

Clerks Update

A newsletter from Quaker Life

Issue 11: Autumn 2024



Welcome to the autumn issue!

Welcome to this autumn edition of Clerks' Update, the communication channel for clerks of local and area Quaker communities. You can view an archive of past messages on our website at www.quaker.org.uk/clerks-update.

Information for Quaker clerks

A chance to contribute to discernment on the future of Central Committees

Yearly Meeting 2023 asked BYM trustees to consider what form a new committee structure could take. In August 2023 the Group to Review Central Structures (GRCS) was formed, bringing together Friends with wide experience of our current committee structure. GRCS now needs feedback from Friends on its proposal of creating a single central committee to replace Quaker Life Central Committee and Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee.



Please read the GRCS consultation document www.quaker.org.uk/documents/grcs-consultation-doc---to-share and send your comments by email to governance@quaker.org.uk by 13 October 2024.

You can also keep an eye on this web page www.quaker.org.uk/simplify where GRCS will post about any new developments in its work.

GRCS does not expect that area meetings will be able to spend time now looking in detail at this consultation. There are many individual Friends with interest and expertise and GRCS hopes to hear from them, as well as from any informal grouping or meeting that is able to consider the proposal.

After this consultation closes, GRCS will consider all the feedback received and then send final proposals to BYM trustees. Any firm proposals for change to the central committee structure will then go forward to Yearly Meeting for discernment and decision. At that stage further material will be provided to help Friends and meetings prepare to take part in that discernment.

Abbreviations: BYM – Britain Yearly Meeting; CCQW – Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales; LM – local meeting; AM – area meeting; YM – Yearly Meeting; QLCC – Quaker Life Central Committee; FWCC – Friends World Committee for Consultation

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Outreach

Quaker Week 2024

This year Quaker Week starts this coming weekend, **Sat 28 September** to Sun 6 October, with the same theme as last year of **'Simple. Radical. Spiritual'**. There are new materials, as well as those we offered last year. This campaign was generally very warmly welcomed by Friends last year so we are using the same theme again. We feel there's still more we can do to explore what those words capture about Quakerism and how they speak to newcomers.



World Quaker Day

On **Sunday, 6 October** World Quaker Day invites Friends to “find out and share what happened at their local Friends church or meeting”. This follows on from the World Plenary gathering in South Africa in August. See the event website to find out more, <https://fwcc.world/event/world-quaker-day-2024>.



Request a QPSW speaker for your Quaker community

Donations to Quakers in Britain support national and international work for climate justice, peace and social witness (internally known as Quaker Peace and Social Witness or QPSW). The QPSW staff team and its Central Committee (who discern and uphold the work) would like to share some case studies with you and stories about the current work. They are available to deliver a short overview presentation after Meeting for Worship or as part of any in-person or blended events being planned in your Quaker Community. They say:

'We think the work we do is really inspiring and we couldn't do it without you, so we want to share it with you!'

If you want to request a speaker to come and speak locally, please email qpsw@quaker.org.uk.

Local Development Worker recruitment – East Anglia

We are currently recruiting for a Local Development Worker to serve East Anglia. Local Development Workers are based in the communities that they work with and help to support the life of Quakerism across their patch. They are employed by Britain Yearly Meeting and work within the Quaker Life staff team.

If you know someone who you think could do this work please share the job pack and application form with them. It can all be found online at www.quaker.org.uk/jobs.

Applications need to be received by **Monday, 14 October 2024**.

Interviews will take place on **Tuesday, 22 October 2024**.

Welcome Directory

The Welcome Directory is a multi-faith organisation committed to combatting social isolation and loneliness in the prison leaver community. It does this by empowering faith communities to offer lasting welcome and challenge the public stigma that so many prison leavers face. Their national directory of welcoming faith communities is a key resource available for prison leavers, prison chaplains and resettlement teams in all prisons and Approved Premises across England and Wales to facilitate faith-based community connections.



Ahead of the early release of over 5,000 more individuals from prison this September, the need for their work is even more essential. Of our 420 faith communities registered in [The Welcome Directory](#), there are only 14 Quaker meetings. The Welcome Directory would like to do more to better serve the Quaker community – **could your Quaker Meeting register?**

Including your meeting within the directory can better serve Quaker prison leavers, enabling them to continue their faith journey on the outside, and ultimately **break the cycle of re-offending**. The free [Prisons Awareness Course](#) is intended for faith communities with no experience of prison, imprisonment or release to better understand the issues. Registration is quick and easy, through the [online form](#) or you can get in touch if you have any questions.

Youth, Children and Families

Children & teens programmes at Meeting for Sufferings

We are offering a programme of activities for children and teens at Meeting for Sufferings. The activities link to the main themes of Meeting for Sufferings and will:

- Build and support Quaker communities
- Spiritually enrich young Quakers
- Provide enjoyment, creativity and fun.

Please share the flyer, www.quaker.org.uk/documents/children-and-teens-at-mfs-flyer, with all from your communities who could come.

Events

Quaker Parent Worship

This is a new space for parents who are currently bringing up children, to come together for worship, reflection, and connection. It takes place at 9pm on the second and fourth Monday of each month starting from 14 October 2024, www.woodbrooke.org.uk/worship/quaker-parent-epilogue.



Training and learning

Business Method Surgery

First Tuesday of the Month, 19:00-20:30 (UK time)

Do you feel your Meeting for Worship for Business isn't running as smoothly as you'd like? Whether you have specific issues or would like to explore issues more generally, this Woodbrooke session is for you!

Book your place for the next session (Tuesday, 1 October):

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/business-method-surgery-october

Practical Discernment for Witness

22 October to 12 November 2024

How do we know what we are called to do, especially when the world is full of urgent problems? This course will offer practical techniques from the Quaker tradition for individuals and communities to find a right way forward.

Find more information: www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/practical-discernment-for-witness

Quaker Nominations

7 November to 12 December 2024

Nominations are at the quiet heart of the way we live together as Friends, when we listen faithfully to the Spirit. We will aim to root ourselves in good practices of discernment whilst responding to the particular issues that face us.

Find more information: www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/quaker-nominations

Grants

Hope Grants

These are small grants to improve the quality of life of Quaker members and attenders who are unemployed or unable to make a living wage. Friends in financial need can apply for a grant of up to £750 towards items or activities that will improve their quality of life. More information and the application form are available from our website: www.quaker.org.uk/hopegrants.

Pastoral Care Grants

These grants supplement funds available to pastoral care role-holders locally and can be used in situations of hardship and suffering through old age, or to support women Friends in need. Please contact the Grants Programme Officer (grants@quaker.org.uk 020 7663 1053) for further information and an application form.

