

Clerks Update

A newsletter from Quaker Life

Issue 5: Spring 2023



Welcome to the Spring issue!

Welcome to the Clerks Update, the communication channel for clerks of local and area Quaker communities. This is the first edition in 2023. You can view an archive of past messages on our website at www.quaker.org.uk/clerks-update.

Information for Quaker clerks

Peace at the heart of Scottish schools

A travelling exhibition en-route to the Scottish Parliament

Would you like to engage your local community in peace education? We are looking for Quakers in Scotland to host a travelling exhibition in their meeting houses, local schools or other community venues. The growing exhibition will then gather ideas for building peace as it makes its way to Holyrood where MSPs will be presented with a picture of how peace education is helping Scotland and the world. If you think you could [host or support the travelling exhibition please find out more here](#).

We are hoping to secure firm commitments to be involved by 27 March 2023.



Photo: Elyse Jacobs

Safer recruitment documents

Britain Yearly Meeting has produced some documents on safer recruitment as part of its responsibilities to area meetings on safeguarding. The documents are there to help local and area meetings consider how their nominations processes can include best practice advice on safer recruitment. You can find the safer recruitment materials on the [safeguarding page of the BYM website](#). Under the heading *Model Safeguarding Documents for Area Meeting Safeguarding Coordinators* you will find a document you can download – [Safeguarding Procedures and Toolkit](#) (safer recruitment is covered in **sections 5 & 6**).

Energy bill support for places of worship

The UK Government has published its scheme to assist non-domestic customers, which includes places of worship, with their energy bills from April 2023 to March 2024. The announcement can be seen at www.gov.uk/guidance/energy-bills-discount-scheme.

For most customers, a discount on the price per unit will be applied automatically via energy bills. Details of the discount are linked to above, and energy providers should confirm with all customers before the end of March 2023. There are some conditions relating to the kind of contract which the customer has with the supplier. In most cases, this will mean a rise in the unit cost of energy from April 2023 compared to what is being paid now, but it will still be below the market price.



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

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Events

Yearly Meeting

28 April to 1 May – Friends House, London and online

Please remember to [register to attend Yearly Meeting](#) whether you plan to come in person or take part online. This will enable you to access the timetable and the events listing when they are made available in the coming weeks.



Preparation for Yearly Meeting and other Special Interest Meetings will all take place online over the weekend of 21-23 April. Please let Friends in your Quaker community know of these dates to try to keep them as free as possible to join the preparation sessions and the events that are on offer.

For general information about Yearly Meeting look on the website at www.quaker.org.uk/ym, or contact by email, ym@quaker.org.uk.

Quaker Life Representative Council

Friday, 24 March to Sunday, 26 March – online

Registration is now open for Quaker Life Representative Council (QLRC). The theme for the gathering this spring is *Spiritual Nurture: Filling your Bucket*. Area meeting representatives can now register their place using the online form, <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/quaker-life-rep-council-march-2023>.

If you have any questions about QLRC please get in touch with Quaker Life by email, qladmin@quaker.org.uk.

Faith in Action Gathering – focus on reparations

15 April, 10.30am to 4.30pm, Cardiff Meeting House

Join us in Cardiff for a day of gentle and focussed discussion, connection and spirituality centred on justice, equality, and reparations. The day is open to all.

Contemplation and discussion will be focussed on these questions:

- What is the mechanism for responding to Yearly Meeting minutes and what they ask us to do?
- What are the consequences of believing that everyone is equal?

[Book to attend using the online registration form](#) or contact us on FaithInAction@quaker.org.uk.



Meeting House Matters

In-person events in 2023

Quaker Life is holding three in-person events for wardens, resident Friends, volunteers, and other role-holders who are involved in the running or management of Quaker meeting houses and lettings businesses. They will take place in Bristol (18 April), Leeds (18 July) and London (14 November) and run from 10am to 4pm. One session at each in-person event will be held blended and will focus on a topic.

Please forward the details of these events to paid or voluntary meeting house wardens, managers or other workers and support them to attend. If they would like to attend in person please register using the online form, <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/mhm-23>.

Life Cycle of Quaker Communities – Consultation Conversations

Throughout April 2023 – online

Many Quaker meetings and communities are changing. A lot of our numbers are smaller. What are some of the ways we might adjust? What does it look like to have faith and cherish our communities while also recognising that our energy levels are getting low?

Since summer 2021, Emily Provance (New York Yearly Meeting) has been working with a group of Friends from multiple yearly meetings, countries, and theological branches of Quakerism. The group has been exploring transitions and endings for Quaker meetings. They've produced a publication about [the life cycle of meetings](#) and [a resource for Friends' meetings that are nearing the end of their life cycles](#).

In April 2023, as part of this ongoing project, Friends everywhere are invited to participate in a series of Zoom-based consultations. These gatherings have three purposes:

- for each participant to learn
- for each participant to share their own knowledge and insights
- and for each participant to meet other Friends who are experiencing similar circumstances to their own.

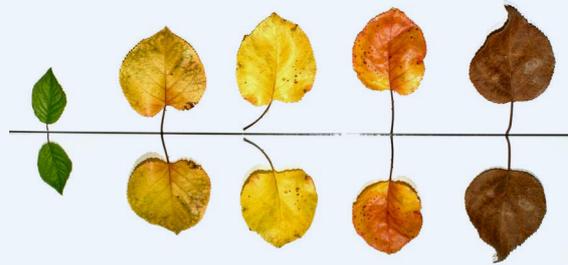
In each 90-minute consultation, you'll hear a brief presentation, then have a chance to ask questions and engage in an open conversation.

Topics include the following:

- the life cycle of meetings
- simplifying committee structures
- combining / merging meetings
- sharing / repurposing / selling buildings
- restructuring local meetings
- and laying down meetings.

There are also consultations specifically for yearly meeting staff members and clerks, quarterly or regional meeting staff members and clerks, record keepers, and trustees.

You're welcome to attend as many of these as feel relevant to you. Look online to [find more information and register](#).



Images: Tolga Ulkan on Unsplash (above); Lily Kroese (below)

Youth, Children and Families

Online worship for young adults and parents

There are opportunities for parents and young adults to worship each week hosted by Woodbrooke and supported by Quaker Life. Please share this information with Friends locally who might wish to join an online worship space with peers.

- **Young Adult Worship** is offered weekly on Wednesday at 9pm. Find out about it on the Woodbrooke website, www.woodbrooke.org.uk/worship/young-adult.
- **Quaker Parents Worship** is offered on the second Monday of each month at 9pm. More information is on the Woodbrooke website, www.woodbrooke.org.uk/worship/quaker-parent-epilogue.



Training and learning

Future of the Woodbrooke Centre

Woodbrooke Trustees have released a statement about the future of the Woodbrooke Centre in Birmingham. Responsibility for the buildings and grounds will pass to Bournville Village Trust. Woodbrooke's learning, research, and worship will continue. You can read the statement and a minute from the trustees on Woodbrooke's website.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/woodbrooke-centre-statement-feb-23

Woodbrooke Working With Meetings

Woodbrooke is offering area meetings an opportunity to tailor a year-long programme of Woodbrooke courses and learning activities. They will be delivered online and in-person at local venues selected by the area meeting. If you think your area meeting would benefit, find out more at www.woodbrooke.org.uk.

Woodbrooke Where You Are

Woodbrooke also offer opportunities for Quaker communities, such as local meetings, to explore a single topic or have a one day event through [Woodbrooke Where You Are](#) (formerly Woodbrooke-on-the-road). Woodbrooke Where You Are is now available in person, online and blended.

Find out more: www.woodbrooke.org.uk/learn/learning-for-communities

New Woodbrooke courses and roles training coming soon!

Woodbrooke is working on a new programme of courses, which will include support sessions as well as full courses for Quaker roles. These will go live towards the end of March and the start of April. Updates will be in *Quake!* and the Woodbrooke newsletter (sign up at www.woodbrooke.org.uk/newsletter).

All current roles courses are sold out. To be added to the waiting list for a specific roles course email Learning@woodbrooke.org.uk.

There's still space on a session exploring Quaker business method which you can book here: www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/exploring-quaker-business-method.

Grants

Adult Education Grants

"It has been a nourishing, challenging, transformative experience, which will remain with me going forward." MA graduate in Gender, Media and Culture.

Any mature student or graduate who is a member of Britain Yearly Meeting, or an attender of at least five years, can apply for an Adult Education grant to follow a course that will equip them to serve society or Quakers in Britain if they need financial support to do so. Friends can apply for up to three years of funding to support their living and tuition costs provided that the course is offered at a reputable institution within the UK.

For more information on the grants and how to apply: www.quaker.org.uk/adult-education-grants



WOODBROOKE

