

Clerks Update

A newsletter from Quaker Life

Issue 8: Winter 2023



Welcome to the winter issue!

Welcome to this winter edition of Clerks' Update, the communication channel for clerks of local and area Quaker communities. You can view an archive of past messages on our website at www.quaker.org.uk/clerks-update.

Information for Quaker clerks

Outreach

Are you interested in how we can create more welcoming communities, and how we can be better equipped to explain our Quaker way confidently and clearly to anyone who asks? Our outreach network sessions run twice a month online to explore these issues. For upcoming dates, please see www.quaker.org.uk/events. Your [local or children & youth development worker](#) can also offer support. **Please share this information with Friends in your Quaker community who are responsible for or interested in outreach.**



Are you responsible for your meeting's website or social media? From January 2024, we will be offering drop-in sessions for anyone involved in running social media accounts for their meeting or contributing content or making updates to local or area meeting websites. For more information, please email Naomi Major at naomim@quaker.org.uk.

If you'd like to order more outreach resources, please use this email address: outreach@quaker.org.uk. Please note that no one will be able to respond between 22 Dec and 2 Jan.

Meeting role-holder changes

You should have received an email asking you to update the Role Holders for your Local meeting for 2024. Just a reminder that the **deadline is the 31 December 2023**.

If you didn't receive the email or have lost it the form can be filled in online at: <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/2024-role-holder-updates>.

Contact updates@quaker.org.uk for information or help.

Abbreviations: BYM – Britain Yearly Meeting; CCQW – Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales; LM – local meeting; AM – area meeting; YM – Yearly Meeting; QLCC – Quaker Life Central Committee; FWCC – Friends World Committee for Consultation

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Registering officers

Registering officers have been sent a request for information about marriages that have taken place in 2023. All area meetings need to have a registering officer (Qf&p 4.04 & Qf&p 16.22). If an area meeting does not currently have a registering officer, then please let Michael Booth know by emailing wedding@quaker.org.uk, he will be in touch and can explore possibilities for different ways of filling the role.

Changes of registering officers should be reported to BYM staff without delay, as we need to inform the civil authorities. When your area meeting appoints a new registering officer, please send the minute of appointment, together with the name, address and email of the Friend being appointed, to wedding@quaker.org.uk (this email address is monitored by Graham Spackman and Michael Booth). We also need to know when a registering officer resigns or is released from service.

We will then do the necessary administration, which includes writing to the new registering officer welcoming them to their task.

An online course for new registering officers has been arranged for early next year. See www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/being-a-quaker-registering-officer for details.

Quaker trustees handbook revision

The Quaker trustees handbook revision is nearing completion. A draft has been prepared in collaboration with Woodbrooke and many Friends have commented on it and helped shape the text to make it as useful as it can be for Quaker needs. The new revision will have more of a focus on the Quaker aspects of trusteeship and point towards the places where secular aspects of charity trusteeship can be found from charity regulators.

The draft text is currently with BYM's lawyers to ensure that the document is fit for purpose legally. We expect the legal comments to be complete so that the design of the handbook can be worked on during December and January. The plan is that the final revision will be ready and with Friends in Spring 2024.

Quaker charities memorandum of understanding

The Quaker charities memorandum of understanding work is ongoing and reaching the point where a final document will be available, and meetings will be asked to sign.

To give a very brief update on where things are:

- On 6-8 October Meeting for Sufferings approved the draft document.
- It is currently with BYM's lawyers undergoing final scrutiny to ensure that it does not create additional commitments between the parties.
- In late 2023 to early 2024 the document will be formally finalised, and a published version will be available. Meetings will be notified through the usual channels.
- In Spring 2024 those Quaker bodies requested to join the MoU will be sent a copy with advice on how to sign.

If you have questions please direct them to Siobhán Haire, siobhanh@quaker.org.uk.

Reporting to BYM

Now that the work on the BYM charities memorandum of understanding is almost complete thought has been given to how and what is reported to BYM by area meetings on compliance. In previous years

separate governance and safeguarding reports have been sent out for trustees to complete. We would like to bring all this reporting together so that it happens in one place annually, and can be passed to Quaker Life Central Committee, who report on this to Meeting for Sufferings.

A new online form has been developed which gives the opportunity to report everything in one place. It will cover all the following areas:

- Charity regulatory compliance
- Safeguarding
- Annual sustainability reporting
- Policies and risk management
- Record keeping
- Serious incidents or notifiable events

Many of these are areas that trustees are asked to report on so please let your AM clerks of trustees know to expect to receive the form. You can look at the form online here. Please only make one submission per area meeting.

<https://forms.quaker.org.uk/am-governance-annual-return>

Quaker Housing Trust

The Quaker Housing Trust invites any area meetings who would like to hear more about the work of the Trust to contact us at involve@qht.org.uk. Trustees are happy speak at local and area meeting gatherings about the work of the Trust and the Quaker Housing Concern. We would also like to discuss with Quakers and Quaker communities the many actions they are taking to forward our housing concern.

Events

Working Together in Faith – conference

15-17 March 2024, High Leigh Conference Centre, Hertfordshire

Area Quaker Meetings are invited to appoint a representative to attend a weekend conference which seeks to meet the needs of Friends involved in interchurch and interfaith activities within their community. The conference is organised jointly by Woodbrooke and the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations ([QCCIR Qf&p 9.13](#)).

Please alert your AQM nominations committee and encourage them to find a Friend to attend on behalf of your AM. It will be particularly suitable for Friends engaged in local ecumenical and interfaith work.

Places for representatives from Area Quaker Meetings will be held until **Tuesday, 2nd January 2024**. After this date places will be available for other Friends. There is a waiting list for Friends who wish to apply as individuals before that date.

The Woodbrooke website www.woodbrooke.org.uk/qccir2024 has all the details of topics, speakers and activities on offer, and is where you will also find the booking link.



Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) 2024 nominations are open!

Friday 26 July – Tuesday 30 July 2024

Friends House, London

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) is a welcoming, exciting and thought-provoking event for young people that is open to anyone born between 1 September 2005 and 31 August 2008.

This year, JYM will be a discreet residential programme running in London connecting in to the main programme of the Yearly Meeting of Quakers in Britain. So, everyone attending can join all-age sessions as well as the JYM programme of activity sessions, small groups, speaker sessions, and Quaker worship.

“Everyone had a smile on their face and made me feel welcome.”

You will explore the JYM theme through speaker sessions, discussions, reflection and Quaker Meetings for Worship for Business.

“Best Quaker event I’ve ever been to (probably).”

JYM is also a spiritual event with the opportunity for you to experience Quaker practices and worship.

“Fun, friends, learning about Quakerism.”

Social activities and small groups, called base groups, will provide a place to build relationships and play games.

“It was a very safe space in which I felt comfortable talking to new people about important topics and expressing myself.”

Nominations are now open for Junior Yearly Meeting 2024. Area meetings are asked to nominate up to three young people from their community to attend JYM. There are also some open places available.

To find out how your area meeting can be represented at JYM please visit:

www.quaker.org.uk/events/junior-yearly-meeting-2024



Meeting House Matters 2024

Following the success of the Meeting House Matters events in 2023 Quaker Life is going to make a similar offer in 2024. There will be three in-person events in April, June and November with an online event taking place on the other months.

In 2024 the overarching theme that will be explored at the in-person events is sustainability, which the planning group hopes will open up a variety of conversations.

Dates and venues will be circulated in Clerks Update in early 2024 once all have been finalised.

Training and learning

Woodbrooke



Woodbrooke has announced its online programme for the first half of 2024, as well as several residential and day courses for the whole year (with more to be announced).

It's an exciting and diverse programme ranging from courses marking the anniversary of George Fox's birth to sessions supporting Quaker witness in the world and plenty touching on how to nurture our Quaker communities today.

There are also courses for those in (or interested in) Quaker roles including:

- Spiritual Nurture and Pastoral Care in a Nutshell,
- Being a Quaker Clerk,
- and Trusteeship in a Nutshell.



Find the full range of courses on Woodbrooke's website: www.woodbrooke.org.uk.

Grants

Pollard and Dickson Trust

Pollard and Dickson Trust hardship grants are for members and attenders of Britain Yearly Meeting and those of other Yearly Meetings resident in Great Britain at time of application. Grants are for up to £1,000.

Find [information about the trust online](#) where you will find guidance on applying with the criteria and requirements. It also includes things that can't be applied for. There is also an application form available to download.

Hope Grants

Hope Grants are small grants to improve the quality of life of Quaker members and attenders who are unemployed or unable to make a living wage. Friends in financial need can apply for a grant of up to £750 towards items or activities that will improve their quality of life. More information and the application form are available from our website: www.quaker.org.uk/hopegrants.

Meeting Houses Fund

The Meeting Houses Fund provides financial assistance to Meetings for carrying out improvements to their premises. The purpose of the Meeting Houses Funds is to give or lend money to meetings for improvements to their property. This includes:

- improving wardens' living areas
- buying and improving new property
- helping with large repairs to historic meeting houses.

Find out more and how much can be applied for on the website, www.quaker.org.uk/mhfunds.