

Quaker governance update

Quaker Life Network newsletter

Issue 13: Summer 2026



1. Welcome to Quaker governance update

Welcome to the issue 13 of Quaker Governance Update, spring 2026. This channel is for information relevant to 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 of finance related issue please get in touch with Quaker Life, supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk.



Photo by chi liu on Unsplash

2. Quaker Governance support and guidance



2.1 Renters Rights Act: obligation on landlords to supply information to tenants (UK)

Source, CLAS, Bates-Wells Solicitors

Any area meetings who have properties that are tenanted need to be aware of the changes that came in on 1 May 2026 with the introduction of the Renters' Rights Act. This does not apply to workers with tied accommodation where an occupancy agreement is in place. For tenanted properties without an occupancy agreement you should have done or be doing the following things:

- Tenants must have received a copy of the Renters' Rights Act information sheet by 31 May 2026.
- For tenancies that began before 1 May 2026: provide tenants with a written record of the specific terms of the agreement.
- For tenancies that began on or after 1 May 2026: provide tenants with certain information about the tenancy in writing, which may be a written tenancy agreement.

There is guidance on the information you need to include online here, www.gov.uk/assured-tenancy-agreements-a-guide-for-landlords/written-information-you-need-to-give-to-your-tenant.



Photo by Tierra Mallorca 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 Quakers in Britain template occupancy agreements



QiB produces template documents for use by Quaker meetings for employees and volunteers who have accommodation tied to their role. These roles are not covered by the Renters' Rights Act, but the documents are compliant and have been updated recently. If your AM has volunteers or employees with tied accommodation you may wish to use this as an opportunity to review the agreements, you have in place and update them. Template documents are available on the employers' pages of the website, www.quaker.org.uk/employers.

QiB does not provide a template tenancy agreement on the website but you can talk through questions you might have by contacting supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk.

2.3 Template room hire policy



You can now find the new template policy for short-term or one-off room hire on the Quaker website. It includes a policy including hire principles, a template booking form and a comprehensive set of terms and conditions of hire. It has been developed to be used locally and 'owned' by trustees at AM level.

It is available on the Quaker website at, www.quaker.org.uk/amcharities, and directly using the link below.

- Download the Room Hire Policy Template:
www.quaker.org.uk/documents/quaker-template-room-hire-policy

2.4 Area Meeting governing documents in the post-Meeting for Sufferings era



We have already received enquiries from Friends about amending their AM / charity governing documents to remove references to Meeting for Sufferings. Generally it is a good idea to keep things up to date and to make changes as they arise.

However, if your charity has followed one of the model documents provided by Britain Yearly Meeting then you must be cautious about making changes.

Although the BYM model documents for unincorporated charities and charitable incorporated organisations follow a slightly different format, they both contain three references to Meeting for Sufferings. Two of these will be in the section dealing with winding up or dissolving the AM / charity and the other will be in the definition section.

The dissolution clause in a charity governing document cannot be changed without seeking permission from the Charity Commission. Therefore, these clauses should not just be amended without permission.

The definition of Meeting for Sufferings appears in the governing document in order to explain the dissolution clause and it is therefore also unwise to amend that definition without permission.

Will leaving the document unchanged cause a problem?

There should be no difficulty in leaving the three references to Meeting for Sufferings in the document. In the dissolution clause:

- (i) Meeting for Sufferings needs to agree to the proposal to dissolve the AM or amalgamate with another AM / charity
- (ii) Meeting for Sufferings has a role in determining what should happen to the assets of a dissolved AM / charity

On point (i), the term 'Meeting for Sufferings' can now be read as if it said Yearly Meeting. That is because minute 25 of Yearly Meeting May 2026 stated that all the functions of Meeting for Sufferings *"are hereby transferred to Yearly Meeting ... unless otherwise delegated or recorded in Quaker faith & practice"*. That means that from now on, requests to dissolve or amalgamate AMs should be directed to Yearly Meeting.

On point (ii), there is a sequential approach. Although the clause asks for Meeting for Sufferings agreement to a transfer of assets, it ends with the text: *"and failing that for such other charitable purpose as Britain Yearly Meeting shall direct"*. That again gives the power back to Yearly Meeting to deal with this issue.

What should a charity do now?

There is no need to take any action in relation to this change. If an Area Meeting needs to seek Charity Commission permission for any other amendments to their governing document then it may be sensible to seek permission to amend the clauses above. If you do want to make these amendments then 'Yearly Meeting' can be substituted for 'Meeting for Sufferings' in the dissolution clause. You will need to define Yearly Meeting so that it is clear that it is the final constitutional authority for Quakers in Britain.

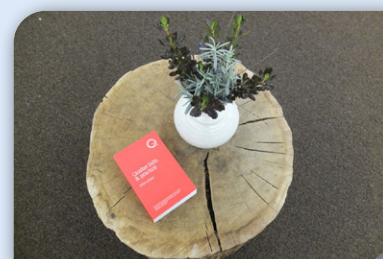
If a new charity is being formed, either because a) an AM is registering or incorporating for the first time, or b) a group of AMs are forming a new charity, it should not include any references to Meeting for Sufferings in the governing document.

If an AM / charity wishes to dissolve or amalgamate then it should be in touch with the Agenda Planning Committee of Yearly Meeting to discuss getting the request onto the YM agenda (YMAgenda@quaker.org.uk). This information is also available as a paper on the website, www.quaker.org.uk/amcharities.

2.5 Quaker faith & practice

In the previous Quaker governance update, changes were announced to *Quaker faith & practice*. Following Yearly Meeting in May, the revised text of Quaker faith & practice has been uploaded and can be found here: <https://qfp.quaker.org.uk>. For those using the printed 5th edition, please note that text has changed in chapters 3-9 (inclusive) and 1-16 (inclusive). Please use the online version to make sure you are referring to the current agreed text.

Michael Booth, Church Government Adviser can be approached with your questions, qfp@quaker.org.uk.



2.6 Keeping Our Meetings Safe (KOMS)



This resource was developed by Quakers in Britain staff and Friends in Scotland. It has been produced to be a panic free approach to safeguarding. It brings together Quaker knowledge, experience and practice in a set of guidance to support Quaker communities across Britain. The guidance includes:

- Information about what safeguarding is,
- Videos and model session plans to engage your community in good safeguarding practice,
- Links to other places where advice and support are available,
- Writing from Quakers and other churches on safeguarding.

All of this is available in this online resource that is designed to be used as part of learning in Quaker communities.

Visit, <https://padlet.com/Quakerscotland/keeping-our-meetings-safe-apevs5ekhvdjuz1t>.

2.7 Friends Trusts Limited invites Friends to share their experience



Friends Trusts Ltd (FTL) holds the property title for most Quaker meeting houses and other area meeting property on behalf of area meetings and Quaker charities.

It is an independent company with a body of trustees appointed by Yearly Meeting in session and staffed by QiB employees.

Aware of the stresses and strains on Friends managing property, FTL trustees are keen to support AM trustees in property ownership and management as best they can.

This survey is to help FTL's understanding of what is working and areas that could be improved or support prioritised. It will be open until **Friday, 4 September 2026**. Please complete the survey using this link, <https://forms.office.com/e/drNL0eAwwi>, or scan the QR code.



Please do get in touch to discuss any property issues, friendstrusts@quaker.org.uk.

2.8 Governance Annual Return



The Governance Annual Return survey will close on 31 July (this is the one for BYM not the one required by the charity regulator). Please ensure you make your AM's submission before it closes. The information you provide helps us to get a good sense of the health of Governance across our yearly meeting. We have now received submissions from 53 out of the 65 charities due to submit. If you are not sure if your AM / charity has made a submission yet contact Ollie Waterhouse to ask, oliverw@quaker.org.uk.

Please send only one submission per charity. The form is available online here, <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/am-governance-annual-return>. You can read the question set before sending the form.

2.9 Cyber Security for charities



Source CLAS / UK Government

In April the **Government published an open letter to businesses on AI cyber threats** with details of the heightened risk to organisations. It urges those with responsibility for charities to take the threat seriously and encourages the use of the **Cyber Essentials scheme**. Cyber Essentials is a government-backed, industry-supported scheme to help organisations protect themselves against common online threats.



CLAS suggests following the government's advice to register your organisation with the National Cyber Security Centre's free Early Warning scheme, www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/active-cyber-defence/early-warning. It then sends notifications tailored to the cyber threats for your organisation's public IP addresses and domains.

3. Events and training opportunities



3.1 Legacies in the past, Legacies Today

We invite you to join us on the 20 November (the evening before the November Yearly Meeting) for this informal evening event held at Friends House, Euston.

- **Starting at 6:30pm**, there will be tour of the Friends House Library (first-come, first-served), where there will be a display of historical materials about legacies and fundraising by Friends in past times.
- **From 7:15pm**, we will hear a few brief talks from speakers including Siobhan Haire, Libby Adams and Graham Torr. You'll also have a chance to socialise, talk to staff, and find out more about leaving a legacy for Quaker work. There will be refreshments and a finger food buffet, so please join us!



To find out more and book go to: www.quaker.org.uk/events/legacies-in-the-past-legacies-today

3.2 The Association of Church Accountants & Treasurers Conference 2026

*Saturday 17 October 2026 10am to 4:30pm
St Michael's Centre, The Green, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8PD*



The ACAT Conference offers a chance for church treasurers and trustees to meet in a day of discussion, encouragement and knowledge. The roles of finance and governance in a church are of utmost importance and carry with them a real responsibility, and I'm sure for some it can feel like a very lonely role. The conference is a place where people who understand these challenges can come together, sharing in their experience and offering practical advice to one another.

For information and to book visit, www.acat.uk.com/product/acat-conference-2026.

3.3 Meeting House Matters events

Quakers in Britain hosts Meeting House Matters (MHM) events online and at Meeting Houses six times per year. The events bring together people with responsibility for Quaker premises, as workers and managers. If you would like a flavour of the events, you can read the [MHM notes from the sessions in 2026](#). See below the times that MHM will come together before the end of 2026.

- 19 August – online, 2pm – Hallmaster demo (no booking required)
- 21 October – Hammersmith LM, 10am to 4pm – Property, book to attend at the venue using this online form, <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/mhm-26>
- 17 December – online, 10:30am – Celebrating the year (no booking required)

Attend any of the online events without booking using the following Zoom details. Join meeting at this link: <https://quaker.zoom.us/j/81586087624?pwd=aYxukeWCrw0Z80E9OuxluJuZvXr8do.1> (Meeting ID: 815 8608 7624, Passcode: MHM-online)



3.4 Safeguarding Training for Trustees

Strong safeguarding starts with good governance – and for every area meeting that governance starts with its trustees. A recent independent safeguarding audit at Quakers in Britain, commissioned by the Audit Committee, recommends that we “clarify and communicate trustee safeguarding responsibilities”.



Whilst trustees rightly delegate day-to-day safeguarding responsibilities to Safeguarding Coordinators, the legal responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding is appropriately resourced and effectively governed rests with the trustee body. A good understanding of safeguarding is therefore an important part of good governance.

To support this, all Area Meeting trustees are encouraged to complete specialist Safeguarding for Trustees training. It can be seen as an opportunity to increase confidence in your safeguarding responsibilities and to play a key part in helping to build an even stronger safeguarding culture across Quakers in Britain.

Quakers in Britain recommends the Safeguarding for Trustees webinar delivered by Thirtyone:eight, our independent charity for safeguarding advice and training. The course is relevant to England, Wales and Scotland and if your AM is a Thirtyone:eight member, you may be able to get a discounted rate.

The 2.5 hour online interactive course explores the trustee's role in safeguarding governance, including policies and procedures, managing safeguarding risks, creating safer organisational cultures and understanding reporting responsibilities.

If you would like to book a place, you can find details of available up-coming dates here, <https://learninghub.thirtyoneeight.org/products/Safeguarding-for-Trustees.aspx>

You can contact Mark Mitchell, QiB Safeguarding Officer by email, Safe@quaker.org.uk.

Learning opportunities offered by Woodbrooke

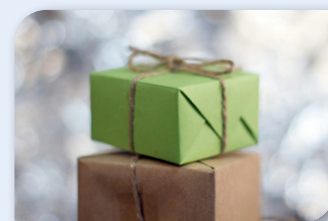


3.5 Why Nominations Matter to Quakers

Wednesday 28 October, 18:30-20:30

Nominations are at the heart of the way we live and work together as Friends. But this fundamental Quaker practice is often undervalued, overlooked and even neglected. Come and learn about why it is an essential core part that holds the key to strengthening Quaker communities.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/why-nominations-matter-to-quakers-oct



3.6 Serving on a Quaker Committee

Wednesday 11 November, 18:30-20:30

Are you about to start or have you recently started serving on a Quaker committee, whether on the children's committee at your Local Meeting or related to governance of Britain Yearly Meeting? Join us to explore what this service and role mean for your Quaker faith and how you can prepare practically.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/serving-on-a-quaker-committee-nov



3.7 Other learning opportunities for trustees

Charity Commission events and webinars



The Charity Commission (CC) in England and Wales frequently holds events and webinars to support trustees and those running charities. They usually have events over the next three months advertised.

You can find out what is coming up and book to attend by visiting this link, <https://bookwhen.com/cetevents>.

The Honorary Treasurers Forum



The Honorary Treasurers Forum is a membership organisation formed in 2004 to provide a source of information, research and knowledge for the Treasurers of charities large and small. QiB is not a member or affiliated with the forum. It runs events and has a page on its website with information, often including presentation slides from previous events.

See, <https://honorarytreasurers.org.uk/events2>, to find out more about the forum and for anything that may be of interest to Quaker treasurers.

4. Grants and financial help



4.1 Meeting Houses Fund

The Meeting Houses Fund provides financial assistance for carrying out improvements to Quaker premises. Find out what can be applied for and the application process by visiting the BYM website, www.quaker.org.uk/mhfunds.

4.2 Places of Worship Renewal Fund (England)

The Places of Worship Renewal Fund (PWRF) is a new fund that opened for applications this year. This is a new grant fund that listed places of worship in England can apply to. It is not the same as the previous Listed Places of Worship Scheme as it does more than refund the VAT. To find out more about the eligibility of the new fund and to apply you can:



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

- Look on the PWRF section of the Historic England website, <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/grants/what-we-fund/places-of-worship-renewal-fund/#2f834d16>
- Watch this film of Diana Evans, Head of Places of Worship and Owners Advice at Historic England introduce the fund, <https://vimeo.com/1200010568/f2e21f1b52>

If your meeting house is not in England there are some alternative sources of funding listed in this government research briefing, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10625>.

4.3 National Churches Trust

NCT offers 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.

Britain Yearly Meeting

Contributions update

Summer 2026



Treasurer Survey

The QIB Fundraising Team invites all treasurers to complete our annual Treasurer Survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/7ZKRJ9N. Your feedback helps us better understand the financial challenges facing meeting houses and provides valuable insight into the financial dynamics within local meetings.



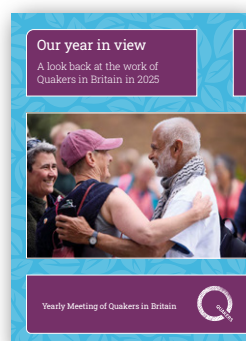
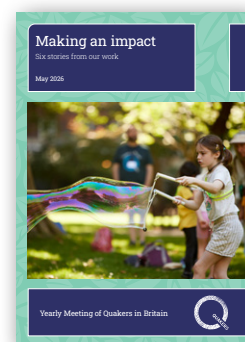
The information you share will help identify areas where additional support, guidance, and resources may be needed, ensuring we can better support meetings across Britain. Thank you for taking the time to contribute your experiences and perspectives.

The survey will be open until 31 July 2026. Contact, contributions@quaker.org.uk, if you have and questions about the survey.

Making an impact: Six stories from our work

In our latest report, *Making an Impact: Six Stories from Our Work*, we bring together six inspiring stories that capture the breadth and depth of Quaker work over the past year. From supporting children's activities in local meetings to providing a protective presence in the South Hebron Hills in the West Bank, these stories show the difference that contributions from Quakers make every day.

www.quaker.org.uk/documents/making-an-impact-stories-2026



Our year in view

In addition to sharing stories of impact from last year, we'd like to invite you to share the new annual review, *Our Year in View*, with your meetings. This publication shows, through infographics, just some of what we achieved in 2025. The support of Quakers helps to make this work possible.

www.quaker.org.uk/documents/britain-yearly-meeting-annual-review-2025