

Simpler meetings – grouping meetings differently

This document is about possibilities. It shares many ideas collected from Quakers around Britain about how we can simplify the way we organise ourselves. You can find more topics here: www.quaker.org.uk/simplermeetings. For each topic there is a document and a short video. All the topics are collected in “*Simpler Meetings – what is possible*”, which also explains ways you can approach the topics.

Within existing Quaker structures, there are several combinations that can be used.

Pair a large and a small meeting

Both can benefit from working together, for example having joint socials, or learning events, or sharing some role-holders.

Link worshipping groups with local meetings

It can be very helpful for a worshipping group to feel a part of a local meeting, with both contributing and gaining.

A cluster of local meetings

Some larger area meetings group their local meetings into clusters of three or four. The cluster does some things together, like learning activities or socials, or some of their witness in the world, or to consider concerns.

Combine two or three meetings with a single business meeting

If there are two or three small local meetings, they might come together with a single business meeting. Technically, they would become a single local meeting, while retaining their meetings for worship in public in different places. This approach is actually quite similar to what already happens in some larger meetings, where they have meetings at different times in the same place – for example on Sunday and Wednesday. There are two meetings for worship with one business meeting. This could enable small meetings to continue worshipping in public where they wish, without trying to maintain all of the local meeting structure and roles on their own.

Questions to consider:

- Are there pairs of meetings that could help one another?
- Are worshipping groups supported by being part of a local meeting?
- Could we form a cluster of local meetings, and do some things together, like learning, socials, witness or to consider concerns?
- Would it help some small meetings if they came together with a single business meeting, while still meeting in their current locations?

Can you help?

The Simpler Meetings project is gathering and sharing ways that Quakers find work well for them. The aim is to liberate the joy of being a Quaker. You can learn more at www.quaker.org.uk/simplermeetings. Please send your ideas and suggestions to Jonathan Carmichael, Simpler Meetings Project Manager at JonathanC@Quaker.org.uk.

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