

**Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE) Annual Report
Year ended 30 September 2016**

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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 (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: 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 2016 were £325 per person per event (2015: £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 2016 was another successful year for FSSE. Further detail on Junior Gathering 2016 and Senior Conference 2016 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 Junior Gathering and they run Senior Conference.

We'd like to thank everyone who helped run our events in particular, 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. 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 2017 with the aim of maintaining reserves within our target levels. 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 2017 and discussed these with the event coordinators.

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 2016.

David Holtam – Acting Clerk to FSSE trustees

Junior Gathering Epistle 2016

Dear Friends,

On the 20th of August 2016, 73 young friends and 22 staff from all walks of life gathered at Leighton Park School to meet with old friends, make new friends and explore the theme “Truth and the Inner Light in Quakerism”.

We enjoyed a variety of thought-provoking sessions:

- Susie Paskins talked to us about meeting for worship and about how we can get the most out of this time. She shared a few techniques for keeping focused during the silence and we spent some time experimenting with these methods and learning which ones worked for us.
- Steve Whiting shared experiences throughout his life where he faced difficult choices and invited us to follow our inner truths. He also introduced the idea of multiple and subjective truths where two people have conflicting views but both are “true”.
- Paul Ingram talked us through the concept of active listening in which you repeat back what you feel the person said. He shared how he used this process to encourage understanding between different political leaders on the subject of nuclear weapons.

A simulation was led by the staff and was thoroughly enjoyed by the groups that took part. It involved protesters who were marching against the government cuts occupying the premises of a company that didn't pay its taxes. Both groups of protesters were eventually arrested but the second group were lured outside by the police before being taken away.

On a slightly less serious note the evening activities were much loved with something for everyone. From the crazy barn dance to the true sportsmanlike feeling of the Olympic base group challenge. The fabulousness disco set new precedents for costumes with jelly fish proving a popular choice. The suspense for the entertainments has been growing throughout the week with brilliant performers sharpening up their final act. This year's fantastic fete was held on an (almost) cloudless day with everything from hook-a-duck to a slip and slide and of course a suitably dressed fortune teller.

A huge range of activities were on offer from tie-dye and glass painting to swimming and woodland adventure and everything in between. These provided ample opportunity to have fun, bond with others and learn new skills.

Our base group sessions were rewarding and offered a chance to reflect on the speakers and the week in general as well as providing an area where your voice can be heard.

Our meetings for worship were both varied and interesting with much profound spoken ministry on the subject of truth and inner light coming from many different people. Epilogue, a half-hour meeting before bed, was especially deep both with spoken, silent and musical ministry. On Wednesday we traveled to Oxford where we joined for worship with our friends from Senior Conference in a meaningful if crowded meeting in Oxford Meeting House.

Signed in and on behalf of Junior Gathering

Clerks: Xanthe, James

Elders: Spencer, Lia

Senior Conference Epistle 2016

To all Friends everywhere,
From 20th to 27th August 2016, 82 Friends aged 15-18 and 11 adult volunteers gathered at Sibford School in Oxfordshire. Together, the theme 'Living in Ministry' was discussed.

To begin considering the theme, we embarked on an introductory session using the medium of chat rooms. In small groups we discussed questions within the theme such as 'Is ministry exclusive to Quakerism?' and 'Where does ministry come from?'. This revealed huge diversity in people's own experiences of ministry, many never having had the confidence to minister aloud in Meeting for Worship before.

Mark Russ, one of our visiting speakers, gave us an insight into his own interpretation of ministry. He considered ministry to be an inward movement of spirituality within the meeting and testimony to be the outward manifestation of beliefs. He spoke of a time in his life where he felt dissatisfaction with Sunday Meeting for Worship and how he felt more spiritually fed at Young Friends General Meeting, finding the community more enriching and particularly enjoying the concept of food sharing. Particularly poignant to young Friends was Mark's correlation between embracing his sexuality and becoming more open to the working of the Spirit. Once this barrier had been removed, Mark described experiencing 'nudges' from God to become a priest which led him into his current job as Nurturing Friends and Meetings Tutor at Woodbrooke where he has the opportunity to lead worship. Here, he feels he can fulfil his calling whilst maintaining his Quaker faith. He spoke of the 'priesthood of all believers' and how we are all entitled to minister and are responsible for upholding the meeting.

Sam, Justine and Elfie joined us from Grow Heathrow to talk about direct action and how they used their gifts to campaign creatively against climate change and the proposed new runway at Heathrow Airport. They helped to challenge our misconceptions of activism and described it as 'not always scary and violent but quite fluffy'. This session reminded us of Advices and Queries 35 'Respect the laws of the state but let your first loyalty be to God's purpose' showing us that living in ministry can sometimes mean going beyond the constraints of the law. Their friendly personalities and depictions of Grow Heathrow as a creative, community space of music and friendship also prompted us to reconsider our perception of people who take direct action. Their active and dynamic session gave us the opportunity to try the nonviolent tactics used during their protests and Young Friends left feeling inspired to be less fearful of taking direct action. Justine's message, that when you live a life in ministry you may experience a greater sense of fulfilment, particularly resonated with many participants.

David Gee's session was underpinned by a similar message to Justine's that when you live life abundantly, you live life more fully. David interpreted the phrase 'living in ministry' as living with a commitment to truth and bringing that of God within yourself into the world around you. He also said that living in ministry can be an unsettling and disturbing experience, especially when your convictions conflict with the way the world works. Conferees revelled in the invitation to question the grey areas in the peace testimony and he replied honestly that he would stick to his commitment to non-violence until proven otherwise.

Three brave adult volunteers answered questions put forward by participants, spanning spiritual experiences to most embarrassing moments and the best and worst days of their lives. Huw Still, Ruth Jesson-Smith and Sally Oliver all spoke of their fond memories at Senior Conference and, like

Mark Russ and Sam, how they found a greater sense of religious community at young Quaker events than at many other times in their life. This prompted them to return as members of the adult volunteer team and made us appreciate how lucky we are to have been a part of this Senior Conference legacy. This emotional session was full of laughter and tears, but ultimately it highlighted the commonalities between everyone at this event no matter the age or person.

Twice a day we gathered in worshipful silence to help us reflect and enjoy periods of calm during this busy week. The weather allowed for a warm outdoor prologue in the morning sunshine which was greatly appreciated by conferees as an opportunity to be closer to nature during our worship. In Meetings for Worship much ministry was heard about starting new chapters in their lives regarding GCSE results, going to university and leaving home for the first time. Participants spoke of finding hope and courage during this week that they could keep with them on their journeys forward.

Our Entertainments Committee provided a spectacular array of activities across the event where people felt comfortable to express themselves uninhibitedly. Open Mic revealed the strong sense of community felt throughout the week showcasing the incredible talent of conferees with unplanned music, comedy and storytelling. The Base Group Challenge tested us mentally and physically and brought us closer together as we became reliant on our team mates to help us through the many obstacles and puzzles we faced. The disco on the penultimate night also gave us an opportunity to unwind and get creative with our Hippie vs Hipster outfits.

Conference has once again proved itself to be an exceptional space in our lives, memories of which we will carry forward throughout the year. The week has been upheld by a sense of calm with strong friendships forming across different ages and social groups. Like Mark's concept of individual gifts, this extraordinary community has been created by each conferee's unique talents. Whether our gifts lie in verbal ministry or not, each one of us has something special to offer and we have a shared responsibility to uphold one another.

Signed in and on behalf of Senior Conference
Alice O and Freya H, 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 2016, which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

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: Keith Walton

Address: C/O Wandsworth Quaker Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 59 Wandsworth High Street, LONDON, SW18 2PT

Date: 11 July 2017

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2016 - Consolidated

	2016	2015
Receipts		
Contributions & donations	2,590	870
Student fees	51,376	54,125
Bank interest	0	0
Total receipts	53,966	54,995
Payments – all direct charitable		
Pre-event		
Applications administration	293	204
Planning expenses	1,052	2,098
Skills development	374	616
Total pre-event	1,718	2,919
Event		
Staff event travel	354	1,462
Group event travel	2,278	1,095
Speakers expenses	497	169
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	27	513
Outing costs	0	1,810
Materials & Supplies	1,008	969
Equipment and furniture	564	0
Miscellaneous	830	138
Total event expenditure	5,557	6,156
General		
Bursaries	326	1,385
Accommodation	41,656	43,839
Fares and expenses	735	80
Room hire (for AGM)	0	0
Insurance	510	495
Bank charges	0	3
Honoraria	0	200
Total general	43,227	46,002
Total payments	50,502	55,077
Receipts less Payments	3,464	-82
Balances brought forward at 1 October	26,543	26,625
Balances carried forward at 30 September	30,006	26,543
Prepayment for Sibford School	3,948	3,948
Cash at bank and in hand	26,058	22,595
Net assets	30,006	26,543

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2016 - Junior Gathering

	2016	2015
Receipts		
Contributions & donations		
Student fees (1)	24,124	24,460
Bank interest		
Total receipts	24,124	24,460
Payments – all direct charitable		
Pre-event		
Applications administration		
Planning expenses	706	1,966
Skills development	292	318
Total pre-event	997	2,284
Event		
Staff event travel	223	285
Group event travel	678	
Speakers expenses	323	101
Tuck shop supplies (net)	27	
Outing costs		1,810
Materials & Supplies	563	
Equipment and furniture	564	
Miscellaneous	251	
Total event expenditure	2,628	2,197
General		
Bursaries	81	225
Accommodation (2)	21,355	22,176
Fares and expenses		
Room hire (for AGM)		
Insurance	255	311
Bank charges		
Honoraria		100
Total general	21,691	22,812
Total payments	25,316	27,293
Receipts less Payments	-1,192	-2,833

Notes

(1) 2016 fee income reflects 73 participants (2015: 76)

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2016 - Senior Conference

	2016	2015
Receipts		
Contributions & donations		
Student fees (1)	27,251	29,665
Bank interest		
Total receipts	27,251	29,665
Payments – all direct charitable		
Pre-event		
Applications administration		
Planning expenses	347	132
Skills development	82	
Total pre-event	429	132
Event		
Staff event travel	131	1,177
Group event travel	1,600	1,095
Speakers expenses	174	68
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)		513
Outing costs		
Materials & Supplies	445	969
Equipment and furniture		
Miscellaneous	579	30
Total event expenditure	2,929	3,852
General		
Bursaries	245	1,160
Accommodation	20,301	21,663
Fares and expenses		
Room hire (for AGM)		
Insurance	255	184
Bank charges		
Honoraria		50
Total general	20,801	23,057
Total payments	24,158	27,041
Receipts less Payments	3,093	2,624

Notes

(1) 2016 student fees reflect 82 participants (2015: 87)

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2016 - General Income & Expenditure

	2016	2015
Receipts		
Contributions & donations (1)	2,590	870
Student fees		
Bank interest		
Total receipts	2,590	870
Payments – all direct charitable		
Pre-event		
Applications administration	293	204
Planning expenses		
Skills development		298
Total pre-event	293	502
Event		
Staff event travel		
Group event travel		
Speakers expenses		
Tuck shop takings		
Outing costs		
Materials & Supplies		
Equipment and furniture		
Miscellaneous		108
Total event expenditure	0	108
General		
Bursaries		
Accommodation		
Fares and expenses	735	80
Room hire (for AGM)		
Insurance		
Bank charges		3
Honoraria		50
Total general	735	133
Total payments	1,028	743
Receipts less Payments	1,563	127
Notes		

(1) Includes £1000 grant from Kingston Friends Trusts, £325 bursary from London Quakers Service Trust, and £915 in cheques from staff volunteers in previous years which were never cashed and have gone stale.

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 2016): Margaret Lee, Bryony Rowntree, Katherine Gibbs, Tirion Rees Davies, David Holtam (Acting Clerk), Tessa Brown, Bernard Leeser, Joanna Tranter

Clerk: 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.