

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE) Annual Report Year ended 30 September 2018

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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, 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: Junior Gathering (for young people aged 11-14) and 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 2018 were £350 per person per event (2017: £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 Junior Gathering 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 2018 was another successful year for FSSE. Further detail on Junior Gathering 2018 and Senior Conference 2018 is set out in the Epistles below.

Trustees' Annual Report

Trustees believe that FSSE's events serve Quakers well, giving a shot of youthful dynamism to the Religious 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 Junior Gathering and they run Senior Conference.

Trustees consider that FSSE's financial footing is improved since last year, and that our financial reserves would enable us to meet the cost of one event failing. Nevertheless, FSSE received a generous gift of £5,000 from Kingston & Wandsworth Area Meeting reserves in the year and, had that not been received, we would have run at a deficit once again, which indicates that our costs are not yet sustainable relative to our income. Focusing on increasing our participant numbers is one way to address this; for the first time this year we offered a discount to first time participants which may have helped with Junior Gathering numbers.

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 2018.

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 those areas where we think we can improve the events in 2019 and discussed these with the event coordinators.

Since AGM 2017, Trustees held separate meetings 4 times¹ including two meetings in-person. We are delighted to have strengthened the skills and experience within Trustees through co-opting several new Trustees including one person who is a current volunteer at Senior Conference. We considered and discussed topics including safeguarding matters; how we use and retain information; what the role of Trustees is; whether, in advance of the 2018 events, we felt that they were well-planned; a future FSSE *Strategy Day* (to be held on 2 February 2019); nominations for 2019 events; and what we ought to include in our annual report to be presented to AGM and filed with the Charity Commission with the accounts.

We'd like to thank everyone who helped run our events this year, and also everyone who came, either as a participant or as a speaker or other contributor. We are grateful also to the Quaker meetings and other bodies whose bursaries enable many of the young people to take part, and who provide spaces for us to use on our outings. We all feel a sense of joy and inspiration to be connected to this organisation, its events and the people who contribute to them. Thank you.

David Holtam – Clerk to FSSE trustees

¹ 4 March 2018 (call), 14 July 2018 (Friends House), 11 November 2018 (call), 17 November 2018 (in person)

Junior Gathering Epistle 2018

To all friends everywhere

From 18th to 25th August 2018 58 amazing young people and 23 inspiring adult staff members came together at Leighton Park School in Reading to explore the theme 'Quakers Changing our World'.

Throughout the week different speakers came to talk to us about the theme. We had Naomi Iliff, a Quaker from Reading tell us about her work visiting prisoners and the impact prisons have on people. MEP Jude Kirton-Darling spoke about politics and the importance of being a fish swimming against the tide and finding others to push together with. Activist Sam Donaldson asked us "what makes you happy?" and "what breaks your heart" to help us find our Quaker path in life. Emily Parker inspired us as she went to volunteer in a medical clinic for refugees in Greece and showed us photos and increased our awareness of refugees and the conditions they have to endure. Sahdya Darr from Quaker Peace and Social Witness made us think about inequality, prejudice, privilege and what it means to be an ally. Finally Tobi Wellner from Turning the Tide led a very active workshop on solving conflict with non-violence.

Other highlights of the week included DIY crazy golf, a Christmas themed disco, a crafty quiz, Barn dancing, a world cup challenge and a 'banging' fete. We particularly enjoyed the staff life lines session and found it inspiring to hear the adults share the challenges in their lives and show us that we can also get through difficult times and grow.

Base groups are really fun, you get to know different Quakers and interact with people you wouldn't normally interact with and make good friends. We played games and discussed the speakers and had a chance to talk to the speakers in person and ask questions.

Meeting for Worship and Epilogues were really a nice time to reflect on the days. One of the staff members helped us to feel calm using our breathing which helped us to settle into the deep silence. It was very peaceful with good ministry from young people and we enjoyed musical contributions from the staff.

Overall Junior Gathering was really fun and exciting. We love how there are no fake people here and everyone joins in with shared Quaker values and you can build real friendships that last. We can be ourselves here, more than some of us feel we can in our day to day lives.

At our young people's business meeting at the end of the week the theme of Modern Equality was decided for Junior Gathering 2019.

Signed in and on behalf on Junior Gathering 2018,

Bisi A and Matthew G (Clerks), Katie F and Adam Sa (Elders)

Senior Conference Epistle 2018

To all Friends everywhere,

From 18th to 25th August 2018, 84 Friends aged 15-18 and 13 adult volunteers gathered at Sibford School in Oxfordshire to consider the theme of 'From Beliefs to Action,' exploring the different journeys that Friends can take to put their beliefs into practice.

Throughout the week, participants spent time in 'base groups,' small groups of eight or nine young people, which provided structure and continuity, as well as enabling new friendships to be formed. These bonds were strengthened by the 'Base Group Challenge,' where the groups competed in team building games, including a blindfolded obstacle course. Friendships created within base groups helped integrate newcomers into Senior Conference's loving and supportive atmosphere, and provided a safe space for us to express ourselves.

James Bewsher spoke to us about how his Quaker beliefs led him to join the RAF, and how his opinion changed from holding strong anti-war beliefs as a teenager to later joining the military. A sniper attack on a soldier in Northern Ireland led James to reflect on what he had done to 'wage peace,' and he felt that he could best achieve this in the air force. James spoke about his desire to actively promote peace, as opposed to doing nothing, and his influence helping to change attitudes within the military, for example by speaking out against restrictions on homosexuality. After the attacks on the World Trade Center, James felt that the nature of NATO actions moved away from defending the weak through UN peace support operations to being based on a desire for revenge, and so he left the forces. He spoke about his experience of feeling forced out of a local meeting for many years by verbal abuse, and the prejudice he faced from some in the Quaker community, as opposed to them challenging his choices. James' talk stimulated discussion in base groups, both on the decisions that he made and the lack of tolerance for these decisions within a society that prides itself on not having a set creed.

Our next speaker session involved a unique opportunity to explore the theme further with the play 'Digging the Dirt' performed by the Multi Story Theatre Company. The play wove together two fictionalised events of those who stood up for what they believed in: one of people digging the common land during the English Civil War and one of a modern-day whistle-blower who stood up against a government agency in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq. In contrast to James' session, this play highlighted the impact of those working outside the system against prevailing notions, as opposed to working from within in the 'pledge for peace'. Gill Nathanson and Bill Buffery's aim in creating the play was to take an issue that was 'bugging them about the world' and initiate a debate, as well as to compare the effects of individual and group action. Conferees asked thought-provoking and insightful questions about the origins of the stories within the play and how they developed from the initial idea, as well as engaging in the underpinning message.

We had two sessions run by our adult volunteer team, beginning on Tuesday with an 'Any Questions?' panel featuring four of its members, answering questions ranging from 'what has been your most intense emotional experience?' to 'would you rather boil to death in

orange juice or milk?’ We heard many stories, both serious and trivial, and the truthful and powerful answers of the adult volunteers helped to strengthen the bond between them and the participants. A second adult volunteer session to close the week on Friday saw two of the team share their personal reflections on the theme. Bryher Bowness discussed the idea of moving from actions to belief, and how small and everyday actions can make a significant difference. She talked about needing a belief in our own self-worth in order to help others. To achieve this, we created our own ‘5 a day’ of small things we can do to support our mental health. Bryher also discussed the impact that sports can have, using the example of the Skid Row Running Club, which provided discipline and dignity to ex-prisoners and homeless people living in Skid Row. Huw Still spoke about his decision to put his beliefs into action through donating a kidney. He described his journey, from an initial urge to donate to using a Meeting for Clearness to discern what his motivations were for doing so. He described this action as his ‘calling’, and discussed the nature of action as ministry. Conferees found this session motivating and moving, and valued an emphasis on the worth of everyday actions.

Our Entertainments Committee organised an exciting array of social events, which were enjoyed by the conferees. Our open mic night showcased the wide-ranging talents of participants, with story telling and songs ranging from ballads to Bob the Builder. As always, this brought participants closer together, with emotional and personal ministry being shared in that evening’s epilogue. The main ‘Ents’ event on Friday night showcased more performances from participants and from all the base groups, including music, magic and comedy. A themed meal saw base groups’ original takes on fancy dress, from the French Revolution to The Incredibles. The work required to put these ideas into practice brought our groups closer, and the ‘Univision’ themed disco gave us a chance to let our hair down after GCSE results day with music ranging from the 1970s to the modern day.

This year’s Senior Conference, as always, has given us a space to reflect on our own lives and choices. Our prologues and epilogues were particularly special, bringing us all together twice a day in shared silence. Through worship, discussion and art we have come to realise that there are many paths we can take to live our beliefs. As Friends we share a common vision and purpose, and are strengthened by the diversity of the actions that we can take to stimulate these beliefs in others and turn them into reality. This event has created and strengthened ties between us, through a week of friendship, love, laughter and support.

Signed in and on behalf of Senior Conference 2018,

Freya Martin and Matt Ward-Perkins

Clerks

FSSE Annual Accounts

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Friends Southern Summer Events (charity no. 1155420)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") set out on pages 9 to 13 for the year ended 30 September 2018.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Name:

Clive Mann

Address: 143b Northcote Road
London
SW11 6PX

Date: 29 July 2019

Receipts and payments to 30 September 2018

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2018 - Consolidated

	2018	2017
Receipts		
Contributions & donations	6,800	1,498
Participant fees	48,192	45,965
Bank interest	0	0
Total receipts	54,992	47,463
Payments		
Pre-event		
Administration & marketing	814	1,619
Planning expenses	2,041	3,528
Skills development	824	1,819
Total pre-event	3,679	6,967
Event		
Accommodation	41,631	40,790
Staff event travel & services	1,489	2,828
Group event travel & services	3,321	2,580
Speakers expenses	515	409
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	-581	-257
Materials & supplies	444	1,017
Minor equipment	0	475
Miscellaneous	0	3
Total event expenditure	46,819	47,845
General		
AGM & trustee meetings	281	0
Trustee expenses	79	0
Insurance	543	520
Bank charges	60	50
Total general	963	570
Total payments	51,461	55,382
Receipts less Payments	3,531	-7,919
Balances brought forward at 1 October	22,087	30,006
Balances carried forward at 30 September	25,618	22,087
Prepayment for Sibford School	3,948	3,948
Cash at bank and in hand	21,670	18,139
Reserves	25,618	22,087

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2018 - Junior Gathering

	2018	2017
Receipts		
Contributions & donations	0	
Participant fees	18,931	18,908
Bank interest	0	
Total receipts	18,931	18,908
Payments		
Pre-event		
Administration & marketing	0	
Planning expenses	763	1,570
Skills development	0	429
Total pre-event	763	1,999
Event		
Accommodation	20,166	19,695
Staff event travel & services	721	1,531
Group event travel & services	1,800	1,370
Speakers expenses	190	62
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	-313	-257
Materials & supplies	207	902
Minor equipment	0	
Miscellaneous	0	
Total event expenditure	22,771	23,303
General		
AGM & trustee meetings	0	
Trustee expenses	0	
Insurance	271	260
Bank charges	0	
Total general	271	260
Total payments	23,805	25,563
Receipts less Payments	-4,874	-6,655

Notes

(1) 2018 fee income reflects 58 participants (2017: 58)

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2018 - Senior Conference

	2018	2017
Receipts		
Contributions & donations	0	0
Participant fees	29,261	27,057
Bank interest	0	0
Total receipts	29,261	27,057
Payments		
Pre-event		
Administration & marketing	0	0
Planning expenses	1,278	1,958
Skills development	0	0
Total pre-event	1,278	1,958
Event		
Accommodation	21,465	21,095
Staff event travel & services	768	1,297
Group event travel & services	1,521	1,210
Speakers expenses	325	348
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	-268	0
Materials & supplies	237	115
Minor equipment	0	475
Miscellaneous	0	0
Total event expenditure	24,048	24,539
General		
AGM & trustee meetings	0	0
Trustee expenses	0	0
Insurance	272	260
Bank charges	0	0
Total general	272	260
Total payments	25,598	26,757
Receipts less Payments	3,663	300

Notes

(1) 2018 fee income reflects 84 participants (2017: 83)

(2) Event accommodation comprises a single payment of £21,465 to Sibford School. It was made after the end of the financial year but, for clarity, is included in these accounts.

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2018 - General Income & Expenditure

	2018	2017
Receipts		
Contributions & donations (Note 1)	6800	1498
Participant fees	0	0
Bank interest	0	0
Total receipts	6,800	1,498
Payments		
Pre-event		
Administration & marketing	814	1,619
Planning expenses	0	0
Skills development	824	1,390
Total pre-event	1,638	3,010
Event		
Accommodation	0	0
Staff event travel & services	0	0
Group event travel & services	0	0
Speakers expenses	0	0
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	0	0
Materials & supplies	0	0
Minor equipment	0	0
Miscellaneous	0	3
Total event expenditure	0	3
General		
AGM & trustee meetings	281	0
Trustee expenses	79	0
Insurance	0	0
Bank charges	60	50
Total general	420	50
Total payments	2,058	3,063
Receipts less Payments	4,742	-1,564

Notes

(1) In 2018, contributions and donations comprised: £5,000 from Kingston & Wandsworth Area Quaker Meeting, £1,000 from the C B and H H Taylor Trust and £350 from London Quaker Service Trust. The remainder represents cheques written out in the previous year which were never cashed, treated as donations back to FSSE.

The grants from the C B and H H Taylor Trust and London Quaker Service Trust supported participation by seven young people who would not otherwise have afforded the fees.

Statement of assets and liabilities at 30 September 2018

The charity had no material assets or liabilities at the end of the period other than the net Reserves (£25,618) reported under Receipts and payments.

The Trustees declare that the charity has given no guarantee where potential liability is outstanding at the date of the statement of assets & liabilities.

The Trustees declare that the charity has no outstanding debts which are secured by an express charge on any of the assets of the charity at the date of the statement of assets & liabilities.

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>

Contact address: 30 Lucombe Way, New Earswick, York, YO32 4DS

Trustees (at November 2018): Katherine Anne Gibbs, Margaret Louisa Rose Lee, Bryony Helen Rowntree, Tessa Rosemary Brown, David Roderick Holtam, Bernard Paul Leeser, Anna Trethewey, James Barnard, Peter Slade, Gwendolen Da Sousa Correa, Michael Wood, Candia Crossfield

Clerk to trustees: David Holtam

Clerk to management committee: Oliver Waterhouse

Treasurer: Graham Torr

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

Appendix 2: Reserves and Investments Policy

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.

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.