

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE) Annual Report 2010

FSSE (Friends Southern Summer Events) is a small Quaker charity, entirely run by volunteers, whose purpose is the advancement of the Religious Society of Friends through the provision of educational events for young people. FSSE currently runs two week-long events: Summer School for 11-14 year olds; and Senior Conference for 15-18 year olds. The catchment area is southern England, though others are welcomed if there is place.

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Object and Activities

FSSE's objectives are to work with young Quakers to help them develop personally, socially and spiritually. In 2010 we facilitated two week-long residential events, Senior Conference for 15-18 year olds, led and run by the young people themselves, and the adult-run Summer School for 11-14 year olds.

Achievement and Performance

2010 was another successful year for FSSE. We know, from their feedback, that our two events are significant in the lives of those who attend. We see young people who want to come back year on year, and also those who want to give back some of what they gained, by helping at the events.

Trustees believe that the events serve Quakers well, giving a shot of youthful dynamism to the Society of Friends. We ensure that the events are run in a Quakerly way and that the young people receive spiritual input and can learn more about Quaker values and testimonies. Their input is vital to the success of Summer School and they run Senior Conference.

I'd like to thank everyone who helped run our events especially – you were great and also everyone who came. We need to remember also the Quaker meetings and others who through bursaries enable many of the young people to take part. We need all your gifts. Thank you.

Overall, trustees are content that FSSE is on a firm foundation. Our financial reserves would provide enough to meet the cost of one event failing. We think this is an appropriate level of prudence. We are trying to register as an incorporated charity – we'd like to move faster than the charity commission will let us. We pay careful attention to the safety of our events – having first aiders and designated trained child protection team members and we assess other possible risks so that we mitigate them, or are prepared should we have an emergency.

Lastly we are excited that an FSSE reunion is being planned for 2013. New blood bringing new ideas. Truly it is a privilege to be part of FSSE. Please join us!

Keith Walton - Chair, FSSE trustees

Comments from the adult helpers and parents, as well as the participants' feedback forms from both events, indicate that FSSE was very successful in meeting our objectives. We have noted issues where we think we can improve the events in 2011.

We have worked hard to make the events open to everyone, regardless of means, by helping participants with difficulties find bursary funding locally where possible, and where not possible,

providing bursary funding from FSSE's own limited funds. We believe no-one was prevented from attending due to financial problems in 2010.

Our non-event activity, such as communicating information and dealing with bookings and the money, continue to evolve and improve as we make better use of new approaches like the internet. Not nearly as exciting as the events themselves, but essential if we are to have happy participants, so many thanks to all our volunteers who give time and effort not only to doing it but also to making it better for the future!

Imran Tyabji – Clerk, FSSE

Summer School epistle

To all Friends everywhere,

From the 21st to the 28th of August 2010 69 young Quakers and 21 staff members came together at Friends' School Saffron Walden to explore the theme of 'Spiritual Identity – who I am in Quakerism'.

During the week we enjoyed base group sessions; they gave us a break from the busyness of each day and provided an opportunity to make new groups of friends. We were also able to consider the theme in more depth and discuss the speaker sessions further.

The speaker sessions started with Chas Bailey, a Quaker policeman, who explained to us how he combined his Quaker identity with his job. The imaginative methods he used gave us a new perspective on the police force in the UK. Simon Best, an active Quaker amongst young Friends, engaged with us on how his spiritual journey evolved through his experiences with other Quaker groups. Jenny Knox from QPSW came to speak to us about her travels in Sri Lanka and the different ways in which Quakers were involved in breaking down communication barriers to resolve conflict. Nancy Irving talked about the common heritage that our "Quaker cousins" (in the 97 different Yearly Meetings around the world) share with us. She also talked about the ways in which Quaker communities became different and about the work FWCC does to unite them.

Each morning we were given an opportunity to choose an activity. These ranged from music making to massage, stamping and embossing to swimming and other stimulating sports.

We had an a-maze-ing time wandering through Saffron Walden's maze and were met by an ice cream van for refreshment afterwards. On market day we grouped up with our friends and went into Saffron Walden to explore the town. Despite the weather, the annual trip to Cambridge was a great success and gave us a chance to buy small presents for our secret friends, as well as holding Meeting for Worship at Jesus Lane Meeting House.

During the evenings and afternoons we enjoyed many social sessions. The Base Group Challenge allowed us to build on our friendships by working as a team. Our first disco didn't go quite to plan but the community spirit held it together by singing our favourite songs along with guitars. Quaker drama taught us about our rich history in an entertaining way with some priceless lines from individuals. The Life Lines of three brave staff members were inspiring, interesting and entertaining. The barn dance was "crazy fun". "Fairy tales and nursery rhymes", the theme for our fancy dress disco, provided us with a chance to dress up and dance the night away (until 9:30!).

Meetings for Worship and Epilogues gave us quiet times and allowed us to reflect on the day's events. We were able to express our inner light with vocal ministry and many people found the confidence to minister for the first time. We particularly enjoyed the Epilogue that was held outside in the dark.

At the business meeting it was agreed that the theme for Summer School 2011 will be “Dealing with Conflict as a Quaker”. This could have partly been inspired by Chas Bailey’s session.

There was a general feeling at the business meeting that one of the best things at Summer School this year was the sense of community and friendship that was shown throughout the week.

Signed in and on behalf of Summer School

Zoe Carmichael and Paul Kerfoot, Clerks; Olivia Sewell Risley and Luke Stamper, Elders

Friends Southern Summer School 2010 - Coordinators’ Report

Summer School 2010 took place from 21-28th August, a slightly smaller-than-usual event with 69 participants and 21 staff (2009: 77, 24). The theme for the week, ‘Spiritual Identity – who I am in Quakerism’ worked wonderfully and provided a platform for some excellent Quaker education and exploration.

Partly owing to the fact that many of the 2009 participants were aged 14 and thus ineligible for Summer School in 2010, we were aware at an early stage that the Summer School numbers might be slightly lower than usual. The spaces for Senior Conference, we noted, were filled very quickly. Fortunately, event participation was closer to capacity than we might have expected, not least due to some sterling work from Ali Tyabji (Bookings Secretary), Ollie Waterhouse who used his CYP Advocate network and Michael Wood who drummed up publicity during BYM.

The coordinators responded to the lower number of participants by reducing the staff team from its normal level down to 21. This hopefully minimised the financial consequences arising from fewer participants.

Oliver Waterhouse, who was appointed in 2009 to serve as Event Coordinator from 2010-2012, became a new father on the Wednesday before the event, for which we congratulated and cursed him in equal measure! Having done all the groundwork before the event, Ollie was replaced during the week by David Holtam who coordinated the event with Anna Trethewey as was the case in 2009.

The school site at Saffron Walden showed a few cracks that have not appeared in previous years; most of these were swiftly remedied by the very helpful school staff, but we were unable to use a sound system sufficient for staging a disco, radiators could not be turned off and printing from the school network proved a challenge. We could have improved on our communication with the kitchens, who unexpectedly prepared a packed lunch for our Cambridge day trip, and we will therefore provide more guidance to catering staff in 2011.

The theme provided an excellent springboard for Quaker education and the speakers took a very strong Quaker focus; we had a particularly interactive talk from Chas Bailey, a policeman from Sutton LM, a well received presentation on different groups of Quakers around the world from Nancy Irving (Wandsworth LM and Secretary of Friends World Committee on Consultation), and thought-provoking sessions from Jenny Knox, a Quaker from St Albans who spent many years living in Sri Lanka during the civil war working on peace projects, and Simon Best of Friends House CYPS and formerly FSSE.

Outside the regular speaker sessions, we were able to explore Quakerism via an evening drama session on scenes from Quaker history, the young people’s business meeting, through a YP Forum which served as a nominations committee, in Base Groups, and of course, during our twice daily worship together. Chris Nickolay, from CYP, delivered a captivating story based around the WWII nuclear bombings in Japan and the cold war, which aroused widespread pacifist sentiment.

Other activities worked well and we felt that the week had a particularly effective balance this year. Of all the positive elements of the week, among the most pleasing was the strength of the staff team. Every individual was outstanding, and collectively we felt that the team was far greater than the sum of its parts. We feel that the event is very well placed for 2011 – now we just need to find some participants!

David Holtam, Anna Trethewey and Oliver Waterhouse

Senior Conference epistle

To all friends everywhere,

From 21st to 28th of August 2010, 90 young Quakers aged 15 – 18 and 13 adult volunteers aged over 22 came together at Sibford School, Oxfordshire to consider the theme of “Simple Riches”.

While structured sessions helped us to explore living simply, we also felt empowered to simply live, together. All participants at Senior Conference made an effort to include those who might otherwise be excluded, which was especially important with the many newcomers to the event. It was easy to recognise the tight-knit social community after only a day of being together. Before Conference, “base groups” of nine or fewer participants had been set up to be facilitated by young people, and during the week these became supportive family units that met regularly to socialise and have discussions. These gave us the opportunity to meet across the boundaries of age, gender, culture and previous experience of Quaker events. Against this backdrop of a supportive community, we felt able to reflect on simplicity without being judged.

In worship the theme inspired a large flow of ministry that brought out the idea that our most valuable riches are our relationships. Nevertheless, our struggles with relationships, including those involving illness, death and anger, made it clear that they are far from simple to maintain. Many of the vulnerabilities in our most important relationships were shared during worship, and we felt accepted in our pain, as much as in our joy. Silence and ministry were foundations of this Senior Conference and by the second half of the week extended meetings for worship were introduced, and these became a comforting place to express our spirituality openly.

Advices and Queries 41 reads: “Try to live simply. A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. Do not be persuaded to buy what you do not need...”. Such a focus on ethical spending was touched upon by Huw Still, an adult volunteer at the event. He explained to us his skip-diving, where kilos of good-quality food are salvaged from supermarket bins. Equally, we learnt of the difficulties of obsessing over ethical spending, when Huw had been faced with the dilemma of paying hundreds to travel to New York for his twin brother's wedding. Ros McCarthy and James Barnard, who also volunteer with us, spoke openly about their struggles with the testimony to simplicity, and the importance of simplicity to them on a personal, rather than social, level. Ros had attempted to live more self-sufficiently for four years in Cornwall and James had taken inspiration and strength from setbacks in his life. Hearing more deeply about the lives of those among us, and reflecting on them in smaller “base group” sessions, brought us closer to the experiences that they were sharing.

Being able to express vulnerability and feeling accepted as ourselves made Senior Conference feel like a home. Jennifer Kavanagh explored with us the countless definitions of home, be they places, people or emotions, that she had researched in writing *The “O” of Home*. Geoffrey Durham, who has had a career in showbusiness, explained his changed attitude to his own and others' vulnerabilities, in his seeking to “be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle”, a Platonic teaching.

A physically, spiritually and emotionally intense week was balanced with a strong sense of celebration and freedom that was not dampened by the steady downpour of rain throughout the

week. During a themed meal, we shared good food while being dressed as glam rockers, trees and cartoon characters, among other things. From building spaghetti towers to dancing in flippers at the “Under the Sea” disco and from workshops making music to squelching through mud and juggling, we took advantage of the time to relax.

This Senior Conference has enabled many people to consider different aspects of their own and others' lives. Here it has seemed easier to live simply and appreciate the riches that come with that. We have gathered memories here that we will treasure: of hugging, of swapping friendship bracelets, of songs and art, of friends and support, of silence and laughter - our simple riches.

Signed on behalf of all at Senior Conference, Sally Oliver and Sam Sender, Clerks

Senior Conference Coordinators' Report 2010

What went well

- Overall, we were delighted with how Conference went. In particular, the measures taken to make sure that Sibford school were happier with our presence were extremely successful. This was reflected in gracious and generous ministry from Michael Goodwin, Sibford's head, at the penultimate epilogue. This success would not have been possible without the wholehearted commitment of the Arrangements Committee, who at every turn showed themselves sensible, capable, and extremely flexible – a joy to work with.
- Feedback from conferees was extremely positive. Out of a possible score of 5, only one part of Conference was rated lower than 4 (Speakers, simulation and speaker activities, which received 3.96) and top ratings were given to Conference overall, Epilogues, and Base groups, which received 4.66, 4.62 and 4.54 respectively. Suggestions for next year included workshop swapping, shorter mandatory prologues, but with an extension for those who wanted longer, and a few more organised things to do in free time.
- Epilogues, prologues, entertainments, the clerking of the business meeting, the arrangements of base groups, and general oversight of the conference– all were performed with exemplary care and creativity. As the epistle made clear, this was a conference where many people felt very safe to share painful experiences, and at which there was a great deal of laughter. This is no mean feat.
- The speaker sessions worked well, with the more active simulation session and the 22+ session attracting particular praise.
- Beyond Conference – exit interviews and offers of support for leavers – continued and seems to have been helpful for many.
- Numbers recovered after last year's dip. We had 90 Conferees and a waiting list; a very healthy total. Most of this is probably attributable to the large influx of 15 year olds, but early publicity was also very effective. We wrote to every participant from last year in January 2010 and almost all of them did come back.
- We worked more closely with the clerks than has generally been the case in the past, meeting with them during the year and staying in regular email contact. It is helpful for the Coordinators to do this – rather than another adult volunteer designated as clerk support – because coordinators are more intimately involved in planning the event, liaising directly with the school, etc. And the clerks thrived under this attention.
- 22+ volunteers were given clearer roles and responsibilities than has been the case in the past, with a group being formally on duty at any given time, sweeps of the site before sessions. We put this in place in response to the school's concern that adult supervision of the event was not sufficiently visible, but it also helped us as a team.
- Pete Slade stepped into the first-aider role at short notice. The event benefitted enormously from his sane and calm advice.

- More time was given to workshops this year. In most cases this seems to have worked very well. The open-mic alternative to the disco was a very enjoyable session.

Room for improvement

To the participants and the School, nothing went noticeably awry. However, there were learning points for the team (Arrangements Committee and adult volunteers) which will make life easier next year.

- Foregrounding communication. For the final night's epilogue, the Elders had to switch to plan B at the last moment, which disappointed them; the way to avoid it would have been to communicate better earlier, giving time to prepare plan A properly.
- More time for 22+ team to bond and participate. The new procedures meant more time spent on business, perhaps unavoidable this year, but there was more strain on 22+s. It would be good to re-assert our ethos that our best contribution is to participate fully.
- Early planning for first-aider. Pete Slade stepped in valiantly and was once again excellent in roles as 22+ BGF and first-aider, but next time round we should be giving people better notice.

Events Support Team

The back room work which is so necessary but less visible, is carried out by this team of volunteers, organised into overlapping groups to address particular topics. Child Protection group help staff to obtain CRBs, send volunteers for training who then come back and train event staff, and make sure we are organised to deal with eventualities if they ever arise. Money group have reorganised systems to be simpler, thus easier for our Book-keeper; but retaining a safe separation of duties to safeguard the charity's funds. The Publicity, Bookings and Web groups have worked together to improve steadily how we communicate to our participants and their parents and their Meetings, and take bookings, adapting to the world of the Web. There is plenty yet to be done, with a web-based information source for volunteers being the next step (the Infobase). FSSE is very grateful to all the volunteers who have contributed their wits and their time to this unglamorous but very needed activity.

Appendix 1: FSSE Annual Account

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Friends Southern Summer Events

I report on the accounts of Friends Southern Summer Events for the year ended 30 September 2010, which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

James Sladden

(Associate Chartered Accountant)

5 Balliol House, Manor Fields, London, SW15 3LL

10 January 2011

Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2010 - Consolidated

	2010	2009	2008
Income			
Contributions & donations	1,017	1,750	1,060
Student fees	50,530	49,044	
Bank interest	39	352	1,016
Total income	51,586	51,146	55,451
Expenditure – all direct charitable			
Pre-event			
Applications administration	56	14	53
Advertising	0	36	0
Planning expenses	2,101	2,168	3,311
Skills development	433	91	0
Total pre-event	2,590	2,310	3,364
Event			
Staff event travel	1,429	743	637
Group event travel	1,995	2,010	2,005
Speakers expenses	167	580	98
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	-60	-32	194
Outing costs	0	500	454
Materials & Supplies	0	439	1,363
Equipment and furniture	275	286	0
Miscellaneous	1,137	666	789
Total event expenditure	4,943	5,190	5,540
General			
Bursaries	935	890	0
Accommodation	37,760	37,094	40,250
Fares and expenses	545	333	268
Room hire (for AGM)	150	293	158
Insurance	210	263	263
Bank charges	8	0	85
Honoraria	1,350	1,350	1,750
Total general	40,957	40,222	42,774
Total expenditure	48,490	47,722	51,678
Income less Expenditure	3,096	3,425	3,773
Balances brought forward at 1 October	23,716	20,291	16,518
Balances carried forward at 30 September	26,812	23,716	20,291
Current assets			
Debtors		390	0
Cash at bank and in hand	27,762	40,257	54,580
Total current assets	27,762	40,647	54,580
Less creditors due within one year	950	16,931	34,289
Current assets less current liabilities	26,812	23,716	20,291
Fixed assets and investments	0	0	0
Total assets less current liabilities	26,812	23,716	20,291
Less creditors due after one year	0	0	0
Total assets less liabilities	26,812	23,716	20,291

**Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2010 -
Summer School**

	2010	2009	2008
Income			
Contributions & donations			
Student fees	22,420	23,790	24,400
Bank interest	1	19	56
Total income	22,421	23,809	24,456
Expenditure – all direct charitable			
Pre-event			
Applications administration	56	14	0
Advertising			
Planning expenses	1,225	1,197	2,343
Skills development (1)	180	91	
Total pre-event	1,461	1,302	2,343
Event			
Staff event travel	631	296	459.53
Group event travel	1,120	1,060	1,055
Speakers expenses	150	208	
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	57	-13	
Outing costs (2)		500	404
Materials & Supplies		228	798
Equipment and furniture	240	86	
Miscellaneous	406	475	717
Total event expenditure	2,603	2,838	3,434
General			
Bursaries	325	585	
Accommodation	16,511	17,925	18,256
Fares and expenses			
Room hire (for AGM)			
Insurance	105	131	131
Bank charges			
Honoraria	550	550	550
Total general	17,491	19,191	18,937
Total expenditure	21,555	23,331	24,714
Income less Expenditure	866	477	-258

Notes

(1) Skills development costs were for Sarah Holtam's lifeguard training

(2) Outing lunch expenses were nil as the kitchens unexpectedly made a packed lunch for us!

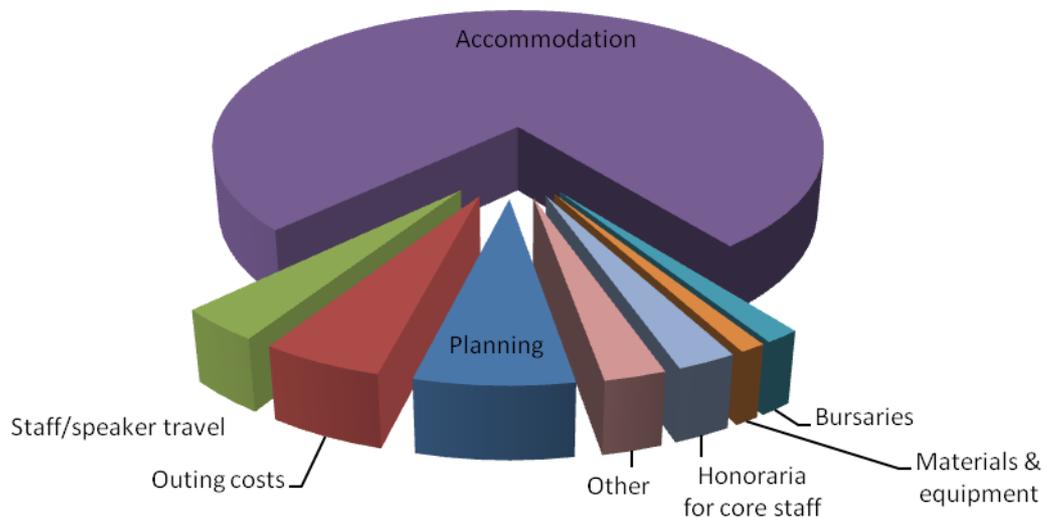
Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2010 - Senior
Conference

	2010	2009	2008
Income			
Contributions & donations		750	
Student fees	28,110	24,095	28,975
Bank interest	4	11	
Total income	28,115	24,856	28,975
Expenditure – all direct charitable			
Pre-event			
Applications administration			
Advertising			
Planning expenses	876	971	968
Skills development	28		
Total pre-event	904	971	968
Event			
Staff event travel	799	447	178
Group event travel	875	950	950
Speakers expenses	17	372	98
Tuck shop deficit/(takings)	-116	-19	194
Outing costs			50
Materials & Supplies		211	565
Equipment and furniture	35	200	
Miscellaneous	331	191	72
Total event expenditure	1,939	2,353	2,107
General			
Bursaries	610	305	
Accommodation	21,249	19,169	21,994
Fares and expenses			
Room hire (for AGM)			
Insurance	105	131	131
Bank charges	3		85
Honoraria	450	450	850
Total general	22,417	20,055	23,061
Total expenditure	25,260	23,379	23,061
Income less Expenditure	2,854	1,477	5,914

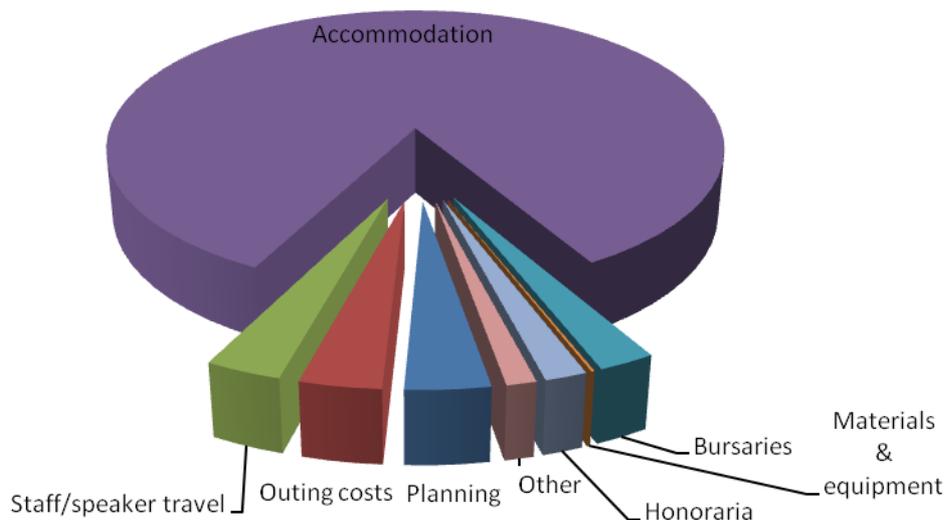
Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE)
Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 30 September 2010 - General
Income & Expenditure

	2010	2009	2008
Income			
Contributions & donations	1,017	1,000	1,060
Student fees		1,159	
Bank interest	34	323	960
Total income	1,051	2,482	2,020
Expenditure – all direct charitable			
Pre-event			
Applications administration			53
Advertising		36	
Planning expenses			
Skills development (1)	225		
Total pre-event	225	36	53
Event			
Staff event travel			
Group event travel			
Speakers expenses			
Tuck shop takings			
Outing costs			
Materials & Supplies			
Equipment and furniture			
Miscellaneous (2)	400		
Total event expenditure	400	0	0
General			
Bursaries			
Accommodation			
Fares and expenses	545	333	268
Room hire (for AGM)	150	293	158
Insurance			
Bank charges	5		
Honoraria	350	350	350
Total general	1,050	976	776
Total expenditure	1,675	1,012	829
Income less Expenditure	-624	1,470	1,191

Summer School - how are the fees spent?



Senior Conference - how are the fees spent?



Appendix 2: Reference and Administrative Details

Name: Friends Southern Summer Events, known also as FSSE. It is sometimes familiarly known by the names of the events it runs: Southern Summer School, and Senior Conference.

Registration status: Not yet registered. FSSE is an unincorporated charitable association and has hitherto been excepted under charity law from registration. The Charity Commission is aware of FSSE's existence and has requested FSSE to defer registration till required.

Governing Document: FSSE is governed by its Constitution, adopted by the first AGM of the unincorporated association on 24 November 2007. It may be found on FSSE's website at

<http://www.fsse.org.uk/fsse/downloads>.

Address: c/o Wandsworth Quaker Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 59 Wandsworth High Street, LONDON, SW18 2PT

Trustees in November 2010: Jo Rado, Beth Rigby, Alan Pearmain, Philippa Stanger, Imran Tyabji, Keith Walton (Chair)

Bankers: CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

Appendix 3: Structure, Governance and Management

FSSE is a charitable unincorporated association whose corporate members are the Area Quaker Meetings of Southern England¹ and individual members are principally the volunteer staff. Authority is vested in the Annual General Meeting of members, where decisions are taken according to the Quaker Business Method. The trustees and all other major roles are appointed by the AGM (trustees may make appointments between AGMs which are to be ratified at the next AGM).

The current governing document is the Constitution adopted in November 2007².

Event Coordinators are responsible for the proper running of the events: each event usually has two, and they recruit a team of adult volunteers, who prepare in Planning Meetings before the event. The team sits as the Event Management Committee at some point during the event to take decisions which are passed to the Management Committee for FSSE.

The Management Committee meets at least once a year, being the main organisational working committee, and prepares recommendations for AGM. All volunteers in major roles are members of Management Committee.

Trustees meet at least once a year, and consist of some who are involved in the work of the events and some who are not. Their role is to provide oversight, that the Quaker ethos of FSSE is maintained and that activities are carried out in right ordering (which will include abiding both with the spirit and the letter of the law).

1 The list may be found at <http://www.fsse.org.uk/fsse/catchment>

2 The Constitution may be downloaded at <http://www.fsse.org.uk/fsse/downloads>