

## Simpler meetings – meetings changing

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](http://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.

Meetings around the country are constantly changing – they ebb and flow. Here are several changes you might be involved in, each with its own opportunities for new life.

A **growing meeting** can be exciting, as well as a chance to re-think how the meeting needs to run, now it is larger.

**Opening a new meeting** in a new place can be energising. Perhaps it will be a better match for where the current worshippers live and travel from, and be more part of their community. Perhaps there is a new population, and people want to draw in new Friends.

Others are looking at **increasing the number of meetings** that take place at their existing meeting place. They might be at different times of day, or on different days. The key seems to be to experiment, see which work, trying it for a period and then reviewing.

**Reducing the scale of a meeting’s activities** can be a sensible response to reduced numbers. This might involve fewer meetings for worship, or adjusting expectations of what can be done or how it is done. It might need a fresh look at which roles are needed now. This can require some focus on what is essential, and what is not. Essentials are addressed in the section on Small Meetings.

Some are in the stage of **recognising a point is coming** when their local meeting may be laid down, but not yet. The meeting may need some particular support in this phase.

Others are considering or have decided on **laying down a meeting**, with its members and attenders joining another meeting and its community. This can be a time of sadness, and also a step onto a new path and new discoveries.

## Questions to consider:

- Are we in a new phase, where we should re-assess how often we meet, and what we try to achieve?
- Should we look again at how we do things, and what roles are needed, to match our size?
- Could we meet in a new place, to respond to where our current worshippers live, and where there is a population we could reach?
- Are we approaching a stage where we should be preparing for laying down our meeting? Do we need any support with this phase?

## 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](http://www.quaker.org.uk/simplermeetings). Please send your ideas and suggestions to Jonathan Carmichael, Simpler Meetings Project Manager at [JonathanC@Quaker.org.uk](mailto:JonathanC@Quaker.org.uk).

11/2/2020