



Quaker Young Adult Representative

A guide for Young Adult Representatives and Area Meetings

This leaflet is for new **Young Adult (YA) Representatives** and the appointing **Area Meetings**. It outlines the role, what is required of the Area Meeting, and the support available. Young Adult Representatives help Quaker communities listen to, include, and work alongside young adults aged 18–35.

The aims of the role are:

- **to advocate for the needs, experiences and gifts of young adults (18–35) within the Area Meeting** – ensuring young adults feel seen, valued, and welcomed
- **to raise awareness** of regional and national opportunities that support young adults' spiritual growth, community connection, and leadership in Quaker life
- **to strengthen the involvement of young adults** in the worship, witness, governance and social life of local and area meetings
- **to encourage and support Quaker communities** in becoming more inclusive and responsive to young adult participation
- **to build relationships** between young adults and the wider community, opening space for intergenerational understanding and shared discernment

Essential tasks

- **speak up for young adult participation** at local and area meeting level, including raising concerns or opportunities affecting those aged 18–35
- **gather and share information** about Quaker events, training, retreats, gatherings, and service opportunities relevant to young adults
- **regularly attend Area Meeting sessions** to report on current opportunities, barriers, or developments relating to young adult engagement
- **listen to young adults in the Area Meeting**, helping discern what might support their spiritual lives and connection with the community
- **work with elders, clerks, and role holders** who carry responsibility for community life, inclusion, and pastoral care
- **follow data guidelines** if keeping basic contact information for young adults wishing to be included in local networks

“Creating space for young adults to speak into our community’s discernment has deepened our intergenerational life.”

Additional tasks

Across Area Meetings, Young Adult Representatives may:

- encourage new initiatives for and with young adults
- organise occasional gatherings, discussions or social activities for young adults
- be part of committees or working groups exploring inclusion, outreach, or community development
- promote opportunities for Friends to reflect on the place of young adults in the future of the meeting
- build relationships with young adults already active in Quaker life, and those who may be less visible
- advocate for safe, welcoming and well-supported practice, communicate where appropriate with Safeguarding Coordinators
- collaborate with representatives or supporters in neighbouring Areas, e.g., joint retreats, special interest events, or learning groups
- connect and collaborate with student chaplains if there are any in the area and connect to the chaplaincy network

Within local meetings, Young Adult Representatives may:

- connect with Friends supporting young adult spiritual nurture
- encourage meetings with few or no young adults to explore what might make participation easier or more inviting
- support meetings in using available resources, training, and opportunities to strengthen intergenerational community life
- help maintain simple, secure contact lists (in line with local guidelines) for young adults wishing to be kept informed

“Creating a simple meal after meeting opened space for new friendships and deeper conversation.”

Area Meeting responsibilities

Area Meetings are asked:

- to appoint one or two Young Adult Representatives (these should be from the active young adult community)
- to inform the relevant staff team at Quakers in Britain of the appointment youngadults@quaker.org.uk
- **to actively consider the needs and contributions of young adults** – not leaving this solely to the Representative
- to identify Friends with eldership or pastoral roles who can support the Representative
- to enable Representatives to keep appropriate, secure contact details for young adults
- to ensure records and guidance are handed on to succeeding Representatives
- to enable Representatives to do this work with appropriate funding where available

“Young adults enrich our discernment. Their insight, experience and energy help shape who we are becoming.”

Support for the role

Young Adult Representatives can expect support from the following Area Meeting groups or role-holders:

- elders and pastoral carers with responsibility for inclusion and community life
- the Area Meeting clerk – the Representative is an Area Meeting appointment and should not work in isolation
- trustees, where responsibilities overlap with community development, participation or safeguarding
- neighbouring YA Representatives or similar roles

Local meetings can support by:

- affirming and resourcing young adult participation
- ensuring the clerk and committed local Friends are aware of the Representative's work
- inviting young adults into worship, service and decision-making in ways that feel accessible and meaningful

Support from Quakers in Britain may include:

- newsletters with information about events and training
- opportunities to connect with staff or networks supporting young adult engagement
- online guidance, sample policies, and tools for nurturing inclusive community life
- periodic gatherings or network meetings for Young Adult Representatives

Could this be you?

This is a simple, practical role for a young adult who cares about helping others feel welcome, connected, and involved in Quaker life. You do not need to have everything worked out. If you enjoy noticing what could help, sharing ideas, and encouraging people, this could be a great role to try.

What would I actually do?

- be a friendly link between young adults and the Area Meeting
- share news about events, gatherings and opportunities for people aged 18–35
- notice what helps young adults feel included, and speak up about it
- encourage ideas like shared meals, conversations, worship, trips or socials
- help meetings think about how to make space for younger adults to join in and belong

You would not be doing this on your own. The role can be shaped to fit your gifts, your confidence, and the time you have available. It can start small and grow.

A note for Area Meetings

Appointing a Young Adult Representative is a simple way to show that young adults matter in the life of the meeting. It helps make sure their ideas, needs and energy are noticed and encouraged. This role does not need to be heavy or complicated to be valuable.

- choose someone who is connected to young adult life, or interested in helping it grow
- keep expectations realistic and manageable
- offer encouragement, practical support and someone to talk things through with
- remember that building community often starts with small, simple steps

If you are a young adult wondering whether to have a go, or an Area Meeting thinking about appointing someone, this role could be a good place to start. Young adult Quaker communities in Britain offer connection, belonging, events and opportunities for people aged 18–35, and local and national groups can help new people get started.

You do not need to be an expert – just someone willing to notice, encourage and help make space.