

January 2014
Volume 5 - Issue 1

[View this email in your browser](#)



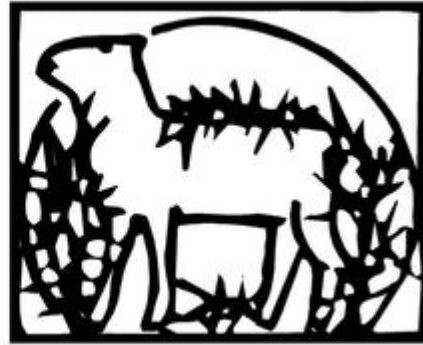
[ABOUT US](#) ▾ [BLOG](#) [EVENTS](#) ▾ [RESOURCES](#) ▾

The Mennonite Trust

We are grateful to those of you who took part, either by email or in person, in the consultation process about the future direction and priorities of the Mennonite Trust. On Saturday 11 January the trustees met to reflect on the responses we had received and to make some decisions.

As you will know, the past four years have been difficult and demanding. Dealing with a serious financial crisis, closing Metanoia, negotiating the launch of Bridge Builders as a separate charity, selling the much-loved London Mennonite Centre, identifying a new location and then moving to Birmingham, attempting unsuccessfully to establish suitable premises for a new centre and to appoint new executive staff – these have placed many demands on a small group of trustees. However, we are pleased now to report progress in a number of areas and to explain how we envisage the Trust will operate in the coming years.

- Having considered three main options for the future, we have decided that the Trust should not attempt to form another residential community or appoint a new director but focus primarily on providing **support and resources** for the wider Anabaptist movement. This movement owes much to the ministry of the London Mennonite Centre and its directors and other staff over many years. But we believe that the Trust's role now is not to run its own programmes but to nurture and support the organisations that it has helped to initiate. This will involve providing administrative help, resources and financial support.
- We are grateful for our long relationship with the Anabaptist Network (which began at the LMC) and we envisage an even **closer partnership** in the future. Although we are not anticipating a formal merger, we will consult much more closely on strategic issues.



- We are persuaded that the Trust needs to ensure that the Anabaptist movement does not lose touch with its **Mennonite dimension** but continues to draw on this. An ongoing aspect of the Trust's work, therefore, will be to foster links with European and North American Mennonites. We envisage this involving short-term assignments, exchange visits and joint initiatives, rather than appointing further Mennonite staff. We are looking forward to the visit of Tom & Rebecca Yoder Neufeld in September-November 2014 as an example of this.
- The property in Selly Oak that was to be called 'Menno House' cannot, after all, be used in ways we had intended (so it is currently rented out and will probably be sold).
- However, the other property, 'Kreider House', is excellent and will provide a **base** for the Trust in Selly Oak. This will enable us to continue to develop relationships in the area (its proximity to the International Mission Centre and the Woodbrooke Quaker Learning Centre is very valuable), provide space for guest accommodation and some small meetings, and hopefully nurture expressions of Mennonite-oriented community in the neighbourhood. We will need some residents in the house to facilitate this.



- We have responded positively to an offer from Bristol Baptist College to house the **Mennonite Trust library**. This will be gifted to the College and resources will be provided to upgrade and update the collection. Based in a theological college, we believe that the library is likely to be used much more than it was at the LMC. A small collection of core Anabaptist/Mennonite books and journals will be maintained at Kreider House.

- Our **finances** are now on a level footing with income from rented properties providing all we need for our current activities. We are in the process of developing a policy to enable us to decide how to make best use of the available finances.
- Our new administrator, **Mike Beckett**, has started work and is already grappling with a range of administrative issues as he gradually takes over from Will Newcomb, who will finish working for the Trust on 7 March. Mike is keen to hear from you people especially if they have talents that might assist the Trusts as it develops.
- **Juliet Kilpin** continues to work for the Trust in her role as Development Worker but her role will be reconsidered in light of the decisions recently taken about the Trust's future.

Over the next few weeks we will continue to work through the implications of the decisions we have made and will write with further news in due course. Although the Trust will operate in a less visible way in future, we are confident this will enable us to make a more effective contribution to the ongoing development of the Anabaptist movement.

Please continue to pray for the trustees and for the future ministry of the Mennonite Trust, and do let us know if you have any questions about what we have written.

Shalom

Stuart Murray Williams & Jeremy Thomson
Present and previous Chairs of Trustees



email: tmt@menno.org.uk

web:

www.menno.org.uk

Copyright © 2014 The Mennonite Trust, All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

