

Report to Area Meeting from Hope Valley Local Meeting January 2020

We are a happy small Meeting with a good Sunday attendance generally with friends from other Meetings or enquirers, and sometimes - excitingly - those new to Friends.

With few regular members and attenders, however, we struggled to appoint essential post holders for many years. A series of Discernment meetings and advice taken led to a proposal agreed by Hope Valley Meeting, and then Area Meeting in January 2019.

We agreed a convening team of 3 for clerking, eldership, oversight, and finances. The former co-clerk and Elder was appointed for 3 years, joined by 2 attenders for 1 and 2 years; sadly one had to stand down in August, an issue to be addressed this year. We hold 2/3 Business Meetings a year, with mini-ones after Notices when necessary. AM Treasurer valuably supports our simplified financial arrangements. Friends make individual arrangements to support charities, HVLM & Quaker work. We distributed excess funds.

Our Meeting has felt a new energy. We share responsibility informally for Oversight, greeting and refreshment. Afterword following each Meeting for Worship is a deep sharing of Meeting experience and ministry, giving more an opportunity to speak; followed by sharing news of absent friends. Advices & Queries are shared as felt appropriate.

A vibrant well-attended monthly discussion group led by different Friends, who suggest the theme, is often followed by bring & share lunch. Themes have included: Ministry; Gifts; Friends; What is the Truth?; Silence; Does being a Quaker affect my Politics?

HV Friends wished to share their experiences of our Meeting:

'I am happy to be part of HVQM, to have found encouragement from our small, quiet Meeting in my inclination for Membership. I am lucky I enjoy the Discussion Group.

'In the reflective silence, common to all, is our unity, the evidence of our action in faith. No words required, though when they arise, we welcome.'

'Our Meeting is sometimes so gathered, we can experience 'the still dews of quietness and the beauty of thy peace' (Whittier), which nourishes and directs my daily living.'

And some share their experience of living out our Testimonies:

'3 HV Friends helped block the road in protest against set up of DSEI Arms Fair London.'

'Two of our members led a Healing Meeting on Friends Fellowship of Healing Day which 17 Friends from S&BAM attended; we plan another for 2020.'

'Global Warming: I have made many significant changes to my daily life.'

'I have chosen a path of Simplicity, having not bought much in my life: a life of trust between living people over faith in material goods or externalise laws.'

'I organised a timely and topical zero carbon day conference for the Area Meeting.'

'Five HV Friends attend monthly What's Left in Hope Valley meetings to discuss political issues ranging from Brexit to rewilding. Several have joined with XR and Hope Valley Climate Change Group: campaigning for action on climate and environmental destruction.'

'I try, as far as I possibly can, to pay attention, listen, and affirm others in my life: shop assistants, children, unknown other motorists, as well as loved ones and friends.

For Outreach, our lane attracts many walkers, who appreciate our large (often homemade) Poster, and information, and take several hundred leaflets a year.

Our Meeting blesses us and amplifies the promptings of love & truth in our hearts.

Gillie Bolton, Amanda MacKenzie, Co-Convenors