

The Life of Bridgwater Meeting

Bridgwater Meeting is a small worshipping group numbering, at a Meeting for Worship, from 4 to 12. Arrangements for meetings and attendance have been greatly affected by the 2020 Pandemic. Before March we met regularly at Bridgwater Arts Centre, except when Worshipping Together Meetings were hosted at other Meetings. Since then we have variously met "in our homes" as individuals, once at the home and garden of Richard and Gilly Lee, and over Zoom. Some socially distanced Meetings were held at BAC in the gallery and garden, but numbers attending were low so the decision was taken to suspend Meetings at BAC for now. We have readings from Advices and Queries, Quaker Faith and Practice, the Bible, and other spiritual sources. Ministry is infrequent, but much use is made of Afterword. During the year we held much restricted Business Meetings.

In 2019 our Clerk Steve Trelfa (also an Elder) asked to lay down his service to the Meeting. Phil Parratt is now Clerk. We have been unable to appoint Elders and Overseers to the Meeting after Val Pennock, Shirley Anthony and Gilly Lee completed their trienniums. As a Meeting we have discussed the need to find a new way of nurturing our Meeting, but our discussions have been delayed during the Pandemic.

We saw two new attenders while we briefly held Meetings at BAC in the summer, and through 2019 we often saw Liz who attends Meeting in Prague and Gina who lives in Bridgwater. Our Friend John Sivyer has moved to Wellington where he attends Meeting. We have been saddened that our Friend Steve Trelfa has not felt he wished to attend Meetings. We have maintained occasional meetings at the home of our Friend Mary Usher, though prevented during the pandemic, Mary is becoming frail. We were pleased that our Friend Phil Tapp has successfully moved from his home of several years at Ash Ward in Bridgwater to a home near Taunton, a new chapter in his life. Our Friend Rosemary has recovered after a fall, and we hope is recovering now from COVID. We were sad to hear of the death, through COVID, of our Friend Meg Holiday who moved away from our area and Meeting some years ago but kept in touch.

Friends from the Meeting serve Area Meeting in several roles: Gilly Lee is a funeral advisor, Assistant Burials Officer, convenor of Nominations Committee and Registering Officer for Marriages, Shirley Anthony was a trustee until completion of her triennium and is a funeral advisor; Rosemary Dagley served on Nominations and was a funeral advisor until laying down these duties; Sue Brownlie serves as a trustee. Philip Parratt serves both on the Business Team and Taunton Management Group, Philip is also AM treasurer. Meg Winfield served on the AM Business team before family commitments meant she must lay down this service. Elaine Youngs serves on Taunton Management Group and is completing training in Clerkship, Elaine will serve as Assistant Clerk.

Philip Parratt
December 2020