

Quaker governance update

Quaker Life Network newsletter

Issue 9: Spring 2025



1. Welcome to Quaker governance update

Welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of Quaker governance update for Quaker trustees, treasurers and other Friends involved in Quaker governance.

If you have questions about any of the items in the newsletter or about any other governance or finance related issue please get in touch with Quaker Life, supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk.



2. Quaker Governance support and guidance

2.1 Annual reporting



Trustee Annual Report and Accounts (TARA) – checklists produced by BYM

BYM has produced the checklists for annual reporting for the financial year 2024. The new checklists are available on the trustees' page of the Quaker website, www.quaker.org.uk/trustees. Or can be downloaded directly below.

- [Checklist for England and Wales](#)
- [Checklist for Scotland](#)

Charity Commission Annual Returns Regulations 2024 (Eng & Wales, source CLAS / CC)



The Charity Commission has published guidance on Annual Returns Regulations 2024, which prescribe the information to be included in charities' annual returns from 1 January 2025 onwards.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-commission-annual-returns-regulations-2024

Quaker governance annual return



Thanks to all who have completed their AM or charity annual return.

There are a small number outstanding which we would like to receive to get a full understanding of the Society's health in governance.

The form is available here, <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/am-governance-annual-return>.

Photo by Aniket Bhattacharya on Unsplash

Abbreviations: CC – Charity Commission; CLAS – Churches' Legislation Advisory Service; BYM – Britain Yearly Meeting; LM – local meeting; AM – area meeting; ACAT – Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers; OSCR – The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator; YMG – Yearly Meeting Gathering; QLCC – Quaker Life Central Committee

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2.2 Changes to Scottish charity regulations in 2025 (Scot, OSCR)



From summer 2025, charities will need to provide OSCR with details about its trustees. Then, starting at the end of 2025, full charity accounts will begin to be publicly available on the Scottish Charity Register. This is a change from charities hosting their report and accounts on their own website. When uploading documents to OSCR you may want to ensure that signatures or other sensitive information is redacted to avoid fraud. The details that charity trustees submit to OSCR will not be publicly available.

See: www.oscr.org.uk/news/get-ready-for-new-charity-regulations-coming-this-year.

2.3 Block membership of the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT)



ACAT has been providing training and support to church treasurers since 1995 when a change in the law required accounts to be prepared to a much higher standard. ACAT provides training and support in the form of training courses which take place online and at various locations around the country, a regularly updated handbook, regular e-newsletters and an advice line, www.acat.uk.com.

BYM pays for a Block Membership which allows one local and one area meeting treasurer access to ACAT's resources and support. For details on accessing the membership please contact Quaker Life, supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk.

2.4 Friends Trusts Limited



Friends Trusts Limited (FTL) is the national Quaker organisation that holds ownership of Quaker property as **custodian trustee**.

Many Quaker Area Meetings and other organisations are unincorporated charities meaning the organisation isn't an entity legally. Trustees of these organisations become the **beneficial owners** of the property. FTL's role is to be the 'legal owner' of Quaker property. This means that trustees don't have to change the names on their property deeds every time the trustee body changes. It is also really helpful to have a central address for all Quaker property avoiding property getting 'lost' or possibly even stolen.

Read about the [difference between beneficial and legal ownership](#).

Friends Trusts does not make decisions about property but it needs to be included and instructed in any property transactions.

Contact Friends Trusts: friendstrusts@quaker.org.uk.

2.5 Quaker Housing Trust



If your local or area meeting is considering repurposing or selling property it owns, [Quaker Housing Trust](#) can offer support and guidance.

Please feel free to get in touch with Grace Burgess, QHT Secretary, if you have any questions. You can email her at involve@qht.org.uk or call 020 7663 1057.

2.6 Tabular Statement and Marriage Extracts



Each year area meetings are asked to provide information about the numbers of local meetings, members, attenders and marriages. Quakers are known for our meticulous recording keeping, so we appreciate the way that many area meetings respond swiftly to these requests.

It saves us significant staff time when we don't have to send reminders.

We would like to take this opportunity to encourage Friends to be ready at the end of the year to respond to our requests.

2.7 Advice to Quaker meetings on hiring rooms



Following the [police raid at Westminster Quaker Meeting House on 27 March](#) we are reminding Friends that Quakers in Britain asked for advice in 2020 on hiring rooms to XR. This advice was based on the legal framework at the time, and it is necessary to remind you that the law has changed since then. New advice based on the current legal position has been requested from Bates-Wells solicitors who previously provided the advice.

When the new advice is received, it will be shared with trustees, Friends and workers who are involved in making decisions about hiring meeting houses.

A key message to anyone involved in hiring premises is to be aware of new and existing hirers, to carry out due diligence and discern if it feels safe to offer them room hire. Many Quaker meetings may well have hired a room to Youth Demand as the values of their organisation may not be seen as conflicting with Quaker values. However, keeping others users safe bearing in mind the ability of the police to forcefully enter a place of worship, may need to be part of the consideration for trustees now.

If you would like to ask for support with decisions on room hire, please contact the Quakers in Britain comms team on media@quaker.org.uk.

2.8 Employment changes, UK wide



Employers resource update and a summary of changes in 2025

The Quaker employers' resources will very soon be updated. They resource and template documents on the website, www.quaker.org.uk/employers. All local employees are ultimately employees of a Quaker charity, usually an area meeting, that the local meeting is within.

Here is a list of the changes in 2025 which you will need to be aware of. The details of each can be found within the resource.

Date of change	Headline information
October 2024 Reminder for action	The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 came into force for England, Scotland and Wales on 28 October 2024. Employers now have a duty placed on them to take measures to prevent the sexual harassment of their employees. Further information is available from the Equality & Human Rights Commission .
April 2025	Neonatal leave and pay A new statutory entitlement to up to 12 weeks of neonatal leave and pay comes into effect across England, Scotland and Wales.

Date of change	Headline information
April 2025	Statutory wage rates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Living Wage for over 21's increases to £12.21 ■ National Minimum Wage for 18–20-year-olds increases to £10 ■ National Minimum Wage for 16–17-year-olds and Apprentice Rate increases to £7.55 ■ Statutory Sick Pay increase to £118.75 per week ■ Statutory Maternity Pay and other family related leave pay increases to £187.18 per week
April 2025	National Insurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing the rate of secondary Class 1 contributions to 15%. ■ Reducing the secondary threshold for Class 1 contributions from £9,100 to £5,000 a year. ■ Increasing the Employment Allowance from £5,000 to £10,500 and removal of the secondary Class 1 NICs liabilities limit of £100,000.
By 1 May	Real Living Wage Whilst not a legal change, employers signed up to pay the Real Living Wage must increase pay to £12.60 in UK and £13.85 in London if they wish to retain their accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation.

3. Events and training opportunities

3.1 Trustee and treasurer conference 2025



12 July, Friends House, Euston 10am to 4.30pm

Quaker Life is going to be holding a day conference to bring together trustees and treasurers from across Britain Yearly Meeting. The conference will look at things that are relevant in the life of Quaker communities to ensure that they are resilient and sustainable in today's world.

There will be some time together as a whole group and a mixture of workshops and discussion spaces. With maximum participation there will be two places per AM or charity and we hope that this will help all get the most out of the event.

Throughout the day there will be refreshments and a cold lunch provided.

We will be asking for £25 per delegate to help cover the cost of the conference.

Bookings will be open soon but please put the date in your diary.



3.2 Yearly Meeting 2025



23–26 May, Friends House, Euston, NW1

A final reminder to register to attend Yearly Meeting if you are planning to come. This helps us to plan for the number of people coming in person. If you are planning to join online it will allow you to choose which sessions to attend and give you access to the joining details.

Register online at: www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

3.3 Upcoming Woodbrooke Courses for Trustees and Treasurers

Woodbrooke will be offering new courses and sessions for Trustees and Treasurers, available to book on their website after Easter.

You can explore all Woodbrooke's Quaker Service and Roles courses at www.woodbrooke.org.uk/roles.



3.4 Taking care online and being cyber-aware



Being safe online can be a challenge, especially for small charities and organisations which may include Quaker area meetings and other Quaker charities. We have a shared responsibility to look after individuals' data and do our best to take care of Quaker resources and be aware of scams and fraud.

Preventing Charity Fraud is an organisation that supports small charities and other organisations to protect their assets and raises awareness of threats they may encounter. **Charity Fraud Awareness Week** is one of the campaigns they offer to help support small organisations.

There is training available free online provided by the **National Cyber Security Centre** and is aimed at trustees and those with responsibility for charities and small organisations. The online training covers the following topics:

- Backing up your organisation's data
- Protecting against malware
- Creating strong passwords
- Keeping your devices secure
- Defending against phishing

www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/small-business-guide

4. Grants and financial help



4.1 Allowances, expenses and reliefs for charities (Eng & Wales, source CLAS / HMRC)

HMRC has published an easy-access compilation of its pages for the various ways to reduce a tax bill for charities, community sports clubs, limited companies and the self-employed.

The relevant pages for charities are linked below:

- [Tax relief when you donate to a charity](#)
- [Charge, reclaim and record VAT](#)
- [Claim capital allowances](#)
- [Claiming Gift Aid as a charity or CASC](#)

See the full page listing online: www.gov.uk/government/collections/allowances-expenses-and-reliefs-when-you-run-a-business

4.2 National Churches Trust

Churches, chapels and meeting houses are impressive, exciting and surprising places. Whether seeking quiet reflection, access to critical community services, a warm welcome, a place to worship, or a space to explore, which should be loved, supported and available to all.



The National Churches Trust (NCT) wants to help you to keep Quaker meeting houses open and in good repair. Working with churches of all denominations the help to maintain these wonderful historic buildings and keep them thriving today, and tomorrow.



NCT offer a range of support from expert advice to financial grants. It provides training, access to specialist skills, and advice to develop an effective maintenance plan to protect buildings for future generations. Read the [NCT information leaflet to find out about their support to Quakers](#).

Visit the NCT website: www.nationalchurchestrust.org.

4.3 Listed Places of Worship Scheme (source CLAS / UK Gov)



The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme will be extended until 31 March 2026. The terms of the Scheme have been modified, however; a listed place of worship will not be able to claim more than £25,000 during the financial year, though that can still be spread across multiple claims.

Find out if your meeting could claim back VAT on any repairs to your meeting house, <https://listed-places-of-worship-grant.dcms.gov.uk>.

4.4 Adult and Further Education grants



Adult and Further Education grant applications for courses beginning this autumn close on 25 April. For more details please see www.quaker.org.uk/adult-education-grants or contact grants@quaker.org.uk 020 7663 1053.

4.5 Yearly Meeting Bursary Fund



Friends shouldn't be put off coming to Yearly Meeting because they can't afford it. Find out how to get help, or donate to the support others to attend, www.quaker.org.uk/yimbursary.

Britain Yearly Meeting

Contributions update

Spring 2025



How can we support Quaker work?

Quakers in Britain delivers work that is discerned by Friends at Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings. We need the support of meetings and individual Friends to ensure this valuable Quaker work can happen.

If you or your meeting have additional funds – for example through a legacy gift or excess reserves – we have a number of **Quaker projects described on this sheet** that need the support of Friends. If you or your meeting would like to support one or more of the projects please get in touch by emailing us at contributions@quaker.org.uk.



Contribution 2025 material

A reminder that the Contribution 2025 material is now available in PDF format at www.quaker.org.uk/contributions. It includes the Contribution leaflet, BYM Treasurers' letter and giving forms which have been updated in line with the new Gift Aid requirements. Please share these materials with Friends in your meeting and paper copies are available on request by emailing contributions@quaker.org.uk.



Implementing Tap Donations in Meeting House

As fewer people carry cash, meeting houses will need to adapt to new ways of collecting donations. Contactless tap donation devices offer a modern, secure, and convenient way to encourage giving.

We have put together an information sheet outlining the key benefits of adopting tap donations, exploring the legal and compliance considerations surrounding 'attended' and 'unattended' devices, and providing insights into the financial aspects of implementation. It offers a collation of information gathered to give some direction on the types of devices, prices and suppliers to choose from.

Visit www.quaker.org.uk/treasurers#tap-donate