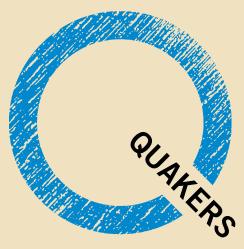


Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious  
Society of Friends (Quakers)

# Patterns of membership

including the 2020 tabular statement

Compiled for Yearly Meeting Gathering,  
Online 19 July–8 August 2021



# Membership patterns in Britain Yearly Meeting

The tabular statement of membership has been published annually since 1861. It informs the yearly meeting of the number of Friends in membership, based on information provided by area meetings (see *Quaker faith & practice* 4.10h).

This document contains information down to area meeting level. Additional data, including local meeting data, will be available online at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym).

## Membership

Membership of the yearly meeting at the end of 2020 was 12,125 (12,498 in 2019), a decrease of 373. During the year 218 came into membership. The membership of 139 adults was terminated and area meetings recorded 330 deaths.

## Attenders

The number of recorded attenders was 6,902 (6,965 in 2019) and there were 1,164 children not in membership (1,283 in 2019).

## Marriages

There were 10 marriages in 2020 (29 in 2019). In 4 of these both partners were members of Britain Yearly Meeting; in 3, one partner was a member; and in 3, neither partner was a member. These figures include 1 same-sex and 9 opposite-sex marriages.

## The statistical tables

### Quakers in regions and general meetings of Britain

**Table 1** provides a summary of incomings and outgoings for Britain Yearly Meeting as a whole. Membership fell by 2.98% over the year. New memberships fell by fifty-two compared to 2019. Terminations fell by fifty-four.

**Table 2** (page 5) provides membership statistics for the yearly meeting since 1935.

**Table 3** (page 6) provides a regional summary of the number of members and attenders as well as an indication of the proportion who are children, attenders and women. 60% of members and attenders are women and 60% of all adults are attenders. The

gender category of 'other' (introduced in 2015) has been used by a few area meetings. Meetings may wish to make members and attenders aware of the opportunity to be recorded this way.

**Table 4** (page 7) summarises trends in membership over the last ten years. Convincements over ten years represent 2,913 Friends or 24% of total membership. Terminations over the same period were 1,910 and deaths were 3,069. This resulted in a decline in membership of 2,150 with notified changes from 2010. The overall decline in members and attenders in 2019 is from 20,746 to 20,191.

## Area meetings

**Table 5** (page 8-9) provides information on members, attenders and children for each area meeting, as well as information on those joining and leaving over the last ten years.

**Table 6** (page 10-11) looks at trends at area meeting level over ten years. Over this time the membership of nine area meetings grew and in two area meetings, the total number of adults (members and attenders) grew by more than 10%.

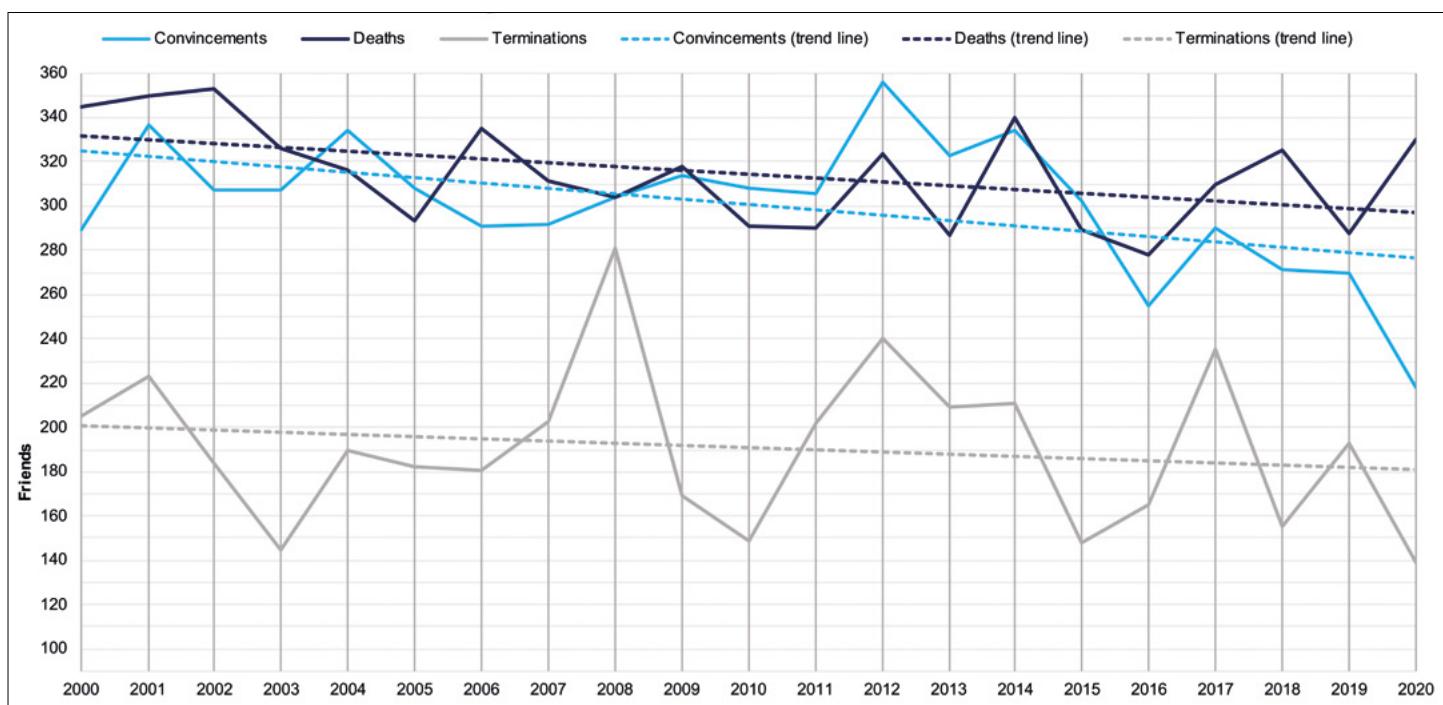
## Local meetings

There were 463 local meetings (LMs) at the end of 2020. No meetings opened and six local meetings informed us of closure. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Friends were unable to meet in person throughout 2020. A significant number of Quakers gathered together online, either in local and area meeting groups or together nationally and internationally.

Table 1. Quakers coming into membership and ceasing to be members of Britain Yearly Meeting in 2020

Incomings	2019	2020	Outgoings	2019	2020
<b>By application</b>			<b>By termination of membership</b>		
Adults	268	218	initiative of member	101	87
Children	2	0	initiative of area meeting	92	52
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>218</b>	termination of children's membership	0	0
			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>139</b>
			<b>By death</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>By certificate</b>			<b>By certificate</b>		
from Britain Yearly Meeting	157	103	to Britain Yearly Meeting	149	103
from another yearly meeting	8	0	to another yearly meeting	9	8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Total notified incomings to AMs</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>Total notified outgoings from area meetings</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>580</b>
	2019	2020		2019	2020
Members living abroad	114	117	Total number of members at start of year	12,666	12,498
Sojourning members	36	18	Recorded +/- in membership	-200	-259
			Balance of notified discrepancies	+32	-114
Number of area meetings	70	70	Number of members at end of year	12,498	12,125
Number of local meetings	469	463	As a % of membership loss/gain	-1.33%	-2.98%

Figure 1a. Flows in and out of BYM 2000-2020



A more detailed version of this graph can be found on page 12.

## About the tabular statement

Since 2013, changes have been made to the tabular statement to help make the data more informative and to highlight important patterns and trends. All data is collected from area meetings but at local meeting level. Historical data from the last 20 years is being used to provide more information on trends.

Following requests from individuals and area meetings, Meeting for Sufferings asked the Recording Clerk to consider how best to provide information on gender. As a result, an additional category of “other” has been included (see Terminology below). Some meetings have chosen to use “other” to remove gender reporting in their meetings.

## Terminology

**Attender:** one who, not being a member, frequently attends a specific meeting for worship (*Quaker faith & practice* 11.38). Refers to an adult attender; children not in membership are identified separately.

**Child:** someone under 16 years old.

**Member:** one who is in membership of the Society. Unless stated differently, figures include children in membership.

**Other:** adults who have indicated a gender identity other than man or woman. This might include people who have stated they are agender, neutrois or who have a(nother) non-binary gender identity.

**Sojourning member:** a member of another yearly meeting, recognised as sojourning their membership within an area meeting in Britain (*Quaker faith & practice* 11.27). Identified separately, they are not included in the membership figures.

## Boundary changes

In 2015, North Cumbria AM and West Cumbria AM combined to form Cumberland AM. Where two area meetings combine to form a single one, figures provided for all years combine the data for the constituent meetings. Where area meetings have separated into more than one, membership information is based on the actual numbers for each of the constituent local meetings. Up to 2014, figures for flows (convincements, terminations, transfers and deaths) were only collected at area meeting level. Estimates are based on the proportion of the membership forming each new area meeting in the year they were formed. This applies to: North Somerset AM (formed 2011); West Wiltshire and East Somerset AM (formed 2011). Where a single local meeting moved from one area to another, it has not been possible to adjust the figures. Data

for that meeting is included with the area meeting of which it is part in any year. This affects Oundle LM which transferred from Cambridgeshire AM to Northamptonshire AM in 2010; and Chorley LM which transferred from Lancashire Central & North AM to Pendle Hill AM in 2016.

## Year-end figures and corrections

Each area meeting is required to send tabular statement information for the year ending 31 December. Meetings are given an opportunity to correct previous year data with subsequent amendments to changes, (including transfers and deaths) which were minuted within the last year but not returned before the year-end deadline. In the past these revisions were included in the figures for the following year. As this distorts trends, the method adopted since 2014 is to modify membership figures each year to take into account corrections provided the following year. These corrections are indicated in the notified discrepancies row within Table 1.

This document and supplementary tables are also available for download from:

**[www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym).**

For other formats please contact:

Recording Clerk's Office,  
Quakers in Britain  
Friends House, 173 Euston Road,  
London NW1 2BJ

E: [tabstat@quaker.org.uk](mailto:tabstat@quaker.org.uk)



**Table 3. Quakers in regions and general meetings of Britain, 2020: summary**

Region	Number of members at end 2020			Number of attenders at end 2020			Members plus attenders at end 2020		
	Women		Men	Total		Children	Total adults	Unspecified / not disclosed (adults)	
	Other	Children	Men	Women	Other	Other	Women	Men	Unspecified / not disclosed (adults)
Bedfordshire	-	-	660	143	251	-	460	1,120	411
Berks & Oxon	214	399	-	3	616	175	234	-	492
Bristol & WesseX	373	699	1	-	13	1,086	175	337	5
Cumberland	55	95	-	-	1	151	24	46	-
Derbys, Lincs & Notts	162	233	1	-	396	100	144	-	30
Devon & Cornwall	203	302	-	-	505	161	240	-	19
Essex & Suffolk	153	273	1	-	427	74	109	-	27
Hants, SE Dorset & Islands	50	108	-	278	-	436	24	48	-
Kent	67	140	-	-	207	55	70	-	6
London	434	747	2	-	1,184	264	409	15	134
N Wales & NW England	260	492	-	-	1	753	207	266	1
NE England	155	236	1	-	3	395	80	122	-
Norfolk, Cambs & Hunts	216	328	-	-	1	545	110	188	32
Scotland	238	440	-	-	678	185	263	-	107
Sussex & Surrey	251	427	-	-	4	682	170	270	-
Warwick, Leics & Staffs	114	211	-	448	2	775	61	85	-
Western	325	557	3	-	-	885	228	367	3
Westmorland	136	235	-	-	3	374	78	123	-
Yorkshire	478	828	3	-	61	1,370	212	334	-
<b>REGIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>4,152</b>	<b>7,142</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>12,125</b>	<b>2,526</b>	<b>3,906</b>	<b>56</b>
							<b>1,164</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>8,066</b>
							<b>20,191</b>	<b>6,678</b>	<b>11,048</b>
							<b>68</b>	<b>1,257</b>	<b>1,140</b>
							<b>18,934</b>		
<b>WALES TOTALS</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>290</b>	-	-	-	<b>446</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>219</b>	-
<b>SCOTLAND TOTALS</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>440</b>	-	-	-	<b>678</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>263</b>	-
<b>ENGLAND TOTALS</b>	<b>3,758</b>	<b>6,412</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>11,001</b>	<b>2,193</b>	<b>3,424</b>	<b>56</b>
							<b>1,002</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>7,089</b>
							<b>5,951</b>	<b>9,836</b>	<b>68</b>
							<b>1,095</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>16,995</b>
							<b>6%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>58%</b>
							<b>55</b>	-	<b>813</b>
							<b>6%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>63%</b>
							<b>107</b>	-	<b>1,126</b>
							<b>10%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>55%</b>
							<b>1,140</b>	<b>16,995</b>	<b>6%</b>
							<b>1,095</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>60%</b>

**Table 4. Membership changes in regions and general meetings of Britain, 2020: recent trends**

Region	Members		Members and attenders		% of adults who are members		Convincements		Deaths		Terminations		Net geographic moves Ten year net 2019-2010					
	2019		2020		2010		2020		2010		2020							
	2010	Change in recorded membership 2019-2020	2020	Change in membership 2010-2020	2019	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020						
Bedfordshire	660	676	850	-16	-190	1,120	1,163	1,516	58.9%	56.1%	17	16	26	16	5	7	0	-31
Berks & Oxon	616	638	769	-22	-153	1,108	1,168	1,482	55.6%	51.9%	8	10	18	14	7	1	-5	-13
Bristol & Wesse	1,086	1,100	1,202	-14	-116	1,697	1,694	2,084	64.0%	57.7%	21	27	28	39	7	6	4	49
Cumberland	151	148	194	3	-43	225	243	290	67.1%	66.9%	3	2	0	8	0	0	0	2
Derbys, Lincs & Notts	396	400	456	-4	-60	670	667	768	59.1%	59.4%	5	6	9	3	0	4	1	-2
Devon & Cornwall	505	605	629	-100	-124	925	952	1,082	54.6%	58.1%	11	10	8	8	4	1	-2	30
Essex & Suffolk	427	431	523	-4	-96	637	646	859	67.0%	60.9%	7	16	11	14	1	17	-2	-10
Hants, SE Dorset & Islands	436	457	495	-21	-59	721	773	820	60.5%	60.4%	9	9	18	15	11	5	-2	11
Kent	207	215	256	-8	-49	338	333	463	61.2%	55.3%	2	5	7	3	2	2	-1	5
London	1,184	1,238	1,444	-54	-260	2,006	2,211	2,488	59.0%	58.0%	26	52	25	23	36	23	-16	-115
N Wales & NW England	753	762	870	-9	-117	1,347	1,432	1,590	55.9%	54.7%	16	21	16	22	7	10	0	-3
NE England	395	401	445	-6	-50	630	618	741	62.7%	60.1%	10	8	12	14	3	9	0	3
Norfolk, Camb & Hunts	545	556	630	-11	-85	916	852	1,055	59.5%	59.7%	8	17	15	4	7	6	3	19
Scotland	678	683	720	-5	-42	1,233	1,305	1,456	55.0%	49.5%	16	16	20	6	3	18	1	1
Sussex & Surrey	682	696	817	-14	-135	1,188	1,183	1,370	57.4%	59.6%	10	18	18	15	13	15	9	4
Warwick, Leics & Staffs	775	789	944	-14	-169	1,223	1,237	1,590	63.4%	59.4%	11	17	20	26	5	1	2	16
Western	885	906	1,060	-21	-175	1,562	1,560	1,944	56.7%	54.5%	12	21	29	17	9	3	7	23
Westmorland	374	386	415	-12	-41	608	630	770	61.5%	53.9%	3	1	13	8	2	6	-2	9
Yorkshire	1,370	1,411	1,596	-41	-226	2,037	2,079	2,703	67.3%	59.0%	23	34	37	36	17	15	1	46
<b>REGIONAL TOTALS</b>	<b>12,125</b>	<b>12,498</b>	<b>14,315</b>	<b>-373</b>	<b>-2,190</b>	<b>20,191</b>	<b>20,746</b>	<b>25,071</b>	<b>60.3%</b>	<b>57.6%</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>-0.11</b>	<b>2.32</b>



Table 5, continued

AM#	AM reference	LMs in 2010	Members 2010	Child attenders 2010	Adult attenders 2010	LMs in 2020	Members 2020	Child attenders 2020	Adult attenders 2020	Members joining and leaving over ten year period					
										Convincements	Transfers in	Transfers out	Terminations	Deaths	
	SCOTLAND	33	720	189	547	32	678	107	448	1,233	167	102	101	124	123
49	Surrey & Hampshire Border	5	133	21	65	5	107	0	42	149	55	8	21	26	30
50	Sussex East	9	238	22	134	9	202	0	146	348	57	36	14	52	66
51	Sussex West	8	280	30	171	8	239	44	146	429	55	44	31	54	67
52	West Weald	8	166	21	89	7	134	22	106	262	31	4	22	23	45
	SUSSEX & SURREY	30	817	94	459	29	682	66	440	1,188	198	92	88	155	208
53	Central England	17	580	100	262	17	448	46	235	729	72	64	51	66	125
54	Leicester	4	224	46	138	4	203	16	80	299	43	18	20	2	61
55	Staffordshire	7	140	10	90	7	124	5	66	195	38	15	10	26	22
	WARWICK, LEICS & STAFFS	28	944	156	490	28	775	67	381	1,223	153	97	81	94	208
56	Gloucestershire	8	305	22	213	8	233	22	107	362	41	48	38	48	84
57	Mid-Wales/ Canolbarth Cymru	6	73	24	63	6	80	11	82	173	11	3	8	3	10
58	South Wales/ De Cymru	14	251	57	165	12	197	26	155	378	53	28	29	49	53
59	Southern Marches/ y Gororau Deheuol	9	215	42	183	8	196	7	156	359	60	52	34	28	91
60	Worcestershire & Shropshire	7	216	26	89	6	179	13	98	290	52	22	21	33	52
	WESTERN	44	1,060	171	713	40	885	79	598	1,562	217	153	130	161	290
61	Kendal & Sedbergh	4	128	35	91	4	115	10	45	170	14	12	13	0	31
62	Lancashire Central & North	8	221	33	153	5	209	23	124	356	25	28	26	21	32
63	Swarthmoor (SW Cumbria)	4	66	3	40	4	50	0	32	82	5	9	1	3	31
	WESTMORLAND	16	415	71	284	13	374	33	201	608	44	49	40	24	94
64	Brighouse West Yorkshire	5	163	40	95	5	152	23	69	244	14	29	23	14	22
65	Central Yorkshire	7	145	28	82	6	116	13	49	178	39	16	16	31	27
66	Craven & Keighley	5	145	19	90	5	116	14	69	199	27	18	15	26	27
67	Leeds	7	235	36	136	7	181	31	93	305	44	29	26	68	58
68	Pickering & Hull	7	279	15	100	7	167	9	88	264	16	12	16	49	85
69	Sheffield & Balby	4	201	43	117	4	214	1	39	254	51	25	15	13	29
70	York	5	428	77	229	5	424	30	139	593	64	54	26	40	99
	YORKSHIRE	40	1,596	258	849	39	1370	121	546	2,037	255	183	137	241	347
	Subtotal	478	14,315	2,196	8,560	463	12,125	1,164	6,902	20,191	2,913	1,660	1,592	1,910	3,069
	Notified corrections to 2010			-17											
	BYM Total	478	14,298	2,196	8,560	463	12,125	1,164	6,902	20,191	2,913	1,660	1,592	1,910	3,069



Table 6, continued

AM#	AMs by number of members	Members			Attendees			Combined			Changes: ten year changes as percentage (%) of current AM						
		Members 2010	Members 2020	Average annual change 2010–2020	Adult attenders 2010	Adult attenders 2020	Average annual change 2010–2020	% Adults who are attenders in 2020	Total members and attenders at end 2020*	Change in total members & attenders 2010–2020	Increase or decrease as % of 2010 total	Convincements	Transfers in	Transfers out	Terminations	Deaths	
11	North Somerset AM	314	101	-21.3	208	33	-17.5	25%	134	-420	n/a	23%	22%	19%	6%	28%	
5	Banbury & Evesham AM	138	97	-4.1	135	73	-6.2	43%	177	-124	-41%	15%	19%	21%	9%	51%	
26	West Kent AM	123	97	-2.6	94	59	-3.5	38%	156	-79	-34%	19%	16%	15%	2%	23%	
35	Manchester & Warrington AM	102	91	-1.1	100	69	-3.1	43%	184	-35	-16%	36%	16%	13%	9%	22%	
4	Northamptonshire AM	94	81	-1.3	63	49	-1.4	38%	139	-18	-11%	28%	32%	14%	26%	30%	
45	East Scotland AM	108	81	-2.7	51	52	0.1	39%	144	-30	-17%	19%	19%	21%	14%	31%	
57	Mid-Wales AM	73	80	0.7	63	82	1.9	51%	173	13	8%	14%	4%	10%	4%	13%	
37	Pendle Hill AM	173	77	-9.6	96	69	-2.7	47%	146	-156	-52%	53%	22%	21%	49%	53%	
20	Mid Essex AM	91	76	-1.5	54	21	-3.3	22%	99	-53	-35%	34%	3%	9%	12%	30%	
22	Thaxted AM	92	71	-2.1	53	47	-0.6	40%	129	-34	-21%	18%	8%	7%	24%	38%	
63	Swarthmoor (SW Cumbria) AM	66	50	-1.6	40	32	-0.8	39%	82	-27	-25%	10%	18%	2%	6%	62%	
42	Wensleydale & Swaledale AM	33	28	-0.5	40	35	-0.5	56%	63	-12	-16%	11%	4%	4%	4%	21%	
		Totals	14,315	12,125	-3.44	8,560	6,902	-2.55	36%	20,191	-5,181	-19%	25%	14%	13%	16%	26%
				Average			Average	Average			Average	Average					

AM reference # match numbers used in the map on the back cover.

\* Includes children.

Figure 1b. Members and Attenders by Area Meeting, 2010-2020

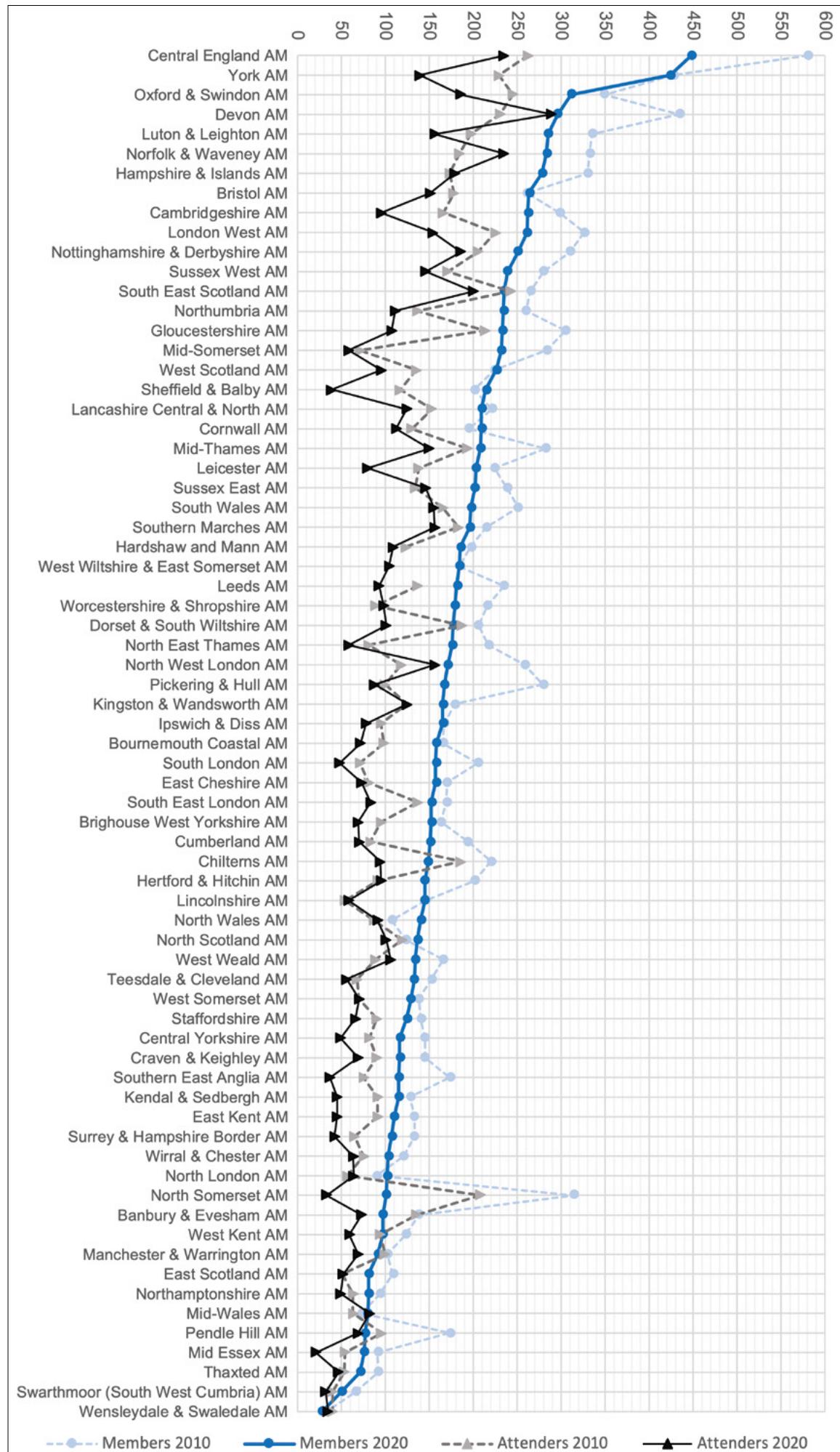


Figure 2. Area Meetings of Britain Yearly Meeting



Quakers share a way of life, not a set of beliefs. Quaker unity is based on shared understanding and a shared practice of silent worship – a communal stillness.

Quakers seek to experience God directly – internally, in relationships with others, and with the world. Local meetings for worship are open to all who wish to attend.

Quakers try to live with honesty and integrity. This means speaking truth to all, including people in positions of power. The Quaker commitment to peace arises from the conviction that love is at the heart of existence and that all human beings are unique and equal.

This leads Quakers to put faith into action by working locally and globally to change the systems that cause injustice and violent conflict.

Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)  
Registered charity number 1127633

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