Total Payments	49,807	48,017
Net receipts/payments	(11,410)	(9,092)
Cash converted to investments		20,000



Northern Friends Peace Board

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