

Northern Friends Peace Board meeting held in Liverpool Friends Meeting House on the 2nd of March 2019.

Liverpool Friends meeting house is situated in the centre of Liverpool and is a vibrant meeting place for all to rest and eat, Quaker or non Quaker .If any of you are ever in this great city it is worth a visit.

Our meeting started with the customary silent worship, a time honoured silence that brought our meeting of friends from towns and cities in the north together as one.

Being a Board Representative:

The first meeting of 2019 was a good time to talk, inform and discuss how we view our role and what we individually bring to our gathering and how we best cascade back to our home AM and local meetings.

Agreed that the core that held this and every reunion of delegates was our NFPB Co-ordinator Philip Austen who plans and prepares for every meeting so that our day, this time in Liverpool, runs faultlessly.

Delegates discussed how they engaged with their home base and gave positive Information that helped highlight their role better. Some agreement that local meetings should receive more of a verbal report as well as, the usual Area meeting reports. Just a reminder that NFPB are Quakers who meet together to advise and encourage Friends in the North and through them their fellow citizens , in the promotion of peace in all its breadth and depth.

Quaker Peace Testimony is a shorthand description of the action taken by Quakers for Peace and against participation in war. This Quaker value is at the heart of who we are and what our core beliefs can ultimately achieve .

Members Forum:

Members from all over Northern Britain gave information about their local Initiatives. I reported on the recent well attended demonstration in support of Victor and Marion, two Zimbabwean nationals who were interviewed by invited Zimbabwean (but covert UK government interviewees) immigration officials. Sheffield residents had earlier petitioned for Victor's release from Morton Hall Detention Centre. I am pleased to say Victor has now been released and was present at the gathering. Marion entered the Home Office building in Vulcan House Sheffield for a 9am meeting. We all awaited Marion's return from her interview, and were pleased to witness her return to the supportive gathering.

People are taken from our communities , locked up in far off detentions centres Without time limit , without any idea of when they might be released . Why? Simply because they do not have the correct immigration papers.

This has to end.

These Walls Must Fall.

detention.org.uk

#TheseWallsMustFall

Roots of Resistance:

This planned project was again highlighted as a mass picket of the bi -annual Arms Fair held in London on Tuesday 3rd September. This huge trade fair takes place bringing together 1,500 arms companies with representative militaries from around the world. Friends are planning to picket the Fair with 1000 protesters on the day the unwanted trade fair takes place.

Please open this link for more information. www.rootsofresistance.org.uk

Rethinking Security.

Reports were given on the ongoing project .

The UK has the 5th largest economy in the world and the largest defence budget in Europe . Many UK citizens face growing insecurity as inequality and continued austerity measures push them into homelessness ,hunger and debt this has to change. www.rethinkingsecurity.org.uk

NFPB Working Groups.

We received a report from the ongoing Nuclear Abolition Group.

The group's main purpose is to highlight and inform Friends and the wider peace movement of the continued British government's belief that maintaining a *Nuclear Polaris fleet of nuclear submarines* , based in Faslane Scotland and Barrow in Furness where production of a new Polaris fleet is in advanced planning.

Witness at both these sites continues. Our Quakers Peace Testimony is paramount

In challenging established views on weapons as a deterrent to national and world

peace. Please view the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty briefing 2019 or check

The website of the International campaign to abolish nuclear weapons.

<https://icanw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/ICAN-CAN-UK-Sep-2017-for-upload-6th-September.pdf>. Thanks Janet Fenton for your detailed report.

In turbulent Times. We ended our day with group conversations that reflected the world of 2019 . Concerns were held about the ongoing war in Yemen and the seemingly insolvable Israeli – Palestine impasse. War and Military history is imbedded into our society , we only have to stand back and see for ourselves . Britain continues to regularly hold Armed Services Days and service recruitment drives have become normal attendees at many fairs and social events we all attend.

John Morgan Northern Friends Peace Board – Sheffield and Balby AM.