

# Yearly Meeting programme

## comprising agenda & notes and events listing

Compiled for Yearly Meeting, Friends House, London 24–27 May 2019



This booklet is part of '*Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain 2019*', a set of publications published for Yearly Meeting.

The full set comprises:

5. The *Yearly Meeting programme*, with introductory material for Yearly Meeting 2019 and annual reports of Meeting for Sufferings, Quaker Stewardship Committee and other related bodies
6. *Testimonies*
7. *Minutes*, to be distributed after the conclusion of Yearly Meeting
8. The formal *Trustees' annual report* including financial statements for the year ended December 2018
9. Tabular statement.

All documents are available online at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym). If these do not meet your accessibility needs, or the needs of someone you know, please email [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk).

Printed copies of all documents will be available at Yearly Meeting.

All Quaker faith & practice references are to the online edition, which can be found at [www.quaker.org.uk/qfp](http://www.quaker.org.uk/qfp).

# 1 Introduction and information

## 1.1 Introduction

Yearly Meeting is when Quakers in Britain come together to worship, make decisions and spend time as a community.

It's also when we can learn, practise, improve, and take back to our local meetings ways of conducting business which are rooted in Quaker tradition and our own experience, yet also meet contemporary challenges.

The purposes and functions of Yearly Meeting are described in *Quaker faith & practice* 6.02–6.11, which also gives the background to the business agenda.

You can send comments on the agenda and on Yearly Meeting sessions to Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee by writing c/o the Recording Clerk, by [arrangements@quaker.org.uk](mailto:arrangements@quaker.org.uk) or, during Yearly Meeting, through the box on the information desk.

## 1.2 General contact details

Events & Committee Services  
Friends House  
173 Euston Road  
London  
NW1 2BJ

Telephone: 020 7663 1040

Email: [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk)

Website: [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bymevent](http://www.facebook.com/bymevent)

Twitter: [#ymevent\\_britain](https://twitter.com/ymevent_britain) [#YM2019](https://twitter.com/ymevent_britain)

# 2 How does Yearly Meeting work?

## Discipline of Yearly Meeting sessions

The principles of the Quaker business method are the same for Yearly Meeting as for area and local meetings. Please read the guidance found in chapter 3 of *Quaker faith & practice*.

“In our meetings for worship we seek through the stillness to know God’s will for ourselves and for the gathered group. Our meetings for church affairs, in which we conduct our business, are also meetings for worship based on silence, and they carry the same expectation that God’s guidance can be discerned if we are truly listening together and to each other and are not blinkered by preconceived opinions.”

*Quaker faith & practice 3.02*

At Yearly Meeting, which has a large number of Friends present, it is usually the case that not everyone who stands to give spoken ministry is called. It is useful to remember this:

“Not all who attend a meeting for church affairs will necessarily speak: those who are silent can help to develop the sense of the meeting if they listen in a spirit of worship.”

*Quaker faith & practice 3.05*

The agenda gives the timings of sessions. Published starting times indicate when the clerk will formally open the sessions; please aim to arrive before that time, so the meeting can gather in silence beforehand. The clerk will aim to conclude sessions by published closing times, but if it is necessary to extend sessions, the clerk will indicate when those who need to meet participants in the children’s programme, or who have other pressing matters, can leave.

Entering late or leaving early can disturb other Friends. If you need to do so, please wait for a shuffle break or, if necessary, leave at the end of an item of business. Please avoid leaving or entering when the clerk is standing or a Friend is ministering.

One door only will be used for latecomers so please follow the directions of doorkeepers and wait quietly until a doorkeeper indicates you can enter.

Friends will be reminded at regular intervals to turn off mobile phones. Please do so. Even a phone set to vibrate can be distracting to Friends sitting near you. The exception to this rule will be parents with children in the Children and Young People’s programmes, who need to be contactable in case of emergency.

The Quaker business method is a discipline in which all present should be focusing on worship and discernment of the matter at hand. Please avoid any activity that detracts from this discipline. This includes knitting and unsuitable use of electronic devices.

However, Friends are aware that some people with particular needs will find it easier to concentrate if using their hands. If this is the case, please let elders know by emailing [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk) and they will be in touch prior to Yearly Meeting.

## Spoken ministry

We meet in large venues and therefore rely on the use of microphones. If you feel called to minister please stand, or if unable to stand please raise your hand and wait for a microphone.

If you rise, and another is called, please sit down.

If you are called, please tell everyone who you are and where you worship before you begin your ministry (e.g. 'x area meeting' or 'attending xx local meeting or worshipping community').

When offering spoken ministry, "try to sum up what you have to say in as few words as possible. Speak simply and audibly, but do not speak for effect." (*Quaker faith & practice* 3.10)

Each contribution should be heard in silence. Audible indications of approval or disapproval of spoken ministry are not part of the discipline of Britain Yearly Meeting.

After each contribution, there will be a pause to allow reflection. Please do not stand at this time. When the clerk feels the time is right for a further contribution, they will say so. If you have tested your ministry and feel that the meeting needs to hear it in order to reach unity, you should stand at this point.

When the clerk discerns that the time is right, they will say they are ready to draft a minute. At this point, any Friend standing should sit down. Whilst the minute is being drafted, please uphold the clerks in prayerful silence.

When the clerk asks if a minute is acceptable Friends can answer "I hope so", or stand to be called. Please reflect on whether the minute is good enough. If you are clear that an amendment is necessary, stand and wait to be called; however, do not present fresh material at this point.

## **Elders at Yearly Meeting**

Yearly Meeting elders prayerfully support the meeting and take responsibility for the right holding of meetings for worship, including those for church affairs. They also support individual Friends as required.

Elders uphold the clerks in worship immediately before each session, and are available to Friends between sessions.

## **Use of electronic devices**

You can use electronic devices to access Yearly Meeting documents but please make sure you do not disturb others. Please ensure your device is on 'silent'.

Resist the temptation to check emails or post on social networks while in sessions.

Outside sessions please think carefully about public posts to social networking sites. What stage have we reached in our discernment? Are you being tempted to anticipate a decision? Remember, ministry given in session has been offered in the context of a gathered meeting for worship and therefore might not be appropriate to share in a public forum.

# 3 Explanation of business to be taken at Yearly Meeting

## 3.1 Amendments to Quaker faith & practice

Meeting for Sufferings suggests amendments to *Quaker faith & practice* as printed under item 12.

Comments and queries from Friends and meetings in advance of Yearly Meeting should be sent to Michael Booth, Church Government Adviser, at [qfp@quaker.org.uk](mailto:qfp@quaker.org.uk). Suggestions should relate only to the proposed changes. Any suggestions for further changes made as a result of comments received will be available at the time of Yearly Meeting.

## 3.2 Nominations and appointments

Each year, Yearly Meeting appoints Friends to serve in different capacities at that Yearly Meeting and to serve on committees and groups working throughout the year.

Yearly Meeting itself will nominate and appoint Friends to serve on:

- the Committee to Examine Minutes, which operates during Yearly Meeting and is responsible for checking the minutes at the close of each session and correcting any slight inaccuracies. Friends can be nominated to this committee in advance of Yearly Meeting but must be present at Yearly Meeting to serve. Further information
- is on the website [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym). The deadline for nominations is 17:00 on 22 May. If we receive nominations for more than ten Friends, Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee will determine the names to be brought before Yearly Meeting on Friday evening
- the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group (see *Quaker faith & practice* 6.22). To nominate Friends to serve on this committee please complete the form available at the information desk. The form will need to be signed by you and the Friend(s) you are nominating. You can only nominate Friends in membership who are present at Yearly Meeting. Completed forms should be put in the box at the information desk by 12:00 on Sunday 26 May. A list of Friends nominated, together with a map showing their geographic distribution, will be available on a notice board in the north corridor.

Objections to any of the nominations should be brought to the attention of Yearly Meeting

Arrangements Committee via the boxes on the reception desks or by email at [arrangements@quaker.org.uk](mailto:arrangements@quaker.org.uk) as soon as possible and before the rise of session on Sunday afternoon. A meeting of all nominated Friends will be held on Sunday 26 May at 17:15 in the restaurant to define the task and solve any problems of over-nomination and geographical spread. The nominations will then be brought before Yearly Meeting on Monday 27 May.

Nominations from nominating committees

For the remaining vacancies, three different nominating committees will bring the names of Friends to Yearly Meeting: Committee on Clerks, Central Nominations Committee and Yearly Meeting Nominating Group.

These Friends have been identified after a careful and prayerful process of discernment. Their names will be published on our website [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym) before Yearly Meeting, and a full printed list of nominations and requests for release will be available at Yearly Meeting.

If you see a problem with the service of any of the Friends nominated, you should:

- before Yearly Meeting, contact Zoe Prosser either by email at [nominations@quaker.org.uk](mailto:nominations@quaker.org.uk) or telephone 020 7663 1115
- at Yearly Meeting, contact Arrangements Committee via email [arrangements@quaker.org.uk](mailto:arrangements@quaker.org.uk) or use the box at the information desk. This should happen as soon as possible and before the session involved.

## Receipt of annual reports

Yearly Meeting is the final constitutional authority of the Religious Society of Friends. Consequently Yearly Meeting receives the annual reports of the committees appointed to carry out its business between Yearly Meetings. These reports are from:

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees are responsible to the yearly meeting for the right stewardship of the centrally managed work and the assets and property of the yearly meeting. See *Quaker faith & practice* 8.16–8.19. Trustees are accountable to both Yearly Meeting and the charity regulators.

Central Nominations Committee is responsible for bringing the names of Friends for service to both Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings.

Consequently, they have an overview of the number of Friends who have offered their service and are involved in encouraging Friends to consider service. See *Quaker faith & practice* 6.21.

Friends Trusts Ltd is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It is the denominational trust corporation for the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain and in this capacity holds

property and investments as custodian trustee or nominee for meetings and other bodies within Britain Yearly Meeting. It receives legacies which are to benefit some aspect of the Society or its work and manages a number of Quaker trusts. See *Quaker faith & practice* 14.45.

Friends Trusts Limited's audit will not take place until after Yearly Meeting, so no report is included in these documents. The report will be available on the website together with the company's annual report and financial statements when they have been approved by the directors at their June meeting.

Meeting for Sufferings is the body entrusted with the general care of matters affecting Britain Yearly Meeting and, in the intervals between Yearly Meetings, the making of decisions and issuing of statements in the name of Britain Yearly Meeting. See *Quaker faith & practice* 7.02–7.06.

Quaker Housing Trust is the yearly meeting's own national housing charity. It makes grants and loans to social housing projects. Independent of BYM funds, its income comes directly from Friends and meetings. See *Quaker faith & practice* 8.15.

Quaker Stewardship Committee gives help and guidance to area meetings in meeting the requirements of charity law in the stewardship of finance and property. They are also required to certify annually to Yearly Meeting that every part of Britain Yearly Meeting is producing proper financial accounts and property records. See *Quaker faith & practice* 14.36–14.42.

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee is responsible for planning the agenda for and use of premises during each Yearly Meeting. At the beginning of each Yearly Meeting, Agenda Committee reports on the planning of that Yearly Meeting and sets the agenda in context. See *Quaker faith & practice* 6.18.

## Yearly Meeting Epistle

The Yearly Meeting Epistle, also called the General Epistle, is the letter sent from this Yearly Meeting for Friends everywhere: to other yearly meetings

worldwide and to local meetings in Britain. It is sent to all local meetings immediately after Yearly Meeting so that it can be read out at meeting for worship at the first available opportunity.

## Procedure for the Yearly Meeting Epistle

*Quaker faith & practice* 6.23 outlines the process for creating the epistle. The details are as follows:

- Any Friend may give written advice on the content of the epistle by placing it in the box on the information desk before 17:30 on Sunday 26 May.
- Epistle Drafting Committee will then produce a Draft Epistle, which will be shared with the Children & Young People's Programme. Copies may be picked up from the information desk on Monday morning, 27 May. At 8:45 on Monday morning Friends can hear the Draft Epistle being read in the George Bradshaw Room (first floor).
- Written comments on the content, text, style, grammar, language, etc. of the Draft Epistle should be placed in the box on the information desk no later than 15 minutes after the rise of the morning session on Monday 27 May.
- A revised Draft Epistle will be presented at the final session on Monday 27 May when no further revision (except perhaps excision) will be invited.



# 4 Agenda and notes

## Throughout the weekend

### Events

#### **Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke stands**

The East Corridor

The Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) stand and the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre stand will be in the East Corridor all weekend. Members of staff from BYM and Woodbrooke will be available at various times of the day. See stands for details.

#### **Community hub**

Waldo Williams Suite

Yearly Meeting is a time when you can meet old F/friends and new. At the times below there will be space in the courtyard, bookshop and café to meet and have a coffee. The community hub will be the place to go to enjoy meeting new friends around conversation tables, over art and craft activities, and by playing board games. There will even be a jigsaw! This is the place to go if you are on your own at Yearly Meeting and would like to get to know new people.

The hub will be open throughout Yearly Meeting and will usually have a host present.

Friday 15:00–21:00

Saturday 09:30–17:15

Sunday 09:30–17:15

Monday 09:30–16:00

#### **The Library**

The Library will be open throughout the weekend and you are welcome to come in, whether to talk to staff, to look at our displays and resources, or simply to find a moment of quiet. Please note that the Library will be used for special interest meetings on Saturday and Sunday lunchtimes and at dinner time.

# Friday 24 May

## Events before Yearly Meeting

12:30–14:00 Large Meeting House

### **Quaker Socialist Society**

#### **Salter Lecture: Solutions for a divided society**

Society is increasingly divided, not just along traditional class lines, but between city and countryside, and by metropolitan 'elites. People often don't know their neighbours. Loneliness is on the increase. Young people who have worked hard at their studies are stuck on low pay with little hope of buying a home.

Catherine West MP will suggest some basic solutions for our communities, which could make a real difference and bring people back together.

15:00–17:00 Large Meeting House

### **Britain Yearly Meeting**

#### **Britain Yearly Meeting fair**

Come and find out more about the work done by Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM). There will be displays and literature available and a chance to speak to staff and committee members. No centrally managed work tables will be at the Sunday evening Groups Fair. We realise that not everyone will be able to attend on Friday afternoon and therefore aspects of the work will also be displayed on the permanent BYM stand throughout the weekend.

15:00–15:45 Sarah Fell Room

### **Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre**

#### **Preparing for Yearly Meeting**

An opportunity to explore the particular focus for Yearly Meeting 2019. Join Woodbrooke staff for a short, facilitated session using some of the materials sent to meetings in January. These are open to all, whether you have been unable to attend such sessions in your local or area meeting or would like to do it again.

16:00–16:45 Sarah Fell Room

#### **How does Yearly Meeting work?**

Is this your first time at Yearly Meeting? Have you been before but are still confused by what happened? In this session, Woodbrooke staff will guide you through the way Quaker business method works in a large meeting. They will also offer practical tips on getting the best from the weekend and provide a chance to ask any questions that are on your mind. There is no such thing as a silly question!

17:00–17:45 Sarah Fell Room

Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

#### **Preparing for Yearly Meeting**

*See 15:00–15:45 Sarah Fell Room*

18:00–18:45 Sarah Fell Room

## **How does Yearly Meeting work?**

See 16:00–16:45 Sarah Fell Room

## **Yearly Meeting session 1, 19:00–21:00**

### **1. Appointment of Clerks**

The Yearly Meeting Committee on Clerks nominates the following Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerks for Yearly Meeting 2019, serving until the first session of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020:

Clerk, Clare Scott Booth, London West AM

First Assistant Clerk, Siobhan Haire, North London AM

Second Assistant Clerk, Gavin Burnell, Leeds AM

### **2. Welcome to all**

### **3. Children & Young People's Programmes and Junior Yearly Meeting**

The Clerk will refer to the age-related programmes happening in parallel with main Yearly Meeting sessions and identify times when we will all come together.

### **4. Appointment of Committee to Examine Minutes**

The names of those nominated to serve on the committee will be read out and Yearly Meeting may approve them.

### **5. Agenda Introduction**

The Clerk of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee will introduce the report of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee.

The report can be found at Appendix A and Friends should refer to page 7 for an explanation of the role of the committee.

### **6. Explanation of practicalities**

### **7. Report of Central Nominations Committee**

Further to minute 8 of Yearly Meeting 2018, Central Nominations Committee brings forward nominations to Yearly Meeting 2019 as specified in Table 1 of the Schedule of Nominations appended to these minutes.

Friends should refer to guidance on page 6.

### **8. Central Nominations Committee – nominations required**

We ask Central Nominations Committee to bring nominations to Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020 as specified in Table 2 of the Schedule of Nominations appended to these minutes.

Friends should refer to guidance on page 6.

### **9. Report of Yearly Meeting Committee on Clerks**

The Yearly Meeting Committee on Clerks brings forward nominations as specified in Table 3 of the Schedule of Nominations appended to these minutes.

Friends should refer to guidance on page 6.

### **10. Report of Yearly Meeting Nominating Group (2018-2019)**

Further to minute 47 of Yearly Meeting 2018, the Nominating Group appointed at Yearly Meeting 2018 brings forward nominations as specified in Table 4 of the Schedule of Nominations appended to these minutes.

### **11. Nominations to the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group (2019–2020)**

## 12. Proposed amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*

Friends should refer to guidance on page 6. Meeting for Sufferings proposes amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*. These changes were considered by Meeting for Sufferings at a meeting held 23–25 November 2018, and their minute and the proposed amendments are as follows:

### MfS/18/11/06 Revisions to *Quaker faith & practice* (part)

We receive paper MfS/18/11/07 and Mark Tod, convenor of Church Government Advisory Group (CGAG), has spoken to it.

#### a) *Quaker faith & practice* sections 4.23–4.26

Further to our minute MfS/18/04/05, CGAG has brought forward proposed changes to *Quaker faith & practice* sections 4.23–26, currently headed ‘Disputes among Friends’. We agree to these changes, with two minor alterations made in this meeting, and forward the draft text to Yearly Meeting.

#### b) *Quaker faith & practice* sections 6.21 and 6.22

Further to our minute MfS/15/12/10 and minute 28 of Yearly Meeting 2016, CGAG has brought forward proposed changes to *Quaker faith & practice* section 6.21, Central Nominations Committee and 6.22, Yearly Meeting Nominating Group. We agree to these changes and forward the draft text to Yearly Meeting.

We forward this minute to Yearly Meeting.

## Changes to the appeals process

See Appendix C for an explanation of the changes proposed. New text is underlined and removed text is struck through.

### 4.23 Disputes among Friends and disunity

Our meeting communities are not immune to conflict and we should be well prepared and willing to accept it and engage with it. In times of conflict we are required to show love and face our difficulties so that we can move forward together in unity. It will not always be possible to find conflict resolution and in such cases appropriate conflict transformation should be considered. Further guidance on conflict in meetings can be found in 10.21–10.24 Conflict within the meeting.

Area meetings are recommended to appoint a group of experienced and knowledgeable Friends to give general assistance in the amicable settlement of disputes among Friends. If help or advice from outside the area meeting is needed, meetings should ask Quaker Life the clerk of Meeting for Sufferings, who to suggest Friends and others able to

give it. Techniques of problem-solving, mediation, counselling or meetings for clearness may be appropriate in particular instances where disputants wish to mitigate the consequences of confrontation. It should be borne in mind that Friends were among the pioneers of conflict resolution as a distinct activity and have constantly sought to promote reconciliation in the wider world.

See also 20.67–20.75 Conflict

## 12. Proposed amendments to *Quaker faith & practice* (continued)

### 4.25 Right of appeal against decision

If a member is dissatisfied with a final decision of an area meeting affecting her or him (e.g. if membership has been terminated) and feels that the area meeting has acted unjustly, unreasonably, with insufficient knowledge or not in right ordering, them personally and adversely, and provided that

- i. the decision concerns the termination of membership; and
- ii. the grounds of the appeal are that the decision was not made in right ordering, or was not made with knowledge of the relevant facts, or was unreasonable; and
- iii. experienced mediators have been involved and the matter is not resolved;

the member may appeal in writing to the area meeting clerk. The nature of the appeal and name of the appellant should be kept confidential as far as is possible or is desired by the appellant. The area meeting shall then appoint a small group of disinterested Friends to try to settle the matter (see 4.23). If this fails, the area meeting shall then ask a neighbouring area meeting or meetings to appoint a small group of disinterested elders, or one drawn from those exercising eldership, to act as an appeal group. The appeal group should meet with the appellant and representatives of the respondent area meeting and issue a judgement to that area meeting, as far as possible without breaking the confidentiality of the parties. The area meeting should accept the judgement of the appeal group, at which stage the decision should become as public as is needed for the matter to be acted upon.

If the appellant remains dissatisfied with the decision of the appeal group, he or she may then appeal to Meeting for Sufferings against the decision of the area meeting. On receiving such an appeal, the clerk of Meeting for Sufferings shall report this to the area meeting and shall request Meeting for Sufferings to appoint an appeal group of five Friends, who should be independent of the area meeting concerned. The group shall make all such enquiries as seem to them desirable, from the member concerned and from others having relevant knowledge, to consider and determine whether or not the appeal should be allowed and whether any further recommendations should be made. In conducting such enquiries the healing power of worship will be helpful.

The decision of the Friends so appointed shall be final and be communicated directly to the parties concerned. The appeal group shall inform Meeting for Sufferings that it has reached a decision and communicated it to the parties concerned, and Meeting for Sufferings shall record this in its minutes without breaking the confidentiality of the parties concerned. Guidelines for the conduct of an appeal group are obtainable from the Recording Clerk.

### 4.26 Right of appeal against decision

If an area meeting is dissatisfied with a final decision of another area meeting that affects it, the dissatisfied area meeting may appeal to Meeting for Sufferings against such decision. The procedure on such an appeal shall be similar to that on an appeal by a member personally, but prior notice shall be given by the dissatisfied area meeting to the other area meeting concerned before invoking this appeal procedure. should seek advice from the Recording Clerk.

## 12. Proposed amendments to *Quaker faith & practice* (continued)

### Changes to Central Nominations Committee and Yearly Meeting Nominating Group

6.21 Central Nominations Committee. Delete existing text and insert:

Central Nominations Committee is responsible for finding names for appointments as required by Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings, and for overseeing and developing nominations procedures. It is appointed by Yearly Meeting on the nomination of Yearly Meeting Nominating Group (6.22). Members are appointed on a rotating triennial basis. Terms of reference for the committee are agreed by Yearly Meeting.

Central Nominations Committee consults with the committees and other bodies for which it is seeking names and ensures that up-to-date terms of reference and other information required are obtained in good time. The committee seeks nominations on the basis of its own discernment and in line with the general guidance on nominations set out in 3.22–3.25.

6.22 Yearly Meeting Nominating Group. Delete existing text and insert:

Yearly Meeting Nominating Group is responsible for nominating to Yearly Meeting names of those to serve on Central Nominations Committee (6.21) and Committee on Clerks (6.19).

Yearly Meeting Nominating Group is appointed annually by Yearly Meeting from those attending Yearly Meeting. The convener is nominated by the previous Nominating Group.

Yearly Meeting Nominating Group consults as necessary and brings names to the next Yearly Meeting as required. The group also offers nominations to fill any vacancies.

## 13. Eldership and Pastoral Care at Yearly Meeting

### 14. Concerning privilege: an introduction

“Evils which have struck their roots deep in the fabric of human society are often accepted, even by the best minds, as part of the providential ordering of life. They lurk unsuspected in the system of things until men of keen vision and heroic heart drag them into the light, or until their insolent power visibly threatens human welfare.”

William Charles Braithwaite, 1919; *Quaker faith & practice*

23.05 Friends, we live in challenging times.

Yearly Meeting 2019 provides us with an opportunity to investigate what might be holding us back from acting on our urgent concerns.

Together we will examine our own privilege and lack of privilege in relation to climate change and climate justice, and in relation to the inclusion and equality agenda that is a living part of our Quaker witness.

Where do we have privilege? Where do we lack it? Can we recognise this for ourselves? How does it feel to exam this together? Can we work together to overcome our fears and move forward?

This is an unusual and challenging theme and, whilst offering the potential for spiritual and practical transformation, investigating our own privilege is fraught with difficulties. We expect to feel some discomfort. Therefore, as we engage in worship and discernment, let us be tender with ourselves and each other. We undertake this exercise in order to free ourselves, to grow and change. We seek to become aware of the unseen and unspoken chains that bind us and determine the ‘permission to act’ in our lives.

Although privilege is wider than the particular issues we are examining here – and our privilege is fluid and depends on the context we are in – this will only be the start of our journey. The work will continue through Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020 and beyond.

# Saturday 25 May

Events, 08:45–09:15

Sarah Fell Room

## **Early morning worship (unprogrammed)**

Restaurant

## **Early morning worship (programmed/semi-programmed)**

Further information will be available on the website and bulletin boards.

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## **Yearly Meeting session 2, 09:30–12:00**

### **15. Looking through the lens of privilege at climate justice and inclusion**

In this session Friends will hear two voices engaged in a broad-ranging conversation around privilege. Our speakers will draw on different personal experiences, as together they consider privilege and the lack of privilege in relation to diversity and inclusion, sustainability and climate justice. This session will prepare the ground for wider discernment, which will continue throughout the weekend in parallel sessions and beyond.

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# Saturday 25 May

Events, 12:30–13:30

Large Meeting House

## **Book of Discipline Revision Committee**

### **Meet your Book of Discipline Revision Committee**

A large task has been given to the Book of Discipline Revision Committee. This needs to be grounded in worship. Come along to a meeting for worship with members of the committee, and afterwards have a chance to meet them.

Ada Salter Room 2

## **BYM Central Nominations Committee**

### **Coffee, cake and Quaker Service Information Forms**

Are you interested in serving Britain Yearly Meeting at a central level? Come and speak to Central Nominations Committee members about opportunities for Quaker service.

We are happy to talk to you about the variety of ways you can serve.

There will be cake.

George Fox Room

## **Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)**

Yearly Meeting Programme



## **Amplifying the global Quaker voice**

In the context of world Quakerism, we invite Friends to contribute to FWCC's purpose of amplifying the Quaker voice. Ahead of the World Plenary Meeting in 2023 in South Africa, we will be engaging Quakers around the world in the conversation 'Addressing spiritual issues of privilege and historical injustice'. What can we say? How can we enlarge the conversation taking place at Yearly Meeting and bring healing to the world?

Drayton House Room B16 Edgeworth

### **Friends of Hlekweni**

#### **Friends of Hlekweni – steady work in Zimbabwe**

Friends of Hlekweni Trustees will give an update on our work in Zimbabwe, including support for primary schools, funding of the Zimbabwe Secondary Bursary Scheme and peacebuilding work (AVP and Peace Clubs). The formal annual business will be conducted. We plan time for discussion and networking.

Drayton House Room B20 Jevons

### **BYM Property Advice Project**

#### **Meeting houses and sustainability – done simply**

A chance to hear, share and discuss ideas of how Friends can take simple steps along the way of making meeting houses more sustainable.

Drayton House Room B04

### **Northern Friends Peace Board/Quaker Peace & Social Witness**

#### **Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – time for Quaker action**

Concerned that the UK has not signed the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons? Come along to learn more about the Treaty, the work of NFPB and QPSW on this issue, and how you can effectively lobby the UK Government to sign it!

Drayton House Room B06

### **QPSW Economics & Sustainability Programme**

#### **Tax in the new economy**

How can we use tax as a tool to build 'an economy where Quaker testimony can flourish'? This session will look at why tax is key to equality and sustainability, and how Friends can take action for tax justice. It will include an opportunity for small group discussions exploring the big questions about tax and its role in our society, and starting to imagine a better tax system.

Restaurant

### **QPSW Turning the Tide**

#### **Turning the Tide – 25 years of making waves**

Turning the Tide will be 25 years old in 2019!

Join us to explore how people were turning faith into action 25 years ago and how people are turning faith into action today. Come along if you'd like to reflect on the challenges of the current context and feel encouraged about the possibilities of positive change through nonviolent means.

Ada Salter Room 1

## **QPSW Middle East Programme**

### **Morally responsible investment in Israel- Palestine**

In November 2018, BYM announced it would not invest any of its centrally-held funds in companies profiting from the occupation of Palestine. In doing so, Quakers became the first church in the UK to take such a position. Come and hear how this decision came into being, the history behind it, the impact it's had, and how Friends across the country can help their own LMs, AMs and communities to take action.

William Penn Room 1

#### **Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations**

### **Andrew Copson: Humanists and Quakers – chalk and cheese?**

Yearly Meeting's ecumenical guests this year have been chosen to open up issues of diversity and inclusion, and to push at the boundaries of 'what is faith?' Andrew Copson, Humanists UK's youngest ever chief executive when he was appointed in 2010 at the age of 29, will talk to us about the relationship between faith and scepticism, positive versus negative definitions of belief, and whether Religious Education should include world views.

Drayton House Room B19

#### **Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture**

### **Preventing torture – taking effective action**

Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture (Q-CAT) is a concern upheld by Britain Yearly Meeting.

Torture is widely employed in the world. Q-CAT invites supporters and potential supporters to:

- explore their perceptions of torture and to consult with them about how difficulties could be addressed
- share information and ideas about ways to reduce the use of torture, following on from the conference 'Preventing torture – effective action'.

Sarah Fell Room

#### **Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA)**

### **The price of populism: How are European and international affairs changing and who will be affected?**

55.9 billion euro – that's how much the EU will spend on border control and military research over the next seven years. Quaker work seeks to overcome this trend and build a Europe of sanctuary. Join us to hear about the impact we are having, and to share what is important to you.

George Bradshaw Room

#### **Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies**

### **Between death and life**

As Quakers we are called to bear witness to the sustaining power of the Spirit in our lives. Spiritual experiences, when integrated into our daily awareness, give us glimpses of eternity and help us to live better in the here and now. In this meeting we will share experiences and look at Quaker and other spiritual sources that help sustain us on our journey, with information about QFAS events and activities.

William Penn Room 2

#### **Quaker Life Ministry & Outreach team**

### **Tear and share: faith and food**

Yearly Meeting Programme

Join Quaker Life's ministry and outreach team to learn about our work, our team and have some lunch with us.

Ada Salter Room 3

### **Quaker Peace & Social Witness**

#### **Who we are in the world and how solidarity looks today**

To be true to our testimony of justice, our community has been exploring issues around diversity and inclusion, but are we doing enough? In this session,

we will explore the importance of understanding our power and privilege as a way to transform our community and society, and will explore tools to achieve justice for those communities in the margins and ourselves.

Drayton House Room B03 Ricardo

### **Quaker Universalist Group**

#### **Forgiveness in a universalist context**

We will look back at our annual conference, which focused on forgiveness. We answered the question 'Why forgive?' from a variety of viewpoints, including psychology, justice, Christianity and animism. We will also look forward to our 2020 conference entitled 'Life and Death; Time and Eternity'. Our many pamphlets will be on sale, including our recent ones on Islam, compassion, mysticism, language and truth.

Library

### **Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre**

#### **Postgraduate Quaker Study & Research with Woodbrooke**

Find out about our research degrees run in collaboration with the University of Birmingham and our online postgraduate degrees run in collaboration with the University of Lancaster.

Drayton House Room B05

### **Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre**

#### **Equipping for Ministry**

Do you want to deepen your understanding of the Quaker way and explore your own sense of ministry or service? Woodbrooke's two-year learning programme 'Equipping for Ministry' gives a solid grounding in thinking about what it is to be a Quaker in the world today and exploring and discerning how you might live out that calling. It is designed to nurture the life of individuals and their communities. Come and find out more.

Waldo Williams Room 1

### **Quaker Life Ministry & Outreach team**

#### **Quaker parents and families space**

A space for parents and families to rest, relax and eat over lunchtime during Yearly Meeting. This is a chance to meet other Quaker families.

## Yearly Meeting session 3, 14:15–17:15

### 16. Parallel sessions

To develop our investigation of privilege, Friends are invited to choose one of a number of sessions running in parallel. These will include working towards our commitment to 'zero carbon'; engaging with diversity; using privilege for positive change; and challenging exceptionalism.

Friends are encouraged to listen to each other with open hearts. Please remember to let people speak for themselves. This work is not theoretical; it is about us. Can we lovingly respect each other's voices and cherish each other's Friendship?

In parallel sessions Friends may find themselves confronted with these and other questions:

- How does my privilege impact me? How does it impact my relationships with others?
- Does privilege give me choices? What choices do I have?
- Does my lack of privilege limit me? How does it impact my relationships with others? How does it impact my ability to act?
- What are the repercussions if I take action? And if I do not take action?
- How will I integrate what I have learned?

If you find a session challenging, please give yourself permission to slow down and sit with the topic in worship. But, equally, prepare to be surprised, liberated and transformed!

Sessions are in development at the time of publication. Full details, including locations, will be available at Yearly Meeting and circulated in advance to all Friends who have registered to attend. Some sessions will repeat during the second parallel sessions slot on Sunday afternoon, so Friends will have the opportunity to choose more than one option.

### 17. The work of our national representative body: receipt of annual report from Meeting for Sufferings

The written report can be found at Appendix D and Friends should refer to page 7 for an explanation of the role of the committee.

### 18. Process for amending *Quaker faith & practice* while a new book of discipline is being prepared

At a meeting held 23–25 November 2018, Meeting for Sufferings considered options for keeping *Quaker faith & practice* up to date during the preparation of a new book of discipline and their minute is printed below.

#### **MfS/18/11/06 Revisions to Quaker faith & practice (part)**

We receive paper MfS/18/11/07 and Mark Tod, convenor of Church Government Advisory Group (CGAG), has spoken to it.

#### **c) Necessary revisions to church government while a new book of discipline is being prepared**

Yearly Meeting 2018 agreed to a complete revision of *Quaker faith & practice*, and the Recording Clerk has explained that this will take

some years to complete. During that time, the current constitutional text in the church government chapters is likely to become out

of date. We agree that Meeting for Sufferings should be ready to take on the responsibility for keeping up to date the current church government text included in *Quaker faith & practice*.

We forward this minute to Yearly Meeting.

# Saturday 25 May

Events, 17:45–18:45

Library

**BYM data protection and records custodians support**

**Meeting records and data protection drop-in**

Drop-in session for anyone to discuss issues with data protection in meetings or their meeting records. The drop-in will be hosted by BYM staff who advise meetings on these issues. There will also be guides and leaflets to pick up on related topics.

Drayton House Room B19

**Quaker Peace & Social Witness Conciliation Group**

**Experience of Quaker international conciliation work**

The role of faith in building peace and preventing further armed conflict. Hear about Quaker work alongside indigenous peacemakers working to promote nonviolence in an area of South Asia.

Drayton House Room B06

**QPSW Crime, Community and Justice**

**Justice Matters – a workshop**

What prevents crime? Does punishment work? Can harm be transformed? These are three of the questions that come up at a Justice Matters workshop.

Drayton House Room B16 Edgeworth

**QPSW Peace Education**

**Rethinking security through peace education**

Big ideas about building a safe and peaceful world are coming from the Rethinking Security project. This interactive workshop explores the key question, what makes us safer? What does security mean at a community, national or global level?

We'll facilitate the same way we would in a secondary school to model peace education in action, so whether you're drawn to the peace education "how?" or Rethinking Security "what?" this workshop is for you.

Sarah Fell Room

**Quaker Life and Quaker Stewardship Committee**

**Simpler Meetings Project**

Are our meetings and arrangements more complicated than they need to be? How can the roles of area meeting clerks, treasurers and trustees be made simpler, and less time-consuming? What solutions have meetings already found that work in their experience? What could you try?

Come and hear about the Simpler Meetings Project and some of the varied and surprising approaches you could use.

Drayton House Room B03 Ricardo

**Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN)**

**Asylum and refugees – a continuing concern**

Yearly Meeting Programme

QARN will present the areas of its current work and concerns around asylum and refugees, with particular emphasis on immigration detention, what's happened over the past year and what the next year might hold. What's happening in these areas of Friends' concerns?

George Bradshaw Room

## **Quaker Concern for Animals**

### **Who do you say that I am? Quaker spirituality and species equality**

Is it desirable, or even possible, for human beings to perceive themselves as equals with sentient, non-human beings, rather than as their natural superiors? Is it possible for us to regard animals, or particular species, as having the same sort of interest in their personal well-being, the well-being of their families and the integrity of this earth, our common home?

What does love ask of us?

William Penn Room 2

## **West Midlands Quaker Peace Education Project**

### **Minus Violence Plus Peace**

A report from West Midlands Quaker Peace Education Project on recent work working with at-risk youth on anti-knife crime. Using a grant from the Home Office we have been working in partnership with Youth Against Violence to work with schools and the community around issues of knife crime. Can peace education help us tackle some troubling issues?

William Penn Room 1

## **Friends House Moscow**

### **Friends House Moscow: Changing with the times**

The British Committee and International Board Members invite you to join us for an update on, and discussion of, how our activities (both in the UK and Russia/Ukraine) have evolved: responding to our discernment of what Quakers are called to do with limited funds in a dynamic geopolitical context. It includes a report by Mike Eccles (FWCC) on the 2018 'introduction to Quakers' event run in Ukraine with FHM involvement.

Drayton House Room B20 Jevons

## **Quaker World Relations Committee/ Quaker Peace & Social Witness**

### **Sustainability: a perspective from the world family**

Hear from Susanna Mattingly, Sustainability Communications Manager, FWCC; Ludwig Quirog, a Friend from the Philippines; and Lindsey Fielder Cook, Representative for Climate Change, QUNO to understand more about what is being done across the Quaker world on sustainability. Chris Walker from QPSW will then talk about Friends' climate advocacy in the UK. We will challenge each other to consider the spiritual basis of our role in the global Quaker sustainability movement.

Ada Salter Room 2

## **BYM communications team**

### **Tea, snacks and social media chats**

Come along to this open and informal session where there will be tea, coffee, snacks – and opportunities to chat to Friends and BYM staff about what's going on in the world of Quaker social media. Share tips, geek out, and make friends both online and off. Bring along your smartphone or

tablet too: staff can give hands-on technical help, whether you are mastering Instagram stories or making your Twitter pictures accessible.

Ada Salter Room 3

### **Roots of Resistance**

#### **Roots of Resistance: Quaker campaign against the arms trade**

Find out how you can get involved in Roots of Resistance and witness to our collective peace testimony at an arms fair in London in September 2019.

George Fox Room

### **Quakers and mental health**

#### **Quakers and mental health**

Mental health is a key issue for many individual Friends and for meetings. Our different and shared experiences is an area of rich diversity that we can celebrate. Mental health services are overstretched and underfunded – should Quakers speak out?

Come and meet with others concerned about mental health, hear about projects and developments across Quakers and help to discern future responses and work. Everyone is welcome.

Waldo Williams Room 1

### **Quaker chaplaincy**

#### **Could you be a Quaker chaplain?**

Are you a Quaker chaplain in hospital, prison, school or university, or in any other work or community setting? Or considering starting chaplaincy? Or just wanting to find out more about Quaker chaplaincy? This will be an opportunity for sharing, supporting and exploring the connections between different settings.

Drayton House Room B05

### **Vibrancy in Meetings Pilot Programme**

#### **Vibrancy in Meetings: beyond the pilot**

The Vibrancy in Meetings Pilot Programme has been testing whether having locally based staff can support Quaker meetings to become more confident, connected, strong and sustainable. This is an opportunity to hear about learning from the programme's external evaluation and to hear about and discuss options for the future being considered by BYM and Woodbrooke Trustees.

Ada Salter Room 1

### **Quaker Peace & Social Witness**

#### **QPSW activism information, support and networking**

An opportunity to learn more about how to move into and develop campaigning witness on any or all of the topics QPSW does (or should) cover: refugees and asylum seekers, climate and environmental justice, peace, housing, equality, Israel/Palestine, criminal justice, economic justice. It gives an opportunity to network with others interested in the same or allied topics, or using techniques that you might find useful. QPSW staff will be on hand to support and advise.

Drayton House Room B04

### **The Friend Publications Ltd**

## **Truth ache: being authentic in a world of fake news**

It's easy to be disparaging about misinformation in the media. But are we sometimes guilty of using it ourselves? A righteous commitment to a cause can sometimes lead to careless argument, or prevent us from understanding others' concerns. And how sure can we be, in a largely white and middle class Society, that we're not ignoring important voices? A short talk and honest discussion with staff from The Friend.

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# Saturday 25 May

## **Associated Events**

19:15–20:15 Large Meeting House

**Swarthmore Lecture Committee and Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre**

### **Swarthmore Lecture: Eden Grace**

'On earth as it is in heaven; the kingdom of God and the yearning of creation'

Eden will explore Quaker eco-theology, from early Friends to Quakers today. Through stories of Friends' response to climate change, she will show how this witness arises from their Quaker faith. She will ask us to imagine and create a positive future. What are the obstacles to radical, prophetic, joy-filled, corporate action?

Eden Grace is a member of New England Yearly Meeting and Global Ministries Director for Friends United Meeting.

A book based on the lecture will be published later in the year. Friends can pre-order copies at Yearly Meeting.

20:45–21:15 Large Meeting House

### **An epilogue of sorts**

Young adult Friends from across the country will host a reflective epilogue that explores themes of sustainability, privilege and faith in action.



# Sunday 26 May

Events, 08:45–09:15

Sarah Fell Room

## **Early morning worship (unprogrammed)**

Restaurant

## **Early morning worship (programmed/semi-programmed)**

Further information will be available on the website and bulletin boards.

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## **Yearly Meeting session 4, 09:30–12:00**

### **19. Meeting for worship with those participating in the children's programme**

We will have the opportunity to worship together. The doors will remain open so that children, parents and carers can move in and out as necessary. Further information will be available nearer the time of Yearly Meeting.

### **20. The work of our yearly meeting trustees: Receipt of annual report from Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees**

The annual report including financial statements is published as a separate document and will be available in April 2019.

### **21. Hearing other voices**

Too much emphasis on groups and categories obscures the importance of lived experience. How do we hear the voices of those who are seldom heard? Can we bring other voices to the centre of our corporate discernment?

In this session Friends will hear stories of personal transformation. Our speakers will tell us about the chains that bound them, and what happened next.

You might want to ask yourself: what am I hearing that is new or surprising? What aspects of life within our religious society are being revealed? Does this change us? And also: what remains concealed?

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# Sunday 26 May

Events, 12:30–13:30

George Bradshaw Room

**Friends Fellowship of Healing**

**Friends Fellowship of Healing presentation and demonstration**

This Special Interest Meeting (SIM) will outline the work and achievements of the long established FFH. It will include a demonstration of the simplicity of the healing act and will put emphasis on the divine nature of healing and its spiritual ethos.

Library

**Friends Historical Society**

**FHS presidential address by Erin Bell**

'The Quaker turned Jew': Quakers and Jews in seventeenth- to nineteenth-century publications.

Drayton House Room B03 Ricardo

**Gloucestershire Area Meeting**

**Rock and a hard place: Journeymen Theatre performance**

A new play by this Quaker theatre company, which explores the prevalence of domestic abuse in our society and the struggles faced by the women's refugees to survive in today's climate of government cuts.

We see domestic coercion at work, the potentially tragic consequences for women and children, and the cost of neglecting domestic abuse to our society. Time for questions and reflections after performance.

Drayton House Room B20 Jevons

**Living Witness**

**Zero-carbon Quakers?**

Preventing climate catastrophe requires system transformation. Our lives are part of the system; we can be patterns and examples, and a growing number of Friends are on the journey to zero carbon. At this event we will hear where to find reliable scientific guidance, explore uncertainties and moral dilemmas, and share experiences of our own journeys including difficult conversations with families and friends.

Ada Salter Room 1

**Meeting for Sufferings**

**Meeting for Sufferings, your representative council**

What's Meeting for Sufferings for? Who's on it? What's it up to? And what about the name?

Come and meet the clerks and other members of Meeting for Sufferings. Find out more about this important (and historic) part of our national structures. Learn how it's working to discern our national Quaker concerns, and what it's working on at the moment. Ask us anything – we should know some of the answers!

William Penn Room 2

**Nontheist Friends Network**

**Unity, diversity, boundaries**

The case for an inclusive Society of Friends. Open to all.

Drayton House Room B06

**QPSW Sanctuary Everywhere Programme**

**Creating sanctuary everywhere: where are we at?**

QPSW's Sanctuary Everywhere Programme and QARN help to coordinate the work of 95 Sanctuary Meetings across the country. This meeting is open to Friends already involved in the work and those wishing to come together, learn about each other's work and discuss where we are at as a growing movement for racial justice.

Waldo Williams Room 1

**Quaker Life Ministry & Outreach team**

**Quaker parents and families space**

A space for parents and families to rest, relax and eat over lunchtime during Yearly Meeting. This is a chance to meet other Quaker families.

Ada Salter Room 2

**Quaker Arts Network**

**Quaker Witness and the arts**

How can the arts sustain our witness, inform or nurture our witness? How does our witness inspire our creativity? How can we develop the Quaker arts community? Come and share experiences and ideas with others, tell us what you're doing, and find out more about the Quaker Arts Network.

William Penn Room 1

**Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations**

**Joey Williams: On being a prophetic peace church**

Community of Christ, an international denomination with roots in British and US restoration (primitivism) movements, has around 20 groups in the UK.

Britain Yearly Meeting welcomes Joey Williams, its Europe Mission Center President, as our ecumenical guest this weekend to share Community of Christ understandings of continuing revelation, becoming a peace church committed to nonviolence, decision-making and unity in diversity as an inclusive Christian family.

Drayton House Room B05

**Quaker Community Bamford**

**Quaker Community Bamford**

Living and working with our testimonies, members of the community share their skills and offer service to run our retreat programme, provide hospitality,

manage the maintenance of our buildings, gardens and woodland. All members volunteer in the work of the community, some also have part-time employment in the locality. Our twice-daily worship is central to our commitment to living together in the spirit.

We are currently looking for new members. Come and meet us and find out more about this unique Quaker community.

George Fox Room

### **Quaker Disability Equality Group**

#### **Including everyone: disabled Friends speak out**

Listen to our experience. Four Friends with a variety of disabilities will talk about how they are enabled to participate in the life of their Quaker meeting, and what barriers they experience to full involvement.

There will be time for questions and discussion.

Restaurant

### **Quaker Gender & Sexual Diversity Community**

#### **Let's talk about gender and sexual diversity**

This is a meeting for anyone interested in taking forward conversations – in their meetings or beyond – about gender and sexual diversity. It is open to all Friends, whether they are members of Quaker Gender & Sexual Diversity Community (QGSDC) or not. We will also be holding a short AGM.

Drayton House Room B19

### **Quaker Housing Trust**

#### **What is Quaker Housing Trust?**

Did you know that Yearly Meeting has its own unique, national charity funding social housing projects throughout Britain? Friends serving on Quaker Housing Trust will describe what your charity does and introduce some of the projects we have funded. We would also like to hear about local social housing projects you are involved with, especially any that are using area meeting property.

Large Meeting House

### **Quaker Life Ministry & Outreach team**

#### **Quakers are inclusive**

Friends with eldership and oversight responsibility are encouraged to attend this event, which will build on last year's session entitled 'Inclusivity: taking down the barriers'. It will help those Friends with eldership and oversight responsibility explore how they can support meetings to be as inclusive as they can be.

Ada Salter Room 3

### **Quaker South Asia Interest Group**

#### **Ekta Parishad and engagement with its JaiJagat2020 initiative**

A working group of QSAIG is focusing on the continuing connection with Ekta Parishad. Its next global initiative is called JaiJagat2020 (Victory to the World) and we are seeking to raise awareness of, and support for, nonviolent action by Quakers and others in Britain and Europe. The culmination of this initiative is in Geneva in September 2020, where explicit links with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is being made.

Drayton House Room B04

### **Quaker Values in Education – QVinE**

## **Visions of childhood**

Visions of childhood – an exploration workshop, sharing our fundamental beliefs, perceptions, discernment and values that determine what we do with and for children – and how that has consequences for education. (Together with an update on the work of QVinE and future plans.)

Drayton House Room B16 Edgeworth

### **Quaker Women Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse**

### **Quaker Women Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse**

This group is for women only, and only for women who experienced sexual abuse or sexualisation (grooming) in their childhood at whatever stage in their journey they are. This group is to provide mutual support and information and the opportunity to share their story, if they wish.

Sarah Fell Room

### **Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre with Eden Grace**

### **Meet the Swarthmore Lecturer**

This year's Swarthmore Lecture will be given by Eden Grace, who will explore the spiritual basis for climate justice through the prism of a worldwide community of Friends.

This is an opportunity to explore further the themes of the lecture.

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## **Yearly Meeting session 5, 14:15–17:15**

### **22. Parallel sessions**

Please see Item 16.

### **23. Further discernment and gathering the threads**

Together we seek to understand what is holding us back from action on our urgent concerns. What have we discovered that might be relevant to the Society as a whole? How do we live, and what impact does our living have? What needs to change?

We will come together in worship, seeking to gather the threads of our work so far.

### **24. Invitation to Yearly Meeting Gathering**

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# Sunday 26 May

Events, 17:45–18:45

George Bradshaw Room

## **Money for Madagascar**

### **Money for Madagascar – new horizons**

MfM is changing. When the previous incumbent retired as director in 2015 we discussed the future – whether we should reduce our activities or whether we should employ staff and grow. We were unanimous in the decision to grow because the need in Madagascar, sadly, shows no sign of diminishing, and climate change is now bringing big challenges. We would like to show Friends some of the ways in which we are tackling these problems.

Drayton House Room B03 Ricardo

## **BYM Trustees**

### **Meet Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees**

Meet the Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees and discuss the work being done on behalf of all Quakers in Britain, including any questions on the annual report and financial statements.

Sarah Fell Room

## **Quaker Life and Quaker Gender & Sexual Diversity Community**

### **10 years of Quaker marriage equality**

Yearly Meeting 2009 discerned that love and truth compelled us to solemnise the marriage of same-sex couples equally with opposite-sex couples. Michael Booth, Church Government Adviser, will speak about the journey Friends have made, alongside the legal changes that mean same-sex marriage is possible throughout Great Britain.

William Penn Room 1

## **The Kindlers**

### **The Kindlers: deepen the spiritual life of your meeting**

Come and experience a Kindlers workshop as a taster and see for yourself how a day's workshop can kindle a new fire and spirit in your meeting!

Drayton House Room B04

## **Quaker Esperanto Society**

### **Quaker Esperanto Society**

An introduction for Quakers to the concept of Esperanto, the international language whose aim is to encourage peace and friendship across national boundaries by enabling everyone to use a common second language that is culturally neutral while being very simple in its structure and easy to learn

George Fox Room

## **Experiment with Light Network**

### **Living Lightly – a short guided meditation**

How can the Light help us to live a lighter and simpler lifestyle? We will be going through a short 'Experiment with Light' meditation on this topic, with time for reflection and optional sharing afterwards.

Drayton House Room B05

### **Quaker Concern Over Population**

#### **Quakers, population and the future of humanity**

Presented by Simon Beard (Quaker, Cambridge University Research Associate, New Generation thinker, radio and TV speaker). Quaker testimonies, to simplicity, equality, sustainability and peace, have much to say about population. Yet, as a Society, we seem to prefer talking about other things instead. What can, and should, Quakers say about fertility, mortality, migration and urbanisation that are shaping humanity's place in the world? What does this mean for us now and for future generations?

Drayton House Room B19

### **Quakers in Criminal Justice**

#### **The decriminalisation of drugs**

This workshop gives an opportunity to take further the discussion on this topic, which derives from the theme of the Quakers in Criminal Justice annual conference in February 2019, where there were three very well informed speakers on the topic.

Drayton House Room B20 Jevons

### **Quaker Social Action**

#### **Speaking truth to power in 2019**

Join Quaker Social Action to explore how this longstanding but relatively small charity, which lives out Quaker values of equality and justice, is achieving national impacts on overlooked national issues – and what lessons they have learnt which can be applied more widely. The session draws upon two examples of QSA's work at different stages: its well established work on funeral poverty and its new housing project for young adult carers.

Drayton House Room B16 Edgeworth

### **Quaker World Relations Committee**

#### **Meet Friends from Europe and Middle East Section**

This session offers the opportunity to meet representatives from other yearly meetings in our Section of the world family (Friends World Committee for Consultation – Europe and Middle East Section), and hear from them about how the truth is prospering in their yearly meetings, what work they are doing, and what challenges they are facing. How can we learn from each other?

William Penn Room 2

### **BYM safeguarding**

#### **Safeguarding Matters**

An event about safeguarding in Quaker communities – with a particular focus on a new model safeguarding policy for area meetings, and the responsibilities of trustees and safeguarding coordinators.

Drayton House Room B06

## Quaker Stewardship Committee

### Supporting Quaker stewardship in meetings

This is an opportunity to meet with members of Quaker Stewardship Committee, ask questions on the QSC report to Yearly Meeting, and discuss problems and solutions in upholding right stewardship in meetings.

Restaurant

#### Quaker United Nations Office Geneva

### “The paths keep opening up” – Quaker quiet diplomacy

How can a small Quaker office support multilateralism when some countries are turning inward? We'll share with you the spiritual nudges, the practical challenges, the unexpected and the inspiring in our work on your behalf at the United Nations, including human rights

of migrants, 'toolkits' for climate change awareness, new dialogues about disarmament. We'll answer your questions and ask you to explore the links to your meetings and communities.

Library

#### Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

### What Woodbrooke can offer you and your meeting

Woodbrooke offers courses and workshops to nurture spirituality, deepen understanding of Quaker faith, practice and history, and explore putting faith into action. Come and find out how

we can support, inform and transform you and your Quaker community.

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# Sunday 26 May

## Associated Events

18:15–20:30 Large Meeting House, Ada Salter Suite and North, East and West corridors

### Groups Fair

For details of groups present and a floor plan, see pages 44–45.

20:00–21:00 Sarah Fell Room

### Opportunity for worship

“Keep your meetings in the power of God... And when Friends have finished their business, sit down and wait a while quietly and wait upon the Lord to feel him.”

George Fox, 1658 (*Quaker faith & practice* 3.05)

We may not have quite finished our Yearly Meeting business, but as we pause at the end of the day this opportunity for worship gives us time to wait quietly. Come and join for a period of worship, drop in and stay for as long as you can.



# Monday 27 May

Events, 08:45–09:15

Sarah Fell Room

## **Early morning worship (unprogrammed)**

Restaurant

## **Early morning worship (programmed/semi-programmed)**

Further information will be available on the website and bulletin boards.

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## **Yearly Meeting session 6, 09:30–12:00**

### **25. The work of Quaker Stewardship Committee: Receipt of annual report**

Please see Item 16.

### **26. Receipt of other reports**

We will formally note receipt of the following reports:

- Central Nominations Committee (Appendix B)
- Quaker Housing Trust (Appendix F).

Friends should refer to page 7 for an explanation of the role of the committees.

### **27. As led**

### **28. Going forward**

In this session, we will reflect on our journey so far. Where will we go next? What will we take back to our local and area meetings, to deepen and extend the work? How far will our discernment take us? Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020 will provide us with an opportunity to gather once more, to share what we have learned. Can we step over fear and go forward on our journey together, loving one another?

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## **Yearly Meeting session 7, 14:00–16:00**

- 29. Receipt of the Yearly Meeting Draft Epistle**
- 30. Receipt of Tabular Statement**
- 31. Minute of Record: Epistles**
- 32. Minute of Record: Testimonies**
- 33. Minute of Record: Friends from other yearly meetings**
- 34. Minute of Record: Inter-church and interfaith visitors**
- 35. Formal acceptance of reports and accounts**
- 36. Yearly Meeting Nominating Group 2019-2020**
- 37. Any other business which may properly be taken**
- 38. Receipt of minutes from the Children and Young People's Programme**
- 39. Receipt of Junior Yearly Meeting Epistle**
- 40. Reading and signing of the Yearly Meeting Epistle**
- 41. Naming of Clerks for Yearly Meeting 2020**

# 5. Appendices

## **Appendix A: Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee report to Yearly Meeting 2018**

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (YMAC) is responsible for planning the agenda for, and the use of the premises during, Yearly Meeting. YMAC's remit has grown in recent years from simply managing the agenda of Yearly Meeting in session, to planning for the entire event, including talks, worship, welcomes and small group activities. This is no small task, and

in approaching it we benefit from the significant expertise of the Events & Committee Services team at Friends House. We receive regular reports from Meeting for Sufferings and invite representatives of many Quaker committees and groups to our early autumn planning meeting each year, so that we can gain a sense from them of what Yearly Meeting's agenda should comprise.

During this year's planning cycle, we have paid particular attention to the call in minute 38 of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017 to consider diversity and inclusion in our work. We have worked with Edwina Peart, BYM's Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, to educate ourselves on privilege, inclusion and diversity. Evidently this is an ongoing process for the Society and for our committee. However, we hope that by keeping these issues at the forefront of our minds during our planning, we will increase our ability to work inclusively as a group of Friends, to plan an inclusive and truly welcoming event, and to effectively facilitate Yearly Meeting's discernment in this area.

Our discernment has explored the connections between sustainability and climate justice, and diversity and inclusion. These issues confront us urgently, both as a religious community and as a species. We have spent time considering how privilege relates to both issues. We are hopeful that a joint consideration of these issues will be a fruitful approach for Yearly Meeting as we discern God's will together.

We have also heard, both within our own discernment and from other committees, a need to simplify our own structures and systems. YMAC's report in 2018 considered whether it might be the right time to consider a review of Yearly Meeting.

With the forthcoming revision of the book of discipline, it is our view that a review of the holding and purposes of Yearly Meeting is timely, and we recommend that Yearly Meeting asks Meeting for Sufferings to take this forward.

Our next Yearly Meeting Gathering will take place in 2020, and YMAC will be responsible for its agenda. Experience in previous planning cycles suggests that a Gathering requires roughly 18 months of planning time from a dedicated group. As a result, from January 2019 Agenda Committee was split into two groups, one focused on Yearly Meeting 2019, the

other focused on Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020. This is a new way of working, but one which we hope will enable YMAC (and, of course, the Spirit) to deliver two substantial events in quick succession.

Siobhan Haire, Clerk February 2019

## **Appendix B: Annual Report of Central Nominations Committee (CNC)**

This has been a particularly busy year for Central Nominations Committee.

The appointments made by Central Nominations Committee included 75 routine nominations together with six nominations to replace Friends who had requested early release (supplement 1). In addition, we were asked to find five Friends urgently to sit on an Appeal Group and three friends to Review Quaker Stewardship Committee.

Finally, the most important decision made at Yearly Meeting in 2018 was to carry out a full revision of our book of discipline. This resulted in our receiving a request to nominate 24 people, including two clerks.

Central Nominations Committee should be made up of 17 Friends, but this year has frequently been down to only 14 – more on this later.

### **How we do our work**

This year we have used two search methods: one developed for our regular searches and an enhanced procedure for the Book of Discipline Revision Committee.

#### **a) Our normal search procedure**

To find nominees we split up into search groups of between two and four members who are each asked to find nominees for a particular committee. These groups then find suitable names and discern which

to bring to the full committee at one of our five meetings in the year.

To find names the search group may use their own knowledge, the recommendations of others, advertisements in The Friend and other suitable places, and Quaker Service Information Forms (QSIF). We do not know all the Friends from these sources personally, so we rely heavily on either the Supporting Friends specified on QSIFs or the clerks of area and local meetings to help us in our discernment by advising on the suitability of a person for the role required. We give information about the role to the Supporting Friend usually by email and then follow this up with a telephone call or email conversation to discuss the suitability of the proposed nominee. A

Supporting Friend's opinion can help the search group consider how and where the nominee's gifts and skills are best used.

Some of the questions we ask are:

- Is this committee right for the nominee or would they be better suited to another?
- Would a place on this committee help the nominee to grow and develop their Quaker beliefs and understanding, whilst also serving the Society?

These contacts with Supporting Friends are a very important part of the process, giving a balanced and nuanced appraisal which weighs both the needs of the committee with the skills, attributes and character of the individual. So remember, if you are submitting a QSIF choose Supporting Friends who know you well and let them know you are giving their name.

Supporting Friends: if you are contacted by someone from Central Nominations Committee, please reply as soon as possible as your information is invaluable to us.

#### **b) The Book of Discipline Revision Committee search**

We approached this search in a different way because we wanted as many people as possible to have the opportunity to offer this exciting service. Initially it was widely advertised throughout the Society, using a variety of methods, that we would be looking for members of this committee. We

received over 300 expressions of interest, which was amazing. Our first need was to learn more about these applicants, so we sent them a questionnaire (supplement 2). A pilot of the questionnaire was successful but resulted in limiting the number of words in a reply – Quakers can sometimes be somewhat wordy. We finally received around 200 completed replies.

We wanted to ensure younger Friends were involved so our clerks attended Young Friends General Meeting on their invitation and encouraged them to apply and asked for their views. They were happy to engage with us and we were given many ideas which would help them to contribute.

We also received suggestions of possible nominees from area Meetings and individual Friends, and we ourselves asked some Friends to complete questionnaires.

We then divided into four search groups (supplement 3). A fifth group, consisting of our two CNC clerks and two other committee members, were tasked specifically with finding two clerks for the Revision Committee. This search resulted in the appointment of Rosie Carnall and Catherine Brewer by Meeting for Sufferings at its November meeting. We wanted to appoint them first, so they could start to plan and also have an input into the rest of the process.

This additional work has meant extra meetings. In particular, the fifth search group included a day meeting in Lancaster, part of which was spent in a meeting for worship for discernment. We found this particularly moving and it has led us to consider how our normal search process could be improved by allowing greater time for meaningful discernment.

## **Central Nominations Committee membership concerns**

### **1) Discernment and its role in CNC's work**

Because of the number of nominees needed and the speed at which we have to work, the amount of discernment that we are able to give to each name

remains a constant source of concern. We have to rely on trying to remain aligned with the Spirit throughout our work. Most discernment takes place within the search groups, but then there should be further discernment at the full committee meetings. We try to give each group of names for a committee appropriate consideration, but in order to get through the work

in a day, this is often squeezed to a matter of a couple of minutes – the Spirit has to work fast if there is anything to be said to us! Nominations are sent to Meeting for Sufferings or Yearly Meeting, where corporate discernment is another important part of the process. But here the time is often shorter still.

At Yearly Meeting and sometimes even at Meeting for Sufferings the names are not even read out, let alone given time for discernment. If, as a previous Recording Clerk said, “nominations are the holiest thing we do”, then surely we should be giving them more time and attention?

### **2) The effect of the workload on members, ability to serve**

As mentioned previously, we have been running with less than our 15 members and two clerks throughout this year. Central Nominations Committee consistently has considerably more requests for release than any other committee. For some the pace and volume of work is just too much; some have asked to be released because of family commitments; others have felt unable to devote the significant amount of time needed. At any one point we have been short of between two and five members, which has meant even more work for those who stayed. We think Yearly Meeting should be aware of this problem and be considering how it might be resolved particularly as we want and need to involve more young people. At the moment it is difficult for people to serve whose free time is limited and constrained by demands of work, family and other commitments. This results in the committee consisting largely of those who are retired or self-employed. This needs to change over the next two years.

## What of the future?

At a national level there are 400 members of our Society involved in committees and very many more filling posts at local level.

We were energised by our meeting with young Friends but, as they told us, they need different ways of being involved so they can take our Society forward. It is essential we work with them to make this happen.

Some central committees are beginning to do this, reducing their numbers and finding more creative ways of meeting using technology. We need to make committee membership more inclusive and open the way for more young adults of working age and those with families to join and contribute. We ask Yearly Meeting to be bolder and bring about these changes, simplifying our overly complex structures by reducing the number of committees and the people on them, thus creatively releasing the energy and enthusiasm of our members to proclaim the Truth.

Finally, we want to pay tribute to the members of the committee who have put quite astonishing amounts of time, energy and enthusiasm into all the work. But it is not just hard graft; it is also really interesting and rewarding work. There is a huge feeling of satisfaction when you find exactly the right person for exactly the right role.

Gill Reid and David Beale, Clerks February 2019

## Appendix B: Supplement 1

### Central Nominations Committee nominations from May 2018 to May 2019

The following list shows the Committee Name, the Number on committee and the Number of appointments (and number of requests for release).

- **Book of Discipline Revision Committee:** 24 on the committee and 24 appointments.
- **BYM Representatives to Friends World Committee for Consultation serving on QWRC:** 6 on committee with 2 appointments.
- **Church Government Advisory Group:** 5 on committee with 0 appointments.
- **Friends Trusts Limited:** 5–10 on committee with 6 appointments.
- **Meeting for Sufferings Appeal Group:** 3 on committee with 0 appointments.
- **Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Committee:** 3 on committee with 1 appointment.
- **Pendle Hill Friends in Residence:** 2 on committee with 2 appointments.
- **Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations:** 15 on committee with 5 appointments (and 1 request for release).
- **Quaker Housing Trust:** 12 on committee with 4 appointments (and 1 request for release).
- **Quaker Life Central Committee:** 12 on committee with 6 appointments (and 1 request for release).
- **Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee:** 15 on committee with 2 appointments.
- **Quaker United Nations Committee Geneva:** 10 on committee with 2 appointments (and 1 request for release).
- **Representatives to other yearly meetings:** 11 on committee with 11 appointments.
- **Review of Quaker Stewardship Committee:** 3 on committee with 3 appointments.
- **Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees:** 12 on committee with 7 appointments (and 1 request for release).
- **Quaker Stewardship:** 9 on committee with 5 appointments.
- **Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee:** 18 on committee with 6 appointments (and 4 requests for release).
- **Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee:** 2 on committee with 2 appointments.
- **Yearly Meeting Elders:** 8–10 on committee with 8–10 appointments.
- **Yearly Meeting Epistle Drafters:** 4–6 on committee + convenor with 5–7 appointments.
- **Yearly Meeting Pastoral Care Group:** 4 on committee + convenor with 1 appointment.
- **Yearly Meeting Publications Group for Quaker faith & practice:** 2 on committee + convenor with 1 appointment.

**IN TOTAL:** 103 appointments (112 found including requests for release)

## Appendix B: Supplement 2

### Questionnaire sent to Book of Discipline Revision Committee enquirers

#### Book of Discipline Revision Expression of Interest Questionnaire

Can you answer the following questions which will help us in our discernment when appointing the Book of Discipline Revision Committee? It would be helpful if the responses in total did not exceed two sides of A4.

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Email address:**

**Telephone number: Local/area meeting:**

**Age (by decade):** e.g. are you now in your 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s?

1. Please describe your current involvement with Quakers, including any information about your service on local and central committees and written contributions to Quaker materials.
  2. What skills do you bring from activities outside Quaker work?
  3. Can you tell us briefly what you think your special contribution to the Revision Committee would be?
  4. Commitment to this committee may last up to ten years. Obviously it is difficult to predict life events, but will this present you with any problems?
-



## Appendix B: Supplement 3

### Search Groups

**Search Group 1** will look for Friends who are:

- deeply spiritual
- knowledgeable about Quaker Theology
- able to discern possible future directions of Quakers
- widely read, especially Quaker literature.

**Search Group 2** will look for Friends who have:

- a clear and comprehensive understanding of Quaker church government and structures
- a good understanding of Quaker history and its relevance to contemporary Quakerism
- experience or knowledge of Quakers worldwide.

**Search Group 3** will look for Friends who are:

- experienced in writing clearly and concisely
- able to craft language and use words accurately and elegantly (English and/or Welsh)
- have editorial experience
- have good attention to detail.

**Search Group 4** will look for Friends who are:

- familiar with contemporary publishing and media use and their potential
- skilled in the use and potential of social media
- creative, in the arts, music, etc.
- able to convene small working groups.

Each search group must bear in mind the characteristics listed on the search information and ensure that their selected potential nominees cover at least some of these. In addition, all those nominated should have the skills and abilities shown on the search information as essential.

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## Appendix C: Amendments to appeals process

In July 2016, on the recommendation of Church Government Advisory Group (CGAG), Meeting for Sufferings agreed to review the appeal process as described in sections 4.25 and 4.26 of *Quaker faith & practice* (minute MfS/16/07/11 refers).

Meeting for Sufferings set up a review group. The summary of the group's report is below.

### Summary of the report of the Appeal Review Group

The group was appointed to review the appeals procedures described in sections 4.25–4.26 of *Quaker faith & practice* and to propose any alterations required (clarifications, improvements, simplifications), whether reconciliation between parties could have a place, and whether the procedures should be extended to other bodies within the yearly meeting structure.

Through wide consultation with Friends who had experience of the appeals processes, and other enquiries, the group found that:

- meetings are not immune to conflict, yet find it difficult to acknowledge openly or to handle it effectively – lack of familiarity with Quaker decision-making processes and their spiritual basis, and mental health issues in meetings appear to be factors in causing or failing to resolve conflict
- appeals processes within area meetings, or involving neighbouring area meetings, are not working well, partly because mediation and conflict transformation have not been attempted or have failed, and meetings are not well-equipped to handle appeals, so disputes do not get resolved and the parties involved suffer continuing distress.

### The group recommended that:

1. the section 4.25 provision for a dissatisfied Friend's appeal to be heard by an area meeting (and, if that fails, by another area meeting) be removed, while greater priority is given to conflict transformation locally with appropriate external support;
2. as a principle for the revision of section 4.25, a member dissatisfied with a final decision of an area meeting affecting them personally and adversely may appeal to Meeting for Sufferings if, and only if,
  - (a) the decision concerns the termination of their membership;
  - (b) the grounds of the appeal are that the decision was not made in right ordering, or was not made with knowledge of the relevant facts, or was unreasonable;
  - (c) experienced mediators have been involved and have failed to resolve the matter.
3. the section 4.26 provision for appeals to Meeting for Sufferings following disputes between area meetings should be removed, and provision should be made elsewhere in *Quaker faith & practice* for an area meeting in dispute with another to seek advice from the Recording Clerk;
4. wider work is needed on further ways of supporting conflict transformation (including promoting familiarisation with Quaker processes and handling difficulties affected by mental health issues) within meetings at all levels.

Meeting for Sufferings at a meeting held 7 April 2018 accepted these recommendations (minute 18/04/05 refers), and asked CGAG to draft appropriate amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*.

## Appendix D: Annual Report of Meeting for Sufferings

“Meeting for Sufferings is the body which is entrusted with the general care of matters affecting the Yearly Meeting in its life and witness. It seeks to discern spiritual values and vision to guide Friends’ corporate commitment and actions.”

from *Quaker faith & practice* 6.28

Meeting for Sufferings is made up of about 100 members, drawn from the wide geographical and demographic spread of all 70 area meetings, Young Friends General Meeting, General Meeting for Scotland, and Meeting of Friends in Wales.

Representatives of Quaker World Relations Committee, Quaker Life, Quaker Peace & Social Witness, Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations and Central Nominations Committee all attend our meetings. Britain Yearly Meeting trustees, senior staff and the Yearly Meeting clerk are ex officio members, and we regularly receive visitors.

In October we were delighted yet again to welcome 13- to 18-year-olds attending the Young People’s Participation Day. They worshipped with us in the

Large Meeting House at the start and the close of the day, led us in an ice-breaker exercise and joined our session on diversity. Their epistle spoke of a sense of being part of the wider all-age Quaker community and of the theme of diversity that permeated their activities during the day. At this meeting we agreed

to the suggestion that four young adult Quakers could be appointed to MfS in addition to the YFGM representatives.

For the membership of Meeting for Sufferings this has been a year of change, as one triennium ends and another begins. Nearly a third of our number have continued, some as representatives instead of alternates, or carried on into a second period of service. Sixty are completely new. Our induction meeting in July was followed by a residential meeting in November, where we spent further time in home groups getting to know one another better.

Meeting for Sufferings is a place for worship and for learning; representatives from all over the yearly meeting are the means by which information and ideas flow to and from Friends in their local and area meetings. Above all it should be a place of prayerful listening and discernment.

### Our work in 2018

In 2018 our court and prison register continued to record the witness of friends against arms sales, air pollution, and forced deportation. This is a real link with our history of recording the sufferings of Friends in their witness to the truth.

Under the umbrella of administrative business, we are continuing to register Quaker recognised bodies, and have accepted terms of reference for the new Book of Discipline Revision Committee, which we hope

will begin work in 2019. The co-clerks of the Revision Committee were appointed in November. We have heard from staff engaged in the work laid upon us by Yearly Meeting in 2017 on the issues of diversity and inclusion, from the Engaging Young Adult Quakers project, and the Vibrancy project which concludes its pilot phase early next year.

We sent Yearly Meeting some proposed changes to church government, and recommendations regarding the updating of the book of discipline during the revision process. There is full information about this elsewhere in the Yearly Meeting documents.

## Reports from committees

This year we have experimented with taking all the central committees' reports at one meeting – the residential in November – to offer new representatives and those with more experience the chance to hear about the breadth of BYM's centrally-managed work at one time. We hope this overview will be of benefit in the future when new concerns come to us and we are called upon to discern their place in our witness.

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, all of whom are members of MfS, report to us at Sufferings after all their meetings and ask for our discernment on matters of policy. We all benefit from this close relationship.

Sustainability has been on our agenda at three meetings in 2018:

- In February we received a report from BYM Sustainability Group (BYMSG) – our working group on sustainability. It was set up in 2014 to provide “a leadership role, similar to eldership and oversight” in relation to the Yearly Meeting's Canterbury Commitment to become a low-carbon, sustainable community. We were impressed by the amount and scope of the work undertaken but challenged to consider “what is the meaning of a yearly meeting concern, if we as a yearly meeting don't do it?”
- At the following meeting in April the Friends appointed to review the BYM Sustainability Group paid tribute to all that has been achieved since the Canterbury Commitment of 2011. However, they also drew attention to structural issues in the group's relationship with the centrally managed work (CMW), and we minuted that “the Review Group has found that there were inherent problems here both in terms of ambition and in organisation”. We did not at this time accept the recommendation that the BYMSG should be laid down immediately. Nevertheless we re-affirmed our commitment to sustainability and noted that we need to explore “what it is about our structures that makes it difficult to make the progress which we would like to see.”
- MfS has a responsibility to oversee the progress of its working groups. In accepting the Review Group's recommendation that our work on sustainability must now be embedded in all parts of the CMW, all parties including MfS will need a greater level of commitment to the work than hitherto. An initial meeting of Central Committee clerks, staff and others took place in July to map progress and begin further exploration of the issues. We expect this to become a regular part of our oversight as we rise to the challenge that living out our witness to sustainability across the yearly meeting presents. In light of this positive meeting and a decision to strengthen MfS' oversight on behalf of BYM, MfS agreed in November to lay down the BYMSG

Other reports in 2018 came from groups reviewing the Appeals Process and the Committee on Clerks. Each report has challenged us in a different way, and we have much to learn from them all.

- The group looking at our appeals processes recognised that any appeal is in danger of creating ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ and that more attention may need to be given to conflict transformation or conciliation in our processes. The group said: “We therefore recommend that the yearly meeting as a whole should address the challenges arising from conflicts in meetings, and should consider initiating some further work on ways of assisting conflict transformation – including the handling of difficulties affected by lack of familiarisation with Quaker processes and mental health issues – within meetings at all levels.” We referred the matter to Quaker Life.

In November we received the report of a group set up to review the Committee on Clerks. The recommendations which that group brought to us did not all find favour. In particular we were not willing to transfer some of the work of Committee on Clerks to Central Nominations Committee until we were sure that CNC has the capacity to carry out this extra work.

## Concerns brought by area meetings

In April Southern Marches forwarded their minutes about the erosion of truth in society, and we sent them to all AM clerks for consideration. We expect to return to the matter in 2019.

Devon AM wrote to MfS about BYM Trustees' investment policy in relation to the Israeli occupied territories in Palestine. We sent their minutes to QPSW and QCCIR in 2017–18 for advice. In October we reaffirmed our decision made in 201 to boycott settlement goods, until such time as the Israeli occupation of Palestine is ended, and whilst

understanding that currently BYM has no investments in any company profiting from the occupation of Palestine we “encourage them [trustees] to amend their investment policy to ensure that this remains the case”. Trustees have subsequently made this amendment.

Kingston & Wandsworth: In October we spent time considering how we can better work together to set priorities for the centrally managed work of the yearly meeting. This is part of our responsibility in “guiding Friends' corporate commitment” which has been a theme running through the work of Sufferings this year.

The right balance between the spiritual basis of our lives and actions as Quakers – the church – and the governance responsibilities of trustees – the charity – is one that we must continue to strive for. We rely on the power of our gathered meeting for worship for business to guide our discernment.

“The ground of our work lies in our waiting on and listening for the Spirit...We are a small church with pretensions to change the world. But first we must let God change us – to empower us to be better Friends, and more active in our own work. We should not be creating structures to work for us, but empowering each other to do the work laid on each of us. However we plan...the Spirit is unchanging and will always lead us...All is connected, worship with action, wisdom with love.”

*from Quaker faith & practice 29.02*

# Appendix E: Annual Report of Quaker Stewardship Committee 2018 (including compliance report)

## Role and purpose

Quaker Stewardship Committee is a standing committee of Britain Yearly Meeting.

The purpose of Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) is to support area meetings in their stewardship and coordinate the relationship between (all parts of) the yearly meeting and those administering charity law (*Quaker faith & practice* 14.36). It exists to give help and guidance to meetings to enable them to meet the requirements of charity law in the stewardship of their finance and property; encouraging openness, accountability, transparency and integrity in all our affairs (*Quaker faith & practice* 14.38).

QSC is responsible for the provision of advice on property matters and for the provision of conferences for treasurers and for trustees through Quaker Stewardship Annual Conference Committee (QSACC).

The committee has met five times during the year; once by telephone conference and four times at Friends House. During the year, we have continued to refine the focus of our work and to discern how it relates to the Simpler Meetings project. We have carried out a survey of area meeting treasurers and

trustees on our effectiveness. This showed a high level of awareness of our work and that it is perceived to be useful. We have sent a detailed response to the survey results to area meetings. We have used the survey to identify achievable targets for our work over the next two to three years.

The Responsibilities of Quaker Stewardship Committee are given in *Quaker faith & practice* 14.39.

These responsibilities have been undertaken as follows:

## Support for trustees

QSC has focused its work in this area on increasing the confidence and competence of trustees, with the aim of helping area meetings to recruit trustees and make their work as straightforward and manageable as possible. Trustees have a broad range of responsibilities under charity law for finance, property, safeguarding, data protection, health and safety and employment. The real importance of this work is to make sure that meetings are well run according to our Quaker principles. QSC is working to provide model policies and procedures that support good practice and compliance with external regulations.

About half of area meetings are currently 'excepted charities', which means that they do not have to report to the Charity Commission annually. This status is due to end in March 2021 and QSC has started to scope the work needed to help excepted area meetings to register by the deadline.

## Property advice and guidance

QSC has worked with the Property Support Officer Huw Davies to provide advice and guidance for area meetings on property matters during the year.

## Support for treasurers

To help ensure every part of Britain Yearly Meeting is producing proper annual reports and property registers, the committee has continued to review the reports and accounts of area meetings. It has offered guidance and support to meetings in their production.

QSC has produced guidance for area meeting treasurers on guarding against online fraud.

The Treasurers' Handbook, which has been out of date for several years, has now been replaced by a set of advice sheets that link to the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers handbook

and give Quaker-specific information. These are attractively presented and easy to access and keep up to date.

### **Education and training are available**

The committee continues to work with Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre to provide relevant and accessible training for Friends involved in finance and property matters. During 2018 training was available on trusteeship, area and local meeting treasurership, writing trustees' annual reports, and property.

QSC identified that clerks to area meetings face challenges particular to their roles and has been working with Woodbrooke to develop an online course for them that will run for the first time in spring 2019.

### **Enable meetings to act within the law**

The committee has updated and expanded the agreed checklist for trustees' annual reports and accounts to bring it into line with current Charity Commission and Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator requirements.

### **Disseminate good practice**

Trustees & Treasurers News continues to be published on a regular basis to provide news of changes in the regulatory framework and to share good practice.

The committee has responded to queries from meetings on a variety of topics, including the right use of funds, meeting house hirings and appointment of trustees.

### **Future work**

Over the coming year the committee will:

- revise the Trustees' Handbook
- work on the provision of model policies and procedures
- support area meetings preparing to move from excepted to registered charity status.

### **Compliance report**

As a standing committee of Britain Yearly Meeting, QSC reports to Yearly Meeting in session (Quaker faith & practice 14.37). QSC is asked to certify that every part of Britain Yearly Meeting is producing proper financial accounts and property registers that have been professionally audited or examined as defined in 14.39e. This task is carried out using an agreed checklist that has been sent to all area meetings.

The 2017 reports mainly met the basic requirements of the checklist but the quality was variable.

All registered Quaker charities have submitted their accounts to the Charity Commission or Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

## Appendix F: Annual Report of Quaker Housing Trust 2018

“We are a Quaker body giving Quaker money, on behalf of Quakers, to social housing projects we believe Friends would want to support.”

Quakers have long been clear about the importance of a home to each individual’s development and the health of the wider community. Quaker Housing Trust (QHT) is Britain Yearly Meeting’s own housing charity, giving practical witness to the longstanding concern on housing.

Our income is from individual Friends and their Quaker meetings, and repayment of the loans we make to social housing projects. Using that money we support a wide range of small, local, charitable social housing projects in Britain. We help them provide real homes for people of all ages and with a wide range of needs. You will see this reflected in the list below of the 13 projects to whom we gave or offered funding during 2018.

Housing does not exist in a vacuum: it has links with many other yearly meeting concerns. For example, we promote the highest possible standards for energy efficiency, carbon emission reduction and other environmentally sustainable options for the properties of the social housing projects we support.

Not only does this contribute to care for our planet, it gives very practical help to the projects and their occupants. Having an energy-efficient property leads to lower running costs. This can reduce expenditure for tenants and/or release money that the project can use for hard-to-fund work such as support and care to vulnerable occupants.

We are often able to help projects actively support and sustain real diversity in rural and urban communities. Recent examples include housing meeting the needs of people as varied as 16-year-old refugees separated from their families, to older people wanting to stay in the place where they have deep roots. And we hear directly how providing safe accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers not only helps them find a home but contributes to a new diversity and richness in those communities.

### **Baca Charity, Loughborough**

Grant of £19,000 for converting a property into a new arrivals house for 16- to 18-year-old separated young people seeking asylum and victims of human trafficking, making it both HMO-compliant and homely.

### **Boaz Trust, Manchester**

Grant of £13,500 for essential maintenance and renovation work to seven of the properties they lease to give safe accommodation to destitute asylum seekers and refugees.

### **Calder Valley Community Land Trust, Hebden Bridge**

Grant of £25,000 for completing building four new dwellings for local people aged 60 upwards, with a defined housing need and limited financial means.

### **Canopy Housing Project, Leeds**

Interest-free loan of £10,000 for buying and renovating four properties to increase their provision of decent affordable homes for people in housing.

### **Charity Of Amy Temple, St Margaret’s At Cliffe, Kent**



Grant of £12,500 for modernising another of their alms-house cottages, giving independent homes for older women of limited means in the immediate area.

### **East Cleveland Youth Housing Trust, North Yorkshire**

Grant of £15,000 and interest-free loan of £15,000 for buying and renovating a property, using apprentices and volunteers alongside builders, to create homes for vulnerable young people in housing need.

### **Glenurquhart Care Project, Drumnadrochit, Scotland**

Grant of £40,000 for building four blocks of three two-bedroom self-contained units in a courtyard setting, designed to adapt to the changing needs of the residents, who will be elderly members of the local community.

### **Handcrafted Projects, Durham**

Grant of £10,000 and interest-free loan of £32,500 for buying and renovating a property to house two people with multiple and complex needs in supported accommodation.

### **Independence Initiative Limited, Merseyside**

Grant of £10,000 for converting an existing non-residential space into an eighth en-suite bedroom at their project for people experiencing severe and multiple forms of disadvantage including homelessness and health issues.

### **Maxie Richards Foundation, Argyll And Bute**

Grant of £35,000 for remodelling part of their building to create two new resident rooms for men recovering from addiction, together with a staff sleep-over room, improved communal facilities, and a new heating system.

### **Street Connect, Glasgow**

Grant of £20,000 and interest-free loan of £20,000 for buying their second move-on flat for people with addictions who have successfully completed the residential rehabilitation programme.

### **South Ayrshire Women's Aid, Ayr**

Grant of £50,000 for converting a property into self-contained one- and two-bed flats, plus small meeting rooms, and communal areas at this refuge for women, children and young people with experience of domestic abuse.

### **Transition Homes Community Land Trust, Totnes, Devon**

Grant of £19,000 for fitting out two self-contained flats, one of which will be wheelchair-accessible, giving affordable supported housing for local adults with learning and/or physical disabilities.

Quaker Housing Trust is Britain Yearly Meeting's own housing charity, funded by donations, loans and legacies from Friends: a unique national channel for practical Quaker witness in social housing since 1967 (see Quaker faith & practice 8.15). Registered company no. 00924311. Registered charity no. 254704.

It operates throughout the Britain Yearly Meeting area of England, Scotland, Wales, Channel Islands and Isle of Man. The QHT trustees are appointed by Meeting for Sufferings. The 2.5 days/week staff

time to administer it is provided by QPSW and paid for by Britain Yearly Meeting as a reflection of the yearly meeting's concern for housing issues in its corporate work.

QHT receives no money from BYM funds. Audited accounts, more information about QHT and copies of all our materials are freely available from our secretary at:

Friends House  
Euston Road  
London NW1 2BJ

[involveme@ght.org.uk](mailto:involveme@ght.org.uk)

020 7663 1036

[www.ght.org.uk](http://www.ght.org.uk)

## Groups Fair

On Sunday evening the Groups Fair will take place throughout the Large Meeting House, the East Corridor, West Corridor, North Corridor and the Ada Salter Suite. The groups participating are listed below, with their location and table number:

- **Britain Yearly Meeting:** East Corridor, E2
- **Friends Community Development Trust (Uganda):** Large Meeting House, L2
- **Friends Fellowship of Healing:** Large Meeting House, L9
- **Friends Historical Society:** North Corridor, N7
- **Friends House Moscow:** Large Meeting House, L6
- **Friends in Tune:** West Corridor, W3
- **Friends of Hlekweni:** Large Meeting House, L3
- **Friends Southern Summer Events:** West Corridor ,W1
- **Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC):** East Corridor, E4
- **Glebe House:** North Corridor, N1
- **Living Witness:** Ada Salter Suite, A5
- **Money for Madagascar:** Large Meeting House, L4
- **Nontheist Friends Network:** Large Meeting House, L15
- **Northern Friends Peace Board:** Large Meeting House, L12
- **Post Yugoslav Peace Link:** Large Meeting House L7
- **Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs:** Ada Salter Suite, A3
- **Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network QARN:** Ada Salter Suite, A8
- **Quaker Campers:** North Corridor, N6
- **Quaker Community Bamford:** North Corridor, N5
- **Quaker Concern for Animals:** Large Meeting House, L17
- **Quaker Concern Over Population:** Ada Salter Suite, A6
- **Quaker Congo Partnership UK:** Large Meeting House, L1
- **Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA):** East Corridor, E3
- **Quaker Disability Equality Group:** Ada Salter Suite, A1
- **Quaker Esperanto Society:** West Corridor, W2
- **Quaker Gender & Sexual Diversity Community:** West Corridor, W7
- **Quaker Homeless Action:** Large Meeting House, L10
- **Quaker Residential Centres:** North Corridor, N2
- **Quaker Social Action:** Large Meeting House, L11
- **Quaker Socialist Society:** Ada Salter Suite, A4
- **Quaker South Asia Interest Group & China Interest Group:** Large Meeting House, L5
- **Quaker United Nations Office Geneva:** East Corridor, E5
- **Quaker Universalist Group:** Large Meeting House, L16

- **Quaker Values in Education (QVINE):** Ada Salter Suite, A7
- **Quaker Voluntary Action:** West Corridor, W4
- **Quaker Women Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse:** Large Meeting House, L8
- **Quakers & Business:** West Corridor, W6
- **Quakers and Mental Health:** Ada Salter Suite, A2
- **Quakers in Criminal Justice:** Ada Salter Suite, A9
- **Quakers Uniting in Publications:** North Corridor, N3
- **Roots of Resistance:** Large Meeting House, L13
- **The Friend Publications Ltd:** North Corridor, N4
- **The Kindlers:** West Corridor, W5
- **The Peace Museum/Give Peace a Chance Trust:** Large Meeting House, L14
- **Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre:** East Corridor, E1
- **Young Friends General Meeting:** North Corridor, N8

Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Registered charity number 1127633

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