

Friends Southern Summer Events Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 11 November 2023

Held at Westminster Quaker Meeting and online

Minutes

Present

David Holtam (clerk), Oliver Waterhouse, James Barnard, Kit King, Rob Johnson, Graham Torr, Michael Wood, Kathy Gibbs, Lucy Dodgson, Bryony Rowntree, Emily Collins, Sam Bennett, Nell Gayle-Harris, Matt Winkless, Candia Crosfield, Becky Kennard, Freddie Fricker, Juno Lee

Apologies

Eduin Boater-Latimer, Olivia Sewell-Risley, Lou Whalley, Bryher Bowness, Imi Hills, Keith Walton, Georgina Bailey, Philip Wood, Eleanor Brooks, Carol Foussat, Margaret Lee, Leonora Davies, Trottie Kirwan, Alex Skinner, Asa Benedikz, Anna Benedikz-Barton

FSSEAGM23-01 Opening worship

We have opened our meeting with a period of silent worship

FSSEAGM23-02 Agenda check

We have agreed our agenda. We note the apologies that have been given in advance and the names of those people present.

FSSEAGM23-03 Minutes of AGM 2022

We have received the minutes of the 2022 FSSE Annual General Meeting. There were no matters arising.

We accept the minutes of last year's AGM.

FSSEAGM23-04 Junior Gathering 2023

Kit King, one of the volunteers from JG 2023, has read the epistle from Junior Gathering on the theme of "The Past and Present of Quakers around the world".

Speakers covered the topics of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel, experiences of Quaker worship, the actions of Quakers during the Hungarian revolution, and Quaker myths and legend.

The epistle describes a fun packed week including a barn dance and fictional characters disco. Base groups provided space for reflection, and there was a successful trip to Oxford.

The days began and ended with Quaker worship and an epilogue, and a period of silence was held at meal times.

We are hugely grateful to the staff team of volunteers who helped make this event happen, and thank them for all of their efforts and care to enable such a successful event.

We thank Olivia Sewell-Risley, Gwen da Souza Correa, who have each come to the end of their terms of service.

FSSEAGM23-05 Senior Conference 2023

Freddie has read us the epistle from Senior Conference 2023. We have had a discussion about Senior Conference and we have heard about a successful event which was held on the theme of "Simplicity and Sustainability in an Unequal World".

Speakers covered racism, identity and its intersectionalities; considering climate change through the lens of justice; and a drama session on the power of imagination to turn chaos to simplicity.

The epistle describes a week of fun activities as well as reflective spaces in base groups. Being a Quaker event, each day opened and closed with worship.

The 22+ team and arrangements committee have worked hard to make this event happen and we recognise the work that has gone into it. We are hugely grateful to all of the volunteers who enabled SC to happen in 2023 and we thank the staff volunteers and the outgoing arrangements committee. We are especially grateful to Emily Collins and Bryher Bowness who have each finished their term as Event Coordinator. We look forward to working with the incoming AC to see what the 2024 event has in store.

FSSEAGM23-06 Report from Management Committee

FSSE's management committee (being named role holders appointed by the AGM) met this morning to reflect on the 2023 events, and identify actions to strengthen our events in 2024 and beyond.

Key areas of focus include restoring our financial reserves, working with our venues, and continuing to grow our participant numbers in 2024. We will reconvene the "events support team" again this year which had been dormant for a few years in order to progress these activities. This team can also identify training which would be useful for staff teams.

We have not yet recommended fees for 2024.

We plan to hold the events from 17-24 August 2024, subject to confirmation with the venues. We note that the maximum capacity at Sibford is now much lower than our normal numbers used to be for SC pre-Covid.

FSSEAGM23-07 Treasurer's report

We have received a report and FSSE's draft annual accounts presented by Graham Torr, our treasurer. We have had the opportunity to ask Graham questions.

The accounts show a significant loss for the year of almost £12,000, which has resulted in halving our reserves. Graham reported that the principal causes of this included (1) a significant increase in venue costs of circa 20%, whereas we increased participant fees by 5%; (2) we were more generous with bursaries this year; (3) paid-for training; (4) a larger staff team, given the team at JG in 2022 was stretched; (5) smaller participant numbers.

We do need to ensure our events are financially sustainable and Graham has made various suggestions to respond to this, which will include a significant increase in fees. We have learned this week that we have been awarded a £4,000 grant from the Sir James Reckitt charity and we will seek grants from elsewhere to restore our reserves. Another key action is to ensure we attract a larger number of participants, and ensure we collect payment in good time.

We will assemble a working group on fundraising and finance as part of the events support team. Kit, Graham, Michael and Matt have expressed interest in supporting with this. We will circulate information to the volunteers in our staff teams to ask for help with fundraising, and could also use our AM Reps, and perhaps also people who have been volunteers in the past or expressed interest in FSSE, even if not currently on the staff teams.

We thank Graham for his work as treasurer and note that he is standing down after 6 years in this role.

FSSEAGM23-08 Trustees report

James Barnard has read to us a draft report from Trustees which will form the basis of our annual submission to the Charity Commission, along with the accounts. This touches on key matters considered by trustees this past year, including our finances in the context of the cost-of-living crisis, our interactions with the Quaker schools at which we hold our events, the way in which trustees have worked with the event teams, and our approach to safeguarding.

We thank trustees for the work they have done during the year, and we thank Kit King and James Barnard who have come to the end of their terms of service.

FSSEAGM23-09 Nominations

Nominations brought forward from Management Committee

We receive the following names from FSSE Management Committee

Role	First name	Surname	Term (years)	Appointment	End of service
FSSE Clerk	David	Holtam	3	AGM 2021	AGM 2024
FSSE Treasurer	TBC			AGM 2023	
FSSE Trustee (clerk)	Michael	Wood	3	AGM 2022	AGM 2025
FSSE Trustee	Imi	Hills	3	AGM 2023	AGM 2026
FSSE Trustee (SC nomination)	Alex	Skinner	2	AGM 2023	AGM 2025
FSSE Trustee (SC nomination)	Anya	Moore	2	AGM 2023	AGM 2025
JG Bookings secretary	Graham	Torr	3	AGM 2023	AGM 2026
JG Coordinator #1	Matt	Winkless	3	AGM 2022	AGM 2025
JG Coordinator #2	Bryony	Rowntree	1	AGM 2023	AGM 2024
JG Planning Coordinator #1	Lou	Whalley	1	AGM 2022	AGM 2023
JG Planning Coordinator #2	Juno	Lee	1	AGM 2023	AGM 2024
JG Planning Coordinator #3	Imi	Hills	1	AGM 2023	AGM 2024
Publicity coordinator	Kit	King	3	AGM 2023	AGM 2026
SC Bookings secretary	Ollie	Waterhouse	3	AGM 2023	AGM 2026
SC Coordinator #1	Al	Page	2/3 TBC	AGM 2023	[AGM 2026]
SC Coordinator #2	Georgina	Bailey	2/3 TBC	AGM 2023	[AGM 2026]
SC Planning Coordinator	TBC				
JG Coordinator (reserve)	Kathy	Gibbs	1	AGM 2023	AGM 2024

For SC planning, the proposal is that there will be three planning coordinators alongside the two coordinators.

We thank all those who have come to the end of their service for the hard work they have given to FSSE to help make the events happen over the time they have been in service.

We are thankful to all those Friends who are coming into roles for the first time and welcome them to FSSE and its work.

FSSEAGM23-10 Date and venue for FSSE AGM 2024

We hope to meet for the 2024 FSSE AGM on Saturday 16 November 2024. The venue will likely be Friends House, Westminster, Croydon or Hampstead and on Zoom.

We ask our clerk to make the arrangements on our behalf.

Closing worship