

Reporting on the responsibilities of Balby (Doncaster) Local Meeting Year ending 31 December 2016

- We have continued to hold regular meetings for worship. Our numbers have declined during 2016 but we continue to maintain a core of regular worshippers.
- We also continue to maintain a midweek meeting on a Wednesday at 1.00
- Our Advices and Queries have been regularly used either in personal vocal ministry or as a foundation for our Worship Sharing. We display individual Advices and Queries in the entrance hall. We have begun a series of discussions after meeting about Advices and Queries and how they affect us individually.
- We have maintained spiritual and pastoral care of our meeting and its members and attenders. Our elders and overseers meet regularly and we have maintained a series of discussion groups and social events which have enhanced the life of the meeting. We have continued our regular 'End of Life' sessions. We have considered this year how the spirituality of the meeting might be further developed, and have made consequent changes to our normal worship sharing arrangements. We have held an Enquirers Day, and an Open Day for Quaker Week. Our Clerk is undertaking the Equipping for Ministry course at Woodbrooke with the pastoral and financial support of the Meeting.
- We do not have a demand for a children's meeting at present.
- We hold regular meetings for business each month and have been able to send representatives to all this year's Area Meetings. We seek to uphold the Area Meeting clerks by whatever means we can, and are happy to host area meetings when required. We have sought to send representatives to Quakers in Yorkshire when possible.

- We have given consideration to our patterns of giving, in order to satisfy ourselves that we are giving our money to appropriate Quaker causes. We are about to reach some firm conclusions on this. We continue to encourage Friends to give what they can afford to the Meeting. The accounts will be audited in line with our usual annual practice
- Tabular details and statistical details have been returned when required
- Our Meeting House has a full-time presence during the day from Monday to Wednesday, and frequently on Friday. On Thursdays the Doncaster Conversation Club is in occupation and supervises building use. Our website continues to be well used, and it provides a quick and easy method of communication with the meeting by enquirers. We have appointed a manager during 2016, who deals with the bulk of the administration of the Meeting House.

During 2016 we have had much of our roof replaced. The building itself continues to be used by a variety of groups, including representatives of several other faiths, and we continue to look at ways in which we can improve outreach to those who use it and to others. We continue to use the building for events and to publicise these locally. The income from hire of the building is a valuable contribution to our income.

- We took part in the Quaker Meeting House Heritage Survey, which was both interesting and informative.
- Correspondents are appointed to the main Quaker services and during 2016 we have begun the process of reviewing the stock of our library and putting in place a system for encouraging Friends to borrow and read the books which we have.

- Doncaster Conversation Club (DCC), a resource for asylum seekers and refugees, which was in part an initiative of Friends, continues to engage the attention of several of our Friends, as well as numerous other volunteers, and to provide a valuable service on Thursdays to asylum seekers and refugees in the town, especially at a time when members of these communities are being put under significant personal and financial pressure. Friends in our Meeting continue to provide active, as well as financial, support to DCC. The average weekly attendance is up to 150 from 100 last year. Volunteers do not simply provide conversation, but also practical help and support, including the provision of material goods for those who need them, the weekly supply of food by way of unwanted supermarket food which reaches us through the club's close links with the Fare Share organisation, English classes, practical help with the claiming of benefits, help at a variety of levels by Migrant Help and the Red Cross, support with asylum applications, the preparation of medical reports for Freedom from Torture, and social events. DCC continues its regular series of Saturday walks and outings, which are enthusiastically supported by Friends in our meeting. This is not without its problems, in view of the large number of people attending and having to be transported.

The loss of the Northern Refugee Centre gave cause for considerable concern, but various other forms of help are available, and the Club itself is applying to OISC (Office of Immigration Services Commissioner) to have DCC registered. Three volunteers will apply for the basic Level 1 asylum and Protection status, under which they cannot give any immigration advice, but can complete travel documents and do other non immigration work.

- The centenary of World War One has continued to be a focus for Friends during the year, and we had a stall and exhibition in Doncaster Market Place as part of their series of events around World War One, to ensure that the Quaker point of view is not lost.