



Quakers and other faiths

New 2015 edition

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020 7663 1162

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Introduction

This booklet is an open but internal document for use by local Quaker meetings and Quaker institutions. It has been written by the Quaker Committee on Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR), a standing committee of Britain Yearly Meeting's Meeting for Sufferings, and subsequently revised in the light of comments.

The booklet sets out, reviews and makes observations which are intended to encourage the fellowship and fun which can be found in engaging in interfaith activities. Nevertheless, we should be alert to some of the problems which can arise, and know where to seek advice. It also challenges us to consider whether as Quakers we have a distinctive, even prophetic, role as we have had in other spheres of human endeavour.

Our aim is to help Quakers in Britain to answer questions like:

- Why and how do we relate to people of other faiths in our local communities?
- In doing so, how should we set about developing a greater understanding of their beliefs, practices, cultures. Are there any possible problem areas?
- Have we as Friends a role in promoting understanding? Where do we make a stand recognising that some issues cannot be bypassed in the interests of goodwill? For example, equality in leadership between the sexes; support for the armed forces as a mark of Britishness.
- In dialogue and engagement, how clear are we about what we have to offer and about where we ourselves may have questions to answer?
- How can we share with Friends more widely what we have learnt from our interfaith experience?

A parallel booklet Quakers and the Ecumenical Agenda was published by QCCIR in June 2009. This described Friends' work with other Christian Churches in Britain.

Some history

Quakers have acknowledged the existence and significance of other faiths from the start. George Fox quoted from the Qur'an in writing to the King of Algiers about slavery. William Penn in 1682 spoke to the Native Americans, as an equal in their own language, of 'the Great Spirit who made me and you'. John Woolman a hundred years later, with the support of his Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, engaged with them in the same way, asking "...if haply I might receive some instruction from them..." (*Quaker faith & practice* 27.02)

The Friends Foreign Mission Association (founded in 1868) reflected nineteenth century concerns to convert the 'heathen'. By 1928 the Association had become part of the new Friends Service Council which recognised how its witness had gradually evolved. Its former secretary Henry Hodgkin wrote in 1933, 'I really find myself wanting to learn from people from whom I would previously have regarded as fit objects for my missionary zeal' (*Quaker faith & practice* 27.07). As so-called unprogrammed or silent tradition Friends, BYM should be aware that programmed Evangelical Friends in the USA actively continue to evangelise at home and abroad mainly in East Africa and Latin America.

Our recent books of discipline (1960 & 1995) have invited us to recognise the spirituality and good works of those faithful to other religions. Our present QCCIR, branching out from an existing Quaker Committee on Christian Relationships, got its current name and wider interfaith remit in 1991.

What, then, is the Interfaith agenda for Friends?

Britain is now a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. Quakers are conscious of issues of faith and concerned for good relations within our communities. For some Friends the differences of belief, worship and culture between religions will be of a quite different order from ecumenical or inter-Church denominational differences in the UK. Some Quakers have come to the Religious Society of Friends with an interest or connection to another faith, from their upbringing, family relationships, or personal searches for spiritual sustenance.

We must be informed if we are to avoid naïveté, and engage respectfully with unfamiliar people's lives. Even at the level of neighbourliness each of us needs a basic grasp of etiquette – what behaviour is likely to give offence – and if possible a knowledge of the day by day and year round pattern of observances likely to be found. (Suffolk Inter-faith Resource has a "Faith Card" in its Handbook of Faiths with details: www.sifre.org.uk)

What can we offer as Quakers? Our traditional Testimonies to truth, peace, equality and simplicity are a good starting point.

- Quakers do not 'possess' the **Truth**, but are committed to search for it with the guidance of the Inner Light. This confidence that Truth is something 'beyond' and transcendent allows respect for other versions of it, as does our emphasis on accepting each person's own experience as being the truth for them. Friends strive to ensure that truth is not separate from love, humility or justice.
- Peace to Quakers leads us to address conflicting views and interests non-violently. Stemming from Quakers' challenge to answer 'that of God' in every person, Quakers are committed to working for peace and justice through nonviolent social change. The Jewish concept is that of shalom and the Hindu and Buddhist is ahimsa.
- Our view of Equality encourages us to work for a more just and equal society. When other religious traditions promote beliefs and practices not in tune with Quaker testimonies and insights, this can give a creative opportunity, when appropriate, to offer an

alternative view from Friends. Let us hope that we too can take the opportunity to learn from others. Which of us, for example, sets aside five times a day for prayer or its equivalent in silence? What does the central Buddhist doctrine of anatta (no soul) mean and teach us? Are we sensitive to every living thing above and below ground like the Jains?

- Simplicity extends to sustainability, and Friends have a commitment to concern for the planet. Yet we lack the clarity of the Hindu teaching of aparigraha (non-acquisitiveness) or the Buddhist viraga (freedom from desire) or samma-ajiva (right livelihood).

Quakers can also offer what can be called gifts of a less abstract kind.

- Our non-credal faith and lack of formality encourage us to engage with a wide variety of religious groups.
- Our silent worship can have a uniting influence without seeming to conflict with the religious practices of others.
- Our premises are similarly welcoming, and their style usually offers a meeting place which has the character of neutral ground.
- Men and women play an equal part in all that we do.
- We have a non-hierarchical organisation, which allows Friends to mix easily with believers like us, and equally with faith leaders.
- We do not have a separate priesthood, as all may equally share in and witness to the spirit.
- Our practice of making official appointments for a limited period of time is a witness to both equality and good human resource management.
- Our business method and especially its avoidance of the so-called 'tyranny of the majority' is sometimes a revelation to those who have not met it. (As a consequence, the World Council of Churches has now abandoned straight voting.)
- Our treasuring of the sacred in the everyday allows us to respect what other faiths sanctify without compromising our own practices.

- Some of our “Quaker gifts” may however also be seen as negative. Counterpart representatives in religious hierarchical systems, for example, may be disconcerted by a lack of continuity in the Quaker representation. Some will find it hard to respect our lack of credal certainty. Some of us may compound this by a lack of background knowledge – both of where we come from, and of the religion of those with whom we are engaging. We need to do our homework. The diversity of belief in the Quaker community will seem a weakness to some, but our history, corporate testimonies, practice and social action do have an integrity which allows us to claim our identity as Quakers in Britain.

What do other faiths offer to us?

The faith teachings of the world religions have developed by offering what they see as the Truth or truths to their followers. Some of those truths can, with discernment, resonate with Quaker experiences and practices.

Those who have grown up or found a home for a time in other faiths will often bring valuable insights and depth of understanding to our Meetings.

Different religions have developed a range of spiritual traditions and practices. While Quakers do not share these, we can learn from them, for example, music, ritual and images. We can welcome traditions of hospitality, possibly best exemplified by the Sikh gurdwaras which feed all who come at midday, as a lesson to us.

When we have established contacts and built up relationships with members of other faith groups, this can lead to deeper interfaith dialogue. We can use these interfaith encounters to learn from others how they deal with difficulties which we ourselves may also have.

- We also want to make modern sense of ancient scriptures which were written in a different culture, point in history and language. For us this will mostly be the bible.
- Among British Quakers we are faced with beliefs and ideas which some of us individually find threatening or hard to live with such as

non-theism or Christo-centrism.

- Some of our meetings, perhaps because of size, can find it hard to attract young people to join or stay.
- There is the programmed-unprogrammed schism in Quakerism worldwide, where we share an identity and heritage with those from whom we sincerely deviate in fundamental aspects.
- We have to decide how far to support individual demonstrations or acts of conscience, including law-breaking, which our testimonies or beliefs have encouraged.
- We lack socio-economic or ethnic diversity as a Quaker community in Britain.

What are the 'difficult issues' that may divide us?

Some difficult problems are equally issues in our dialogue with others in the Christian tradition.

Creeds and beliefs include the nature or indeed existence of God or a Supreme Being, the nature of 'last things', the after-life, reincarnation, and the uniqueness or universal validity of one set of revelations or beliefs. We can and do respect those whose faith is expressed in theological expressions which we do not normally use, even if our search is more for understandings 'beyond what words can utter' (Issac Penington, *Quaker faith & practice* 27.27). Our non-credal stance can allow us to be open to listen to the spiritual journey of others.

Our schism: Amongst Quakers worldwide over 80% espouse bible-based evangelical Christianity rather than the unprogrammed reliance on the Inner Light practised in Great Britain. The divergence which arose in USA in the 19th century came from different answers to the question of where ultimate authority lies. Is it from the Bible (which George Fox knew so well), or from the Inner Light of divinely inspired personal experience: "What canst thou say?" It is understandable how this schism arose when we are aware of its historical context.

Conversion: Some faiths such as Islam and some denominations of Christians have mission as a requirement. The Qur'an says no

compulsion in religion (Surah 2:256), and adds that if Allah had wanted us to be all the same he would have made us so. Yet the apostate who abandons the faith once held may be demonised or even be at personal risk. A sense of mission to convince those of other faiths, and in particular those with none is understandable, but it can at community level make groups defensive. This may also limit the willingness of Evangelical Christians, and even some Quakers, to participate in interfaith dialogue, though for different reasons. (Matthew 28:19 is seen by Evangelicals as the 'Great Commission'.) The boundaries between proselytising, evangelism, mission, witness, dialogue and shared experience could be an interesting topic for discussion. Limits or ground rules restricting proselytising are something to be agreed when setting up or working in interfaith bodies.

Holy books are central to many faiths: they may be seen as divine themselves (such as by Sikhs), as the word of God, as divinely inspired, or (as with Buddhists) enlightened teaching. Their interpretation or translation from forms of speech no longer current may often lead to controversy, even if this is not admitted by all believers. It is helpful to know the historical circumstances of their emergence, especially if this can be supported from outside sources. Supplementary texts such as the Muslim Hadith and the Jewish Mishnah carry weight. So indeed does *Quaker faith & practice*.

Friends should recognise the risk of seeming unprepared for dialogue if they know the Bible less well than others in the group. The application of treasured texts to modern circumstances can be a good discussion. It was the teachings of Jesus as reported in the Gospels that led to the Quaker testimonies we now hold dear. Organised 'scriptural reasoning' can be a useful and productive activity with other "People of the Book" (the Abrahamic faith traditions i.e. Christianity, Judaism and Islam.)

Conservative/liberal cross currents are found nowadays in nearly all faiths. We have noted above (Creeds and beliefs) that Quakers worldwide have a schism in which BYM is seen as liberal. Interfaith dialogue may appear to be of more interest to the liberal wings of the main faiths. We must not avoid making contacts with more conservative groups. Additionally, perhaps woman to woman, youth to youth or clergy to swami, imam, bhikku (Buddhist monk) or rabbi contacts may be fruitful.

Some divisions within religions are of wider origin than developments of scholarship and the impact of modern life, and we should be sensitive to tensions and such intra-faith historical antagonisms. Examples to be aware of include between Sunnis and Shia Muslims, the Ahmadiyya Muslims and all other Muslim groups, different strands of Buddhism and between Baptists and Roman Catholics.

Violence condoned by religion is challenged by our peace testimony. Most religions sign up to peace as a goal, but this is interpreted differently across (and within) the faiths. The concept of a just or sanctified war runs through many religions, and few faith traditions are explicitly pacifist. There are now chaplains of most faiths in the armed forces. No mainstream religion, however, endorses violence as a way of establishing a fundamentalist interpretation of their faith.

Pacifism and conscientious objection, and the role of conscience and of human rights principles vis-à-vis faith and belief are other good topics for discussion. The inclusion of non-pacifist Christians may lead to Quakers, Buddhists and some Hindus engaging in dialogue with most Christians, Muslims and other faith traditions. The starting point could be the deeper religious question: from where does violence arise?

Political unrest and armed conflicts overseas, either those seen by some to be as a result of British foreign policy or between members of different faiths, can cause tensions in Britain, particularly with young people. Examples are British involvement in Afghanistan, but also Buddhist attacks on the Muslim minority in Myanmar (Burma). Any opportunity to enable opportunities for listening should be encouraged.

Finally, violence as punishment (e.g. capital punishment, amputation or mutilation) is accepted in some religions, or at least their religious leaders may not oppose such state-approved or condoned violence. Honour-killings are not usually religiously sanctioned, but they also may sometimes be condoned by silence.

Cultural issues are deeply entangled with faith teachings. Gender justice and the managing of human sexuality are issues that give rise to practices and taboos that Quakers do not share and may wish to find ways to challenge.

Many faiths have dietary obligations. Uncleanliness arises as a concept

in the teachings of many faiths. Friends engaging with any faith community should prepare themselves by knowing what common courtesy requires. Are they vegetarian and does this include eggs? If not, what meats are allowed, and how should they be killed? Are there rules for posture, for shaking hands, for acceptable clothing?

Some faith groups in Britain are coping with trying to maintain what they understand to be traditional practices in this country where they are in the minority and where the main culture is secular. Second and third generation members have to decide how assimilated to become while maintaining respect (or control by) their elders. Mixed marriages can cause tension.

Provocation and blasphemy, and also the desecration of graves, holy places and holy books are bound to provoke anger and a possible violent response. There is a level of freedom of speech and tolerance in Britain which can provide opportunities for statements, actions or ridicule which believers of some faith groups will find unacceptable and provocative. For them failure to respond may be interpreted as failing in one's religious duty to "defend the faith," which then implies having brought dishonour to one's family. Quakers, perhaps as part of in their local inter faith groups, may be able to offer support and help mediate the response.

'New religious movements' (NRM) such as followers of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, or Falun Gong, ancient orders revived (such as Druids, Pagans or Krishna Consciousness), alleged heresies or schisms (such as Jews for Jesus, Mormons, Soka Gakkai Buddhists or Ahmadiyya Muslims) present problems when established faiths see them as threats, or refuse to be part of any organisation or activity where they are present. We should remember with humility that we too as Quakers (our nickname) were a 17th century NRM! Our views and behaviour at that time seemed outrageous, and indeed we have modified some of them over time.

Membership criteria for local interfaith councils: In addition to difficulties with groups such as those mentioned above, for some other groups (such as Scientologists, The Family or the Unification Church), there may be a suspicion of a lack of integrity in some of their

practices. They tend to seek recognition, amounting to endorsement, through membership of interfaith councils, and this can be highly controversial. The risk of open eligibility is that others will walk out, thus weakening the local interfaith witness led by the mainstream faith traditions.

This problem can also arise when the Humanist movement seeks to share in the representational role that nowadays religion has taken up. There is no problem with their integrity, but they are not a religious faith group as such. Nevertheless, some interfaith councils do value their presence representing a commonly-held belief system.

The solution is usually to be careful about the criteria for membership of the local interfaith council. All groups could be allowed to attend and participate in public meetings, with due ground rules as mentioned above about not proselytising. Membership eligibility per se however could be controlled by having a core membership of the traditional faith traditions, with criteria for accepting new applicants. There could be a period of observer status before membership is accepted. Often there is a spirit of welcome to most, but even Quakers are sometimes excluded from Churches Together groups on doctrinal grounds.

The dimension of public life

Governments are now obliged to comply with internationally agreed standards of human rights. The United Nations General Assembly in 1948 adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in which Article 18 reads:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Other related UN declarations, such as those on the rights of the Child and of Women, as well as Conscientious Objection, have added obligations to this. A problem can arise as to which article takes precedence.

Individual thinkers, notably Hans Küng and Karen Armstrong (see below), have developed alternative propositions with claims to universality. We must recognise, however, that such universality is still an aspiration.

It was the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1893 which gave mutual respect between faiths a widespread recognition. This was in contrast to the emphasis until then (and indeed later) on mission and conversion. The International Association for Religious Freedom followed in 1901. The thread continued in 1936 with the World Congress of Faiths, which now continues as a British-based organisation for individual membership. In 1988 the Parliament was reconstituted. Its 1993 meeting adopted the Hans Küng declaration, 'Towards a Global Ethic'. Its 2009 meeting welcomed Karen Armstrong's 'Charter on Compassion' but has not yet adopted it. Religions for Peace is another organisation whose title explains its aim. It works at world, national and regional level. The Europe regional membership is for 'religious leaders', including those from 'religions with a shorter presence in Europe'. The UK branch is for individual membership.

In Britain, as in other countries, there are now a number of national and local interfaith groups and committees. The Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN) was founded in 1987 and links in membership national faith community representative bodies; national, regional and local interfaith bodies; and educational and academic bodies with a focus on interfaith issues. The faith communities represented are Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian. The IFN has up till now limited membership to these nine main faiths. A recent strategic review recommended widening the range of faith groups it can consider for membership and it is currently deciding how to implement this in practice. Representatives from these nine communities meet two or three times a year as its Faith Communities Forum. QCCIR is normally represented there. IFN can offer advice about setting up a local inter faith group.

Some of the other active bodies in this field are bilateral, like the Council of Christians and Jews, the Christian Muslim Forum and the new Hindu Christian Forum. There is also the Three Faiths Forum

which links the three Abrahamic faiths. The CTBI (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland) has a Churches Interfaith Relations Network (CIRN) which brings together those in the wider Christian community active in interfaith relationships.

Joining organised interfaith bodies is one area where Friends who feel this as a concern can play a constructive and spiritual contribution to UK society.

Following the 7/7 bombings in London in 2005 the British government developed a counter-terrorism policy that included a programme known as PREVENT. This targeted Muslim communities, providing funding for projects deemed to counter radicalisation while trying to encourage information sharing on possible extremists. The project aroused hostility among Muslims and resentment from other faith and community groups. More recently community integration projects have now been separated from the PREVENT programme. Local authorities continue to provide programmes to prevent radicalisation of individuals. Meanwhile the government has published its clear intention to encourage dialogue between people of different faith and cultural backgrounds, and to defend the role of faith in public life. The new programme of HMG's Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is a broad-ranging document entitled: "Creating the Conditions for Integration" (www.communities.gov.uk)

Government departments and also local authorities used to be and may still be sources of funds for faith-initiated social projects, or 'Interfaith Week' community events. Sometimes local authorities see secularism as a safe option, arguing that it is not their place to resource individual religious communities rather than seeing the long term contribution that faith based social action can make. Friends serving on interfaith bodies, as respondents to consultations, or when looking for opportunities for social projects, may well be able to put a different view.

So, what can we do together?

Quaker Committee on Christian and Interfaith Relations works at three levels: first connecting with others in the faith community in various

networks, secondly, writing and speaking for Quakers as a whole and thirdly listening to and supporting local Friends in their meetings. The suggestions that follow are addressed to Friends in local meetings, not an agenda for committee work.

Being

Amongst ourselves and in dialogue with others, we should be open about the varying faith patterns of our own Quaker community. This will include valuing the insights of Friends who have joined us from other faith traditions, letting these deepen our own worship, knowing ourselves. The diversity can be a strength rather than an obstacle to our sense of belonging. We hope that Friends who have particular interfaith contacts or involvement are able to share their experiences with others in their Meetings.

Learning

The more we know from reading, from personal participation and from the media about other faiths (as well as our own), the easier it will be to live in a world of mixed peoples. The appendices on the website (listed at the end) contain resources and references which will help with learning and discerning action. If only as citizens, we need at least to know the pattern of communities and faiths in our own locality. Are there some believers looking for premises in which to meet? Are there nationality issues, or overt tensions facing those of a particular faith identity? Has your Local Meeting considered a programme for interfaith studies and initiatives?

Meeting

This is about meeting others, and getting to know them. There is neighbourliness, friendliness to those who perhaps hire the Meeting House for events, accepting and offering hospitality. Has your Meeting thought of an organised visit to a mosque, synagogue, temple or gurdwara, with a return invitation? Getting started may not be easy, but the more formal suggestions in this list may bring the personal contacts needed. All this will generate the trust that makes relationships fruitful. Friends may sometimes find it hard to relate to the more fundamentalist members of other faiths (and Christianity too). However the dialogue of liberal to liberal will not be enough in the

longer term for the interfaith objective to deepen and flourish. We must develop a confident voice about our own position.

Participating

Friends have sometimes taken the lead or joined others in setting up councils of faiths or faiths forums.

Friends looking for a starting point may find that their Churches Together ecumenical movement has already joined an interfaith body locally. There are public events such as Interfaith Week in November, Peace Walks, Remembrance Day ceremonies, and the calendar celebrations of the various faiths. We should not be embarrassed about Christmas, either because of the early disdain of Friends, or for fear of alienating non-Christians. Believers expect each to be faithful to his or her own tradition and Christmas is a well accepted British cultural festival. Attending others' holy days, weddings and funerals, are great opportunities for us to be drawn in. As well as social or public meetings, deeper levels of dialogue may follow if the leads are nurtured. Establishing links via shared food builds relationships which come into their own when a difficulty such as an outrage against a faith community arises.

Serving

Friends involved in a broad spectrum of public life may have to engage with faith issues. Opportunities to promote understanding will apply to teachers, particularly but not exclusively, those of Religious Education, also those engaged in criminal justice or community projects.

Chaplains of hospitals and prisons will meet the full spectrum of religious allegiances. Friends at times become involved in issue-based political campaigns, particularly over human rights and environmental issues, and our allies may come from unexpected quarters. The Israel-Palestine controversies have made dialogue with the Jewish community painfully challenging, but with enormous effort it can become fruitful as well. (cf. the Manchester case study below and elsewhere)

Trustees of endowed Quaker funds large and small can play their role in supporting interfaith initiatives, and are seen to be amongst the pioneers in this field. Other friends ranging from students to employers

to carers may find opportunities to take or join initiatives with an interfaith dimension.

Case studies

Accompanying this document there are four case studies (available on the web at www.quaker.org.uk/qof-case-studies.) They focus on Quaker experiences of inter faith in Southampton, Harlow, South Shropshire and Manchester. The following thoughts reflect some of their findings.

1. For Quakers, taking part in inter-faith groups is not usually problematic and indeed is felt to be a useful contribution to society. The feeling of spiritual enhancement from an established relationship is rewarding.
2. In practical terms, the success of local interfaith bodies is often dependent on the presence, inspiration and commitment of individuals.
3. Quaker meeting houses are a useful resource as meeting places without obvious doctrinal connotations.
4. Collective events such as peace walks or responding to a disaster or incident can be very productive.
5. In the right circumstances, it is possible to handle the full range of "difficult issues" directly in dialogue, and to sustain a commitment to Truth and truthfulness.
6. In the one case where a conciliatory role was required, Friends were one of the parties in contention; a Bridge Building Group was created and played a constructive role.
7. The Local Authority interest in interfaith varies, and may only be lip service, but it is part of the organisational picture. Friends need to be alert to the Government's current policies and strategic thinking.
8. The inter-faith agenda will be dependent for success on leadership by committed individuals and on the development of friendly and informed personal relationships.
9. One message for us all was to 'speak with pride and listen with respect'.

The Jewish-Quaker dialogue is highly sensitive in the light of both our historical support and BYM's current ethical political stance on the Occupied Territories.

Have quakers something prophetic to offer?

We are exhorted to be "Patterns and examples" and to "Let our lives speak," but what is the distinctive Quaker approach?

- Truth is the key testimony for Friends. Thus the search for Truth and a personal unmediated experience of it pervades the shared religious experience of Quakers in Britain and beyond as our primary testimony and purpose.
- Friends accept an evolving revelation. We are perhaps distinctive in being more open to change to our faith and practice, yet within other faith traditions similar uncomfortable issues also clearly exist. The fact that we are searching quietly recognises that as Quakers we do not "possess" universal Truth.
- Are we ready, then, to set ourselves two charted spiritual goals, based on our own experiences: firstly that of achieving warm and loving relationships with those of all faiths, our fellow climbers, whom we meet in dialogue or discussion? Secondly, as the ultimate goal of interfaith, to begin to share our vulnerabilities and doubts, gifts and discoveries, as the key to experiencing a search for Truth together?
- Can we, by widening a spirit of trust, thus bring a deeper reality to the common search for an understanding of the human condition and the things that are eternal?
- We have a willingness to work with others of good faith

Resources and references

Sources of support, knowledge and ideas for the use of local meetings and Friends generally will be found under the QCCIR pages of the Britain Yearly Meeting website at www.quaker.org.uk/qccir.

- **Case Studies** of Quaker interfaith involvement in various urban and rural environments
- **Leaflets** with guidance for practice in interfaith contacts
- The Kindlers' booklet *SIGNPOSTS Quakers exploring Interfaith* includes examples of Quaker interfaith work over the past 20 years to the present. Available from the Quaker Centre Bookshop.

Also on the BYM website www.quaker.co.uk

- Up to date information on the BYM position and action on Israel/Palestine. Similarly-up-to date information on the Quaker position on same-sex marriage may be useful.

Search online for other information such as:

- **Local interfaith activities**
- **Contact details**, especially websites, for interfaith and other organisations e.g. Interfaith Network for the UK (IFN), the Three Faiths Forum, World Congress of Faiths, INFORM, Quaker Universalists
- **Events** (e.g. Interfaith Week, Woman's World Day of Prayer for Peace, Remembrance Day, Holocaust Memorial Day...)
- **Publications** including those of IFN, books on individual faith traditions (by authors from each tradition and others), government publications such as the report *Face-to-Face and Side-by-Side* published by DCLG in 2007.
- **Websites** of relevant initiatives and issues (for example the Muslim scholars' site www.acommonword.com)

Getting involved

Quakers may well want to get involved in interfaith activities in their local area. Anyone who would like to contribute at central level is encouraged to make their interest known by completing and returning a 'yellow form' obtainable from the Recording Clerk's office.