

**Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE) Annual Report**  
**Year ended 30 September 2015**



*In August 2015, Friends from FSSE Junior Gathering and Senior Conference gathered in Oxford and held a joint meeting for worship. This picture shows the assembled events.*

## **Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE) Annual Report Year ended 30 September 2015**

FSSE (Friends Southern Summer Events) is a small Quaker charity, entirely run by volunteers, whose purpose is the advancement of the Religious Society of Friends through the provision of educational events for young people.

### ***Object and Activities***

FSSE's objects are:

- (a) to promote and advance the religious education of the community and in particular of young people, including those of the Quaker tradition, and others with an interest in learning more about Quakers;

AND in furtherance thereof:

- (b) to organise and promote events for the spiritual growth and moral benefit of the community and in particular of young people with an interest in Quakers;
- (c) to disseminate by whatever means the ideals of truth, non-violence and equality within a Quaker background; and
- (d) to promote any purpose that is charitable according to the laws of England and Wales and for the benefit of the public as may from time to time be determined by the trustees.

FSSE currently runs two week-long events: Junior Gathering (formerly *Summer School*), for 11-14 year olds; and Senior Conference for 15-18 year olds. The catchment area is southern England, though others are welcomed if there is space.

### ***Public benefit statement***

FSSE exists for the promotion and advance of the spiritual nurture and religious education of young people including both those of the Quaker tradition, and those with an interest in learning more about Quakers and Quakerism. This benefits personally the participants who attend the events, and also benefits the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) more widely, through the spreading of Quaker ideas and ideals.

In carrying out these purposes, FSSE currently organises two annual residential Quaker events in August of each year: Friends Southern Summer School (for young people aged 11-14) and Friends Southern Senior Conference (for older participants aged 15-18). These events benefit the young people who attend them enormously, by providing spiritual education through workshops which advocate the Quaker testimonies of peace, simplicity, equality and truth. The events provide spiritual nourishment from new (and old) friendships, shared worship and activities including sports, games, drama, music and other creative arts.

Based on the feedback participants provide, we know our events are significant in the lives of those who attend, helping build confidence, knowledge and supportive friendships which in some cases last a lifetime. We see young people wanting to come back year on year, and also those who want to give back some of what they gained by helping at the events.

### ***Funding***

FSSE is funded primarily through participant fees, which for 2015 were £325 per person per event (2014: £325). We know that some participants are funded in part or in whole by their Local or Area Quaker Meeting. FSSE's aim is to ensure that no-one who wishes to come to Summer School or Senior Conference is prevented from doing so for financial reasons, and as a result, in exceptional circumstances fees may be partially waived. Any decision to waive fees is made by the bookings secretaries, having consulted with the event coordinators and the treasurer. Any waived fees are presented as bursaries in the accounts.

In addition, occasional gifts and donations are received from Quaker meetings and individuals.

### ***Achievement and Performance***

The year to September 2015 was another successful year for FSSE. Further detail on Junior Gathering 2015 and Senior Conference 2015 is set out in the Epistles below.

### ***Trustees' Annual Report***

Trustees believe that the events serve Quakers well, giving a shot of youthful dynamism to the Society of Friends. We ensure that the events are run in a Quakerly way and that the young people receive spiritual input and can learn more about Quaker values and testimonies. Their input is vital to the success of Summer School and they run Senior Conference.

I'd like to thank everyone who helped run our events especially – you were great - and also everyone who came. We need to remember also the Quaker meetings and others who through bursaries enable many of the young people to take part. We need all your gifts. Thank you.

Overall, trustees are content that FSSE is on a firm foundation. Our financial reserves would provide enough to meet the cost of one event failing. We think this is an appropriate level of prudence and will hold participant fees flat for 2016 with the aim of maintaining reserves within our target levels. In January 2014 FSSE was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (registered charity number 1155420) with the Charity Commission. We pay careful attention to the safety of our events – having first aiders and designated trained child protection team members and we assess other possible risks so that we mitigate them, or are prepared should we have an emergency.

Comments from the adult helpers and parents, as well as the participants' feedback forms from both events, indicate that FSSE was very successful in meeting our objectives. We have noted areas where we think we can improve the events in 2016.

We have worked hard to make the events open to everyone, regardless of means, by helping participants with difficulties find bursary funding locally where possible, and where not possible, providing bursary funding from FSSE's own limited funds. We believe no-one was prevented from attending due to financial problems in 2015.

*Margaret Lee – Clerk to FSSE trustees*

## **Epistle Junior Gathering 2015**

To all Friends everywhere,

On the 22nd of August 2015, at Leighton Park School, Reading, 76 young Quakers, aged 11-14 and 23 staff volunteers came together to investigate the theme 'Quakers in War'.

Daniel Bos came to talk to us about video games and popular culture, which everyone found they could relate to, as many participants have experienced military style games and how they turn war into entertainment.

Chris Venables an Ecumenical accompanier came to talk to us about his experience in Hebron, Palestine where he was observing the human rights situation for the UN. He talked to us about the perilous journey that the children there have, to get to school and how it compared to our own journeys.

Simon Colbeck showed us a film which Watford Quakers had made in response to the WW1 remembrance in 2014, this taught us about conscientious objectors and the ordeal that they had to go through to stick to their beliefs.

Noah who was a child soldier in Uganda and is currently still seeking 'Right to Remain in the UK' after living here for 15 years, shared his moving story. He was taken away by rebels and was forced to abduct other children and carry guns for 9 years before he escaped, however he was met with hostility by his government and was then put in prison and tortured for 5 years. His story made us realise how much devastation war causes.

Our last speaker was Elisa Weatherwax who came to talk to us about the militarisation of schools. She talked with us about the influence of the military in the form of cadets and the military ethos within schools. This talk was especially interesting as many young Quakers had experienced militarisation in their schools.

As well our workshop sessions we had a diplomacy simulation where we acted as roles in two countries where peace was needed. We had to try and achieve peace by bringing the two countries back together and by making compromises.

In our non theme sessions we had a super quiz, a drumming extravaganza, base group capture the flag, a barn dance, Charlie and chocolate factory disco and life lines from the staff. A new addition this year was our sunny summer fate with a bouncy castle, ice cream van, sack race, face painting, wheelbarrow race, guess the sweets, egg and spoon race, fortune telling, slip n slide and a tombola.

Finally on the last night we had very entertaining entertainments.

In the mornings we had many activities to choose from, including den building, drumming, sports, discussion groups, nail painting, costume making, music, dancing, sewing electronics, cooking and many other crafts.

This year the event was held at Leighton Park school, Reading where they welcomed us warmly to their greenalicious grounds and delicious food. This meant that our trip out was to Oxford where we met up with Senior Conference and held Meeting for Worship with over 200 people!

Base groups are our families for the week and help new comers to Junior Gathering find friends and always have someone to talk to. We play games and discuss the speaker sessions in our base groups.

Meeting for Worship and Epilogue enriched our spiritual understanding of each other and the world around us. A highlight as usual was our epilogue outside which prompted some very insightful ministry.

This year at Junior Gathering although the location changed everyone has kept the same feeling of kindness and inclusiveness, as well as maintaining Quaker values. We had an uplifting and inspiring week in which we thoroughly explored our theme of 'Quakers in war'.

Signed in and on behalf of Junior Gathering 2015  
Ailwyn E, Anna-Tina J, Clerks  
Lucy C-D, Josh P, Elders

## Senior Conference Epistle 2015

To all Friends everywhere,

From 22nd to 29th August 2015 87 Friends aged 15-18 and 13 adult volunteers gathered together at Sibford School in Oxfordshire. We met to consider the theme 'The Art of Simply Acting', exploring creativity in activism and simplicity.

Throughout the week, base groups of no more than ten young people provided structure and continuity. This was highlighted in the base group challenge where groups competed against each other in a series of amusing challenges culminating in the creation of the best hat. Close friendships formed within base groups really helped integrate newcomers into Conference's loving atmosphere. We felt supported in expressing and confronting ourselves, and the ways in which we live, without fear.

Meeting for worship brought us together spiritually and as a community. We met twice a day for Prologue and Epilogue, allowing us to reflect on the theme and the sessions. During our trip to Oxford we even joined Junior Gathering for Prologue in one of the largest gatherings of young Quakers in Britain.

There was a diverse range of sessions for conferees to participate in, one of which was facilitated by members of the Arrangements Committee. We explored through art, discussion and practical means the theme of the week. These engaging 'activity stations' led to a great deal of moving and meaningful responses. Other sessions included external speakers and an 'Any Questions?' panel, during which many difficult but thought-provoking questions were asked of members of our 22+ team, bridging the gap between our young people and adults.

Our speakers, the first of whom to visit was Sima Cutting, an inhabitant of Britain's first Transition Town and owner of local food catering company The Kitchen Table, provided a different perspective on our theme. Sima used her passion for food and the environment to 'safely, effectively and meaningfully effect change in a small community'. Her desire for change and her creative ways of obtaining it connected some conferees with the power they have to change things in their local communities. This stimulated animated discussion especially within base groups.

This theme of creative change was continued and fuelled by our second speaker, Chris Alton. Chris talked about how his Quaker beliefs influence his work as an artist, his art focusing on social issues and often involving simple actions, interventions and instructions with deep and powerful meanings. We were inspired by the way he used humorous methods of protest by creating a group to counteract messages of hate and division. This demonstrated to conferees how using initiative within pacifism can lead to an effective change in perception.

We also welcomed Cat Waithaka and Lucy Sam from Friends House to lead a session on simplicity and enacting testimonies in our daily lives. This prompted us as conferees to ask questions regarding priorities in life and the impact the Quaker testimony of simplicity has

on them. This input also allowed us to make contributions towards 'Living Our Beliefs', a new resource for young Quakers.

Our Entertainments Committee organised a fantastic series of social events which were enjoyed by the participants. An emotionally charged open mic showcased the wide-ranging and awe-inspiring talents of the conferees. The unity between both the performers and the audience was highlighted in the ministry brought by that evening's Epilogue.

A base-group themed meal saw an original take on fancy dress ranging from visual representations of our Senior Conference boundaries to Leonardo Dicaprio's career. This hilarious evening further strengthened the bonds the conferees had with each other, and the 'Fiesta' themed disco gave us time to relax and dance in the emotionally intense week to Shakira and Taylor Swift.

This year's Senior Conference has allowed us to reflect on our own lives and priorities as well as becoming aware of the power that we have to make change in the world. Through discussion, worship and art, we have come to know that change should not have to be complicated. Like the many friendship bracelets that we have swapped, this week has created ties between people that will be hard to lose; a week of friendship, security, love, tears and laughter.

Signed in and on behalf of all at Senior Conference,  
Catherine H and Olwyn S  
Clerks

## **FSSE Annual Accounts**

### **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Friends Southern Summer Events**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 30 September 2015, which are set out on pages 9 to 12.

#### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

#### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Name:** Madeleine Rudge

**Professional body:** Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

**Address:** 58 Mallinson Road, London SW11 1BP

**Date:** 13 July 2016



**Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)**  
**Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2015 - Consolidated**

£	2015	2014
<b>Receipts</b>		
Contributions & donations	870	2,942
Student fees	54,125	49,857
Bank interest	0	14
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>54,995</b>	<b>52,813</b>
<b>Payments – all direct charitable</b>		
<b>Pre-event</b>		
Applications administration	204	0
Planning expenses	2,098	1,414
Skills development	766	742
<b>Total pre-event</b>	<b>3,068</b>	<b>2,156</b>
<b>Event</b>		
Staff event travel	1,678	1,582
Group event travel	1,095	1,843
Speakers expenses	169	298
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	21	38
Outing costs	1,810	1,320
Materials & Supplies	969	509
Equipment and furniture	0	225
Miscellaneous	138	492
<b>Total event expenditure</b>	<b>5,880</b>	<b>6,307</b>
<b>General</b>		
Bursaries	1,385	964
Accommodation	43,839	39,519
Fares and expenses	80	69
Room hire (for AGM)	0	75
Insurance	495	344
Bank charges	3	3
Honoraria	200	1,100
<b>Total general</b>	<b>46,002</b>	<b>42,074</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>54,950</b>	<b>50,537</b>
<b>Receipts less Payments</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2,276</b>
Balances brought forward at 1 October	26,625	24,349
<b>Balances carried forward at 30 September</b>	<b>26,670</b>	<b>26,625</b>
Accruals for Summer School 2014		-4,663
Prepayment for Sibford School	3,949	3,945
Cash at bank and in hand	22,721	27,343
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>26,670</b>	<b>26,625</b>

**Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)**  
**Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2015 - Junior Gathering**

£	2015	2014
<b>Receipts</b>		
Contributions & donations		300
Student fees (1)	24,460	22,242
Bank interest		
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>24,460</b>	<b>22,542</b>
<b>Payments – all direct charitable</b>		
Pre-event		
Applications administration		
Planning expenses	1,966	668
Skills development	318	431
Total pre-event	2,284	1,099
Event		
Staff event travel	285	1,025
Group event travel		693
Speakers' expenses	101	
Tuck shop supplies (net)		134
Outing costs	1,810	1,320
Materials & Supplies		509
Equipment and furniture		
Miscellaneous		383
Total event expenditure	2,196	4,064
General		
Bursaries	225	54
Accommodation (2)	22,176	18,717
Fares and expenses		
Room hire (for AGM)		
Insurance	311	172
Bank charges		
Honoraria	100	500
Total general	22,812	19,443
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>27,292</b>	<b>24,606</b>
<b>Receipts less Payments</b>	<b>-2,832</b>	<b>-2,064</b>

**Notes**

(1) 2015 fee income reflects 76 participants (2014: 67)

(2) The venue was moved from Saffron Walden to Leighton Park School in 2014

**Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)**  
**Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2015 - Senior Conference**

£	2015	2014
<b>Receipts</b>		
Contributions & donations		
Student fees (1)	29,665	27,615
Bank interest		
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>29,665</b>	<b>27,615</b>
<b>Payments – all direct charitable</b>		
Pre-event		
Applications administration		
Planning expenses	132	746
Skills development	150	
<b>Total pre-event</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>746</b>
Event		
Staff event travel	1,393	557
Group event travel	1,095	1,150
Speakers' expenses	68	298
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	21	-96
Outing costs		
Materials & Supplies	969	
Equipment and furniture		225
Miscellaneous	30	109
<b>Total event expenditure</b>	<b>3,576</b>	<b>2,243</b>
General		
Bursaries	1,160	910
Accommodation	21,663	20,802
Fares and expenses		
Room hire (for AGM)		
Insurance	184	172
Bank charges		
Honoraria	50	200
<b>Total general</b>	<b>23,057</b>	<b>22,084</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>26,915</b>	<b>25,073</b>
<b>Receipts less Payments</b>	<b>2,750</b>	<b>2,542</b>

**Notes**

(1) 2015 student fees reflect 87 participants (2014: 83)

**Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)**

**Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2015 - General Income & Expenditure**

£	2015	2014
<b>Receipts</b>		
Contributions & donations	870	2,642
Student fees		
Bank interest		14
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>2,656</b>
<b>Payments – all direct charitable</b>		
Pre-event		
Applications administration	204	
Planning expenses		
Skills development (1)	298	311
Total pre-event	502	311
Event		
Staff event travel		
Group event travel		
Speakers expenses		
Tuck shop takings		
Outing costs		
Materials & Supplies		
Equipment and furniture		
Miscellaneous	108	
Total event expenditure	108	
General		
Bursaries		
Accommodation		
Fares and expenses	80	69
Room hire (for AGM)		75
Insurance		
Bank charges	3	3
Honoraria	50	400
Total general	133	547
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>858</b>
<b>Receipts less Payments</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>1,798</b>
<b>Notes</b>		

(1) Skills development represents the costs of child protection/DBS checks provided by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

**Appendix 1: Reference and Administrative Details**

**Name:** Friends Southern Summer Events, known also as FSSE.

**Charity registration number:** 1155420

**Governing Document:** FSSE is governed by its constitution, a copy of which may be found on FSSE's website at <http://fsse.org.uk/files/FSSE-CIO-Constitution.pdf>

**Address:** c/o Wandsworth Quaker Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 59 Wandsworth High Street, LONDON, SW18 2PT

**Trustees (at November 2015):** Margaret Lee (Clerk to Trustees), Bryony Rowntree, Katherine Gibbs, Rob Johnson, Zoe Carmichael, Tirion Rees-Davies

**Clerk:** Hannah Rignell

**Treasurer:** David Holtam

**Bankers:** CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

## ***Appendix 2: Reserves and Investments Policy***

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### **Reserves**

FSSE requires reserves for normal operational reasons, as follows:

1. cash flow during the year;
2. planned additional expenditure in a particular year;
3. expenditure higher than expected;
4. income lower than expected.

We understand that it is normal practice for a charity to hold 25% - 50% of annual expenditure as an operational reserve. With experience of our cash flow requirements, we agree that we will budget to hold between 30% and 50% of the previous year's expenditure.

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### **Investment**

We will hold our reserves as liquid assets to support the operations of FSSE, in a manner in keeping with Quaker principles. If it is possible to keep some in a higher-interest bearing account without operational difficulties, the Treasurer is requested to do so.