



September 2026

Governance Gold 13

Records management: lists of members and contact address books

For the attention of membership clerks and Friends who compile address books

Guidance

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is a membership organisation that has a decentralised membership model. Membership is held by area meetings or equivalent Quaker bodies on behalf of the national church; these bodies can vary in their size and characteristics. Quaker communities hold information about people to enable participation in the life of the Society. Not all Quakers choose to become members, which means that the basis for holding personal and contact information can vary.

There is more than one reason that Quaker communities choose to hold information about Quakers and other connected people. Quakers in Britain has produced some detailed guidance for Friends on data management in relation to the following areas.

- Membership data or a members list
- Contact information or address lists

The full guidance is available on the Quakers in Britain website here using the link below. This edition of Governance Gold outlines the area the guidance covers.

- www.quaker.org.uk/documents/ds-guidance-contact-lists-and-member-register

See below relevant passages in Quaker faith & practice.

Quaker faith and practice 11.37 (part) and 11.38 (part)

[11.37](#) Each area meeting shall maintain an official register of members and shall appoint a suitable Friend to have care of it...

[11.38](#) Each area meeting shall maintain a list of attenders and of children not in membership associated with its several meetings for worship or shall arrange that such lists shall be kept by overseers...

Data uses and reasons for it to be held

The information that is gathered and held by local and area meetings and associated regional Quaker charities is done so for different uses and so the reason for holding it is not always the same.

Membership data: is held by area meetings on people who have come into membership of Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (BYM), through membership of their area meeting. This information is gathered and held as a **Legitimate Interest** of the area meeting and BYM. Area meetings should hold enough information to usefully know who is in its membership and a way to be in contact with them. The data held for this purpose can be passed to BYM as it is a **Legitimate Interest** of the national Church.

Contact information: is asked for by local and area meetings for all individuals who are part of their communities, including both members and attenders. This information is gathered by asking people to **Consent** to giving it. **Consent** can include:

- Contact details that can be shared in an address book or contact list
- Contact details that individuals also agree to being shared with Britain Yearly Meeting

It is suggested that consent is refreshed on a frequent basis to ensure that data is not being kept unnecessarily.

Privacy Policy: All Quaker charities should have a privacy policy that lets people know how data they share will be used and kept. It should also say how they can ask for their data to be amended or deleted.

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