



Statement of policy on provision of trans-inclusive facilities on BYM's estate

With glad hearts we acknowledge and affirm the trans and gender diverse Friends in our Quaker communities, and express appreciation for the contribution and gifts that they bring to our meetings, which are communities made up of people with a diverse range of gender expressions **Minute 31 of Britain Yearly Meeting, 2021**

Background

As a faith group, Quakers in Britain have a clear position statement, recorded in Minute 31 of Britain Yearly Meeting 2021, and affirmed in subsequent minutes of Meeting for Sufferings. We wish to welcome and affirm trans and non-binary people in our communities. We have underlined this position in recent years through acts of witness, advocacy and solidarity.

The Supreme Court judgment in *For Women Scotland v. The Scottish Ministers* [2025] has affected the interpretation of some parts of the Equality Act 2010. No provision in respect of protection from discrimination for trans people has been affected, nor has the Gender Recognition Act 2004. The EHRC Code of Practice for services, public functions and associations has been updated to reflect the Supreme Court judgment.

Although the Code of Practice is not an authoritative statement of the law, and does not, in our view, provide sufficient clarity on how organisations should interpret and implement their obligations, its publication prompts Quakers in Britain to restate our expectations of how toilet and changing facilities across our estate can be used.

Our Principles

The Senior Leadership Team and BYM Trustees has agreed the following principles which continue to inform our decision-making about facilities at Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall:

- 1) Our position must uphold Yearly Meeting's commitment to welcoming and affirming trans and nonbinary people in Quaker spaces. Minute 31 of YM2021 is the overarching expression of our position and so governs our decisions.
- 2) Our testimonies of Equality, Truth and Integrity must guide the arrangements we make. No trans, non-binary or intersex Quaker, staff member, or service user will be asked to make any disclosure or prove their status in a way that is not asked of cis people. We must respect the dignity of each person to live with integrity, informed by the truth of their lived experience.
- 3) Our position should be compliant with the interpretation of the Equality Act as clarified in some narrow respects by the Supreme Court judgment.
- 4) We see the Equality Act itself as our primary legal guide when making decisions.
- 5) It is not possible or desirable to monitor who uses our facilities and therefore cannot guarantee any shared space as exclusive for one group of people. We will not label something as a single-sex space if we cannot truthfully guarantee that it will be single-sex.
- 6) Sufficient accessible facilities will continue to be designated for use only by those who need accessible facilities. They will not normally be made available for general use to

resolve issues around sex and gender, as this would further disadvantage people with disabilities.

- 7) We will take robust steps to ensure freedom from harassment or inappropriate behaviour. We have no evidence of any harm having come to women using our facilities from trans women or anybody else. We will investigate inappropriate behaviour (especially sexual or other harassment and hate speech or discrimination) and follow this up, including with the police if we believe a crime has been committed.

BYM Trustees have continued to be guided by these principles as the legal context has developed. The details of their chosen approach to toilet facilities is set out below. Legal advice on the matter was sought, considered carefully by BYM Trustees, and reflected in their discernment and minuted decision. In addition to aligning with the seven principles set out above, we believe that the position adopted is a proportionate means of achieving several legitimate aims (as allowed under the Equality Act 2010). In particular, it:

- effectively balances the needs of all building users by providing facilities which cater to groups with different needs;
- provides segregated spaces for women including trans women and men including trans men in the interests of dignity and safety
- provides private, self-contained and single-sex spaces for anyone who is not comfortable in a trans-inclusive segregated space.
- avoids the impact on trans people of having to “out” themselves to others by being excluded from men’s or women’s toilets, which allows trans people to live their lives with dignity and privacy.
- does not encourage people who do not need accessible facilities to use them as single-sex spaces, helping preserve access for those who do.

In addition, we note that this approach has worked well in practice for the last 15 months.

BYM Trustees have confirmed that over time, and in line with our planned maintenance schedule, all facilities in Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall should be refurbished to provide self-contained facilities for all.

“The rights and inclusion of people belonging to our communities and using our buildings are not, and should not be, just about toilets. We will continue to work to make our corner of the Commonwealth of Heaven on Earth a more welcoming and accessible place. This is what Love requires of us.” **Minute BYMT/25/05/02 of BYM Trustees**

Paul Parker, Recording Clerk, August 2026

Toilet facilities at Friends House

Information on toilet facilities available at Friends House

All our public facilities are trans inclusive. This means that toilets labelled with a 'female' sign are intended for cis women, trans women, and non-binary and intersex people for whom this toilet is the best aligned with their lived experience. Toilets labelled with a 'male' sign are intended for cis men, trans men, and non-binary and intersex people for whom this toilet is the best aligned with their lived experience.

We have a number of self-contained, and therefore single-sex facilities across our buildings.

Further details of our provision is below:

Basement:

- Accessible facilities: There is one accessible facility with a private basin and a baby changing facility.
- Self-contained cubicle: one self-contained, and therefore single-sex, cubicle which has a toilet, basin and hand-dryer.

Ground Floor:

- Women's Facilities: This area has 18 toilet cubicles, a shared handwashing area, and baby changing facilities.
- Men's facilities: This area has 6 toilet cubicles, a shared urinal and handwashing area, and baby changing facilities.
- Accessible facilities: There are two accessible facilities on the ground floor with private washbasins. One of them also has a shower.

First Floor:

- *Women's Facilities: This area has 4 toilet facilities and a shared handwashing area.
- *Men's Facilities: this area has one toilet cubicle, three urinals and a shared handwashing area.
- *Self-contained facilities: this area has one self-contained, and therefore single-sex facility containing a toilet, basin and hand-dryer.
- *Accessible facility: there is one self-contained accessible toilet facility, this contains a toilet, basin and hand-dryer and baby changing facilities.
- **First floor facilities are not available during Yearly Meeting events, when they are reserved for the use of participants in the children and young people's programmes.*

Second Floor:

- There are nine self-contained, and therefore single-sex, cubicles on the second-floor landing. Each cubicle has a toilet, basin and hand-dryer. One of these is an accessible facility. These can be used by anybody.

Toilet facilities at Swarthmoor Hall

- All toilet facilities at Swarthmoor Hall are designated as inclusive for people of all genders. A self-contained and therefore single-sex facility is available for users who require or prefer this.