

Update

May 2018



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NFPB endorses letter to Foreign Secretary on nuclear disarmament

Northern Friends Peace Board joined with others in sending an open letter to the Foreign Secretary calling for active and constructive engagement with multilateral nuclear disarmament processes, stating that...

"If the UK is to live up to its aspirations of a Global Britain, the UK cannot cherry-pick those forums for multilateralism that the government is most comfortable dealing with and ignore others. By adopting a policy of engagement and supporting the system as a whole, the UK can strengthen international cooperation at a time when the risks posed by nuclear weapons are considerable and arguably growing. We urge the UK to take all opportunities to work constructively towards the common goal of a world without nuclear weapons."

The full letter and list of signatories can be read at:

<http://nfpb.org.uk/news/2018-04-17/joint-appeal-government-nuclear-disarmament-efforts>

Meanwhile, NFPB member and Edinburgh Friend Janet Fenton has been busy in Geneva ahead of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee discussions, playing an active part as part of the non-governmental presence there.

NFPB members' meetings

NFPB was due to meet on 3rd March in Carlisle. Unfortunately the severe winter weather meant that this could not happen. We managed to gather a number of Friends together via Skype for an hour, sharing news and information about a range of peace concerns and activities. It was also agreed to plan one or more additional NFPB events.

The first of these was held in Huddersfield on 14th April, with local Friends joining in and providing warm hospitality to the approximately 18 participants. A second will take place in Lancaster on 12th May.

Our Huddersfield gathering began as we were beginning to get news of the missile strikes against Syria that previous night. This was much in our minds throughout the day. With new members joining us, we reflected on our past year's activities and participants shared news, reflections and information on a range of peace concerns,

focussing on nurturing the roots of peace as well as the bigger issues of militarism. From acts of witness against arms trade to promoting dialogue in our communities, we heard of challenges as well as creative and inspiring responses.

In thinking about how Friends can best be supported in taking action for peace, participants talked of the vital importance of linking with others, knowing that we don't have to do it all. Persistence is important – we never know when a significant breakthrough may come – and we must continue to explore ways of making it easy for people to find information and resources that will enable them to take action.

Links to resources and information shared at the Huddersfield meeting are available from:

<http://nfpb.org.uk/news/2018-04-17/nfpb-huddersfield-gathering>

Arms conversion – new ways forward?

NFPB is represented on a working group working on Arms Conversion and Defence Diversification, examining ways of initiating and supporting the conversion of the manufacture of arms into the manufacture of socially useful products. The group consists of interested parties from several trade unions, trades council, local government, Scientists for Global Responsibility, Campaign Against Arms Trade, CND and others. Members of the group are lobbying and senior members of the political

parties and trade unions to persuade them of the importance of this work. Chris Butler, our representative to the group writes:

“we are looking at the production of green energy through wind, wave and tidal power... [and] at what exactly constitutes defence. ... The vast sums of money that could be saved by such a switch would enable considerable investment in our infrastructure, education, housing, health and social care.”

Changing the Narrative for Peace:– Engaging with the Media

Manchester, Saturday 16th June

This one-day **workshop** will be held in central Manchester. Hosted by Manchester & Warrington Area Meeting's peace action group and facilitated by Northern Friends Peace Board. Friends from further afield are welcome.

For further details, contact Philip Austin at the address over the page.

Annual accounts and trustees' report

Our financial accounts for 2017, together with the report from NFPB trustees, will be available from our website at <http://nfpb.org.uk/publications/reports-updates-newsletters>.

Whilst donations from Meetings were a little down from the previous year, our income was boosted by a legacy received. Funds that had been tied up in investments have been released in order that NFPB could exit the pension scheme managed by TPT, with its continuing deficit and demands for additional payments. Trustees have been reviewing our reserves policy in order to make best use of income and investments in sustaining and developing our work into the future.

Coming up

*The following is just a selection of the events from the Calendar page of our website - <http://nfpb.org.uk/calendar>. Check this page for further details and our social media (Facebook and Twitter) for other news. **Please send us information about events and resources that we can help promote.***

- **15th May – Conscientious Objector's Day:** events taking place in Manchester, Bradford and Edinburgh, with the latter being the launch of a new memorial art work.
- **11th - 15th June – Stop Fuelling War** – Quakers and others witnessing at the Eurosatory arms fair in Paris – <https://stopfuellingwar.org/en/actions>
- **15th June – Rethinking Security** conference in London - <https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/portfolio/national-conference-2018/>
- **23rd June – NFPB members' meeting** in Glasgow, followed on the 24th by some of us joining the Meeting for Worship at Faslane (contact NFPB for further information)
- **23rd June What chance for a nuclear-free World?** — Paul Rogers contributes to this series of *Hexham Debates* – more info at <https://hexhamdebates.wordpress.com/>
- **22nd September - NAE NUKES ANYWHERE! March and Peace Rally at Faslane** - <http://www.nuclearban.scot/sep-rally/>
- **19th - 21st November – The Peace and Hope to End War** – weekend at Charney Manor, Oxfordshire, facilitated by NFPB Coordinator Philip Austin- <http://www.charneymanor.com/events>

Social Media links: <http://www.facebook.com/NFPB1> <https://twitter.com/nfpb1>