

Britain Yearly Meeting

Collections development policy 2021 – 2023

Approved by BYM Trustees 12 June 2021 (minute BYMT-2021-06-13)

Contents

1	Britain Yearly Meeting collections	3
1.1	Purpose.....	3
1.2	Collecting remit and priorities	4
1.3	How we will use this policy	5
2	Authority and responsibility for collections development	6
3	Background to the collections	7
4	Outline of the collections	8
4.1	Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) archive	8
4.2	The core library and archive collections	8
4.2.1	Rare books, tracts and other early printed material	9
4.2.2	Manuscripts	9
4.3	The current library and archive collections	9
4.3.1	Archives.....	9
4.3.2	Published works	10
4.3.3	Printed material, grey literature and ephemera.....	11
4.3.4	Graphic and visual material	11
4.4	Deposited archives and records management from Quaker organisations .	12
4.5	Objects and fine art	12
5	Our collections development approach and priorities.....	13
5.1	Core library and archive collections	13
5.2	Active collecting	13
5.3	Passive collecting.....	14
5.3.1	Archives.....	14
5.3.2	Printed material	15
5.4	Reviews and appraisal	15
5.4.1	Archives and records management of British Quaker organisations	15
5.4.2	Current library and archive collections.....	15
5.4.3	Objects and fine art	18

6	General principles and ethics	18
7	Engagement with users and stakeholders	19
8	Engagement and collaboration with other collections	19
9	What we will not collect	20
9.1	Archives	20
9.2	Printed materials	20
9.3	Objects and fine art	20
10	Disposals and deaccessioning	21
10.1	General principles	21
10.2	Decision-making for disposals and deaccessioning.....	21
11	Policy review	22

1 Britain Yearly Meeting collections

Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) is a registered charity (registered charity number 1127633). The charity was established with the object of “the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain and beyond”.

The charity is responsible for extensive collections, which are held in the Library of the Society of Friends, in London, and at Swarthmoor Hall, in Cumbria.

1.1 Purpose

Our purpose in developing collections is to support both the object of the charity, and the wider vision of the church in Britain, expressed as six themes for the future that Quakers work towards:

- Meeting for worship is the bedrock of living as a Quaker
- Quaker communities are loving, inclusive and all-age
- All Friends understand and live by Quaker discipline
- Quaker values are active in the world
- Quakers work collaboratively
- Quakers are well known and widely understood.

Within that context, Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees (BYM Trustees) have agreed the following mission statement for developing collections:

Mission

To develop, preserve and share collections relating to Quakers and the Quaker faith, in order to support the life of the church in the present and future and to support a wider understanding of our faith and practice.

Aims

We aim to develop collections that support a sense of shared history and identity among Friends, and our shared commitment to truth, and that represent Quaker values being active in the world.

We seek to achieve high standards of good practice and innovation in our preservation and management of the collections and to work collaboratively within the Quaker community, and with other libraries, archives and museums in the UK and worldwide, to ensure that the dispersed body of knowledge around the world about Quakers and their history is preserved and can be discovered.

We will share our collections as widely as possible and enable people to discover and engage with them in a variety of ways, to support our vision that Quakers are well known and widely understood.

Swarthmoor Hall’s vision and aims, agreed in 2019, are as follows:

Our Vision

To sustain Swarthmoor Hall as a recognised international Quaker visitor centre in Britain and to inform and engage with its visitors by telling the story of the “Cradle of Quakerism”, George Fox, Margaret Fell and Quakers today.

Our Aims are to:

1. Be a welcoming place of historic interest and spiritual refreshment to all.
2. Provide living heritage through the interpretation of the historic house as a base for 1652 pilgrimages and retreats.
3. Be a sustainable centre putting Quaker values into action.

BYM Trustees have agreed three strands of work, which are the strategic priorities for investment and development in the charity in the next five to ten years:

- Thriving Quaker Communities
- A sustainable and peaceful world
- Simple Structures and Practices

The Trustees have also agreed the following criteria for all work being sustained or developed in the charity:

- Distinctively Quaker
- Integrated
- Well-governed

The collections development policy sits within this strategic framework, and alongside a plan for supporting and developing governance in the charity and the church, which BYM Trustees approved in February 2021. Collections development supports the charity and the church by ensuring that the charity is well-governed, and that there is a continuing record of Quaker life, faith and witness.

1.2 Collecting remit and priorities

BYM Trustees have set out some key points about the collections development approach they would like us to take in the next few years:

- Our collections development should be “distinctively Quaker”. We should prioritise the material that is our distinct responsibility to preserve and that might have most impact on our organisational priorities
- We should take a collaborative approach to this with other organisations and not seek to have a “complete” physical collection of all Quaker material
- We should address our legacy issues as a priority and tackle our appraisal and cataloguing backlogs.

1.3 How we will use this policy

This policy will guide us in directing our resources effectively, and in developing a collaborative approach with other organisations where appropriate. The aim of the policy is to enable us to ensure that our collections development fits with the criteria for work to be “distinctively Quaker”.

When the early Quakers were starting to build the church in the 17th century, they were active in preserving a record of their faith, but they had a focus on their current work and priorities in doing so. The core part of our collections today is a result of this, and in developing our collections now, it is important to adapt that vision to the needs of Quakers today and in the future. We can now work with a wide community of organisations, to ensure that evidence of the lives and faith of Quakers around the world is preserved and is accessible.

This policy will form part of a co-ordinated approach with other policies relating to collections information, collections care, and access and engagement, to enable us to share our collections effectively to support organisational priorities. We are committed to providing appropriate space in which to care for our collections, and appropriate facilities and resources to make them accessible. In addition, we seek to monitor the needs of the different audiences we serve and to undertake ongoing development of our service to meet those needs.

In doing this, we will co-ordinate our collections development with the development plans for the two buildings owned and managed by BYM as they evolve. Through the development of appropriate collections, this policy should support the vision for Swarthmoor Hall to be a “recognised international Quaker visitor centre in Britain and to inform and engage with its visitors by telling the story of the “Cradle of Quakerism”, George Fox, Margaret Fell and Quakers today.”

Previous collecting approaches, over many decades, have resulted in a large backlog of material awaiting appraisal, and some that has not been accessioned. Some material accessioned but never catalogued may not now fit our collecting remit. There are also many formats of material, particularly objects and works of art, for which we do not have appropriate storage or display space, and a substantial proportion of the collection lacks appropriate documentation. These legacy issues inhibit proper collections care, as well as accessibility.

It is important for us to use this policy to review and rationalise our collections, in order to be clear that we are collecting items which we can make accessible, and that we are making appropriate use of our space and resources.

2 Authority and responsibility for collections development

BYM Trustees are responsible for the work, assets and property held by the Yearly Meeting. At their meeting on 13 June 2020, they confirmed the purpose of holding and developing collections (minute BYMT-2020-06-04 Library collections policy and principles, 13 June 2020).

BYM staff undertake the day-to-day work of developing and managing the collections. BYM Trustees delegate to Management Meeting the responsibility for the management and co-ordination of the work done by staff on behalf of the Yearly Meeting.

Management Meeting delegates overall responsibility for collections management to the Head of Library and Archives. The Head of Library and Archives will report regularly to Management Meeting and at least annually to BYM Trustees on all aspects of collections management.

When adding new items to the collections, we will seek to acquire the legal title to them, and therefore only to add to the collections through one of these methods:

- internal transfer, in the case of the Britain Yearly Meeting archive
- donation
- bequest
- purchase or subscription, in the case of new books or journals

We will not accept any new archive collections on loan (deposit). In cases where we already hold archives on loan, we will continue to accept accruals to those collections, at least until we have completed the reviews outlined in section 5.4.1 below. This relates particularly to the records of local and area meetings in London, and some other Quaker organisations with a national or international focus, such as Quaker United Nations Office (Geneva). We do not currently have deposit or service level agreements in place in most, if not all, cases where we hold collections on loan.

The archives held on loan were reviewed in 2009, and some loans were converted to donations at that point. We will continue to review the ownership status of our archive collections and to establish whether we have current contact details for the owners of any material on loan. In all cases, where we continue to hold collections on loan after a review, we will seek to put new agreements in place to cover the terms on which we hold that material.

We will not routinely monitor sales of manuscripts and rare books (e.g. at auction), and in most cases we are not able to undertake the appropriate due diligence in the time available. If, however, we become aware that any items have come up for sale that would fit within our collecting remit and priorities, and we are satisfied that purchase would be appropriate, the Head of Library and Archives will seek authority to bid or to purchase from a member of Management Meeting.

3 Background to the collections

The early Quakers actively engaged with writing and publishing, to support the faith to flourish, and were concerned to ensure the preservation of a master collection of the writings they published. Second-Day Morning Meeting, which was responsible for approving publications, recorded this in a minute in September 1673. Meeting for Sufferings reiterated it in the decades that followed.

The development of the collections from the late 17th century to the start of the 20th century was outlined in an article by Anna L. Littleboy in the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, vol. 18, nos. 1 and 3 (1921). Some of the key points in that development are set out here, informed largely by that article and by the minutes of Meeting for Sufferings and Library Committee.

John Whiting produced the first catalogue of Friends books in 1708. Meeting for Sufferings directed frequent reviews and updates of the catalogue during the 18th and 19th centuries, and sought to ensure that they kept their collection up to date as new works were published. There were acquisitions of books from the collections of individual Friends, including from Thomas Broadbank, of Tottenham, in 1780, from Morris Birkbeck in 1817, and from Thomas Thompson of Liverpool, in 1814 and 1831. In 1871, Meeting for Sufferings confirmed that they were actively collecting manuscripts as well as published works.

In 1876, the Printing Committee asked Joseph Smith and Edward Marsh to rearrange the Library and to produce a new single catalogue. The collection was judged largely complete at this point, to the extent that in future, only one copy of each new book needed to be collected, rather than two. This suggests that we should now consider the holdings of pre-1850 publications to be a closed collection, with no significant new acquisitions expected.

The Library, as we might recognise it now, began to develop towards the end of the 19th century, culminating in the appointment of Norman Penney as the first Librarian in 1901, and the move from Devonshire House to the current purpose-built space in Friends House in the 1920s. The development of the Library reflected the emergence of a 'central organisation' at Friends House, as the individual reference libraries for various committees were amalgamated with the central collection, and the Library became a place of safekeeping within Friends House for valuable items such as paintings, when they were removed from public display. During the 20th century the Library has also developed a records management role, not only for the records of the charity, but also for other closely linked charities within the wider church.

Therefore, there has been a gradual accumulation of a range of material within the Library, representing a range of different collecting approaches over the years.

4 Outline of the collections

This section provides an outline of the collections as they currently are, divided into the following categories:

- Britain Yearly Meeting archive
- Core library and archive collections
- Current library and archive collections
- Deposited archives and records management from Quaker organisations
- Objects and fine art

Our collecting approach and priorities for the next two years will be outlined in the next section, in line with these categories.

4.1 Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) archive

This is the organisational archive of the charity and of the national church in Britain including:

- Minutes of Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings, and all other committees reporting to them from the 1660s onwards
- Administrative records of departments within Britain Yearly Meeting, and former departments/organisations for which the charity is the successor body
- Publications produced by Britain Yearly Meeting, e.g. Yearly Meeting proceedings, books of discipline, Advices & Queries, etc.
- Posters and ephemera, e.g. flyers, handouts, etc. produced by BYM

It is our responsibility as part of our organisational governance to manage our archive appropriately.

There is a substantial cataloguing backlog for committee minutes and administrative records in particular, and a backlog of paper records awaiting appraisal and transfer to archives from records management system. We need to address these legacy issues, and the future management of primarily born-digital material currently being created. We have not yet established a digital archive solution.

4.2 The core library and archive collections

Alongside the BYM archive, our core unique and distinctive collections are the rare books, tracts and manuscripts accumulated by Meeting for Sufferings from the 17th century to the early part of the 20th century. There are close links with the central BYM archive, including through the link between the library and printing committees.

These collections are a priority for us in terms of collections care and accessibility, but not for future collections development. It is unlikely that there will be much new collecting, but we also would not expect to undertake much disposal or deaccessioning from these parts of the collections.

There are substantial legacy issues with the cataloguing of these parts of the collections, which we should address to increase their accessibility.

4.2.1 Rare books, tracts and other early printed material

Rare books (pre-1850), pamphlets and tracts, including a separate series of adverse tracts and another of anti-slavery tracts, and a large collection of broadsides and other early printed ephemera. There are also four named collections associated with individuals: Richard Hawkins, Richard Richardson, Morris Birkbeck and Joseph Bevan Braithwaite.

4.2.2 Manuscripts

Manuscripts collected in the 19th and early 20th centuries, representing some of the core archive material for the history of the Quaker faith. There is a link with the BYM archive, in a large collection of loose manuscripts bound up into a series of volumes by the librarians in the first half of the 20th century. The later volumes include some of their own correspondence.

The manuscripts include the letters and papers of early Friends such as George Fox and Margaret Fell, dispersed from Swarthmoor Hall in the 18th century and then gathered together by various individuals in the 19th and 20th centuries. There are also significant personal archives relating to Quakers in the 18th and 19th centuries, such as Elizabeth Fry, and antiquarian collections created by individuals, particularly Thomas Thompson of Liverpool.

4.3 The current library and archive collections

The parts of the collections that are still growing comprise a collection of monographs and journals, and archives collected from individuals, families and organisations outside Britain Yearly Meeting, along with collections of photographs, prints, and works of art on paper, and pamphlets, ephemera, and grey literature. These parts of the collections include substantial legacy backlogs for appraisal and cataloguing.

4.3.1 Archives

The archives we have collected from individuals, families and other organisations are arranged into distinct sequences established at different times during the 20th century, with varying degrees of documentation. All the sequences include a combination of unique archival material with ephemera or reference material with little archival value, including photocopies or transcripts of documents held in other archives, that would not be collected as archives now. For a significant proportion of the holdings there is only very high-level documentation, and therefore there is a backlog of cataloguing work needed to increase their accessibility. There is a substantial sequence of archives collected since the early 1980s, which has been accessioned, but mostly not appraised or catalogued.

There is a wide variety of material, but it largely falls into one of the following categories:

- Personal papers of Quaker individuals and families
- Organisational archives of independent Quaker organisations in Great Britain, e.g. Bedford Institute Association, Friends Ambulance Unit, Quaker Tapestry, etc., or individuals associated with these groups

We hold some non-Quaker personal and organisational archives, relating to conscientious objection in World War I and World War II, including the archive of the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors. We hold some personal papers of individuals who were not Quakers but who were conscientious objectors, particularly including people who served with the Friends Ambulance Unit.

Many of the personal collections include substantial amounts of material that demonstrate past research done on Quaker history, including research notes, draft or unpublished chapters and articles, transcripts, etc., and in some cases original records from other people's personal archives (where they were loaned to support someone else's research). There will be links between some of these collections and published works in the library collections.

4.3.2 Published works

4.3.2.1 Monographs

- Publications about Quaker thought or aspects of Quaker history
- Biographies
- Published research drawing on the Library's collections
- Publications on topics with which there is a connection to some aspect of Quaker work, either now or in the past, such as peace or social reform
- Publications on local and family history which have considerable Quaker content (e.g. focusing on a Quaker family, or members of a local Quaker community)
- Publications by Quakers on non-Quaker topics, including art, fiction, poetry and music
- Reference works originally collected for the use of yearly meeting committees in the early 20th century, which may include many works with no specific Quaker content or relevance.

4.3.2.2 Journals

We have estimated that we have approximately 2300 titles, approximately 100 of which are current. They include:

- Key Quaker journals from Britain and around the world, including The Friend, Friends Journal, etc.
- Serial publications produced by various Quaker organisations, both in Britain and worldwide

- Non-Quaker serials on topics relating to Quaker work, e.g. The Tribunal, Peace News, etc.

There is a small cataloguing backlog of modern books, but the monographs and journals in the collections are largely catalogued and accessible, and there are very few legacy issues to be addressed.

4.3.3 Printed material, grey literature and ephemera

- Printed material from local and area meetings and other Quaker communities in Britain, including newsletters and printed lists of members
- Printed material produced by other yearly meetings around the world, e.g. books of discipline, yearly meeting proceedings, etc.
- Pamphlets produced by Quaker organisations both within and outside Britain, including Quaker Social Action, American Friends Service Committee and Friends World Committee for Consultation
- Theses and dissertations researched using our collections
- Unpublished drafts, texts of talks or speeches, etc. (these overlap with the archives)
- Self-published books and pamphlets, usually with a limited circulation
- One-off articles on Quaker topics from journals not in our collections (often based on research using our collections and presented to the Library)
- Printed ephemera, e.g. flyers, handouts, etc. produced by Quakers or Quaker organisations, or relating to areas of Quaker concern
- Scrapbooks
- Press cuttings acquired from commercial cuttings agencies

There is a wide variety of material, some of which is published and widely available, some of which has been made available to the public but on a very limited basis, and some of which is entirely unpublished.

4.3.4 Graphic and visual material

- Works of art on paper, including watercolours, prints, drawings, etchings, etc.
- Photographic negatives and prints
- Lantern slides
- Posters

We have several separate sequences of photographs and other visual material, which have come from various sources. Many have been separated from archive collections (and should ultimately be reunited with those collections when catalogued). There are also some negatives and lantern slides made by the Library as duplicate access copies. There may be some photographs cut out from books, journals or other publications, for reference, and individual collections from photographers and artists.

4.4 Deposited archives and records management from Quaker organisations

The Library is a place of storage for archives and records management of organisations, which are not legally part of BYM (the charity), but have a governance or other close relationship with the charity. This is the wider archive of the church in Britain, sometimes just transferred to Friends House for safekeeping rather than accessioned as part of the Library collections. In many cases, we are providing an active records management service for the organisations, although there are no service level or deposit agreements in place to regulate this. The organisations include:

- Area and local meetings in London and Middlesex
- London Quakers Property Trust (formerly Six Weeks Meeting)
- Friends Trusts Ltd. (FTL)
- Friends Foreign Mission Association Trust Corporation (FFMATC)
- Quaker International Educational Trust (QUIET)
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)
- Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva (QUNO)
- Quaker Housing Trust (QHT)
- Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM)

The relationships between these organisations and BYM vary, but in some cases there may be record series that are shared between the separate organisational archive and the BYM archive.

4.5 Objects and fine art

We are in the process of developing comprehensive inventories for the objects and fine art stored in Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall. At March 2020, we had recorded over 1100 objects in Friends House. This includes approximately 300 framed works of art dating from the late 17th to the 20th century. Some paintings were originally in the Friends Institute in Devonshire House, and later Friends House, and were later moved to the Library for safekeeping, and some have been donated as part of family bequests.

The objects include:

- Textiles, including clothing, embroidery, tablecloths, tea towels, etc.
- Ceramics
- Dolls
- Items relating to Quaker work overseas, particularly in Madagascar
- Items with reputed links to notable individuals, including personal possessions, locks of hair, etc.
- Medals and other metal objects

We estimate that there may be around 400 items at Swarthmoor Hall, largely comprising furniture purchased or donated to dress the Hall in a period style, but without a specific Quaker connection. There is a small number of objects with a reputed link to early Quakers such as George Fox or Margaret Fell.

5 Our collections development approach and priorities

Our collections development approach is outlined below and comprises:

- An outline of what we will actively collect
- Criteria to guide our decision-making when we are offered new items for the collections
- An outline of how we might address legacy issues, and undertake review and appraisal work, in relation to the deposited records of Quaker organisations, the current library and archive collections, and the objects and fine art in both Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall.

We will take a selective and prioritised approach to new collecting, in line with the remit agreed by BYM Trustees. Between 2021 and 2023, we will review our existing collections against that remit, and balance new collecting with work to address the substantial legacy issues, including material awaiting appraisal and gaps in documentation.

Our focus will be on improving the accessibility of the collections we currently hold, and active collecting where necessary to support the Trustees' priorities, our core collections and current user needs.

5.1 Core library and archive collections

We are no longer actively developing our historic core collections, and do not expect to add much to them in the future. We are occasionally offered extra copies of rare books and tracts, but we will only accept additional copies of items we already hold if they are in some way unique or distinctive. This may be in relation to provenance or annotations, although we would not accept duplicate copies based on provenance alone. We do not expect to undertake any deaccessioning from our core collections.

5.2 Active collecting

We will take a proactive approach to the continuing preservation of the BYM archive, through our records management system. This will increasingly focus on managing born-digital material, but in the short-term we will also need to address the legacy issues of paper records awaiting appraisal and transfer to the archive.

We will actively collect new published material to keep our current library collection up to date as follows:

- New publications drawing on research using our collections
- Works by Quakers on Quaker topics

- New biographies of Quakers or works relating to some aspect of Quaker history or Quaker studies
- Quaker journals, from the UK and around the world

We will actively collect publications produced by Quaker organisations operating at a national or international level, both in Britain and around the world, where they relate to Britain Yearly Meeting concerns. These organisations might include the Northern Friends Peace Board, Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva and Quaker Council on European Affairs.

5.3 Passive collecting

5.3.1 Archives

We will continue to receive accruals to the records of local and area Quaker meetings in London, when they are offered to us. We will review the current holdings and propose a new deposit agreement to ensure that our responsibilities are clear and we can allocate resources effectively.

We may collect archive material offered to us by individuals or organisations, relating to Quakers and Quaker work. We will be selective in what we accept and we will take account of the collecting policies of other archive services. Where there is an overlap between our collecting remit and that of another organisation, we will advise the owner that there is an alternative service for the material and proceed through discussion with them and the other service(s).

5.3.1.1 Criteria for collecting

When considering offers of archive material, we will prioritise material which demonstrates a national focus and has evidential value relating to work to support the church in Britain. This may be through the scope of an individual's witness or action, or through their connection to an aspect of national Quaker work, whether led by BYM or another Quaker organisation in Britain.

Where material has a specific local focus, we will usually suggest that it should be offered to the relevant local archive service. This includes material which is predominantly about personal or family history, which is a collection strength in local archive services.

We will accept personal papers of people who served with the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU), as long as the papers relate directly to their work with the FAU. The FAU was a Quaker organisation, which provided an opportunity for people both inside and outside the church to claim conscientious objection, and it is a particular strength across our collections. There is also some value in holding those papers alongside the main archive of the organisation. Nevertheless, we will assess all offers on a case-by-case basis, and, as with other personal papers, we will take account of the collecting policies of other archive services.

5.3.2 Printed material

We may collect theses and dissertations researched using our collections, and self-published books and pamphlets, when they are offered to us by the authors. In line with the remit set by BYM Trustees, we will prioritise items which may not be collected by other libraries or which we feel are our particular responsibility to collect.

5.4 Reviews and appraisal

One of our priorities in 2022 and 2023 will be to address legacy issues of material awaiting appraisal, and to review our existing collections. The aim of this is to improve our understanding of the collections and how well they meet our purpose, remit, and user needs, and to ensure that they are fully documented. The review will therefore support our cataloguing and collections care work, as part of a co-ordinated approach to collections management. The review and appraisal processes may result in disposal or deaccessioning of some items in the collections.

5.4.1 Archives and records management of British Quaker organisations

We will review the records we already hold for other Quaker organisations, which have a national focus or a governance relationship with Britain Yearly Meeting (the charity or the church). This includes the records we hold on loan, or where we may be providing a records management service, and those which have been donated to us.

We will assess the situation with regard to ownership, the relationship between Britain Yearly Meeting and the organisation, and the work required to deal with the appraisal and cataloguing backlog. We will make recommendations to BYM Trustees and the relevant organisations in each case, about

- Addressing legacy issues with the existing records
- Managing accruals to the collections in future, including appropriate infrastructure and procedures required for managing the ingest and continuity of digital material.

5.4.2 Current library and archive collections

5.4.2.1 Published works (monographs and journals)

We will review the monographs and journals in our current collections. This may result in the identification of items that constitute part of our unique and distinctive collections, and the definition of our core collections may expand as a consequence. This review may also result in some disposal or deaccessioning. Possible criteria for deaccessioning of post-1850 published material include:

- Reference books which have been superseded, or which are widely available, either in other libraries or online, where we judge they may be of limited value alongside our core collections.

- Duplicate copies with no distinguishing annotations or provenance. We will not expect to hold more than two copies of each edition of a work in future, and in most cases one copy will be sufficient.
- Books on non-Quaker subjects, including both fiction and non-fiction works by Quaker authors
- Biographies which have been superseded or are widely available elsewhere.
- Journals which are now available online, or are widely available in other libraries

5.4.2.2 Quaker printed material

We will review our collecting of printed material produced by other yearly meetings, such as books of discipline or yearly meeting proceedings. This will include an assessment of the holdings in other Quaker libraries, particularly in Ireland and the USA.

We will also review our holdings of printed material produced by local and area meetings in Britain, including meeting newsletters and printed lists of members. The archives of meetings outside London are held in local archive services, so it may be more appropriate in future to advise meetings to preserve these items amongst their meeting archives than for us to retain copies centrally.

Through these reviews, we will seek to establish, in line with our priorities, whether we should continue to collect this material, and how long we should retain it for, depending on its preservation and availability elsewhere. This may result in the identification of items that constitute part of our unique and distinctive collections. It may also result in disposal or deaccessioning, or in a decision only to retain some material for short-term reference purposes, rather than long-term preservation.

5.4.2.3 Archives

We will undertake review and appraisal of the archive material we hold, beyond the core manuscript collections, in relation to our current collecting remit. This will include both material which has been catalogued to some extent, and entirely uncatalogued material, some of which was not appraised on receipt.

The aim of this appraisal process is to ensure that we are retaining unique material with evidential value in its appropriate archival context, which aligns with our organisational priorities. We will also review ownership and copyright issues. Some archive material previously appraised and accessioned may no longer fit within our collecting remit, and we may undertake some deaccessioning as a result.

Possible criteria for disposal of material following appraisal, or for deaccessioning material, may include:

- Ephemera with no evidential value

- Photocopies or transcripts of material which is publicly accessible elsewhere, or which remained in private hands (we may retain references to material in private hands, or retain material for staff reference)
- Drafts of works which were later published
- Research notes and unpublished drafts. We will assess these on a case-by-case basis in relation to whether we feel we are in a position to make them fully available, whether they have sufficient evidential value, and significance within the context of the overall collections, including connections to published works
- Material which is duplicated elsewhere in the collections (e.g. personal copies of minutes where we also hold the official copy)
- Duplicates of published items already held in the library collection

5.4.2.4 Archives on loan

We will undertake a review of personal and family collections on loan. We will propose action on a case-by-case basis, and some options for this may include:

- If we identify that the collection fits within the collecting policy of another archive service, we may propose to transfer the collection to that service
- If we judge that the collection fits within our current collecting policy, we will seek to agree a new deposit agreement with the owners to ensure that our responsibilities are clear and we can allocate resources appropriately.

5.4.2.5 Graphic and visual material

We will review the photographs, prints, and other similar visual material we hold, and we may dispose of some items as a result. Criteria for disposal may include:

- Physical copies of photographs made by us in the past, before the availability of digital photography. This includes slides in various formats, including glass plate negatives and 35mm slides. If the copy was made from an original that we also hold, or which is held in another publicly-accessible collection, we will dispose of the copy. If the copy was made from an original which was retained in private hands, we will make an assessment of the copyright situation and we may retain the copy for staff reference, but not as part of the collections.
- Published photographs cut out of books or other published material, which we hold copies of in our collections or which are widely available elsewhere (we may record references to items or retain selected items for staff reference).

We will aim to establish the archival context for photographs, prints and other visual items previously removed from archive collections we hold.

This part of the collections is unlikely now to grow, although we may continue to acquire photographs, printed ephemera or works of art on paper where they form part of larger archive collections.

5.4.3 Objects and fine art

We will review our object and fine art collections, in both Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall, in relation to our current collecting remit, and to the development of new interpretation at Swarthmoor Hall.

We lack appropriate space in Friends House to store some larger items appropriately, especially framed oil paintings, and so the review will need to consider appropriate future collections management arrangements for our existing collections.

If we identify that we hold items, which we cannot appropriately store or make accessible, we will explore a range of options, including:

- Permanent transfer to a museum in the UK, where the objects fit within their collecting policy
- Long-term loans to museums in the UK, to fit within their engagement and display strategies
- Long-term off-site storage

6 General principles and ethics

In our implementation of this policy, we will be mindful of the context within which our collections have developed over the last 350 years, and of the needs of Quakers in Britain today. We will seek to build both ongoing engagement with stakeholders and monitoring of user needs, to inform our actions in relation to collections development.

Our priority is to ensure the accessibility of collections relating to Quaker faith and experience, in the most appropriate context, and in the most sustainable way. This will involve sometimes finding a balance between retaining collections in our custody, and ensuring that they reach the widest possible audience.

We recognise our responsibility to work within relevant professional standards and codes of ethics, including:

- Archives and Records Association (UK and Ireland) code of ethics
- Museums Association code of ethics
- Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) code of ethics
- Spectrum, the UK standard for Museums (managed by the Collections Trust)
- Standards and guidance from Arts Council England and The National Archives
- Standards and guidance from the International Council on Archives (ICA)

We will undertake due diligence before acquiring new items for the collections, and ensure that we have reason to believe that we are able to acquire legal title to them. We will not collect material where we cannot establish appropriate provenance or proof of legal title. If we are offered material by an intermediary, we will seek to establish contact with the owners of the material before accepting it.

We will seek to comply with all relevant legal requirements in relation to acquisition of, and illicit trade in, cultural property.

We will not collect material if we judge that we do not have appropriate facilities and resources for storage, cataloguing and access. We currently lack appropriate infrastructure for managing born-digital archives or digital publications, and this is an area for future development.

We have a standard 50-year closure in place for archives, and any archives we acquire which are under 50 years old will be subject to this, unless otherwise agreed with the donor. We will comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and archives may be closed for longer than 50 years if required under that legislation.

We may agree specific arrangements with donors of archives in relation to copyright and publication rights, although we will usually seek to acquire the copyright to items we acquire. We will not accept items with conditions attached that restrict our ability to manage them appropriately.

7 Engagement with users and stakeholders

We will seek to monitor the needs of relevant stakeholders on an ongoing basis, and to consider them when implementing and reviewing this policy.

When we consider deaccessioning material from archive collections, we will take into account whether it has previously been available for research.

Quakers in Britain form one of the major stakeholders for these collections, and library and archive staff will work with colleagues in BYM and Woodbrooke, in particular, to ensure that we are making appropriate decisions in relation to meeting the needs of Quakers and Quaker communities.

8 Engagement and collaboration with other collections

We will monitor our collecting remit and priorities in relation to other organisations with related or overlapping collections. We will seek to work collaboratively with them to find the most appropriate place for Quaker collections to be held, and the most appropriate way to make them accessible. These include:

- Quaker collections in the USA and Ireland
- The Quaker Tapestry Museum, Kendal
- The library at the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham
- The Peace Museum, Bradford
- Faith Museum, Bishop Auckland (currently in development)
- Ironbridge Gorge Museums
- Brotherton Library, University of Leeds
- Borthwick Institute, University of York

When acquiring new items for our collections we will take account of the collecting policies of local authority archive services, in relation to archives of individuals,

families or organisations with a specific local, rather than a national focus. We will also take account of specialist archive services with collection strengths in subject areas relevant to Quaker work, including peace and disarmament.

9 What we will not collect

9.1 Archives

We will not usually accept personal archive material which does not relate directly to Quaker work or witness in Britain. We will also not collect digital copies, photocopies or transcripts of archive material where the originals remain in private hands. Some specific exclusions from what we will collect include:

- Archives of individuals who were not Quakers, with the exception of personal papers relating to service with the Friends Ambulance Unit in World War I or World War II.
- Archives of non-Quaker organisations which work with Quakers or undertake related work on a concern of Quakers in Britain, such as peace campaigning or climate justice
- Archives of Quaker communities outside Britain
- Archives of local and area meetings in Britain outside London, which are deposited in local and university archive services

9.2 Printed materials

We will not usually collect printed and published items in the following categories:

- Books by Quaker authors on non-Quaker subjects, including both fiction and non-fiction
- Unpublished printed material, unless as part of a wider archive collection
- One-off articles or chapters on Quaker topics, from journals or books not in our collections, except where they are the result of significant research using our collections
- Printed ephemera or grey literature, which we judge has little evidential value
- Material which is substantially of local interest within Britain, and is (or could be) held in local services alongside, or within, the relevant meeting records

9.3 Objects and fine art

We do not expect to collect any additional objects or fine art in the next two years, in either Friends House or Swarthmoor Hall. This is subject to our review of our existing collections, and development of a sustainable approach to their management and storage in future, as well as the options for access and engagement. When the collections review is complete, we will assess whether future collecting in particular areas will be appropriate, based on analysis of our current collection strengths, and resources for storage and access.

10 Disposals and deaccessioning

10.1 General principles

One of our key legacy issues is that we currently lack growth space for new collecting. Nevertheless, we will not undertake disposal solely due to lack of space, or for financial motivation. We will dispose of or deaccession material in accordance with this policy, in relation to our purpose and remit, as set out in section 1.2. Appraisal and collections reviews will be undertaken by the professional staff responsible for the day-to-day management of the collections.

We will undertake disposal and deaccessioning in accordance with relevant good practice as set out in:

- Deaccessioning and disposal: guidance for archive services, The National Archives, 2015
- Disposals toolkit: guidelines for museums, The Museums Association
- Disposals policy for rare books and manuscripts, CILIP Rare Books and Special Collections Group, 2015

We will ensure, before disposing of any material, that we can demonstrate that we have the right to do so, either through owning the legal title to it, or having obtained appropriate permission in writing from the owner.

Archival appraisal is a routine activity and involves reviewing the contents of an archive prior to cataloguing, in order to select material for long-term preservation, and to weed out non-archival material, such as ephemera, duplicates and other material with no unique evidential or informational value.

We will do this on receipt of a collection, or retrospectively, if there is no obvious evidence of appraisal having taken place when the archive was originally received. We will dispose of non-archival material weeded out of archives as part of this process, and this process will be documented appropriately during cataloguing. When we are acquiring new archives in line with this policy, we will state our intention to undertake appraisal in our accession documentation so that donors are aware of it and can opt for material to be returned to them if they wish.

10.2 Decision-making for disposals and deaccessioning

The formal approval of BYM Trustees will be required for deaccessioning of material that would fall within the parameters of the guidance documents listed in section 10.1 above. Appropriate consultation must be undertaken and legal advice may be required. The Communications Team in BYM should also be informed. This would include proposals to deaccession rare books or pamphlets (pre-1850), manuscripts, objects, fine art, or archives (following a process of re-appraisal).

We will treat anything published before 1850 as a rare book, although books published after 1850 can still be considered rare, depending on various criteria, including availability in other libraries and archive services. If in doubt, we will act in accordance with the guidance on disposal of rare books and manuscripts, referred to in section 10.1.

The Head of Library and Archives has the authority to deaccession and dispose of published general reference sources that are no longer current, and to dispose of duplicates of printed and published works, including pamphlets, monographs and journals. A review of published reference sources is currently underway, and some disposal of these will take place in 2021 and 2022.

All deaccessioning will be documented and the Head of Library and Archives will report to Management Meeting on action taken.

The Head of Library and Archives also has authority to dispose of or deaccession the following types of material:

- Ephemera, including printed items and three-dimensional items such as plastic or cotton bags, mugs, balloons, etc.
- Non-archival material such as photocopies, transcripts, copies of photographs, etc.

These types of material may be identified for deaccessioning or disposal following archives appraisal or collections reviews in line with this policy.

Where deaccessioning of printed or published material is considered, which does not fall within the parameters of the guidance set out in section 10.1, the Head of Library and Archives will refer to Management Meeting in the first instance for approval. The scope of the material proposed for deaccessioning, the rationale and the recommended process to be followed, should all be outlined, with reference to our purpose and remit as set out in section 1.2 above. Management Meeting may refer any decisions to BYM Trustees for approval.

Where appropriate, we will undertake consultation on proposed disposal or deaccessioning with key stakeholders.

The Head of Library and Archives will report annually to BYM Trustees on all disposals and deaccessioning undertaken, as part of routine reporting on collections management work.

11 Policy review

We will report annually to BYM Trustees on our implementation of this policy and elements of the policy may be reviewed as part of that reporting process. The whole policy will be reviewed every two years and the next review should be completed no later than November 2023.