Northern Friends Peace Board
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Bulletin

October 2026

News, events, and more on current peace activities and concerns

NFPB Coordinator news – Irenée Rajaona-Horne takes up her post



Irenée Rajaona-Horne began her work as Coordinator at the start of October, and will be overlapping with outgoing Coordinator Philip Austin until the end of the year.

They will be working together online and in-person, sharing out different aspects of the job and preparing for an office move from Bolton to Lancaster.

Irenée writes:

'As I join the NFPB team, preparing to take over from Philip, my first priorities are listening and learning: listening to Cconcerns of Nfpb members and Quakers in the North and learning from the rich experience of Philip and our members.

My hope is that this period of discernment and reflection will help us to envision the next chapter for NFPB and what we are called to do together'

Irenée's email address is: coordinator@nfpb.org.uk .

NFPB members' September meeting

Thirty-six Friends gathered when Northern Friends Peace Board met in Glasgow and online at the end of September.

The meeting heard from Friends across the North about their local and national **peace witness and activities**, from the local to national level, ranging from vigils to film showings and work with young people. These exchanges of news and information are always a valuable part of our meetings.

Other agenda items included:

- receiving and considering a report of the June gathering on **'Living our Peace Testimony'** – see https://tinyurl.com/LoPTreport
- hearing about the work of the **Scottish Peace Platform** in its work to support peace initiatives and groups in Scotland – https://scottishpeaceplatform.org
- making **appointments** for next year
- hearing from **NFPB trustees** about their recent and current priorities

- considering guidelines that are given to Friends serving as Area Meeting **Representatives** to Northern Friends Peace Board (the current guidelines are here: https://tinyurl.com/nfpbreps)
- receiving an update from Barry Mills about the work that he has undertaken over a number of years, researching into **second world war conscientious objectors** in Britain and the educational and outreach resources arising from that - https://www.conscienceww2.uk/
- participating in a facilitated session in response to a **Quaker Voluntary Action** minute and initiative - https://qva.org.uk/the-svartbacken-summons/

Some NFPB members stayed in the area and joined with local Friends in their Meeting for worship the **Faslane** nuclear submarine base the next day.

A longer report of the meeting on our website at:
https://nfpb.org.uk/2026/10/02/meeting-at-a-time-of-change

Discussions point to importance of promoting radically different form of security from the ground-up

Between April and July 2026, Rethinking Security organised a series of three roundtables with representatives of UK-based civil society organisations in response to the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) and National Security Strategy (NSS) released in summer 2025. Ministers at the time proposed a national conversation on security and 'defence', and called for unity behind these strategies. The report that summarises the discussion notes that:

"It was obvious from the roundtables that the solutions for this will not always be found in Westminster, and that the agenda of militarised security runs deep in our political and economic system. As well as advocating for change from the top, it is also crucial that we build security from the ground up, within and across communities"

and identified the following themes:

• Prioritise political and democratic security

• Address human need

• Centre climate justice

• Reverse neo-liberalism

The report, **"Human Security in a 'War-Ready' UK"** is available via:
https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/human-security-in-a-war-ready-uk

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Humanity In the Balance – a blog

Former NFPB member Geoff Fielding has been researching and writing over a number of years. He has now begun publishing some of his findings and conclusions online. He writes: "year upon year small insights were gained. These gradually joined together with others to make more sense, until now I have arrived at a story of our human existence that, seemingly to me, makes sound sense. Whether this sense makes sense to anyone else, I have yet to find out!

"The uncomfortable bit is that the story explains why our world is in the mess it is in, where our crises are leading, and why. However, in doing so, they also provide ways of reversing these trends and bringing the world back, gradually, into balance."

Read more at: https://humanityinthebalance.com/

Peace Round-up - a small selection of links to a range of news, comment and more, relating to current concerns - *inclusion here does not imply endorsement*

From Adoption to Action: A New Council of Europe Recommendation on Peace Education
https://worldbeyondwar.org/from-adoption-to-action-a-new-council-of-europe-recommendation-on-peace-education-by-with-and-for-young-people

People Support Peacebuilding – new UK public opinion data
https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2026/09/21/people-support-peacebuilding-new-uk-public-opinion-data

Pacifism and the Peace Testimony Today
https://www.friendsjournal.org/issue-category/2026/pacifism-and-the-peace-testimony-today

Quakers welcome "new approach" to Israeli occupation of Palestine https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/quakers-welcome-uk-s-new-approach-to-israeli-occupation-of-palestine

Whistles Not Guns: Learning from Civilian Defence in Minnesota
https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/whistles-not-guns-learning-from-civil-disobedience-in-minnesota

The Absolute Insanity of Militarized Security
https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2026/07/28/the-absolute-insanity-of-militarised-security

Hiroshima's Question: Will we continue to live under the nuclear shadow?
www.ipsnews.net/2026/08/hiroshimas-question-will-we-continue-to-live-under-the-nuclear-shadow

Rethinking the Militarized Future We're Building
https://warpreventioninitiative.org/peace-science-digest/rethinking-the-militarized-future

25 Years of War was the wrong response to 9/11
https://worldbeyondwar.org/25-years-of-war-was-the-wrong-response-to-9-11

"Conscience does not end when war begins," Quakers tell UN
https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/conscience-does-not-end-when-war-begins-quakers-tell-un

ICJ judge Navi Pillay wins Nobel peace prize for promoting international law
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/oct/09/navanethem-navi-pillay-wins-nobel-peace-prize

Hiroshima's Question: Will we continue to live under the nuclear shadow?
www.ipsnews.net/2026/08/hiroshimas-question-will-we-continue-to-live-under-the-nuclear-shadow

Nuclear and AI development reveal broader questions about humanity
https://wagingnonviolence.org/metta/podcast/nuclear-and-ai-development-broader-questions-humanity/

A Better Path for Peace and Security? Focus on Dignity
https://www.justsecurity.org/159466/peace-security-dignity-path/

Campaigners lobby Holyrood to block military use of spaceports
https://theedinburghreporter.co.uk/2026/10/campaigners-lobby-holyrood-to-block-military-use-of-spaceports/

Peace and climate – urgent action needed

Quakers in Britain were among more than 20 organisations who wrote to the Government during the Week of Action on Peace and Climate Justice (21-28 September) calling for the military's climate impact to be fully included in the UK's plans to tackle climate change.

The letter stated that "*We all know that war is a humanitarian catastrophe – what is less well recognised is that it is an environmental catastrophe too. … Around 5.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions result from military-related activity, and this figure does not include conflict-related emissions from sources such as war-related fires, logistics and reconstruction. … The climate crisis is the greatest and most certain of the existential threats facing humanity yet attracts only a tiny fraction of the finance directed to the military. The big military spending nations of which UK is one, collectively spend 30 times more on their militaries than on climate finance for climate vulnerable nations. … At this particular moment in time, as conflict and climate chaos collide, and we are breaching 1.5 degrees of warming, common sense tells us that a much more urgent effort should be devoted to negotiation, diplomacy and international law.*"

Read more at: https://tinyurl.com/qmilemm

Links to additional resources on peace and climate change can be found on the NFPB website at: https://tinyurl.com/peaceclimatelinks

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Some events

This is just a small selection from our website calendar.
To see a fuller events listing, see https://nfpb.org.uk/calendar - and please get in touch if you have an event that we can add to our calendar and future *Bulletin.*

- 20 October — **'People not Nukes: let's prioritise real security'** CND webinar. 7-8pm. Details here.
- 26 October — **Climate resilience: what could a Quaker role be?** Quakers in Britain. Online discussion. 6-7.30pm. Details here - https://www.quaker.org.uk/events/climate-resilience-what-could-a-quaker-role-be
- 29 Oct 2026 — **Skipton Peace Group – Annual Lecture** Skipton Girls' High School, 7.30pm. Details here - https://yorkshirecnd.org.uk/event/skipton-peace-group-2026-annual-lecture/
- 8 Nov 2026 — **Songs For Peace' Bradford event** Bradford Cenotaph, 1-2pm. Details here - https://cnduk.org/events/songs-for-peace-bradford-event/ .
- 21 November — **An Idea Whose Time Must Come – Lucas Plan 50th Anniversary Celebration** Manchester, 10.30am-5.30pm. https://lucasplan.co.uk/50th-anniversary-conference/

Thank you!

As we approach the year end, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Friends for their support over the past year, from those who serve on NFPB in different ways as role-holders and volunteers, to Area Meetings, individuals and grant funders who support our work financially. We have learned during this year of Friends who had previously served as Area Meeting Representatives to NFPB over the years who have died. We are thankful for their lives and what they brought to NFPB.
