

CHANGES TO LOCAL, MONTHLY AND GENERAL MEETINGS

Yearly Meeting 2007, by minute 20, approved revised chapters 4 and 5 of *Quaker faith & practice* as working text agreeing:

- that the three categories of local meetings for worship should be replaced by a single category;
- the recommendations on the functioning of monthly meetings; and
- on the status of general meetings.

This follows the deferred decisions agreed in York at Yearly Meeting in 2005 (minute 25 refers and is copied below).

Please read minute 20 of this Yearly Meeting.

The term 'monthly meeting' continues as a formal and/or legal part of the name until formally changed by minute of the body concerned to 'area meeting'. Name changes need to be communicated by minute to Meeting for Sufferings, c/o the Recording Clerk.

Area / monthly meetings should look at the revised chapter 4* and take steps to implement the relationships with their local meetings. They should give guidance to their local meetings that the terms 'preparative', 'recognised' or 'notified meetings' are no longer current and should be phased out as soon as is possible in relation to any legal or other formalities required. .

General meetings (other than for Scotland and the Meeting of Friends in Wales) are now longer part of our formal structures can be formally laid down or their names changed – they will be written to separately. Changes need to be notified by minute or formal letter to Meeting for Sufferings, c/o the Recording Clerk.

- chapters 4 and 5 as accepted by Yearly Meeting are printed in the church government Supplement to *Documents in advance* (available from the Quaker Bookshop whilst stocks last). They are also available in this form on the Britain Yearly Meeting website under documents for Yearly Meeting. Copies of church government changes to *Quaker faith & practice* will be sent to all meetings in interim format in the June mailing.

YEARLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) IN BRITAIN

**AT THE YEARLY MEETING
HELD IN YORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK
30 JULY – 6 AUGUST 2005**

Minute 25: RECAST Report – Consideration 1

In this morning's session we have returned to the report of the Working Group on Representation, Communication and Accountability in our Structures (RECAST) and considered the recommendations in sections 2, 3 and 4. We have not at this stage considered the names of meetings.

Section 2

We agree to take forward the recommendations that the three categories of local meetings for worship should be replaced by a single category. This will mean that each monthly meeting will need to take care in providing appropriate support and guidance to each local meeting, depending on its size and strength.

Section 3

We agree to the recommendations in this section on the functioning of monthly meetings and their relationship with their local meetings. We pray that this will help release Friends in each monthly meeting to build a community of local meetings, strengthening their worship and witness.

Section 4

We agree to the recommendations in paragraph 34 concerning the existing 18 geographic general meetings. We recognise and value the rich life in some of our existing general meetings which we expect to continue.

We agree that General Meeting for Scotland and the Meeting of Friends in Wales should continue as at present. We ask the Recording Clerk to consider how discussions on the Welsh/English border issues referred to in paragraph 32 can be pursued.

Friends have testified to the help they have gained from the present guidance in *Quaker faith & practice*. None of these changes should be implemented until the necessary changes to *Quaker faith & practice* have been approved by Yearly Meeting. It will be necessary for the new text to provide adequate guidance to monthly meetings so that good practice is shared and the underlying principles made explicit.

PETER J. ECCLES, *Clerk*