

Report on 4 Equality and the Common Good "Ride" for Welfare November 2017

1. We are pleased to hear that the **AM minute supporting our concern** and the national "Ride" 4 Equality and the Common Good is to be discussed at **Meeting for Sufferings in December**. Chris Bullard as our MfS representative has attended our recent meeting to prepare himself for this. Pam Coren as our other MfS rep is being kept informed of the group's plans by email.
2. A **website link** has been set up on the AM website, thanks to Steve Timson. We are working on this to be a central focus for communication. eg. will begin to put notes from meetings on it etc.
3. **Dates for the "Ride" have been changed from Easter to the summer** for various reasons: availability of riders, likelihood of better weather conditions, availability of young people to take part when not studying for GCSE exams, longer time to plan.
4. **The Declaration and accompanying documents to be presented to Friends and to 10 Downing Street at the end of the "Ride" have been drafted** by Tim Nicholls and Jenny Pearman with input from the 4 the Common Good group. The supporting documents explain its origins (based on Margaret Fell's Declaration to Charles II and a detailed evidence base for our claims - the increasing gap between rich and poor and increasing deprivation in this country). These are available for Friends to look at if wish and will soon be on the website and circulated to meetings around the country.
5. We will be working with the **Friends Parliamentary liaison officer** to organise the date and time for the delivery of the Declaration etc.
6. In addition to the Declaration we are planning to gather **stories of those suffering as a result of welfare cuts** before and en route and deliver, hopefully, bundles of these to Downing Street with our Declaration.
7. We hope to organise a **gathering in London** for the end of the "Ride" and draw in more Quakers for this as well as others sympathetic.
8. We have submitted a request for a **grant** to support us to QPSW; the decision re this should be in January. This, we hope, will fund some admin support and help with publicity and the purchase of sashes and high visibility jackets with our messages on to wear on the "Ride".
9. **A route for the "Ride"** has been proposed by Andy Weller, Pierre Betoïn, Tess Satchell and Tim Nicholls using Sustrans to make it as safe and accessible as possible for all. It involves about 30 miles travel a day. This is on the website, and our next step is to arrange for those in the 4 the Common

Good group to visit Meetings to seek their support eg. with space for meetings for worship, meals and accommodation.

10. **An alternative fast track route** is being looked at to provide for more experienced riders over a shorter time to pass through other meetings in order to widen involvement.

11. **Initial publicity has gone out to AMs all over the country** via Maya at QPSW but this will need updating soon.

12. **A meeting with Maya from QPSW in London was organised** by Tess last Sunday 12th at Brigflatts which was attended by about 30 people including the core planning group and supported by a number of Kendal Friends who travelled over after their Local Business Meeting as well as Friends and attenders from farther afield. It began with a report about where we are up to with the planning including a presentation outlining the proposed route. Then Maya ably facilitated a workshop which developed our shared vision, inspired ideas about ways forward and led to the drawing up of a time line for what needs doing and when in order to enable us to be as effective as possible. We also were encouraged to set up subgroups to manage different aspects of the preparation eg. linking with Friends across the country, linking with other organisations and developing a media strategy.

A meeting re the Media Strategy is on Saturday November 25th November at Rookhow at 3.30. Anybody interested is welcome.

13. We are trying to vary when our planning meetings are to involve more local Friends - sometimes Friday evenings in Kendal, sometimes at Brigflatts. Sue Tyldesley from Yealand and Jane Pearson and Robert Straughton from Rookhow and Swarthmoor have already joined us and Wendy Hampton, our regional Vibrancy in Meetings worker continues to support us. Meeting dates and venues will begin to go on the AM website.

14. All members of the group are working to widen discussion about this project. Tess has attended several Quaker events to do this and Sue Tyldesley from Yealand is attending a conference on Economic Justice in Manchester.

15. **Westmorland General Meeting** had proposed to meet at Brigflatts in March to give a focus to this project and support it with a banner making workshop. The venue is now likely to change due to there being a clash with the Rookhow family weekend so may be at Rookhow or perhaps Swarthmore Meeting House or Hall. Further publicity about this will follow. Sue Tyldesley is the link re this.