

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



Yearly Meeting agenda and notes

Documents in advance part 1

Compiled for Yearly Meeting Gathering,
University of Warwick, Coventry, 29 July to 5 August 2017



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

Documents in advance is part of a set of publications entitled *Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain 2017*, published by Britain Yearly Meeting.

The full set comprises the following documents:

1. Documents in advance, including agenda and introductory material for Yearly Meeting 2017 and the annual reports of Meeting for Sufferings and Quaker Stewardship Committee
2. *Epistles & testimonies*
3. *Minutes*, to be distributed after the conclusion of Yearly Meeting
4. The formal *Trustees' annual report* including financial statements for the year ended December 2016
5. *Tabular statement*.

Please address enquiries to:

Yearly Meeting Office
Britain Yearly Meeting
Friends House
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

Telephone: 020 7663 1000

Email: ym@quaker.org.uk

All documents issued are also available online at www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

If these do not meet your needs, or the needs of someone you know, please email ym@quaker.org.uk.

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

All *Quaker faith & practice* references are to the printed fifth edition, which can also be found online at www.quaker.org.uk/qfp.

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1.1 Introduction and information

Introduction

Britain Yearly Meeting in session is the final constitutional authority of the Religious Society of Friends in England, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. All members of the yearly meeting have the right to attend and to take part.

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.

This document contains the Yearly Meeting agenda, showing the main items and related events in their expected order and extra relevant information.

Yearly Meeting sessions are dynamic. Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee will refine the agenda as the week progresses. Changes will either be proposed by Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee or decided by Yearly Meeting in session.

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 email to arrangements@quaker.org.uk or, during Yearly Meeting, through the box on the information desk.

Accessibility

We want to make Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017 as accessible as we can. This means catering for people with very different needs, both in the accommodation and in the planning of the event as a whole.

Information can be found on our website at www.quaker.org.uk/ym/accessibility and more information will be added as planning progresses.

Helen Cherry, our Accessibility Officer, is here to help us meet your access requirements. If the information you need is not on the website, you can write to Helen at access@quaker.org.uk or call 020 7663 1040.

Your area meeting should be the first port of call for support or primary care you may need during Yearly Meeting Gathering. Members of the Pastoral Care Group will be available throughout the week to give additional support. If your area meeting is unable to help, the Pastoral Care Group will try to help but it needs advance notification. While they will make every effort to provide support there may be a limit to what can be done.

Please email access@quaker.org.uk.

Website and contact details

Online information about Yearly Meeting is at www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

You can use these pages to follow the progress of Yearly Meeting and to refer to after Yearly Meeting has finished. All documents, including *Epistles & testimonies*, will be available here in different electronic formats. If these don't meet your needs, or the needs of someone you know, please let us know either by email at access@quaker.org.uk or via the contact details below.

For those at Yearly Meeting we will be posting notices on these pages as well as unchecked minutes posted daily.

General contact details

Events & Committee Services, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Telephone: 020 7663 1040. Email: ym@quaker.org.uk.

Children's and Young People's programmes

The children and young people's programmes are a central part of Yearly Meeting Gathering (YMG). They encourage the spiritual and personal growth of children and young people in a variety of ways.

The Children's Programme (ages 0 to 11) offers the chance to explore and engage with the Gathering theme in a variety of ways. The Programme runs in the mornings and afternoons from Sunday to Friday; apart from Monday and Thursday afternoons when all age workshops are scheduled and on Wednesday when there will be excursions taking place.

The Young People's Programme (YPP) (ages 11 to 14) enables young Quakers to experience and engage with the Gathering theme in exciting, challenging and creative ways. It is arranged by a group of young people – with the support of adult volunteers and staff. YPP runs from Saturday evening until Friday afternoon apart from Monday and Thursday afternoons when all-age workshops are scheduled or Wednesday when excursions take place.

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) (ages 14 to 17) provides a variety of opportunities to explore the theme through activities, speakers and discussion and through participation in some Yearly Meeting sessions. It is arranged by a group of young people – with the support of adult volunteers and staff. JYM runs from Saturday evening until Friday afternoon apart from Sunday evening and Tuesday morning.

Nominations process

The Quaker nominations process is a foundation of our life as a religious community. We have a number of appointments to make at each Yearly Meeting. Friends have been identified for nomination after a careful and prayerful process of discernment. Their names are now before Yearly Meeting.

The nominations and requests for release from roles are available at www.quaker.org.uk/ym and are regularly updated. If any Friend wishes to receive a paper copy before Yearly Meeting, please contact Suze Lidbury, Events & Committee Services, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ; phone 020 7663 1140 or email nominations@quaker.org.uk.

The full printed list of nominations and requests for release will be annexed to the draft minutes. This will be available at the start of Yearly Meeting.

As always, if any Friend sees a problem with the service of any of the Friends nominated, they should:

- before Yearly Meeting, contact Suze Lidbury (contact details above)
- at Yearly Meeting, contact Arrangements Committee via email at arrangements@quaker.org.uk or use the box provided on the information desk. This should happen as soon as possible and before the session involved.

Any factual corrections are also much appreciated and should be communicated in advance of Yearly Meeting. Any factual errors spotted during the session should be given to the Committee to Examine Minutes at the rise of session, unless they could cause confusion about which Friend is being nominated.

Amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*

Meeting for Sufferings will bring suggested amendments to *Quaker faith & practice* as described in the agenda notes below. These suggested amendments can also be found online at www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

Comments and queries are welcome from Friends and meetings in advance of Yearly Meeting to Michael Booth, Church Government Adviser, at michaelsb@quaker.org.uk or in Quaker Life at Friends House. Please note that suggestions should relate to the sections under revision at the present time. The text will be formatted to the style of the present printed *Quaker faith & practice* or the online version following approval by Yearly Meeting. Any suggestions for further changes to the proposed amendments made as a result of comments received will be printed in the draft minutes (*Documents in advance part 2*), available at the time of Yearly Meeting.

1.2 Being at Yearly Meeting

Conduct of sessions

We use the same Quaker business method at Yearly Meeting as at area and local meetings. Guidance can be found in *Quaker faith & practice* chapter 3.

“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

As with all business meetings, it is helpful if Friends prepare in advance. A document was sent to all local meetings in March with information to aid spiritual preparation for Yearly Meeting (available online at www.quaker.org.uk/ym). This document aims to help Friends reflect prayerfully on Yearly Meeting business.

The agenda gives the timings of the sessions. The published starting time indicates when the clerk will formally open the session; you should aim to arrive before this time and the meeting will gather in silence shortly beforehand. The clerk will aim to conclude the session by the published closing time, but if it is necessary to extend it, the clerk will indicate when those who need to meet participants in the Children’s Programme should leave to do so in good time.

Entering late or leaving early disturbs those Friends near you. If you need to do so, please wait for the clerk to call 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 when a Friend is ministering. If you arrive late, please wait by a door until the doorkeeper indicates that you can enter.

Ministry and discernment

If you feel called to minister please stand, or if unable to stand please raise your hand and wait to be called.

As we meet in a large venue, we need to rely on the use of microphones so that all present can hear. The process for being called to speak differs according to the nature of the session or part of a session underway. For all sessions, if you rise but another is called, please sit down.

1. Open worship: for instance, at the beginning of each session. A microphone steward will see you and pass you a microphone.
2. Semi-clerked sessions: the clerk will call on a particular microphone steward and the steward will pass the microphone to a Friend standing in their block. If more than one Friend is standing the discernment of who to call rests with the steward.
3. Clerked sessions: the clerk will discern who should speak and will ask a microphone steward to pass the microphone to that particular Friend.

After each contribution there will be a silent pause to allow reflection on what has been said. Please do not stand at this time. When the clerk feels that the time is right for a further contribution to be heard, they will look up and say “I’m ready to hear another contribution” or similar. If you have tested your ministry and feel that the meeting needs to hear your ministry to reach unity, you should stand at this point.

Each contribution should be heard in silence. It is often the case that a Friend will say something with which you agree or disagree. In some Quaker meetings it is the practice for Friends to call out “That Friend speaks my mind”. Any audible indications of approval or disapproval are not part of the discipline of BYM, and are not helpful to the meeting in finding unity. It is,

however, our practice to indicate assent when the clerk asks if a minute is acceptable by saying “I hope so”, or else stand to be called. If in doubt, say nothing and trust to the discernment of the meeting.

When the clerk discerns that the time is right, they will stand with the minute book and say either that they are ready to try a minute or ask the meeting to uphold them while they draft one. When this happens any Friend standing should sit down. It may be that not all Friends who wished to minister have been called. The task of the clerk is to watch the growth of the meeting towards unity or to recognise that unity may not be possible and to judge the right time to submit the minute. While the minute is being drafted, please uphold the clerks in prayerful silence.

Minutes record decisions and need to be accurate and clear. But we should not expect them to be perfect. We need to reflect on whether the minute is an adequate record of the meeting’s discernment – is it good enough? If on reflection you are clear that an amendment to the minute is essential, stand and wait to be called. Do not present fresh material at this point. If you are aware of a grammatical error, please come to the clerks’ table at the rise of the session when members of the Committee to Examine Minutes will have the minute book.

“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 role of elders at Yearly Meeting

Yearly Meeting elders prayerfully support the meeting, taking particular responsibility for the right holding of meeting for worship and for church affairs and to support individual Friends as needed. They uphold the clerks in worship immediately before each session and are available to Friends between sessions.

Right ordering

The Quaker business method is a discipline in which all present should be focusing on worship and discernment of the matter at hand. Any activity that detracts from the focus on Yearly Meeting in session is not compatible with our business method. This includes activities such as knitting and unsuitable use

of electronic devices. Friends are increasingly using electronic devices to access Yearly Meeting documents, and this is to be encouraged as it reduces the need for printing. Resist the temptation to use social media during sessions and endeavour to ensure that your use of such devices does not disturb your neighbours.

We are aware that some Friends with particular needs find it easier to concentrate if they are using their hands. If this is the case please let elders know via the contact details given at the beginning of this document.

Outside of sessions, before posting to social networking sites, please be mindful of the stage that has been reached in our consideration and try not to anticipate a decision. Avoid being critical or dismissive of ministry that has been offered in the meeting. Bear in mind that ministry given in session has been offered in a gathered meeting for worship and might be better not repeated out of context in a public forum.

Overflow room/Remote participation

Yearly Meeting Sessions will be held in the Butterworth Hall in the Warwick Arts Centre and we will use the Theatre in the Arts Centre as an overflow room. Friends will be able to use this if they find being in the Butterworth Hall difficult. Proceedings in the Butterworth Hall will be broadcast to the Theatre. However for certain sessions (see agenda below) the Butterworth Hall and the Theatre will be ‘joined’ so that Friends unable to find seats in the Butterworth Hall can sit in the Theatre and participate fully in the meeting for worship for business. Cameras will be in use in both rooms so that Friends in both can clearly see the clerks and introducers. In addition a camera will be used in the Theatre to enable to clerks to see if Friends stand to give ministry. Friends in both rooms will be able to hear ministry given from either room during clerked sessions. Ministry given in the overflow room during open worship will not be heard by Friends worshipping in the Butterworth Hall and vice versa.

The same things covered in “Ministry and discernment” and “Right ordering” will apply to the Theatre; elders and members of the pastoral care team will be in both rooms.

Many Friends have told us that they find the overflow space helpful. The excellent facilities available to us at the university enable us to experiment with two-way streaming.

1.3 Yearly Meeting agenda and notes

Saturday 29 July

Welcome session, 19:00–20:15

This is the third and final year of our exploration of the theme ‘Living out our faith in the world’. During our time together we will consider how as Quakers we can change and develop to bring in more justice, more equality, more peace. Our challenge is to engage actively with community and movement building so that our renewed Quaker values might flourish in the wider world.

Our Yearly Meeting sessions are held in the context of the community we are creating here at the University of Warwick. This community is rooted in worship and strives to be inclusive, warm and loving. In this atmosphere we can all be nurtured as we try to be the change we wish to see in our world. We are open to the guidance of the Spirit in all our activities during the week and look to gaining a deeper understanding of what love requires of us.

In this welcome session, we come together for the first time, to be introduced to each other and our Yearly Meeting clerking team, including the clerks of Junior Yearly Meeting. Local Friends will welcome us and we will start to build our community.

Junior Yearly Meeting and the Young People’s Programme will begin at 20:30.

Sunday 30 July

Yearly Meeting session 1, 09:30–12:30

1. **Meeting for worship for all ages** On Sunday morning we will have an opportunity to worship together. Parents and carers are invited to bring their children into the Butterworth Hall with them at 9:30. Worship will begin with a short prepared reading and then will be unprogrammed. There will be a flexible drop-off time for the Children's Programme (0–11 years) between 9:45 and 10:15. The doors to the Hall will be left open to allow easy exit and re-entry during this period of worship. Children and their adults can stay for as much of this time as they wish.
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2. **Appointment of clerks 2017** See draft minutes (*Documents in advance part 2*).
- The Yearly Meeting Committee on Clerks nominates the following Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerks for Yearly Meeting 2016:
- Clerk: Deborah Rowlands (South Wales AM)
- First assistant clerk: Clare Scott Booth (London West AM)
- Second assistant clerk: Siobhan Haire (North London AM)
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3. **Permission to non-members to attend**
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4. **Children & Young People's Programmes and Junior Yearly Meeting**
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5. **Committee to Examine Minutes: appointments** *Quaker faith & practice* 6.24 requires that the Committee to Examine Minutes be appointed at the first session of each Yearly Meeting. No more than ten Friends will be appointed, who will arrange a rota whereby two of their number shall examine the minutes at the close of each session and correct any slight inaccuracies.
- If you would like to nominate a Friend to serve on the Committee to Examine Minutes you will need to complete a nominations form, which can be found at www.quaker.org.uk/ym. On the form you will need to provide your name, area meeting and contact details of the Friend you are nominating. In addition, you will need to have approached the Friend to see if they are willing to serve and you will need to certify this in the form.
- The closing date for nominations is 21:00 on 29 July. If we receive nominations for more than ten Friends, Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee will determine the names to be brought before Yearly Meeting on Sunday morning..**
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6. Report of Central Nominations Committee – part 1	See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>). The nominations and requests for release from roles are available at www.quaker.org.uk/ym and are regularly updated.
7. Agenda introduction	Including receipt of the Annual Report of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (Appendix I)
8. Living out our faith in the world – working with others to make a difference	<p>For the past two years Yearly Meeting has been considering what it means to live out our testimony and the role of discernment in knowing what is ours to do. We will be reminded of our concern about the pain and inequalities in society, and our recognition that we need to work with others to address the root causes of these inequalities.</p> <p>At Yearly Meeting 2016, Tim Gee left us to reflect on some questions: “In the context of cuts, of climate change, of poverty, a great people is gathering already. I want to ask, what is our role? How do you feel led to participate? How could your meeting listen to your local community and forge alliances, to understand the concerns of those who live around you? What kind of support could we offer – is it physical? Is it economic? Is it spiritual? And I suppose I want to humbly ask some bigger questions as well. Are we like John more comfortable in the wilderness, existing prophetically but peripherally? Or are we willing to join with our communities to turn the tables at the temple, if necessary?”</p> <p>At Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017, we will conclude our three-year reflection. We will begin by exploring the leadings of the heart in our Quaker witness and activism. What is this drive, this energy, this passion, this push to take action? What does it feel like? How do we know it’s not just our ego? Where does it come from? How are we enabled to follow it? What joy and sorrows may it bringing? How are we transformed by it?</p> <p>We will hear about the significance of working with others, the power of people of good will to bring about change and the importance of community, cooperation and connectedness.</p> <p>We have a vision of a better society. What other models of more inclusive societies are out there? What can we learn from them? What steps do we need to take to make our vision a reality?</p> <p>In planning the consideration of the theme over the whole week, Agenda Committee has found it helpful to think of it in terms of Heart, Head, Hands and Feet. In the first session ‘Heart’ we will be acknowledging and celebrating the heartfelt spirit that drives our witness; in the second session, ‘Head’, we will learning how we might harness that passion and energy effectively, so that we and others can be empowered to add to movements for change; in the third and fourth sessions on Tuesday and Thursday ‘Hands’ and ‘Feet’ we will be remembering that in our ways of working and approaches to Quaker work, we can identify the transferable skills we bring to our work with others. Finally, on Friday, we will ask, ‘What does God require of us?’.</p>

Sunday 30 July

Yearly Meeting session 2, 19:15–20:30

9. Receipt of annual report of Quaker Stewardship Committee

A description of the role and work of Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) is given in *Quaker faith & practice* 14.36–14.42. It is a committee that reports directly to Yearly Meeting. The Quaker Stewardship Committee terms of reference require it to certify annually to Yearly Meeting that every part of Britain Yearly Meeting is producing proper financial accounts and property records. The annual report of the Quaker Stewardship Committee is at Appendix II and includes the compliance report.

If Friends have specific issues to raise in relation to this report, you are encouraged to do so in advance of Yearly Meeting via Arrangements Committee at arrangements@quaker.org.uk

10. Receipt of annual report from Meeting for Sufferings

A description of the role and work of Meeting for Sufferings is given in *Quaker faith & practice* 7.02–7.06. It is the body entrusted with the general care of matters affecting BYM and, in the intervals between Yearly Meetings, the making of decisions and issuing of statements in the name of BYM. It is a committee that reports directly to Yearly Meeting.

The annual report of Meeting for Sufferings is at Appendix III. If Friends have specific issues to raise in relation to this report, you are encouraged to do so in advance of Yearly Meeting via the Arrangements Committee at arrangements@quaker.org.uk.

**11. Proposed amendments to
*Quaker faith & practice***

Meeting for Sufferings proposes two amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*. These changes were considered by Meeting for Sufferings at meetings held on 3 December 2016 and 1 April 2017. Minutes MfS/16/12/15 and MfS/16/12/16 followed by MfS/17/04/08 are reproduced below and the background and proposed text of the suggested amendments can be found at Appendix IV.

MfS/16/12/15 *Quaker faith & practice*: proposed revision to section 13.19 Further to minute MfS/15/12/17 Review of BYM's relationship with Listed Informal Groups, we have received from Church Government Advisory Group, proposed revisions to section 13.19 of *Quaker faith & practice*. The Group also suggests that the phrase 'Listed informal group' is replaced by 'Quaker Recognised Body' in sections 11.05 and 11.11. The recommendations are set out in paper MfS 2016 11 12b.

We forward these recommendations to Yearly Meeting

MfS/16/12/16 *Quaker Faith and Practice*: proposed revisions to sections 8.21 and 14.40 In July, having heard from BYM Trustees about changes to Management Meeting, we asked Church Government Advisory Group (CGAG) to consider any implications for *Quaker faith & practice* (MfS/16/07/07). CGAG has advised that section 8.22 does not appear to need to be changed, but has proposed minor amendments to 14.40 and 8.21, which are set out in paper CGAG 16 09 08c.

We forward these recommendations to Yearly Meeting.

MfS/17/04/08 *Quaker faith & practice*: proposed revision to section 14.40 Last December, MfS approved some proposed changes to Quaker faith and practice section 14.40 (Quaker Stewardship Committee), and forwarded them to Yearly Meeting (minute MfS/16/12/16). Church Government Advisory Group (CGAG) had overlooked recent changes to the terms of reference to Quaker Stewardship Committee. Accordingly, it now suggests a simplification to the wording of section 14.40 as set out in paper (MfS 2017 04 07).

We agree to this proposed amendment, and forward it to Yearly Meeting

Monday 31 July

Yearly Meeting session 3, 09:30–12:00

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| 12. Report of Central Nominations Committee – part 2 | Appointments to committees and groups for work outside Yearly Meeting in session.
See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>).
The nominations and requests for release from roles are available at www.quaker.org.uk/ym and are regularly updated. |
| 13. Central Nominations Committee: nominations required | See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>).
The list of nominations required will be printed as a schedule annexed to draft minutes available at the start of Yearly Meeting. |
| 14. Report of Yearly Meeting Nominating Group | See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>). The list of nominations required will be printed as a schedule annexed to draft minutes available at the start of Yearly Meeting |
| 15. Nominations to Yearly Meeting Nominating Group | Role of Yearly Meeting Nominating Group
Yearly Meeting Nominating Group nominates Friends for Central Nominations Committee and the Committee on Clerks (which nominates the clerks of Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees).

Yearly Meeting 2017 will appoint five to seven Friends to serve with the convener appointed under agenda item 14 to bring forward nominations to Yearly Meeting 2018 as specified in the schedule annexed to the draft minutes.

Nominations to Yearly Meeting Nominating Group
If you would like to nominate a Friend to serve on Yearly Meeting Nominating Group you may do so as follows:

Complete a nominations form, which can be obtained from the information desk. This form should be signed by both the proposer and the Friend nominated. Place the completed form in the box available at the information desk by 21:00 on Wednesday 2 August.

Please note that nominations should only be for Friends in membership who are present at Yearly Meeting. A list of Friends nominated, together with a map showing their geographic distribution, will be available on a notice board near the information desk.

Objections to any of the nominations should be brought to the attention of Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee via the box provided on the information desk or via email at 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 Thursday at 13:30 to define the task and solve any problems of over-nomination and geographical spread. The nominations will then be brought before Yearly Meeting on Friday 4 August. |

16. Clerks to Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees: appointment	See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>).
17. Appointment of Britain Yearly Meeting Treasurer	See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>).
18. Proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference for the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group	See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>).
19. Proposed Revisions to the Terms of Reference of Committee on Clerks	<p>Committee on Clerks is the body that brings nominations for the clerks of Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and BYM Trustees, and for the YM Treasurer. Following reviews of other nominating bodies, they now propose that a review of their manner of working be undertaken as set out in minute 9 of their meeting held 21 March. In the meantime some minor revisions to their current terms of reference are required, as set out in minute 10 of the same meeting. The proposed revised terms of reference are at Appendix V</p> <p>Minute 9. Proposed review of the Committee on Clerks We have received a paper (CoC 2017 3 21 – 8) arising from a meeting between our clerk and the Yearly Meeting Clerk, the Clerk of Yearly Meeting Trustees, the Clerk of Meeting for Sufferings and the Recording Clerk in February. At this meeting the present manner of working of the Committee was considered. It is recommended that Yearly Meeting 2017 should be asked to approve revised Terms of Reference for this Committee but also to agree to the appointment of a small review group by Meeting for Sufferings to bring in new Terms of Reference for the Committee to Yearly Meeting 2019.</p> <p>We welcome this recommendation and hope that any review will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to nurture potential Clerks and Treasurer; • the relationship between Central Nominations Committee and the Committee on Clerks. <p>Minute 10. Revised Terms of Reference for the Committee on Clerks</p> <p>Further to Minute 4 of our November 2016 meeting, the Clerk has prepared a revised draft of revised Terms of Reference for the Committee (2017 3 21 – 7). We agree this draft after further amendments, except that we ask the clerk to discuss the wording of the last sentence of 2.4 with the Recording Clerk and authorize him to agree appropriate wording.</p> <p>We agree to forward these Terms of Reference to the Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee with the request that this revised draft be submitted to Yearly Meeting 2017 for approval.</p>
20. Living out our faith in the world: working with others to make a difference (cont.)	<p>Head: What do we do when we feel moved to act? While a spirit-led call to action can be overwhelming, we need to use our intellect and our reason to find how we can be most effective. In this session we will use Mark's gospel to look at how Jesus used his head while building movements and we will hear about some of the methods used by Turning the Tide to enable those working for change to be effective in their call to action. There will be opportunities to explore today's theme in afternoon workshops. See also agenda item 8.</p>

Tuesday 1 August

Yearly Meeting session 4, 09:30–12:00

**21. Britain Yearly Meeting
Trustees' report and review**

In these challenging and uncertain times, the need for Quaker work and witness, grounded in our worship and in the life of the Spirit, is as urgent as ever. We cannot do it all, but trustees and the central and standing committees are working ever more closely to see where our work can be most effective. We are a do it together church. Your part in this – giving as much of your time, your service, your financial support and your prayers as you are able – is an essential part of being a Quaker.

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 (a full description of the role and work of Britain Yearly Meeting trustees is given in *Quaker faith & practice* 8.16–8.19). Trustees are accountable both to Yearly Meeting and to the charity regulators.

The *Trustees' annual report* including financial statements for the year ended December 2016 will be before the meeting and we will hear a spoken report from the Clerk of Trustees and the Yearly Meeting Treasurer. A separate annual review, *Our faith in action: Quaker work in 2016*, is also available

**22. Living out our faith in the
world: working with others to
make a difference (cont.)**

Hands: As Friends, we consider that the way we work is an important witness in itself, quite apart from the issues on which we are moved to take action. Rather than focussing on specific issues, the purpose of this session and associated workshops is to help to identify our Quaker ways of working and witnessing in the world; to point to the 'tools' we use to further our work; and to help to empower Friends to take action (hands) in response to the spiritual imperative for taking that action.

There will be opportunities to explore today's theme in afternoon workshops. See also agenda item 8.

Thursday 3 August

Yearly Meeting session 5, 09:30–12:00

- 23. Receipt of other reports** We will formally note receipt of the following reports:
- Central Nominations Committee (Appendix VI)
 - Quaker Housing Trust (Appendix VII)
 - Friends Trusts Limited (Appendix VII).
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- 24. Membership of Meeting for Sufferings** See draft minutes (*Documents in advance part 2*).
- The list of members and alternates to Meeting for Sufferings is available at www.quaker.org.uk/ym and are regularly updated.
- Any factual corrections will be much appreciated. Please communicate these corrections before Yearly Meeting via phone on 020 7663 1140 or email at ym@quaker.org.uk. or in writing at Events & Committee Services, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ
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- 25. Meeting for Sufferings: Call for nominations for the Triennium 2018–2021** In accordance with section 7.06 of *Quaker faith & practice*, area meetings are required to nominate representatives to Meeting for Sufferings for the triennial period beginning Yearly Meeting 2018 until Yearly Meeting 2021. Nominations come to Yearly Meeting 4–7 May 2018.
- Representation from area meetings is on the basis of two Friends per area meeting, one designated as the representative and the other as an alternate.
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- 26. Living out our faith in the world: working with others to make a difference (cont.)** Feet: How can we work with others to make a difference?
- “We are well aware that we can’t put the world to rights all by ourselves. We value the important work of others. By engaging with them we are already changing the world. We want to break down barriers; we refuse to prejudge who is or is not an ally.”
- Our faith in the future*
- This plenary session will provide an opportunity to hear the experience of several groups engaged in social action collaboratively with groups outside of Quakers. Our introducers’ accounts will highlight how their activity has been effective in carrying out witness in particular cooperation between Friends and others, so that the Yearly Meeting can consider more broadly the benefits and challenges in working with non-Quaker groups and build from its consideration in the previous sessions. We will also start to bring together our conclusions from the week’s consideration of the topic.
- There will be opportunities to explore today’s theme in afternoon workshops. See also agenda item 8.
-

Thursday 3 August

Yearly Meeting session 6, 19:15 – 20:30

27. As led

Friday 4 August

Yearly Meeting session 7, 09:30–12:00

- | | |
|--|--|
| 28. Living out our faith in the world: working with others to make a difference (cont.) | What does God require of us? We will draw the week's consideration of our theme: 'Living out our faith in the world: working with others to make a difference' to a conclusion, by asking 'What does God require of us?' We hope that the worship and ministry will bring different perspectives together. |
| 29. Meeting for worship for all ages | Meeting for worship for all ages. We hope this session will be led by those in the Children's Programme. Their theme for the week is 'building a better world' |
-

Friday 4 August

Yearly Meeting session 8, 14:30–17:00

- | | |
|--|--|
| 30. Receipt of the Yearly Meeting Draft Epistle | Procedure for 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 Yearly Meeting. 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.

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 Thursday 3 August.

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 Friday morning, 4 August.

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 Friday 4 August.

A revised Draft Epistle will be presented at the final session on Friday 4 August when no further revision (except perhaps excision) will be invited. |
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31. Receipt of the <i>Tabular statement</i>	The <i>Tabular statement</i> is the annual record of the number of members, attenders, children and marriages in Quaker meetings across Britain Yearly Meeting and is received by Yearly Meeting each year. The <i>Tabular statement</i> for 2016 will be available at www.quaker.org.uk/ym and a hard copy will be sent to meetings before YMG.
32. Minute of record: Epistles	
33. Minute of record: Testimonies	
34. Minute of record: Friends from other yearly meetings	
35. Minute of record: Inter-church and interfaith visitors	
36. Formal acceptance of reports and accounts	
37. Yearly Meeting Nominating Group 2016–2017: appointment and nominations required	See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>). A full list of the nominations required is listed in the draft minutes and schedule.
38. Any other business which may properly be taken	Agenda Committee believes that the time in the final session may be used to bring Yearly Meeting to a right close. It does not feel that it is a suitable occasion to raise new issues that would need substantial time from Yearly Meeting to be given proper consideration. Friends wishing to raise matters under this item are asked to notify Arrangements Committee by 12:45 on Thursday 3 May.
39. Receipt of Junior Yearly Meeting Epistle	The Epistle will be read.
40. Receipt of minutes from the Children & Young People's Programme	Those in the Children's Programme (ages 0–11) and the Young People's Programme (ages 11–14) will have been engaging with Yearly Meeting in age-appropriate and fun ways. Each of the groups in these programmes will join with us to present minutes from their programmes.
41. Reading and signing of the Yearly Meeting Epistle	
42. Naming of clerks for Yearly Meeting 2018	See draft minutes (<i>Documents in advance part 2</i>).
43. Concluding minute	

Appendices

Appendix I: Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee report for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017

Appendix II: Quaker Stewardship Committee annual report 2016 (including compliance report)

Appendix III: Meeting for Sufferings Annual Report 2016

Appendix IV: Proposed amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*

Appendix V: Proposed revisions to the terms of reference of Committee on Clerks

Appendix VI: Annual report of Central Nominations Committee to Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017

Appendix VII: Quaker Housing Trust Annual Report 2016

Appendix VIII: Friends Trusts Limited report for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017

Appendix I

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee report for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017

Planning a Yearly Meeting Gathering is an exciting but daunting task and it has been approached in different ways over the years. This is the first Gathering overseen entirely by the Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee rather than a separate planning group. This has been enabled by an increased staff capacity to deal with more of the logistical issues. The committee's remit now stretches far beyond organising the agenda for Yearly Meeting sessions and the "use of the premises" (*QfP* 6.18), and this has meant some new ways of working to make sure we have looked 'in the round' at all aspects of the Gathering. We started with a clear vision that the process of how we live together for a week at Yearly Meeting Gathering is as important as the business we do together. We set ourselves the task of creating a gathering where we build and live an alternative vision of society: loving, inclusive and all-age – changed people changing the world.

To implement this vision, we spent a lot of time early in the process in consideration of the 'look and feel' of the Gathering. You will see the results in a programme with more free space, particularly at meal times; in greater opportunities for spontaneous activities to arise; in daily queries; in all-age activities; in community activities to create a sense of belonging, safety and connection. We invite gatherers to create their own experience from the range of activities on offer, and to pay attention to what 'anchors' you, whether that means solitary walks, joining a regular group for dancing or singing or worship, meeting new people over conversation tables, taking the time to eat with a friendship group, family or Meeting, or doing whatever love requires.

Agenda Committee wrestled with the best ways to help Friends engage with the business of 'Living out our faith in the world: working with others to make a difference.' In setting the agenda we have taken note of the importance of leaving plenty of space for the Spirit to move and opportunities for worship together. We have planned a range of opportunities for Friends to engage with daily themes of 'Heart', 'Head', 'Hands' and 'Feet' both through plenary sessions and in workshops and smaller groups. We have worked closely with members of Junior Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee, who have set as their theme 'Working together to make a difference', and with other groups and committees. We are grateful for the enthusiasm and participation of local Friends in providing opportunities both to see examples of Quaker work, and for community activities, as part of our Gathering.

Looking to the future, Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee has continued to develop our relationship with Meeting for Sufferings so that planning for Yearly Meeting is grounded in wider discernment. As an experiment, we organised a threshing conference, where representatives spent time looking at the issues that will affect us in the future, with the aim of taking a longer-term view when setting the agenda for Yearly Meeting, and linking the forward planning of Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings. In hearing minutes from past yearly meetings we were moved to see how patient faithfulness, working quietly on issues over a long period of time, has led to change and transformation.

At the heart of our Gathering will be a continual experience of worship, listening for the guidance of the Spirit. Towards the end of the week we have planned a period of worship when we hope that there will be space for ministry bringing different perspectives from the week's experience to bear. We pray that we leave with energy renewed by the Spirit, with a deeper understanding of what love requires of us as we live out our faith in the world.

Clare Scott Booth
May 2017

Appendix II

Quaker Stewardship Committee annual report 2016 (including compliance report)

1. Role and purpose

Quaker Stewardship Committee is a standing committee of Yearly Meeting

The purpose of Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) is to support area meetings in their stewardship and co-ordinate 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).

It is also responsible for the provision of advice on property matters and for the Annual Conference of Treasurers Arrangements Committee (ACTAC).

Quaker Stewardship Committee has met five times during the year; once by telephone conference and four times at Friends House. During the year we put in place a revised induction process and held a training day for the whole committee on reading and commenting on trustees' annual reports and accounts. We have spent time identifying our priorities in line with *Our faith in the future* and developing an action plan. We continued our practice of having a link Friend for each area meeting.

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

These responsibilities have been undertaken as follows:

Support for trustees

We have issued guidance to trustees on several topics including reserves policy and giving to non-Quaker organisations. We have revised the checklists used with trustees' annual reports and accounts to bring them up-to-date with current accounting requirements and Charity Commission guidance on good practice

We have developed an agreement with Quaker Life Central Committee on co-operation between us to support trustees and to plan, provide and evaluate support to area meetings.

The next national Trustees' Conference is to be at Woodbrooke, 17-19 February 2017 on the theme 'Spinning the Plates: Juggling the Joys and Challenges of Trusteeship'.

Provide property advice and guidance

The Quaker Life Network Property Advice Cluster has continued to provide support for meetings and can be contacted through Helen Griffith at Friends House. We welcome more offers of service to this cluster from Friends with appropriate skills or expertise on property matters.

Online property advice sheets are available and can be accessed via the *Directory of services*.

The Quaker Meeting Houses Heritage Project surveys are complete and the static data is to be made available to the public through OASIS, a national database.

We have two representatives on the steering group for the property support pilot project.

Support for treasurers

The national Treasurers' Conference took place at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick on 17–19 June 2016. The theme was 'Money and Ministry' and the main speaker was Barbara Hayes, Woodbrooke Tutor and

member of Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility.

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 using an agreed checklist and has offered guidance and support to meetings in producing their accounts.

Group membership of the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers has been extended to cover all local meeting treasurers.

We have set up an email cluster for area and local meeting treasurers.

The work to provide online treasurers' advice sheets is planned to be completed during 2017. Until these are available the *Treasurers handbook* will not be withdrawn.

Ensure 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 2016 training was available on trusteeship and treasurership including a new course for area meeting treasurers.

Enable meetings to act within the law

Guidance on how to agree a scheme for charities linked to area meetings was agreed with the Charity Commission and issued to area meetings.

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 editors are now Fred Ashmore and Raymond Thompson.

The committee has responded to queries from meetings on a variety of topics, including the right use of funds, valuation of property in annual accounts and appointment of trustees.

Future work

Over the coming year the committee will

continue to encourage and support area meetings in improving practice in writing annual reports and timely completion of the annual report and accounts

produce guidance for area meetings on the use of excessive reserves

Identify and disseminate good practice in nominations and succession planning.

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 *Quaker faith & practice* 14.39e). This task is carried out using an agreed checklist for annual reports and accounts that has been sent to all area meetings.

The 2015 reports all 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 III

Meeting for Sufferings Annual Report 2016

Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace, and ensue it, and to follow after righteousness and the knowl edge of God, seeking the good and welfare, and doing that which tends to the peace of all.

Qf&p 24.04 Margaret Fell 1660

Meeting for Sufferings is the “standing representative body entrusted with the general care of matters affecting Britain Yearly Meeting and in the intervals between Yearly Meetings”. It is the “central body which can act on behalf of the Society (i.e. Britain Yearly Meeting) between Yearly Meetings” and tries therefore to be representative of Friends both as to diversity and geographically. There are just under one hundred members of Meeting for Sufferings including representatives from all (70) area meetings, from Young Friends General Meeting, General Meeting for Scotland, and Meeting of Friends in Wales and there are also representatives from the standing central committees. BYM trustees, Management Meeting (senior staff) and the Yearly Meeting clerk are ex officio members of Meeting for Sufferings.

This balance of membership enables Sufferings to fulfil its function “in drawing together and relating to one another the different strands in the yearly meeting’s life and service.” During 2016 we have met five times, usually in George Fox Room at Friends House. In December we welcomed young Friends from the Young People’s Participation Day who joined us in the Large Meeting House in worship at the start and the close of the day.

Quaker faith & practice Chapter 7 lays down in detail the role and functions of Meeting for Sufferings and these may be broadly defined as making decisions and issuing statements on behalf of BYM, exercising discernment on priorities, receiving regular reports from trustees, and fostering communication within the yearly meeting. *Qf&p* 7.02 also states that Sufferings has a “part to play in developing a visionary and prophetic role for the whole yearly meeting”. There are 19 separate functions detailed and this report is intended to show how Meeting for Sufferings has endeavoured to fulfil these.

Making decisions and issuing statements

The business addressed by Meeting for Sufferings this year has not been new or major decision making but rather continuing with established items.

1) Refugees and Asylum seekers: This issue has been to the forefront of our agendas and last year we adopted a statement that has been circulated widely and used by Friends throughout BYM in speaking out on this issue. We deliberated at length in February about joining a private sponsorship scheme run by Citizens UK but we were not clear that this was the right action for Quakers to take. Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) Central Committee continued work on this issue and, in July, reported that a new project; ‘Responding to Forced Migration’ had been launched. This has been enabled by the use of legacy income to fund a full-time worker. Friends organised a conference on this topic in February 2017. We continue to hear of work with refugees and asylum seekers that is being done locally in area meetings across Britain.

2) Court and Prison register: We have heard of Friends acting under conscience and upheld them in our prayers. We have recorded the sentencing of one Friend and the arrest of five others whose trials took place in late 2016 and early 2017.

3) Appeal process: On the recommendation of the Church Government Advisory Group, we agreed, in July, to initiate a review of the appeal process described in *Quaker Faith & Practice* 4.25 and 4.26.

4) *Quaker faith & practice* amendments: In December we agreed amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*

13.19, 11.05 and 11.11 (Quaker Recognised Bodies) and to 8.21 and 14.40 (Management meeting changes) and forwarded these to Yearly Meeting 2017 by our minutes MfS16/12/5 and MfS 16/12/16.

5) Holding of Meeting for Sufferings: We agreed to hold a single meeting of MfS at a venue outside London in 2017 as an experiment. This is to help greater awareness of the workings of Britain Yearly Meeting and to encourage representatives to meet with local friends in a different area of Britain.

Exercising discernment on priorities and receiving reports for information and consultation

During the year we have had regular reports from BYM trustees, and we have heard from Quaker World Relations Committee in April, from Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations in July, from Quaker Peace and Social Witness in October and from Quaker Life in December. It has been helpful to hear how the work of these groups fits with our vision statement – *Our faith in the future* – and how BYM is moving towards these ideals.

In April we spent time considering how we test concerns: listening to the Spirit in meeting for worship is our starting point. We noted the importance of being tender with Friends: acting under concern can be a frightening experience when you feel impelled and can do no other. Some meetings do not have experience of testing concerns and the process needs to be explained clearly.

Playing a part in developing a visionary and prophetic role for the whole yearly meeting

There have been four strands of work:

1) Call for Equality (YM Minute 2015/36): Yearly Meeting asked Meeting for Sufferings to “take the work on social and economic injustice forward, co-ordinating the work of local and area meetings who might wish to become more deeply involved, and encouraging the deep spiritual and intellectual searching that could underpin a ‘true social order’ for our age.” We spent productive time together in April, hearing about both the various issues important to Friends and the work that is going on around the yearly meeting but our minute concluded that “we have struggled with the concept of Meeting for Sufferings being responsible for co-ordination and see our role more as encouraging and providing networking among Friends”.

2) BYM Sustainability Group (YM Minute 2011/36): Yearly Meeting in Canterbury in 2011 committed to becoming a low carbon sustainable community. Meeting for Sufferings oversees and encourages progress in the commitment through the BYM Sustainability Group (BYMSG). In 2016 BYMSG paid particular attention to strengthening the sense of community around the Canterbury Commitment, and to nurturing Quaker sustainability ministry in all its forms. While we have a long way to go in raising the profile and priority of the Commitment, there is increasing engagement in the various parts of our structures. QPSW has been advising local meetings on fossil fuel divestment and supporting local Quaker initiatives through the Economics, Sustainability and Peace Network. Quaker Life Representative Council in October 2016 focused on spiritual aspects of sustainability. The Recording Clerk’s Office now has a project officer providing advice to local meetings on property matters, including sustainability. QPSW and Living Witness are working together on proposals for Green Light, a new series of resources on lifestyle change, Quaker conversations about sustainability, corporate discernment, and engagement with the wider community and politics. Plans are underway for the next BYM Sustainability Gathering, to be held in the second half of 2018.

3) Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group (MfS 2014/04/05): The Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group created the ‘Reading Quaker faith and practice’ project and invited Quakers across the country to participate in order to get to know our current Book of Discipline. There has been a gratifyingly large take up of this project. The calendar produced for this finishes in spring 2017. One of the aims was to get Friends talking and listening to each other about all aspects of our life together. This aim has been successful.

One of the group’s major pieces of work has been considering the church government aspect of our Book of Discipline. Over 220 people completed a questionnaire about its use. The group has concluded that the church

government part of the text should be comprehensively revised, rather than simply updated. The group sees this as an integral part of a wider revision of the Book of Discipline. The group expects to recommend that a future book of discipline should focus on describing and explaining the enduring principles of our church government, together with anthology examples of our practice. We noted in September 2016 that ‘Friends today – many of whom are new to Quakers – have greater need than previous generations to articulate why we do things as we do and the theological base for them. This will be challenging, but we see it as exciting and necessary.’

4) Quaker Recognised Bodies: In December, Meeting for Sufferings recorded the first four organisations to be recognised under the new system which was agreed in 2015.

Fostering communication throughout the yearly meeting.

At every meeting we receive minutes from area meetings, general meetings or central committees. Friends from different parts of Britain are able to meet and to hear from each other about new issues and issues of common concern. We provide a forum for representatives to share those issues which may be a burden or a joy to them in their locality and to build on the shared insights that we have in the family of Friends.

One such matter, brought to us originally from Cornwall Area Meeting, was its concern for the decriminalisation of the possession of drugs for personal use. Meeting for Sufferings received this in April and asked area meetings to consider the issue. We returned to this in December, having received minutes from 37 area meetings and their response added to our discernment. All the minutes have been forwarded to Cornwall and although we did not feel able to adopt this as a concern for Britain Yearly Meeting at this time, we agreed that we need to seek a humane and compassionate response to drug users and that Friends should be encouraged to work with Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs and other organisations where appropriate.

A paper from QPSWCC, ‘Towards a vision of a criminal justice system’ has also been widely circulated and considered by area meetings. There have been minutes about sustainability, interfaith relations, the arms trade, conscientious objection to military tax and peacebuilding. Often we know that our work, at local level or nationally, can be enhanced by joining with others already working on these issues. We look forward to further information and encouragement at Yearly Meeting 2017 when movement building is to be a main theme.

Other matters

We have received enthusiastic reports from our own workers in the Vibrancy Project which has commenced operation in four areas of Britain (Kent, Sussex and Surrey; North-west England; Wales and Southern Marches; and West Somerset, Devon and Cornwall.) We have spent time reflecting on how we work together so as to be effective and responsive to guidance by the Spirit. Looking forward, we wish to strengthen the links between area meetings, Meeting for Sufferings and the various work going on in Britain Yearly Meeting and to continue to work towards the vision encapsulated in *Our faith in the future*.

Appendix IV

Proposed amendments to *Quaker faith & practice*

The change from 'listed informal groups' to 'Quaker recognised bodies'

Background

By minute MfS/15/12/17, Meeting for Sufferings asked Church Governance Advisory Group to advise on and bring forward amendments required to *Quaker faith & practice* consequent on the decision of Meeting for Sufferings to adopt a new 'Quaker recognised bodies' system in place of the existing 'listed informal groups' system.

Proposed text

13.19 – Quaker recognised bodies

Quakers in Britain, both individually and as a yearly meeting, have long benefitted from the many formal and informal groups which allow and encourage Friends to develop concerns and interests arising from, and strengthening, their experience of Quaker faith. At different times in the past, some of these have been known as special interest groups, or listed informal groups. These, together with many free-standing Quaker trusts and charities, are now known as Quaker recognised bodies.

A Quaker recognised body is an independent group through which concerned Friends may share a common interest, seek affirmation or carry out witness. The bodies are seen as arising from Quaker faith, and provide a way in which conviction and witness can be explored and developed outside our formal structures. Being independent, Quaker recognised bodies generally have no right of communication by minute with structures such as Meeting for Sufferings, central committees or Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee.

All groups or bodies using the name 'Quaker' or 'Friends' in their title are reminded of the responsibility to uphold our testimonies, and that care is needed in case the work or witness of the group is understood to be part of the yearly meeting's corporate activity when it is not.

Details of the following may be obtained from the Recording Clerk: the criteria for and process of recognition, the benefits and responsibilities, and periodic review.

Changes to Management Meeting

By minute BYMT-2016-06-11, Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees agreed changes to management meeting and job titles to better reflect the strategic role it has been asked to fill. The term 'General Secretary' is to be discontinued. Trustees informed Meeting for Sufferings of this change and by minute MfS/16/07/07, Meeting for Sufferings asked Church Government Advisory Group to suggest any necessary changes to *Quaker faith & practice* consequent on this decision.

Meeting for Sufferings, via the Church Government Advisory Group recommend changes to *Quaker faith & practice* section 8.20 (The Recording Clerk) and 14.40 (Quaker Stewardship Committee) to reflect the change of Management Meeting structure.

Proposed text

8.20 The Recording Clerk

The office of Recording Clerk has widened considerably since it was first established in about 1657. In those early days, the role was largely concerned with the sufferings of Friends, and up to 1703 included serving the Yearly Meeting as clerk. In more recent times, oversight of the management of the departments has become an important function of the Recording Clerk.

The Recording Clerk, as secretary to Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, is responsible for servicing these bodies, and for ensuring that their work is carried out.

As the senior member of staff employed by Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, the Recording Clerk's main tasks include maintaining contact with meetings throughout the yearly meeting, leading Management Meeting (8.22), being line manager of the ~~general secretaries~~ *the other members of Management Meeting* and certain senior staff, acting as 'keeper and interpreter' of the regulations laid down in our church government, and representing Britain Yearly Meeting to, and fostering good relations with, outside bodies.

The Recording Clerk serves, for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998, as Data Compliance Officer and is responsible for ensuring that the recording and processing of data held by the yearly meeting conforms with the law (4.45).

The Deputy Recording Clerk deputises for the Recording Clerk in any aspect of his or her work as required.

14.40 Quaker Stewardship Committee

Quaker Stewardship Committee shall comprise the following:

- a) nine Friends appointed by Yearly Meeting, from names submitted by Central Nominations Committee (see 6.21), for a three-year period beginning and ending at a Yearly Meeting, three members retiring annually though eligible for reappointment for a second term and exceptionally for a third;
- b) a clerk and assistant clerk appointed by Yearly Meeting annually from names submitted by Central Nominations Committee (see 6.21);

together with the Recording Clerk and ~~General Secretary of Quaker Finance & Property~~, ex officio.

In case of a vacancy, Meeting for Sufferings is authorised to make an interim appointment up to the next Yearly Meeting.

Appendix V

Proposed revisions to the terms of reference of Committee on Clerks

1. Summary of purpose

1.1 The Committee on Clerks acts as the nominating body for clerks of Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings, BYM Trustees and the Yearly Meeting treasurer. Its considerations take into account the short, medium and long-term clerkship needs.

2. Membership

2.1 The Committee on Clerks consists of 13 members, including a clerk appointed by the committee from within its number. One third of the members other than the clerk will retire annually at the rise of Yearly Meeting, and are eligible for reappointment. These Friends shall serve for no more than six continuous years.

2.2 The clerk is appointed, by the committee for a three-year period and may serve for a maximum of nine continuous years on the committee.

2.3 Yearly Meeting will appoint annually four Friends to serve on the Committee on Clerks for a three-year period from the rise of the Yearly Meeting, on the nomination of the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group (see *Q&P* 6.22).

2.4 The Recording Clerk, or another member of staff designated by the Recording Clerk will normally attend committee meetings to act as secretary to the committee. Meeting without the secretary should only be with that person's or the Recording Clerk's agreement.

3. Frequency of meetings

3.1 The committee shall meet as required to discharge its duties; at least once a year.

4. Duties and responsibilities

4.1 To bring forward, and to notify the Recording Clerk accordingly

a. To Yearly Meeting, annually, names of a Friend to serve as clerk and two Friends to serve as assistant clerks of Yearly Meeting, for appointment at the start of that Yearly Meeting for service until the following Yearly Meeting. To forward these names to the Yearly Meeting prior to that at which they are nominated to serve, and also to the Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee, preferably in time for its September meeting, to allow the nominated Friends to serve on that, and on Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee, in preparation for the next Yearly Meeting.

b. To Meeting for Sufferings, annually, in good time for service commencing in January of the following year, names of Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerk of Meeting for Sufferings.

c. To Yearly Meeting, names of Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerk of the Trustees for the following calendar year.

d. To Yearly Meeting, the name of a Friend to serve as BYM treasurer for the following calendar year.

4.2 To have clear ideas of the qualities required of Friends serving as clerks and assistant clerks to Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings, Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees and as Yearly Meeting Treasurer.

4.3. To ensure that Friends approached with a view to nomination shall have a full understanding of the responsibilities and commitments involved in the role for which they may be nominated.

- 4.4. To maintain contact with the Friends appointed and to support them in their service.
- 4.5 To have ready the name of a Friend or Friends willing and able to serve in place of a Friend who is prevented at short notice from serving at Yearly Meeting.
- 4.6 To bring nominations to Meeting for Sufferings for interim appointments which arise from Friends asking to be released during their time of appointment as clerk or assistant clerk of Meeting for Sufferings; these interim appointments will run until the end of the year.
- 4.7 To bring nominations to Meeting for Sufferings for interim appointments which arise from Friends asking to be released during their time of appointment as clerk or assistant clerk of trustees or Britain Yearly Meeting Treasurer for appointment for the remainder of the one year term. Such appointments should be confirmed by the next Yearly Meeting.
- 4.8 To inform the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group when one of its current members is appointed to serve as clerk for a three-year period. This should be in good time before the end of the service of the current clerk to enable the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group to fill the vacancy that arises from this appointment.

5. Authority

5.1 The committee shall work within these terms of reference under the authority of section 6.19 of *Quaker faith & practice*. The Committee on Clerks is accountable to Britain Yearly Meeting in session.

Draft agreed by Committee on Clerks 21 March 2017

Appendix VI

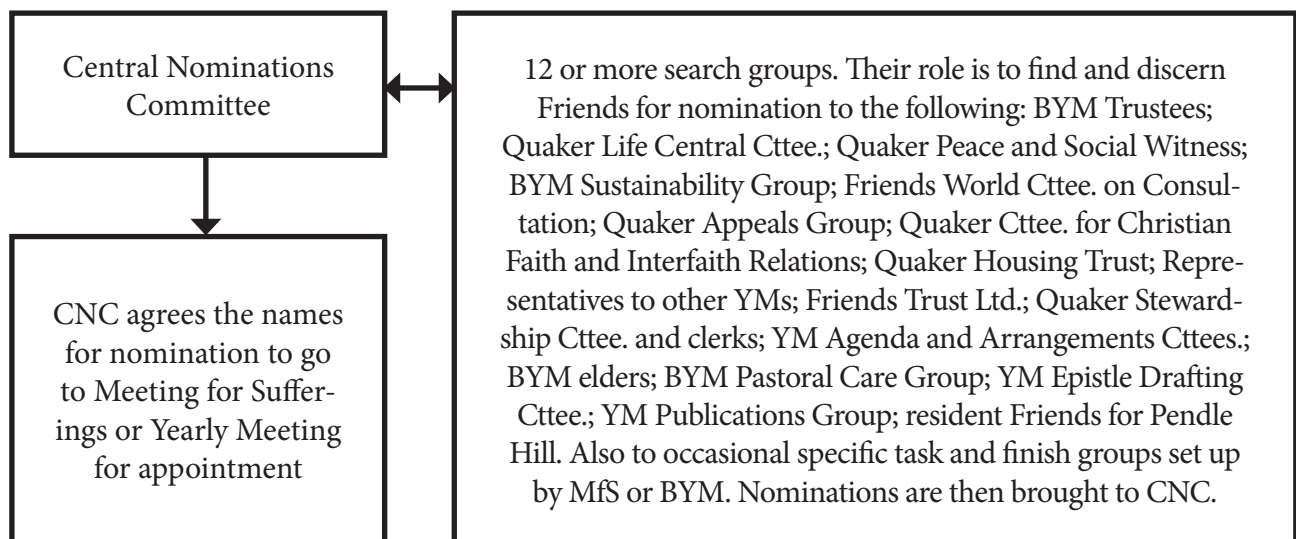
Annual report of Central Nominations Committee to Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017

First let us set our minds to see that committees are not some distant “they” with documents emanating from an impersonal Friends House. It is we who compose the committees....

Quaker Faith & Practice 8.23 (Fourth edition)

Dear Friends,

Central Nominations Committee (CNC) is appointed by Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM). Its role is to discern and nominate Friends for appointment by Yearly Meeting or by Meeting for Sufferings to a range of central committees. Approximately 80 Friends each year are appointed and our experience is that this may involve contacting many potential nominees and their Supporting Friends.



New Terms of Reference

Following the acceptance of the CNC Review Group’s report by Meeting for Sufferings (MfS 2015 12 06) new Terms of Reference for CNC were agreed at Yearly Meeting in 2016. Since then we have moved towards the ways of working suggested in the report including the reduction in our membership to 15 members plus two clerks.

The whole Committee meets 5 times each year. In between meetings our members work in small search groups which have the primary responsibility to find Friends who might be considered for nomination. The search groups provide information about the role, contact Supporting Friends who know the Friend being considered and then ask if they would consider service. All those who are approached are encouraged to understand that ‘not now’ or ‘not for me’ as well as the welcome ‘yes’ responses are equally valued. The search group then discern suitable names.

Some appointments may require particular skills or knowledge while many others provide an opportunity to use or develop an interest in the central work of BYM. Whenever possible, search group members make use of electronic ways of communication including email, telephone conference and Skype to keep in touch.

Difficulties and solutions

Because of illness and changing personal circumstances during this year, several Friends have needed to be released from service on the Committee. This has led to some significant pressures on our search groups who nevertheless have worked with real commitment to find those Friends who have the gifts, experience and the willingness to serve. We are exploring ways of asking Friends not on CNC to help for a limited time with particular searches. We hope in this way to establish a 'pool' of people who could help the process.

We always receive excellent support from the staff at Friends House. This year, changes in personnel have gone smoothly and we are very grateful that the new team continues cheerfully to provide us with the essential help and guidance to enable our work to progress.

Using the gifts of all Friends

The primary source for identifying names for possible service is the database of 500 or so Friends who have submitted a current Quaker Service Information Form (QSIF). As this is only a fraction of the national membership of the Society, there is a real need for more Friends to complete a QSIF to expand this important source of information. CNC is developing a communication strategy to help reach more Friends and to foster central service. We particularly wish to increase diversity in the range of names brought forward for appointment and to harness the gifts of Friends in all age groups including those whose employment, family or other circumstances, may make it difficult to commit to serving for a triennium on committees which currently mostly meet in London at weekends.

There will be a role for CNC in exploring with others, whether and how our Society can adjust to ways of working to allow more flexible involvement. This is a challenge for the whole of the Society at local and area meeting level as well as nationally. In part, it arises from changes in society at large and the effect these are having on our members lives. We are also affected by falling membership as are other religious organisations.

Our spiritual life

The work of CNC is not just about finding Friends to fill upcoming committee vacancies. Important though that primary role is, it is also a supportive and an enabling committee. It seeks to help more Friends discover that their service may be a channel which assists not only with their own journey of the Spirit but that of BYM as a whole. Service may be an opportunity to use existing knowledge and experience, it should also be a means of developing and fostering the practical and spiritual gifts of all Friends.

Our sense of community does not depend on all professing identical beliefs, for it grows from worshipping together, knowing one another, loving one another, accepting responsibilities, sharing and working together.

Quaker faith & practice 10.03

Quaker Housing Trust Annual Report 2016

When creating Quaker Housing Trust (QHT) in 1967 Yearly Meeting saw a particular need to assist housing projects which were focused on meeting the needs of “the most vulnerable groups in our population” not being met by the government. Fifty years later we are still helping this kind of project, often meeting either a local or a very specific personal need and finding it difficult to attract funding from other sources. In relation to the extent of need, QHT is a tiny charity with limited resources but big ambitions. Specialising in helping small projects allows us to live adventurously in using our resources where they can make a genuine and positive difference. Smaller projects can be more creative in seeking solutions and, like Quakers, are often making a positive difference disproportionate to their size.

We live adventurously by welcoming innovative (sometimes even risky) projects, often being the first to fund a new project, giving confidence to others and unlocking the bigger funds needed. We build an ongoing relationship with projects, helping them to test the feasibility of the next steps for their work. And we encourage projects to aim high in the space standards and energy efficiency of the homes they are creating, offering funding that reflects those standards.

The gaping inequality between the housing-rich and the housing-poor has now reached almost every corner of the country. Tackling the injustice that gives rise to such need is beyond the direct remit of QHT, but as part of Quakers in Britain we see housing as an integral part of the wider work of the Society – tackling social and economic injustice, campaigning for new ethical financial models, promoting more sustainable ways of living.

So QHT will continue to channel Quaker money into projects creating real and secure homes for people of all ages and needs, and at the same time work alongside colleagues in Britain Yearly Meeting, in Housing Justice, Scottish Churches Housing Action, and other groups challenging our dysfunctional housing market and working creatively for change.

Here are brief details of the projects to whom we gave or offered funding during 2016:

1. Adfer Ban A Chwm (Abc Wales), Brecon Beacons

Feasibility Study Grant of £5,000 for initial research and landscape mapping of the Myddfai (Western Brecon Beacons National Park) area, to identify derelict vernacular buildings as potential candidates for repair as affordable housing which would be held as a long-term community asset.

2. Amersham United Charities, Amersham, Bucks

Capital Costs Grant of £25,000 towards remodelling the nine houses at Day’s Almshouses to create seven larger, more energy-efficient and modern living spaces better adapted for their older residents.

3. Bridgnorth Housing Trust, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

Capital Costs of £10,000 grant and £20,000 loan as help with the costs of building 22 new almshouses (plus office and residents’ meeting room), on land they already own, to increase the number of homes they have to offer.

4. Charity Of Amy Temple, St Margaret’s Bay, Kent

Capital Costs Grant of £10,000 modernise and extend one of their four 1960s bed-sitting room almshouse bungalow cottages for single women over 60 years of age.

5. Gatesfield Quaker Housing Association, Windermere, Cumbria

Feasibility Study Grant of £5,000 to test the feasibility of creating four further flats from the founder’s workshop, all fully accessible and built to a high environmental standard. Gatesfield is one of the Quaker-run Accommodation Schemes for Older People.

6. Headway, Suffolk

Feasibility Study Grant of up to £5,000 agreed to help Headway further develop the business plan for their proposal to buy a five-bedroom bungalow for people with brain injury or neurological conditions who might otherwise be homeless: an extension of Headway's established domiciliary care services.

7. Home-Start, Tamworth

Capital Costs Grant of £17,226 to refurbish an ex-bed & breakfast property which they will lease to extend their supported housing for parents under 25 and their child/ren.

8. Hope Into Action: Black Country, Bilston

Capital Costs of £20,000 grant and £10,000 loan agreed to help them secure the rest of the funding needed to buy and refurbish a property to house three people who are, or are at risk of being, homeless, and are in need of some support. Payable when all the funding is in place.

9. Justlife Foundation, Manchester

Capital Costs Grant of £20,000 towards the cost of building work to refurbish a property leased from Manchester City Council in order to create safe, supported homes for 13 single homeless adults.

10. The Jericho Foundation, Birmingham

Feasibility Study Grant of £5,000 to test housing options for providing safe houses for survivors of human trafficking as an extension of the organisations existing support to survivors who are at key transition points. With the help of that grant, the project found a suitable property and we have offered them Capital Costs of £30,000 grant and £20,000 loan towards the creation of five flats in phase one of developing it.

11. Julia Norris Almshouse Trust, Cambridgeshire

Capital Costs Grant of £10,000 to help refurbish four one-bedroom almshouses giving homes to local people with varying levels of financial and physical need who would not otherwise be able to stay in the area.

12. Lighthouse Homes, Rotherham, South Yorkshire

Capital Costs Grant of £12,500 for fixtures, equipment and furniture for 15 additional bedrooms in a property leased by Lighthouse Homes to increase their housing for vulnerable homeless men with problems of addiction.

13. Luton Accommodation And Move-On Project (Lamp), Bedfordshire

Capital Costs of £40,000 grant and £20,000 loan for a 4 bedroomed property for young homeless people aged 16-25. [Sadly, LAMP were not able to proceed with this project so the funding had to be withdrawn.]

14. The Purfleet Trust, King's Lynn, Norfolk

Capital Costs Grant of £6,500 to furnish two bedrooms in one of two houses providing further supported accommodation for nine single homeless people, often with complex multiple needs.

15. Seaview Project, St Leonard's On Sea, East Sussex

Feasibility Study Grant of £5,000 to test the feasibility of using 'eco-pods' to provide accommodation on a local site for people presently sleeping rough in the area.

16. St Hilda's Almshouses Trust, Saltburn, North Yorkshire

Capital Costs Grant of £12,000 for the renovation of a derelict property to provide a new, modern, one-bedroom flat for low income 'hidden homeless' people in the area.

17. Street Connect, Glasgow

Capital Costs of £20,000 grant and £20,000 loan offered to help buy a one-bedroom flat as move-on accommodation for people who have successfully completed a residential rehabilitation programme.

18. YMCA Glenrothes

Capital Costs of £10,000 grant given and £15,000 loan offered to help them buy one property as part of a bigger project to provide supported, shared, move-on accommodation for homeless people aged 16 and above.

Quaker Housing Trust is Yearly Meeting in Britain's own housing charity, funded by donations, loans and legacies from Friends. It is a committee of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. The QHT trustees are appointed by Meeting for Sufferings (*Quaker faith & practice* 8.15). QHT is a separately registered charity (no. 254704) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England (no. 00924311). It operates throughout the Britain Yearly Meeting area of England, Scotland, Wales, Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

We welcome applications from a wide range of social housing projects in Britain and QHT Trustees meet five times a year to consider applications. It is part of the ethos of how we operate that we disburse whatever funds are currently available, and do not fix annual expenditure budgets. There is no set amount or 'sliding scale' for the amount that is offered: all applications are considered individually.

The work of QHT is serviced on a part-time basis by a member of BYM staff based in Quaker Peace & Social Witness, who acts as secretary and administrator. The cost of this is paid by Britain Yearly Meeting as a reflection of the Yearly Meeting's concern for housing issues in its corporate work. There is more information about QHT on its website www.qht.org.uk.

Appendix VIII

Friends Trusts Limited report for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017

Friends Trusts Limited is a company limited by guarantee. It is a registered charity providing a public benefit to members and organisations of the Religious Society of Friends.

Friends Trusts Limited acts as the custodian trustee or nominee for Meetings and other bodies within Britain Yearly Meeting. In excess of 500 properties are held in the company's name on behalf of more than 75 organisations and in excess of 165 investments on behalf of more than 70 beneficial owners.

The company also manages a number of Quaker trusts and during the year more than £134,000 was distributed in accordance with the instructions of the original donors. A part of this role is management of the investments in which the capital of these trusts is held. The Directors aim to maximize total returns within a medium level of risk, whilst following an ethical investment policy.

An important function of Friends Trusts Limited is the use of the company as the named recipient of legacies which are to benefit some aspect of the Society or its work. This ensures a clear identity for receipt of the legacy and during the year more than £866,000 was received and passed on to various Quaker organisations.

The company also receives income and legacies into its unrestricted fund. If the gift or bequest includes an expressed wish of how it should be applied, the company will endeavour to follow it wherever possible. If there is no indication of how the funds should be used, the policy is to pass them to Britain Yearly Meeting. During the year more than £421,000 was distributed from the unrestricted fund.

The Treasurer of Britain Yearly Meeting is a Director of Friends Trusts Limited ex officio; the other Directors are appointed by Meeting for Sufferings on a triennial basis. Staff in the Britain Yearly Meeting Finance Department carry out the administration. The Board met three times during the year. Its annual report and financial statements are produced in accordance with company and charity law and copies are available from the Secretary by emailing friendstrusts@quaker.org.uk

Paul Whitehouse
Chairman

Christopher Gregory
Secretary

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All documents issued are also available online at www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

If these do not meet your needs, or the needs of someone you know, please email ym@quaker.org.uk.

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

You can follow Yearly Meeting on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bymevent and on Twitter @ymevent_britain #YMG2017.

www.quaker.org.uk