

128/11 Occupy

We have received the statement from Our Recording Clerk and unite with it. Several local Friends have been active in supporting Occupy Bristol on College Green and we thank them. We encourage Friends to read the statement and to consider how they might contribute.

"Quakers in Britain share the concern for global economic justice and sustainability expressed by the Occupy movement. We agree with the statement of Occupy London Stock Exchange that our current economic system is unsustainable. It is undemocratic and unjust. We need alternatives. We, too, "want structural change towards authentic global equality. The world's resources must go towards caring for people and the planet, not the military, corporate profits or the rich," (as stated in Occupy LSX initial statement). We are grateful to the various Occupy groups for raising these issues so passionately and respond to the deep spiritual significance that we recognise in the movement.

"Those of us who have visited have been welcomed, and found the Occupy sites an exceptional learning experience. We honour the values and positive ways of working within Occupy communities: without hierarchy, based on care for others, open to the contributions of all and searching for the truth. These are in harmony with our Quaker practice and business methods.

"The idea that another world is possible is crucial for us too. We cannot accept the injustice and destructiveness of our economic system as it is. At the annual meeting of Quakers in Britain in August 2011 we wrote: "We need to ask the question whether this system is so broken that we must urgently work with others of faith and good will to put in its place a different system in which our testimonies can flourish". We support the process initiated by the Occupy movement to create a path towards a different future, and to develop it democratically.

"We hope that individual Quakers will continue to provide support, both moral and practical, to the movement. We greatly value its peaceful quality and we pray that this can be actively supported by all, including the civil and ecclesiastical authorities who have the difficult task of maintaining simultaneously both public order and the right of peaceful protest."

Signed Paul Parker, Recording Clerk for Quakers in Britain

We ask that this minute is placed on our Website and sent to the Dean of the Cathedral and the Occupy Bristol Camp. We appoint John Mayne to convene a working group including Michael Best, Ray Bray, Sam McNair and any other willing Friends to develop strategies for the Area Meeting in responding to this leading. We wish to support this working group in their work to promote our testimonies to peace, simplicity, truth and equality and ask them to liaise with the Treasurer and Finance Committee.