



20 February 2026

## **To members of Meeting for Sufferings**

Dear Friends,

The last session of Meeting for Sufferings is on 7th March, 2026. I look forward to seeing you there.

It seems appropriate that at our final meeting we should spend time engaging with Quaker approaches to peace and conflict in communities in Britain. Concern about conflict flaring up in our towns and cities has been expressed at Meeting for Sufferings on several occasions. Staff from the Peacebuilding in Britain team will share their work with us and encourage us to get involved.

We will hear an update on the agenda and plans for the next Yearly Meeting session, which will take place 1-4 May 2026 at Friends House and online. We will also hear the annual report of Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations and a regular report from the Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees.

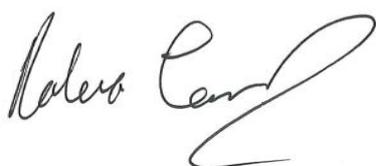
We have a number of items to be taken on draft minute. We will record our membership and attendance, make appointments to roles, consider applications for renewal or removal of Quaker Recognised Body status, note the future arrangements planned for the keeping of the court & prison register and enter any new names, record the completion of certain governance changes in Wales & the Marches, consider letters of greeting to other Yearly Meetings, and note the Meeting for Sufferings annual report to our own Yearly Meeting. This is an unusually long list. Each item is important and needs to be recorded, and some require decisions. None should require extensive discernment, but if any Friend wishes to comment or raise an issue about any of these items then please contact [sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk) before the meeting so that we can reflect on your points in advance.

Likewise we have some further amendments to Quaker faith & practice to consider. Any comments on these should also be sent to [sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk) before the meeting.

We hope to attend to our business in the morning, allowing time over lunch to view a display in the Library about the history of Meeting for Sufferings. We expect to spend some extended time in worship together to commemorate and celebrate the work, worship and witness of this meeting over very many years. Those of us in Friends House will end the day with a small celebration over tea & cake.

One item that is not on our agenda, but which I have been asked to share with you is the concern for a national Quaker rally for peace. For information governance reasons the paper in this pack does not include the organiser's personal email address but it should be included in the email advising you that the papers are available. In the paper are generic contact details and you can request the organiser's address if you need it.

In Truth,



Robert Card  
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

### **Papers enclosed with this mailing**

Agenda

Minutes from MfS Arrangements Group

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>MfS 2026 03 06</b>  | QRB applications                                      |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 07a</b> | Court & Prison Register – future arrangements         |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 08</b>  | Quaker charity governance in Wales & the Marches      |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 09</b>  | Letters of Greeting to European & Middle Eastern YM's |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 10</b>  | MfS Annual Report to Yearly Meeting                   |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 12</b>  | Changes to <i>Quaker faith &amp; practice</i>         |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 13</b>  | QCCIR Annual Report to MfS                            |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 15a</b> | QLCC minute re QLRC                                   |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 15b</b> | QLCC minute re membership                             |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 15c</b> | Sussex West AM minute re protest                      |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 16a</b> | BYM Trustees report & February 2026 minutes           |
| <b>MfS 2026 03 16b</b> | Strategic priorities 2026-2030                        |

### **A reminder of how you can prepare for the meeting**

Read the agenda and papers in good time

Contact the other representative/alternate from your area meeting or body

Send any comments or questions to the clerks ([sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk)), before the meeting to be received by morning of **3 March 2026**



## Agenda

### Meeting for Sufferings – Saturday 7 March 2026

At Friends House and by video conference, open for arrivals from 9.30am for 10am start

	Item	Paper
<b>10am</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Opening worship</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Agenda</b> Adoption and acceptance of the agenda	
<b>4–10</b>	<b>Items to be taken on draft minute:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership (04) &amp; appointments (05) (to follow)</li> <li>• QRB applications (06)</li> <li>• Court &amp; Prison Register – future arrangements (07a)</li> <li>• Court &amp; Prison Register – entries (to follow) (07b)</li> <li>• Quaker charity governance in Wales &amp; the Marches (08)</li> <li>• Letters of Greeting to European &amp; Middle Eastern Yearly Meetings (09)</li> <li>• Meeting for Sufferings annual report to Yearly Meeting (10)</li> </ul>	<b>MfS 2026 03 04–10</b> For decision
<b>11</b>	<b>Yearly Meeting May 2026</b> To hear about the agenda for the Yearly Meeting session 1-4 May 2026	
<b>12</b>	<b>Changes to Quaker faith &amp; practice</b> To consider recommendations from our Church Government Advisory Group	<b>MfS 2026 03 12</b> For decision
	<b>Shuffle break</b>	
<b>13</b>	<b>Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR)</b> To receive the annual report on QCCIR's work	<b>MfS 2026 03 13</b> For consideration

	Item	Paper
<b>14</b>	<b>Peacebuilding in Britain</b> A chance to learn about the work of our Peacebuilding in Britain staff team	
<b>15</b>	<b>Minutes received</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quaker Life Central Committee: Quaker Life Representative Council <b>(15a)</b></li> <li>• Quaker Life Central Committee: membership <b>(15b)</b></li> <li>• Sussex West: freedom of expression/right to protest <b>(15c)</b></li> </ul>	<b>MfS 2026 03 15</b> For consideration & decision
<b>16</b>	<b>BYM Trustees</b> Report from the Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees on their work and the minutes from their February 2026 meeting <b>(16a)</b> and an update on the review of strategic priorities <b>(16b)</b>	<b>MfS 2026 03 16</b> For consideration
<b>12.45pm</b>	<b>End of Session 1</b>	

### **12:45pm to 2.00pm Lunch break**

Over lunch there will be an opportunity to view a display in the Library about the past work of Meeting for Sufferings

	Item	Paper
<b>1.45pm</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	
<b>17</b>	<b>Meeting for Worship to commemorate &amp; celebrate the work of Meeting for Sufferings</b>	
	<b>Shuffle break</b>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Celebration tea</b> To mark the final session of Meeting for Sufferings	
<b>4pm</b>	<b>End of Meeting</b>	



## **Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group**

Held online via Zoom 29 January 2026

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Elizabeth Allen, Robert Card, Charles Philips, Lex Ryder, Mary Savage

**In attendance:** Sarah Donaldson

We began our meeting with a short period of worship.

#### **1. Meetings attended and work completed by the Clerks and others**

Our clerk has completed the Meeting for Sufferings 2025 annual report to Yearly Meeting, and submitted it in January.

#### **2. Agenda for March meeting**

We have considered potential business for Meeting for Sufferings in March. We expect to have an extended item on Peacebuilding in Britain, which relates to a minute from North East Thames Area Meeting on peace building in Epping. We would like the MfS Representatives to go back to their meetings with ideas for actions, and we think a workshop format for this session will help achieve this, and encourage more engagement.

We will receive the final report from Meeting for Sufferings to Yearly Meeting, the annual report from Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations, and the BYM Trustees report, including an update on the review of strategic priorities for the centrally managed work. We will hear details of the agenda for Yearly Meeting in May, and we will receive a draft Letter of Greetings to Ireland and other European Yearly Meetings, prepared by Quaker World Relations Committee. Our Church Government Advisory Group will bring some additional changes to Quaker faith & practice.

Since this is the final Meeting for Sufferings, in the afternoon we will devote time to commemoration of the work that has been done by those who served on this Quaker body over the years.

We have received the following minutes:

- a) **Sheffield and Balby Area Meeting recording the arrest of a Friend - 18th January, 2026 - see also minute on peaceful protest, September 2025**  
This minute records the second arrest of a Friend for supporting Palestine Action. Since the Friend has not been charged, the incident will not be

recorded in the Court and Prison Register, but we agree to attach the minute to the minutes of this meeting.

**b) Sussex West Area Meeting on the effect of proscription of Palestine Action on freedom of reporting in the church newsletter - 17th January 2026**

The minute records the distress of Brighton Local Meeting at the threat of being criminalised as terrorists for an article in their newsletter supporting Palestine Action and the freedom to live out their faith and protest non-violently. The article had to be withdrawn and the newsletter destroyed. As a follow-on from the work we have already done on protest, we will include this minute, along with the back story, in the March MfS papers.

**c) Quaker Life Central Committee, future of Quaker Life Representative Council - 13th November 2025**

The minute from Quaker Life Central Committee concerns a report on the future of their Representative Council, from the Representative Council's Planning Group, which concludes that it should be laid down. This conclusion has been accepted by both the Representative Council and Central Committee. We add this to our March agenda.

**d) Quaker Life Central Committee, non-geographical membership - 13th November 2025**

The QLCC working group set up to explore options for non-geographical membership has brought forward suggestions for how this might work and what changes might be needed to enable it. Although Meeting for Sufferings has been involved in the discernment on this matter, we think it is now time to hand it to Agenda Planning Committee. We agree that MfS will formally receive this minute in March.

### **Preparation Meeting**

We agree that we will not hold a preparation meeting for the March MfS.

We ask staff to draft the agenda in consultation with the clerks.

### **3. Handover Plans**

We have reviewed our Forward Agenda. We confirm that items previously expected to be brought to March Meeting for Sufferings will be put on the agenda.

#### **Business from 2025**

We are content that items on non-geographical membership and on the transition to continuing Yearly Meeting sessions are being handed over to the Agenda Planning Committee of Yearly Meeting (APC). We know that the list of routine business taken by Meeting for Sufferings has been shared with APC and we expect them to take this forward as required.

#### **Ongoing Minutes**

At this moment, we think no further action is needed on the North Wales Area Meeting minute on religious language, received in 2025, as we understand that the Book of Discipline Revision Committee are working on this matter.

We will not pass the North West London Area Meeting minute on assisted dying, received in 2022, to the APC. We will inform the area meeting of this, and advise them that should they want to raise this in the future, they can do so.

The Swarthmoor Area Meeting minute on forming a bigger grouping, received in 2024, will not be passed to the APC.

The West Weald Area Meeting minute about appointing non-members for Quaker service, received in 2024, will be passed to the APC for their decision about whether or not to take forward the matters raised in the minute.

We are taking action at MfS in March on the North East Thames Area Meeting minute on peace building in Epping, received in 2024, by holding a session on this topic, in general.

There being no further business to conduct, we part planning to meet again on 19 March at 8pm to review Meeting for Sufferings in March.

Signed in and on behalf of the meeting,  
Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

## **Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting held on 18th January:**

### **Minute 9. Record of the arrest of a Friend**

We have heard that our Friend Dilys Candler was one of 18 people arrested in Sheffield on 29th November 2025 under anti-terrorism legislation for holding up a sign saying "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action". This was Dilys' second arrest for this reason.

We thank Dilys and ask our Clerks to send this Minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

In friendship

Gillian Hind  
Co-clerk



## National Quaker Peace Rally

Some of you may have read an article in *The Friend* by Steve Day entitled **Rallying call: a proposal for a national Quaker peace rally**. Steve brought this proposal to Ashburton Local Meeting, Devon Area Meeting and it is now being shared with Meeting for Sufferings. Please share this information widely amongst Friends.

In previous years, Quakers in Britain have joined with other faith groups to organise interfaith peace walks. Every two years, many Quakers gather with others to resist the arms fair in London.

This proposal is not for another march, nor another protest, rather a massive peace gathering. It aims to gather 2,000 plus Quakers on the streets of London in a silent rally 'speaking' to the need for peace. Like the Buddhist monks on their 120-day, 2,300-mile peace walk across the U.S, or the movement of people walking for peace across Europe and the Middle East, Quakers can continue to play their part in calling for peace, and putting our love in action.

You can watch this [3 minute video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sy4QWA6wGTc) outlining the vision as it currently stands:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sy4QWA6wGTc>.

There will be a weekly organising meeting, **every Tuesday at 4pm** for the next few months, to make practical arrangements and gather momentum around plans towards a national Quaker peace rally or vigil.

We are looking for more volunteers, to join a small but dedicated arrangements group, to help make this vision possible. You can register to receive Zoom link details [here](#), or you can join directly using the details: Meeting ID: 832 9336 7179, Passcode: peace

All of the above information, plus more links to the inspiration for this project, can be found on the Quaker website: [Weekly Organising Meetings - Quaker rally for peace and justice | Quakers in Britain](#)

Steve Day's email address is included in the email sent out to members of Meeting for Sufferings. If you don't have access to that email then please request it from the Faith in Action Team of Quakers in Britain [faithinaction@quaker.org.uk](mailto:faithinaction@quaker.org.uk) who are accompanying Steve in this work.

## Quaker recognised bodies

### Introduction

This paper covers:

- **Part A:** three reviews of existing QRBs for continuing registration
- **Part B:** the laying down of two existing QRBs.

### Background

The guidelines for groups that would like to be a Quaker recognised body are on the BYM website [www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/quaker-groups](http://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/quaker-groups). That page also contains a list of current QRBs with their contact details and brief description.

A QRB is an independent group where concerned Friends explore a common interest, seek affirmation, or carry out witness. It wishes to be recognised as a Quaker body because its Quaker roots are an important part of its identity or constitution.

Each QRB is allocated a BYM link staff member.

There are no applications to become a Quaker recognised body this time.

### A. Reviews of existing QRBs

When Meeting for Sufferings grants QRB status, it asks for each organisation to be reviewed in due course.

For each of review an update from the staff link about recent activities and key information from the original application to Meeting for Sufferings is included.

There are three reviews submitted this time:

#### **Restoring Relations**

**John Horniman Children's Trust**

**Francis Camfield Charitable Trust**

Action required

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to renew the registration of these organisations as Quaker recognised bodies to be reviewed during 2031 (that is in five years' time).

### Restoring Relations

Initial recognition 2020, review due 2025, emergent group.

**Staff link:** Alistair Fuller, Quaker Life

### **Update from group**

Since 2016, Restoring Relations has delivered 2-3 workshops each year. These have been open public workshops (usually 50/50 Quakers and people from outside the Quaker community) and closed workshops for individual Quaker Meetings.

Links with Britain Yearly Meeting

Quaker Life continues to have regular contact with Restoring Relations. As well as liaising about particular situations where Quaker communities need support in navigating a conflict, we are also working closely with them in planning two in-person events focusing on building Strong, Loving Communities and growing capacity and resilience in Quaker communities to help navigate conflict and deal lovingly with difference and difficulty.

**Email:** [info@restoringrelations.org](mailto:info@restoringrelations.org)

**Group website:** <https://restoringrelations.org/>

### **John Horniman Children's Trust**

Initial recognition 2019, review due 2024, registered charity, staff link Beth Follini

#### **Report from staff link**

The John Horniman Children's Trust continues its long-established witness in supporting the relief of sickness and the advancement of education for children who are sick, convalescent, disabled, or have learning disabilities. Its origins lie in the philanthropic commitments of John Horniman, a Quaker tea merchant whose family founded a convalescent home for children in 1889, from which the present Trust later developed.

Today, the Trust carries forward this legacy by making grants to children's charities across Britain. Its publicly stated aims focus on assisting organisations that support children up to the age of nineteen with medical needs, special educational needs, or disabilities. These grants contribute directly to early intervention, relief of sickness, and improved educational access for some of the most vulnerable young people. Priority is given to grants which are run by Quaker charities or which have a historical connection to Quakers or which are introduced to by a member or attender of a local meeting

The Trust's work is carried out through regular grant cycles. Trustees meet twice a year to consider applications. Projects supported in recent years include work with children with cerebral palsy, accessible arts resources, disability support programmes, and family respite initiatives.

Financial information from the Charity Commission shows that the Trust continues

to operate at a modest but active scale. The Trust is overseen by ten trustees, none of whom receive remuneration.

Throughout 2025, the John Horniman Children's Trust has remained faithful to its central calling: to support the health, wellbeing, and educational opportunities of children facing illness or disability. Through grants to organisations across the UK, with a particular priority for Quaker organisations or for organisations introduced to them by a member or attender, it upholds a practical expression of Quaker concern for those in need.

The details we have in the registration information, including contact details, are still correct as is their description on our website. I've not had any contact or worked with this organization except to recommend Friends who are looking for funds explore whether their work fits within the criteria of this grant making trust.

**Website:** <http://www.hornimanchildrenstrust.org.uk/>

**Contact via webpage:** <https://hornimanschildrenstrust.org/contact-us/>

### **Francis Camfield Charitable Trust**

Initial recognition 2019, review due 2024, registered charity Staff link Beth Follini.

#### **Report from staff link**

In 2025, the Francis Camfield Charitable Trust continued its long-standing ministry of supporting individual Friends in need, particularly those engaged in witnessing to Christian and Quaker testimonies. Established under historic deeds dating back to 1693 and 1706, the Trust maintains its original charitable purpose: the benefit of Friends requiring support in their ministry.

The Trust's primary work remains the making of grants to individuals across Britain. Public records confirm that its focus is on religious activity, with grants typically supporting Friends' travel and participation in spiritually significant events.

Examples of grant made by the trust include awards enabling young Friends and attenders to take part in gatherings and conferences, supported travel for gap-year placements, and contributed to the FWCC bursary fund to help Friends attend the 2024 FWCC plenary. Additional support was provided to Scottish Area Meetings to aid travel to national Quaker events.

The Trust is overseen by six trustees who ensure that grants are awarded in accordance with Quaker principles and the Trust's long-established governance.

The Trust remains faithful to its founding purpose: enabling Friends to uphold their

ministry and to take part in the spiritual and communal life of the wider Quaker community.

The details we have in the registration information, including contact details, are still correct as is their description on our website. I've not had any contact or worked with this organization except to recommend Friends who are looking for funds explore whether their work fits within the criteria of this grant making trust.

**Contact Email:** [francis.camfield.trust@gmail.com](mailto:francis.camfield.trust@gmail.com)

## **B. Laying down of QRBs**

### **Action required**

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to agree to remove Quaker Bolivia Link and the Quaker Service Memorial trust from the list of Quaker recognised bodies, at the request of each group.

### **Quaker Service Memorial Trust**

Initial recognition 2019, External group: registered charity.

**Staff link** Libby Adams, Quaker Church Affairs.

The Quaker Service Memorial Trust has closed and been removed from the Charity Commission register.

The Trustees minuted in September 2023: Since 2011 we have had the privilege of meeting many individuals and organisations who have supported our work to build the Quaker Service Memorial at The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire and our Outreach Activities. We record our thanks to all of them, not least the former members of the Friends Ambulance Unit and Friends Relief Service whose pacifist ways inspired our work.

Over the past twelve years all Trustees have worked co-operatively and supported each other during the course of our work to build the memorial, develop our outreach work and fulfil our charitable objectives.

We pass our good wishes to Staffordshire Area Meeting as they take on the custodianship of the Quaker Service Memorial.

### **Quaker Bolivia Link**

Initial recognition 2019, External group: registered charity.

**Staff link** Michael S Booth, Quaker Church Affairs.

The trustees of the Quaker Bolivia Link having been unsuccessful in finding new trustees, decided to close the charity after 30 years. Having made that announcement, Quaker Bolivia Link reported that the generosity of Quaker Meetings,

individuals and Trusts has meant that the unfinished work planned for late 2025 and early 2026 will be completed.

Michael S Booth  
Church Government Advisor,  
February 2026

## **Court & Prison Register: Future arrangements**

### **Summary**

When Meeting for Sufferings is laid down then we will need new arrangements to continue to maintain a Court & Prison Register. This paper sets out what could happen. The paper is for information only as the Agenda Planning Committee of Yearly Meeting (APC) will be responsible for taking this work forward. If Friends have questions or comments they are encouraged to raise them via [rco@quaker.org.uk](mailto:rco@quaker.org.uk)

### **Background information**

Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) was established in 1676 to consider the sufferings experienced by Quakers for their faith. Quarterly Meetings sent reports of the prosecutions of Quakers in civil, criminal and church courts to the Recording Clerk, who recorded these in the Great Books of Sufferings. This series of volumes remains part of the Quakers in Britain archive. However, the practice of recording sufferings in these books lapsed in the mid nineteenth century as persecution of Quakers declined and this set of records is now closed.

In the 1980s, in response to increased campaigning against nuclear weapons, MfS established a new practice of recording Friends imprisoned for peace witness. Between 1984 and 1988, MfS kept a 'file to record the names and information about Friends facing Court action or imprisonment in connection with their peace witness'.

This practice again lapsed and in 1997 MfS reaffirmed the practice of keeping a register of Friends brought before the courts or imprisoned for matters of conscience. The practice was again reaffirmed in 2015. In 2019 MfS agreed guidance for meetings wanting to submit information for publication.

In recent years MfS has recorded information about Friends involved in a wide range of nonviolent direct action.

It is not entirely clear when the name of the modern Register was formalised. It is interesting to note that there is inconsistency within MfS papers over the years with both 'Court & Prison' and 'Prison & Court' being used. In *Quaker faith & practice* 7.02(k) the term 'prison and court register' is used.

### **Yearly Meeting will maintain a new Register from July 2026 onwards**

When MfS is laid down by Yearly Meeting in May 2026 then MfS's responsibility for making entries in the register under *Qf&p* 7.02(k) will pass to Yearly Meeting.

APC will decide how it wishes to receive information for recording in the register. It is likely to continue to use the guidance produced by MfS in 2019, but it will consider this in more detail later this year. APC expects to share the names of Friends for

inclusion on the register as part of a new report to Yearly Meeting on church affairs (which would include other matters such as the tabular statement). APC will also ensure that there are periodic opportunities for worship to uphold those who are suffering for their Quaker faith.

### **The current Court & Prison Register will be 'closed'**

The MfS books and records of sufferings kept before the 20th century are already closed in the sense that they are no longer added to. The current Court & Prison Register is open. It will be closed after any entries are added in March 2026.

As above, Yearly Meeting will establish its own arrangements for recording sufferings. While we could add these new entries in to the current register, that would not clearly show the change of practice. In addition, the current register is a folder into which new pieces of information are printed and then filed. These arrangements are increasingly impractical. Starting a new way of recording Friends' sufferings that is digital from the start will allow for a modern approach to records management.

### **Conclusion**

MfS does not need to make any decisions about the keeping of the Court & Prison Register. APC, with advice from archives staff, will ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place that align with our tradition of keeping records of our work. Questions or comments about this issue can be sent to [rco@quaker.org.uk](mailto:rco@quaker.org.uk)

Sarah Donaldson  
Secretary to Meeting for Sufferings  
13 February 2026

## **Changes to Quaker charity governance in Wales and the Marches**

### **Summary**

In July 2022 Meeting for Sufferings minuted that it was “content in principle to see significant amalgamations of area meetings and other bodies” (minute MfS/22/07/06). Since then Meeting for Sufferings has been kept informed about a number of processes happening around the yearly meeting. This paper sets out the current position for Wales and the Marches.

### **Background**

In March 2023 Meeting for Sufferings received minutes from the four area meetings in Wales and the Marches plus Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales (CCQW) setting out a proposal for the formation of a single Quaker charity.

Meeting for Sufferings minute MfS/23/03/10 reads in part: “We endorse this proposal, recognising that this will be a new form of organisation for our meetings and hope the new arrangements help to release more energy of Friends into building communities through worship and witness.”

The new charity was registered in April 2024. Its full name is The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Wales and The Marches – Cymdeithas Grefyddol y Cyfeillion (Crynwyr) yng Nghymru a'r Gororau CIO. It is known as Cymar, a word which means ‘mate’ in Welsh and includes the first few letters of both Cymru (Wales) and Marches.

The object of Cymar is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. Its trustees have recently agreed the following mission statement:

Responsible stewardship

For Friends - By Friends - With Friends

Underpinned by our shared values of integrity and inclusion and guided by the Spirit

New ways of working were established and assets were transferred from the area meetings and CCQW at the beginning of 2025.

All four area meetings and CCQW have now closed their independent charities and their charity governance is undertaken by Cymar. The merger has been registered with the Charity Commission and will appear in a future version of the published Register of Merged Charities. All five meetings continue as Quaker bodies.

## **Action for Meeting for Sufferings**

A proposed draft minute is included below and Meeting for Sufferings is asked to agree it.

## **Changes to Quaker charity governance in Wales and the Marches**

In 2023 Meeting for Sufferings endorsed a proposal for a single Quaker charity in Wales and the Marches, brought forward jointly by Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales (CCQW) and by the area meetings of Mid Wales/Canolbarth Cymru, North Wales/Gogledd Cymru, Southern Marches/y Gororau Deheuol and South Wales/De Cymru.

The new single charity was registered in April 2024 as The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Wales and The Marches – Cymdeithas Grefyddol y Cyfeillion (Crynwyr) yng Nghymru a'r Gororau CIO. It is known as Cymar. The object of Cymar is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. Its trustees have recently agreed the following mission statement:

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Assets were transferred from CCQW and the four area meetings to Cymar in 2025. The five constituent organisations have now laid themselves down as independent charities and the merger has been notified to the Charity Commission for inclusion in the Register of Merged Charities. The five meetings continue to operate as Quaker bodies.

Sarah Donaldson  
Secretary to Meeting for Sufferings  
February 2026

## **BYM Letter of Greeting to Yearly Meetings in Europe in 2026**

### **Letters of Greeting**

Every year BYM sends letters of greeting to the Yearly Meetings within Friends World Committee for Consultation Europe & Middle East Section (FWCC-EMES) that are holding sessions. The letters are drafted by Quaker World Relations Committee with support from staff. The letter to Ireland YM is usually shared with Meeting for Sufferings for approval; all the letters are signed by the clerk of Meeting for Sufferings. The suggested text of the letter is below. This year QWRC is gladdened to hear that Middle East YM will be meeting in session for the first time in many years and suggests that an additional sentence be added to their letter to reflect this.

### **Action for Meeting for Sufferings**

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to approve the text of the letter to Ireland and to note that the letter will also be sent to the other Yearly Meetings in FWCC EMES (with the addition of a particular sentence for Middle East YM).

### **Letter text**

Dear Friend

On behalf of all in Britain Yearly Meeting, we send you greetings as you gather in your Quaker communities for your yearly meeting.

Tragically, wars in our region in Europe and the Middle East still continue, both in Ukraine/Russia, and in Palestine/Israel. Political upheaval and violence are continuing to cause suffering throughout the Middle East and those forced to migrate for their own safety are not always being received with love and compassion in Europe. How can our Quaker Peace Testimony serve to end conflict and encourage peaceful and loving welcome throughout our region?

We continue to be inspired by last year's Swarthmore Lecture from Emily Provance in which she urged us to seek out new opportunities for our differing Quaker communities to grow and develop. See [2025 Swarthmore Lecture - A Testimony of Community by Emily Provance](#) How might the Spirit prosper more in your Yearly Meeting?

We pray that your yearly meeting gathering will be one of joy, and we look forward to learning from your experiences.

In Friendship.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Card". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Robert Card  
Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

## **Meeting for Sufferings annual report to Yearly Meeting for 2025**

### **Summary**

Every year Meeting for Sufferings reports to Yearly Meeting on its work in the preceding year. The following report was prepared by the clerks of Meeting for Sufferings and agreed by Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group. It has been submitted to Yearly Meeting for publication within Agenda & Notes. Our clerk will speak to this report. As this will be the final report from Meeting for Sufferings, he will also include relevant information from the March 2026 meeting.

### **Meeting for Sufferings Annual Report 2025**

This is the last written report of Meeting for Sufferings before it is laid down at Yearly Meeting in May 2026. It covers the work of Meeting for Sufferings during 2025. Meeting for Sufferings responsibilities are specified in Quaker faith & practice 7.02.

Meeting for Sufferings is a representative body. Each area meeting in Britain appoints a representative and an alternate. It is likely that your area meeting representative will be a Friend you already know, a living link with your local Quaker life. Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees attend and there are representatives from General Meetings, Central Committees and other Quaker bodies. So, with a crowd such as this, there is lots of buzz, lots of conversation and lots of work to be done. But above all, we are a worshipping community of committed Friends, trusting that we will be Spirit-led in our discernment. We meet four times a year. In 2025, one of these was a residential meeting, held over a weekend at High Leigh in Hertfordshire.

### **Living out our Quaker faith in the world**

We are very far from realising gospel order in our world and this is reflected in the Quaker business that is brought before Meeting for Sufferings.

Meeting for Sufferings was set up in 1675 and as the name implies it had responsibility for supporting early Friends and their families at a time when they were persecuted for their faith and challenging the legal system. Today there is still a price to pay for faithful witness.

At each Meeting for Sufferings, we receive minutes from area meetings detailing the actions of Friends who have appeared before the courts as a result of taking non-violent direct action in response to issues and practices that are of deep concern to them. These names and actions are recorded in the Prison and Court Register. In 2025, they included protests at the Defence and Security Equipment International arms fair in London, and Just Stop Oil and Drax - reclaim the power action, and an increasing number of arrests for supporting Palestine Action, a proscribed organisation. At Meeting for Sufferings in December, we were deeply saddened to

hear that, as a punishment for his witness to protect the planet, a Friend had been sentenced to 26 months, 40% of which was to be served in prison, plus a fine of £2480.

With the implementation in England and Wales of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and the Public Order Act 2023, Meeting for Sufferings received several area meeting minutes about the effect of the new police powers on Quaker witness and protest. This was discussed in March, and in July staff from Britain Yearly Meeting's Faith in Action Team helped us consider the challenges we and others might face when engaging in direct action, and the need for that action to be a clearly discerned, spiritually grounded decision. In a facilitated workshop session on social change, we reflected on the roles of rebel, reformer, citizen and change agent, and which role best fits us. Representatives were given details of this exercise so that they could offer it to their area meetings.

At Meeting for Sufferings in July, we also united with the concern expressed about the police raid on Westminster Quaker Meeting House in March and we agreed a minute of record of the incident, quoting the full minutes of Westminster Local Meeting, which gave the details. We were heartened to hear about the eighty messages of support that came from Friends around the world, other faiths, the community and individuals.

BYM Trustees have told Meeting for Sufferings that they will continue to publicise the adverse effects of current legislation on Quaker witness and peaceful protest.

### **Area Meeting concerns**

During 2025, Meeting for Sufferings received twenty four minutes on various topics from area meetings and other Quaker bodies, giving information or asking Meeting for Sufferings to take forward a concern. Each of these is considered and a response is given. Some go directly to Meeting for Sufferings in session, others need further work and discernment.

At our July meeting we received and considered a minute from Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Meeting on the Supreme Court judgement on the Scottish case regarding trans inclusion. We affirmed the importance of our Yearly Meeting commitment to welcome trans and non-binary people in our meetings, the need to work to make this welcome real, and our belief that it is essential that protections in the Equality Act are implemented fairly and equitably. Our differences are a blessing, and yet working through them can be challenging. In December, we received a draft discussion paper from the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations which will help Friends explore our commitment to the inclusion of all, from a faith perspective. We seek to be in a loving community accepting one another and we encourage meetings to find ways of holding spiritually grounded conversations for learning from our lived experiences on all aspects of this matter. The Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations' paper is available and we commend it to Friends, as a basis for conversations on affirming and respecting gender diversity.

Meeting for Sufferings might revisit matters raised in minutes, and in October we returned to a question posed in 2023, following an initial consideration of two minutes on the relationship of church and state: “Can our participation in civic ceremonies of this sort be a faithful witness to the alternate Gospel Order to which we are committed, or is it rather an expression of complicity with the domination system of worldly powers?” This arose from Quaker participation in the loyal address, an occasion for privileged bodies to reassert their loyalty to the crown as well as drawing the monarch's attention to particular issues. We heard prepared ministry on the history of the Quaker privilege to give the loyal address. Whilst recognising that this is an imperfect means of speaking truth to power, we are not ready to relinquish it yet, but we should use it boldly. We expect Friends will continue with their discernment on this matter.

Sometimes, Yearly Meeting asks Meeting for Sufferings to carry our specific tasks on its behalf.

## **Sustainability**

It is 14 years since Yearly Meeting in Canterbury committed Quakers in Britain to working towards a low-carbon economy. Meeting for Sufferings set up the Sustainability Monitoring Group to follow progress on this commitment. The Group is no longer functioning but Quaker work on sustainability and climate justice continues, albeit in a fragmented way. In March, Meeting for Sufferings heard about some of this work, recognising that this overview was incomplete. The task of monitoring this work was passed to Agenda Planning Committee in the first instance. They were given a list of questions and suggestions for consideration to help move the work forward into a new phase, including the observation that at least some of the groups working on sustainability matters need to be linked into our decision-making structures.

## **Blended meetings**

Yearly Meeting 2024 asked Meeting for Sufferings to explore the theology and community aspects of blended meetings, with some Friends physically present in the room and others present online. We spent time considering this at our October residential meeting, beginning with prepared ministry on large blended meetings for church affairs, specifically Yearly Meeting, and online Meetings for Worship. In small groups we explored this further reflecting on: how being in different places might affect our discernment of the Spirit amongst us; whether in blended meetings we are one worshipping community or two; and best practices for becoming a gathered blended meeting. After listening to each other at these sessions, many Friends changed their views on blended meetings. There was no conclusion, but we need to continue speaking about this and listening to one another. Meeting for Sufferings has passed this work to Agenda Planning Committee.

## **Quaker Recognised Bodies**

Meeting for Sufferings is tasked with approving the registration and re-registration of Quaker Recognised Bodies, and has completed a review of the process involved. We

received the report of the review in December, and agreed to implement its recommendations, which should improve the efficiency and transparency of the application and renewal processes, and clarify how applicants seek to express and realise Quaker values. Suggestions for how the process might work when Meeting for Sufferings is laid down were passed to Agenda Planning Committee.

### **Area Meeting Compliance**

Britain Yearly Meeting requests that area meetings submit an annual report on their compliance with charity requirements. Meeting for Sufferings is responsible for keeping track of this, with the assistance of Quaker Life Central Committee. In 2025, progress was reported in meeting the key governance criteria. The return also asks for information on sustainability. This year the EcoChurch criteria were used and have improved the quality of reporting.

### **Hearing about Quaker Work**

On a regular basis, Meeting for Sufferings representatives hear about our centrally managed and other Quaker work, and they are encouraged to share this information with Friends in their area meetings.

Meeting for Sufferings has a close working link with BYM Trustees. At each meeting, Trustees share a detailed report of their work and from time to time they take the opportunity to consult Meeting for Sufferings about current matters. Meeting for Sufferings representatives are engaged with the review of strategic priorities for centrally managed work, initiated by BYM Trustees.

In March we heard about the innovative work of the Quaker Housing Trust, including setting up the Quaker Asset Fund to help Quaker meetings considering the future use of their buildings investigate if they could be converted to provide social housing. We were reminded that a safe and secure home is essential for our health and well-being and that those who are denied access to housing are becoming increasingly marginalised in our communities. The Quaker Housing Trust provides practical Quaker help through grants and loans to meet real housing needs.

Quakers play an active part in the faith community in Britain. The Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations nourishes and enriches relationships with other churches and faith groups. It reports to Meeting for Sufferings annually on its work and in March we were reminded that creating and maintaining opportunities for ongoing dialogue with others is an element of Quaker peace building across faith differences.

Our Quaker community stretches beyond Britain Yearly Meeting and we are encouraged to engage more with our neighbours. In October the Quaker World Relations Committee shared details of the annual meeting of the Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation. This section includes Friends from Palestine, Israel and Ukraine, who are suffering daily from the ongoing violent conflicts. We pass on the request to hold these Friends in the light, in particular the conscientious objectors.

Currently Quaker Life Central Committee is consulting Friends on the revision of the Quakers in Britain and Woodbrooke strategy for supporting Quaker communities. In October Meeting for Sufferings representatives participated in a creative workshop on 'How our Quaker communities could look in 2030 and beyond', giving some thought to Quaker community priorities for the next five to ten years, and how centrally managed work could support the flourishing of these priorities.

### **Moving towards a simpler church**

Meeting for Sufferings agreed to the proposed changes to amalgamate Quaker bodies in Scotland into Quakers in Scotland, the new Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. On 20th September 2025, General Meeting for Scotland was laid down and its responsibilities as set out in Quaker faith & practice 5.03, were transferred to Quakers in Scotland; on 8th November 2025, East Scotland Area Meeting, North Scotland Area Meeting and West Scotland Area Meeting were laid down and their responsibilities were transferred to Quakers in Scotland. We have also been informed of plans to simplify Quaker governance in Yorkshire by creating a new single Quaker charity, Yorkshire Quakers.

Church Government Advisory Group was asked to draft suitable text for Quaker faith & practice to reflect these and other changes to our structures and governance, and in December, Meeting for Sufferings agreed a raft of minor changes to Quaker faith & practice.

Detailed work continues to facilitate laying down Meeting for Sufferings and handing over ongoing business to the Agenda Planning Committee.

Elizabeth Allen  
Assistant Clerk, Meeting for Sufferings

## **DRAFT**

# **Proposed changes to *Quaker faith & practice* by Church Government Advisory Group**

## **Action**

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to consider changes to Quaker faith & practice to reflect recent changes to our Church Government and prepare for changes due to take effect in May 2026. These are additional changes to those that you considered and agreed in December 2025.

In particular, Meeting for Sufferings is asked if the proposed changes to chapters 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 14 and 15 can be agreed by Meeting for Sufferings as minor amendments to Quaker faith & practice, as agreed by Yearly Meeting in 2019 (Minute 21). Meeting for Sufferings may decide that some of these changes need to go to Yearly Meeting for consideration and approval.

## **Introduction**

Yearly Meeting, held in London from 26 - 30 July 2024, decided to lay down Meeting for Sufferings and to hold several sessions of Yearly Meeting during each year, commencing from May 2026. In minute 37, Yearly Meeting asked various groups to take preparatory steps to enable this change.

## **General approach**

This time the suggestions we are offering to Meeting for Sufferings fall into three broad categories:

- 1 to continue to remove reference to Meeting for Sufferings
- 2 to change references to General Meeting for Scotland to Quakers in Scotland, noting that it now has a dual role that includes carrying out the responsibilities of an area meeting in much of Scotland
- 3 removing the term standing committee.

The proposed text of sections 5.08, 8.05 and 8.23 had previously been agreed by Meeting for Sufferings in December, but Church Government Advisory Group discerned that further changes are appropriate.

In section 4.25, we now have text to describe changes to the appeals process.

In chapter 5 we have revised the description of Quakers in Scotland and there are also minor changes in the sections about Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales, Young Friends General Meeting and the London Quakers Property Trust.

In sections 5.04 and 5.05 it is proposed to change the list to roman numerals, as the first five letters in the English and Welsh alphabets differ. This means that there will be a clearer correspondence between the lists in those two sections.

In chapter 8 text is offered to describe the appointment of the four permanent committees: Quaker Life, Quaker Peace & Social Witness, Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations and Quaker World Relations Committee, as well as minor changes in other parts of the chapter.

In chapter 9, we are proposing a descriptive update to the ecumenical structure in Scotland.

The proposed changes in chapters 3, 13, 14 and 15 all fall into one of the broad categories of change listed above.

The proposed text of sections 5.08, 8.05 and 8.23 had previously been agreed by Meeting for Sufferings in December, but Church Government Advisory Group discerned that further changes are appropriate.

Available on request from [sufferings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sufferings@quaker.org.uk) or [qfp@quaker.org.uk](mailto:qfp@quaker.org.uk) are two additional documents containing more detail.

## **Still to come**

We are expecting to offer changes later this year to reflect the laying down of Quaker Life Rep Council, changes in the Quaker structures in London and any changes to the Marriage Declaration that may be agreed by the Yearly Meeting. We will also review the changes that we have already offered in case additional changes may be desirable.

## **Your comments and suggestions**

We are happy to receive comments and suggestions for further corrections and improvement to our proposed text, and will highlight at Meeting for Sufferings any that we suggest should be included in these revisions to Quaker faith & practice. Please send any ideas to our Secretary, Michael Booth [qfp@quaker.org.uk](mailto:qfp@quaker.org.uk)

We look forward to hearing the views of Meeting for Sufferings on the wording we have proposed and will undertake any further necessary work on this prior to Yearly Meeting 2026.

Michael S Booth  
Secretary, Church Government Advisory Group

Qf&p section	Proposed text
3.09 End note	For regulations on attendance of non-members at meetings for church affairs see <a href="#">4.08</a> for area meetings, <a href="#">4.32</a> for local meetings, <a href="#">5.03</a> for Quakers in Scotland, <a href="#">5.04</a> for Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales & <a href="#">6.15</a> for Britain Yearly Meeting. <i>See also <a href="#">11.28</a> for sojourning membership</i>
4.25 heading	<b>Right of appeal against decisions</b>
4.25	<p>If a member is dissatisfied with a final decision of an area meeting affecting them personally and adversely, and provided that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the decision concerns the termination of membership; and</li> <li>2. the grounds of the appeal are that the decision was not made in right ordering, or was not made with knowledge of the relevant facts, or was unreasonable; and</li> <li>3. experienced mediators have been involved and the matter is not resolved;</li> </ol> <p>the member may appeal to the Recording Clerk against the decision of the area meeting. On receiving such an appeal, the Recording Clerk shall report this to the area meeting and shall request Central Nominations Committee to nominate an appeal group of five Friends, who should be independent of the area meeting concerned. The Yearly Meeting clerks shall appoint the appeal group generally on a between meetings basis.</p> <p>Once appointed the group shall make all such enquiries as seem to them desirable, from the member concerned and from others having relevant knowledge, to consider and determine whether or not the appeal should be allowed and whether any further recommendations should be made. In conducting such enquiries the healing power of worship will be helpful. The decision of the Friends so appointed shall be final and be communicated directly to the parties concerned. The appeal group shall inform the Recording Clerk that it has reached a decision and communicated it to the parties concerned</p> <p>Guidelines for the conduct of an appeal group are obtainable from <a href="#">the Recording Clerk (offsite link)</a>.</p>
5.02	Among general meetings that are continuing and are managing independent activities and financial accounts are Quakers in Scotland, the successor body to General Meeting for Scotland (see 5.03) and Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales (see 5.04 & 5.05). They represent Quakers in their respective nations and are part of Britain Yearly Meeting’s structure with certain delegated powers from Yearly Meeting. Other distinct types of general meeting are any Quaker

Qf&p section	Proposed text
	school general meeting that functions solely as that school's responsible body, and Young Friends General Meeting (see 5.08).
<b>Heading 1</b>	<b>Quakers in Scotland</b>
<b>5.03</b>	<p>Quakers in Scotland has national responsibilities on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting, to represent and advance the life and witness of Quakers in Scotland. It meets at least quarterly. Former members of General Meeting for Scotland became members of Quakers in Scotland on confirming their individual wish to do so. Membership of the Society continues to be overseen by the area meetings within Scotland until they are laid down, in which case membership will be held by Quakers in Scotland subject to individual consent having been given. Provision is made for members of other meetings and attenders to be present at meetings as in 4.08. The responsibilities of Quakers in Scotland include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. promoting spiritual life and witness, facilitating contact between Friends of all ages, and providing opportunities for training and mutual support for those with special responsibilities, in conjunction with the associated area meetings and Quaker bodies;</li> <li>b. representing Britain Yearly Meeting in Scotland, including: acting on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting in relation to the Scottish Christian Forum) (see 9.09–9.12) and other church and faith groups; acting on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting and of Friends in Scotland in dealings with the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Government and the Scotland Office, and on such procedures as may be required by the Scottish legal system;</li> <li>c. encouraging communication from Scottish area, local and other Quaker meetings on matters which in their judgement merit interchange of views (see 4.18), including testimonies to the life and service of deceased Friends, discerning whether the latter be forwarded to Yearly Meeting for the benefit of the Society as a whole (see 4.27–4.30);</li> <li>d. representing Scotland to Britain Yearly Meeting, liaising with yearly meeting committees and departments where appropriate.</li> </ol> <p>Quakers in Scotland will provide information and nominations or appointed representatives to Quaker and other bodies when required. The meeting may communicate by minute with Yearly Meeting through its Agenda Planning Committee (6.18)<sup>1</sup> as well as with</p>

<sup>1</sup> This cross reference will be correct if the Yearly Meeting accepts the proposed text of Chapter 6.

Qf&p section	Proposed text
	<p>remaining area meetings in Scotland. It also has the obligation to receive minutes from these bodies.</p> <p>Where area meetings in Scotland have been laid down, Quakers in Scotland will exercise all the functions of an area meeting in relation to local meetings within those areas (see chapter 4). Some functions may be delegated by Quakers in Scotland to a grouping of local meetings.</p>
5.04	<p>Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales has national responsibilities on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting, to represent and advance the life and witness of Quakers within Wales. The meeting consists of all Friends who live in Wales or who are members in local meetings within Wales. Provision is made for members of other meetings and attenders to be present at meetings as in 4.08. The responsibilities of Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales include:<sup>2</sup></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="427 909 1374 1099">i. promoting spiritual life and witness, facilitating contact between Friends of all ages, and providing opportunities for training and mutual support for those with special responsibilities, in conjunction with associated area meetings and Quaker bodies;</li> <li data-bbox="427 1106 1374 1323">ii. encouraging communication from associated area meetings on matters which in their judgement merit interchange of views (see 4.18), including testimonies to the life and service of deceased Friends, discerning whether the latter be forwarded to Yearly Meeting for the benefit of the Society as a whole (see 4.27–4.30);</li> <li data-bbox="427 1330 1374 1547">iii. representing Britain Yearly Meeting in Wales, including: the appointment of Friends to serve on Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales) and its committees (see 9.09–9.12), communication with the Senedd Cymru (Welsh Parliament) and with other public and voluntary organisations in Wales, especially those concerned with social witness, peace and interfaith relations;</li> <li data-bbox="427 1554 1374 1704">iv. responding to issues which relate to living in a bilingual society, including outreach in Wales and commissioning, translating and publishing Quaker material in the Welsh language;</li> <li data-bbox="427 1711 1374 1816">v. representing Wales to Britain Yearly Meeting, liaising with yearly meeting committees and departments where appropriate.</li> </ol>

<sup>2</sup> It is proposed to change the list to roman numerals, as the first five letters in the English and Welsh alphabets differ. This means that there will be a clearer correspondence between the lists in 5.04 and 5.05

<b>Qf&amp;p section</b>	<b>Proposed text</b>
	<p>Crynwyr Cymru – Quakers in Wales will provide information and nominations or appointed representatives to Quaker and other bodies when required. The meeting may communicate by minute with Yearly Meeting through its Agenda Planning Committee (6.18) as well as with area meetings which include parts of Wales. It also has the obligation to receive minutes from these bodies.</p> <p>Crynwyr Cymru - Quakers in Wales and the four area meetings are constituent parts of the charity Cymar (The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Wales and the Marches - Cymdeithas Grefyddol y Cyfeillion (Crynwyr) yng Nghymru a'r Gororau) which manages property and financial matters.</p>
<b>5.05</b>	<p><i>Note: Crynwyr Cymru is being asked to provide a new Welsh translation of the revised text of 5.04</i></p>
<b>5.07</b>	<p>Quaker gatherings or regional meetings may be set up by two or more area meetings, by a mix of area and local meetings, or by two or more general or regional meetings. The constituent meetings are those that choose to take the responsibility for organising and funding such gatherings or conferences. The members are the members of the sponsoring meetings. They may choose to change their status or area, or local meetings may wish to come together in different combinations to support the work and witness of Quakers in the area. If such changes are contemplated, or if a newly formed gathering is intended to have an ongoing structure and regular meetings, the Recording Clerk should be informed and appropriate guidance obtained from Quaker Life Central Committee.</p> <p>All gatherings (including those that continue from pre-existing general meetings) must inform Yearly Meeting of any substantial changes they may make including their setting up and laying down, and, if the latter, of how they intend to discharge or transfer their responsibilities and deposit their records. They should forward to the Recording Clerk the minute by which they are finally laid down.</p> <p>Quaker groupings which are independent charities may need to register with the Charity Commission and should obtain advice from the Recording Clerk.</p>
<b>5.08</b>	<p>Young Friends General Meeting is open to Quakers between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five who need not be formally in membership of the Religious Society of Friends. Area meetings may appoint representatives to Young Friends General Meeting. The general meeting usually meets for three weekends a year to worship and live in community with each other. It may communicate formally by</p>

<b>Qf&amp;p section</b>	<b>Proposed text</b>
	<p>minute with area meetings, Yearly Meeting through its Agenda Planning Committee, and the committees of Yearly Meeting.</p> <p>Young Friends General Meeting appoints representatives to Yearly Meeting (see 6.16).<sup>3</sup></p>
<b>5.09</b>	<p>London Quakers Property Trust is the successor body to Six Weeks Meeting, which dated back to 1671. Its main objective is to maintain, repair, preserve and insure the places of worship of its member area meetings, and their contents. London Quakers Property Trust, a registered charity, is a company whose founding members are seven London area meetings: Kingston &amp; Wandsworth, London West, North East Thames, North London, North West London, South East London, and South London. The company board is made up of representatives appointed by each of the member area meetings and is accountable to these area meetings for the use, maintenance and stewardship of the assets and pooled funds that the company owns on their behalf. Quaker meeting houses within these area meetings are assets of London Quakers Property Trust. London Quakers Property Trust may communicate formally by minute Yearly Meeting through its Agenda Planning Committee.</p>
<b>8.05 Heading</b>	<b>Committee Accountability</b>
	<p>Yearly Meeting in session appoints four permanent committees: the two central committees, Quaker Life Central Committee (8.08) and Quaker Peace &amp; Social Witness Central Committee (8.11), and also Quaker Committee for Christian &amp; Interfaith Relations (8.12; 9.13) and Quaker World Relations Committee.</p> <p>These committees are accountable to Yearly Meeting in session, either directly or through BYM Trustees.</p> <p>Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees appoint committees which are accountable to Trustees.</p> <p>The diagram shows a simplified version of the governance and committee structure of Britain Yearly Meeting at the beginning of 2026, indicating the relationships between the various bodies / groups.</p>

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<sup>3</sup> This cross reference will be correct if the Yearly Meeting accepts the proposed text of Chapter 6.

Qf&p section	Proposed text
8.05	<pre> graph TD     IF([Individual Friends]) --- LM[Local Meetings]     IF --- AM([Area Meetings Crynwyr Cymru - Quakers in Wales Quakers in Scotland Young Friends General Meeting])     IF --- YMS([Yearly Meeting in session])     YMS --- APC[Agenda Planning Committee]     YMS --- BYMT[Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees]     YMS --- C1[Committees appointed by and responsible to Yearly Meeting Central Nominations Committee Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations Quaker World Relations Committee]     YMS --- C2[Committees appointed by Yearly Meeting and responsible to Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees Quaker Life Central Committee Quaker Peace &amp; Social Witness Central Committee]     BYMT --- MM[Management Meeting]     MM --- S[Staff]   </pre>
8.05	<p>Friends accepting service on committees might usefully share with their area meeting the interests and concerns which are claiming their committee's attention. Clerks might encourage the sensitive sharing of experience, rather than mere reporting.</p>
8.06 Heading	<p><b>Committee Appointment</b></p>
8.06	<p>The two central committees</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Quaker Life Central Committee (8.08)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Quaker Peace &amp; Social Witness Central Committee (8.11)</p> <p>are appointed by Yearly Meeting in session and are accountable to Yearly Meeting through Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, with terms of reference agreed by Trustees.</p> <p>Two further committees</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Quaker Committee for Christian &amp; Interfaith Relations (8.12; 9.13)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Quaker World Relations Committee (8.13; 9.06).</p> <p>are appointed by and accountable to Britain Yearly Meeting in session.</p> <p>These four committees are responsible for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. formulating and presenting policy for their areas of work in accordance with the priorities identified for the centrally managed work. Quaker Life Central Committee and Quaker Peace &amp; Social Witness Central Committee both carry</li> </ol>

<b>Qf&amp;p section</b>	<b>Proposed text</b>
	<p>responsibility for substantial programmes of work largely managed by staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. appointing subsidiary committees and working groups and determining their respective terms of reference and membership within the overall guidance on nominations (see c. below &amp; 3.23–3.25 &amp; 7.07);</li> <li>c. establishing an effective nominations committee, working closely with the Central Nominations Committee (6.21) as appropriate;</li> <li>d. reporting as appropriate to the body to which they are accountable</li> <li>e. considering any matters that Yearly Meeting <del>for Sufferings</del> or Trustees refer to it for urgent attention and action. (See also 8.23).</li> </ul> <p>Terms of reference for all committees may be obtained on application to the Recording Clerk.</p>
<b>8.23 Heading</b>	<b>The work of committees and staff</b>
<b>8.23</b>	<p>It is the role of the standing committees, particularly the central committees, to use their leadings and discernment to advise Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees on policies and priorities for their work. In so doing they should draw on the experience, knowledge and concerns of area meetings and, where appropriate, representative councils so that local Friends are involved in the process.</p>
<b>8.23 Para 2</b>	<p>Committees need to be aware of the different roles they may play in responding to items on their agendas. Central committees determine policies and priorities for their areas of responsibility within the limits set by Yearly Meeting and Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees. Their role is to determine the work to be done and ensure that it is manageable without attempting to do it themselves.</p> <p>Those who carry out the work may be functional committees, working groups, volunteers or staff, or combinations of these. Central committees primarily delegate work to staff, whose responsibility is to undertake the work under the co-ordination of Management Meeting. Other committees and working groups may do more of their own work without much direct staff involvement. Committees that do undertake work themselves need to ensure it is done in partnership with staff, who have the responsibility to co-ordinate its management.</p>

Qf&p section	Proposed text
8.23 Para 3	<p>The close working partnership between staff and committee members brings a wide range of talents and experience to bear on our work. Committee members need to remain free of routine administrative tasks if they are to have the time to exercise their important decision-making functions. However, committee members also need to be aware of how their decisions might affect, unsettle or fulfil staff members involved. In turn, members of staff have to be aware of the delicate tension of being in a position of knowledge and ensuring that their committees benefit from their experience and preparation whilst leaving committees in a position to make consequent decisions freely.</p>
9.09	<p>Britain Yearly Meeting is a member of Churches Together in Britain &amp; Ireland (CTBI) and of three national bodies, namely the Scottish Christian Forum (which in 2024 replaced ACTS: Action of Churches Together in Scotland as the Scottish ecumenical instrument), CTE: Churches Together in England and Cytûn: <i>Eglywsi ynghyd yng Nghymru</i>, Churches Together in Wales. These ‘new ecumenical instruments’, launched in 1990, have a broader membership than those of 1942–1990. Following Friends’ participation in the five-year preparatory process known as ‘Not strangers but pilgrims’, the Yearly Meeting in 1989 after a difficult exercise decided despite hesitations to apply for full membership of the then Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland (now Churches Together in Britain &amp; Ireland) and the national bodies. Yearly Meeting in 1997 confirmed this decision. Each of the four bodies accepted London (now Britain) Yearly Meeting into membership under a clause (Clause 2b) which appears in each constitution as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">A church, which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition and therefore cannot formally subscribe to the statement of faith in the Basis, may nevertheless apply for and be elected to full membership provided that it satisfies those member churches which subscribe to the Basis that it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to the aims and purposes* of the new ecumenical body, and that it will work in the spirit of the Basis.</p> <p>The Basis reads:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland is a fellowship of churches in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</p>

<b>Qf&amp;p section</b>	<b>Proposed text</b>
	<p>The Scottish Christian Forum, unlike its predecessor, does not require member churches to subscribe to a statement of faith. It is a looser association of churches that is not a legal entity. Its constitution states:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The foundation of the Forum is mutual respect, acceptance and attentive listening, allied to the recognition of diversity among the participants, The Forum will seek to discern the work of the Holy Spirit and to respond in an ecumenism of action. Implicit in this is the recognition that participation will not require any church or organisation to abandon particular theological perspectives or traditional religious identities. Participation is to be understood theologically, whereby it is acknowledged that all participants are members of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31).</p> <p>* The Objects, aims and purposes of CCBI provide the context within which the Basis and commitment are to be understood. The relevant constitutional texts are available on request from the Recording Clerk and at <a href="http://www.quaker.org.uk/qfp">www.quaker.org.uk/qfp</a></p>
<b>13.54</b>	<p>In Scotland the administration is carried out by the appropriate authorities for Scotland. Following notification from an area meeting of the name of a Friend appointed as a Quaker prison chaplain, Quakers in Scotland is responsible for providing this name to the governors of all prison establishments in the area meeting area. These Friends then volunteer to serve on a prison chaplaincy team by directly contacting the prison chaplain. To exercise their pastoral responsibility, Quaker prison chaplains in Scotland have to operate in liaison with the official prison chaplaincy team members.</p>
<b>14.36</b>	<p>Quaker Stewardship Committee was created in 2002 to support our meetings in their stewardship of property and to co-ordinate the relationship between the yearly meeting and those administering charity law. It was laid down by Britain Yearly Meeting in 2022 and its responsibilities allocated to other Quaker bodies.</p> <p>Yearly Meeting has responsibility for the oversight of Area Meetings' compliance with their legal responsibilities.</p> <p>Quaker Life Central Committee has responsibility for the advice and guidance function of Quaker Stewardship Committee, including the support of Area Meeting trustees.</p> <p>Britain Yearly Meeting trustees have responsibility for liaising with the Charity Commission on matters of general concern to Quakers, and, working with Quakers in Scotland, for liaison with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)</p>

<b>Qf&amp;p section</b>	<b>Proposed text</b>
<b>15.14</b>	<p>The Recording Clerk oversees the process of registration with the Charity Commission of area meetings and some general meetings and Quaker gatherings in England and Wales. Applications are submitted via the Recording Clerk’s Office, which can provide advice and will confirm the meeting’s status to the Charity Commission. Registration may prove a suitable opportunity for an area meeting to review its oversight of historic charitable trusts with which it is associated.</p> <p>The four area meetings in Scotland, together with General Meeting for Scotland, previously registered with HM Revenue &amp; Customs, have been absorbed into the new register of Scottish charities maintained by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and the successor body Quakers in Scotland has been similarly registered. Any future registration should be undertaken in consultation with the Recording Clerk’s Office.</p>

**Chapter name    Roboslab 16**

**Heading 1        Roboslab 14**

**Heading 2        Arial 12**

**Heading 3        Arial 12**

## **Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR) Annual Report to Meeting for Sufferings 2025**

QCCIR is responsible for keeping Britain Yearly Meeting informed of relevant issues and movements which emerge from the faith life in our three nations and of opportunities for dialogue and co-operation between churches and faiths.

Towards the end of 2024, two new members joined QCCIR and during 2025 there was another turnover of five. So, within the period of around 18 months, we have welcomed the service of Derek McLean, Roy Stephenson, Liz Eddington, Wendy Pattinson, Thecla Geraghty, Lynne Kirtley and Hillary Stringer. These dear Friends are obviously still settling into the BYM responsibilities of engaging with other churches and faiths, and this busy year of transition may well have felt like the “deep end”.

2024 ended with the Salvation Army Christmas Concert at the Albert Hall, to which Judith Baker, our national Ecumenical and Interfaith Officer and I, as Clerk of QCCIR, were invited. This rather grand occasion was televised over Christmas and we both felt it had been a great mark of respect for Quakers in Britain, not known for their recognition of the holy season, to have been invited.

In January, Judith Baker and Paul Parker met with Wajid Khan, then Minister for Faiths, to discuss the vacuum in the national dialogue left by the removal of the Interfaith Network. At the time of writing this report, some alternative thinking has emerged, but such exchanges need to be kept open and relationships maintained. Interfaith development work is necessarily long and slow.

Churches Together in England held their triennial Forum in March. Two of our new QCCIR members were able to participate, as well as other Friends around the country who are involved in ecumenical work. For Quakers in Britain, I was asked to speak to conference about our own version of ‘synodality’ in church governance. Whilst ‘synodality’ is not a word Quakers would choose to describe our meetings for church affairs, our faithfulness to our search for unity in decision-making was heard and our witness recognised.

At our Yearly Meeting in May, QCCIR hosted one online special interest meeting on the Christian commitment to peace work and witness as well as a second on the interfaith implications of the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea. Our two lead speakers, John Cooper of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Peter Colwell of Churches Together in Britain & Ireland, were two of our six invited guests at our Yearly Meeting in session.

Our working groups are still working out their own ways of working, now up to operating capacity and it has been so good to have welcomed so many local Friends into our work. Our Inter-church Working Group organised a series of webinars, held in

October, also to mark the anniversary of Nicaea. The Interfaith Working Group has been working on a revision the booklet, Quakers and Other Faiths.

A sub-group that met jointly with Woodbrooke throughout the year has developed a forthcoming conference at the Hayes at Swanick (13-15 March 2026) on the topic of Hope for the future in dark and difficult times – working with other churches and faiths. Attendance in person is limited but it will be a ‘blended’ event.

In June we held our meeting with Friends in Yorkshire at Hinsley Hall in Leeds. Alongside some “business as usual”, we invited Christians involved in interfaith dialogue as well as a Muslim and a Jewish speaker who could describe their own local experience of faith relations in these days of conflict and hurt beyond our shores. We were grateful for their honesty, courage and goodwill.

As we approached the end of the calendar year, we looked towards how we might work best with the Continuing Yearly Meeting from 2026. We have considered our representation across the year and what hospitality we can offer to our guests. This is against a background of our ongoing review of our own ways of working with a smaller committee. We are pleased to be working with a wider involvement of co-opted Friends in our working groups and as representatives on external ecumenical bodies. Having met with our representatives for the first time in 2024, we met in Friends House again in November 2025. It is good to make the time to consult with this wider group of Friends involved in our work over how we work best together and with our Yearly Meeting.

Our last substantive piece of written work in the year 2025 was the drafting and reworking of some guidance for Friends in Britain on approaches to our gender diversity. The document was considered thoughtfully by Meeting for Sufferings in December, and we hope it will provide a basis for further prayerful and loving discussions amongst Friends when it is distributed more widely.

At the very end of 2025, we became aware that two of our Committee members needed to lay down their service before completion of their term and two others needed to step back from the work for a limited period into 2026. Health reasons were significant in all these personal decisions of the Friends involved and we are left with deep concerns about: the very high turnover of the QCCIR membership in 2024/25 that effectively removed a depth of experience and left new members overwhelmed by the breadth of unfamiliar work; the difficulty for Central Nominations in finding Friends who have the time and energy to take on this complex field of national work that is long-term in nature. The work of QCCIR does not demand deep specialist knowledge but relies upon deep prayerful discernment on matters that are sensitive and multi-relational.

Elaine Green,  
Clerk

## **QCCIR membership in 2025**

Elaine Green (Clerk)

Nigel Dower (General Meeting for Scotland representative)

Will Haire (Ireland YM representative)

Derek McLean

Joyce Robertson (Crynwyr Cymru Quakers in Wales representative)

Roy Stephenson

Claire Bowman (to end April)

Penelope Cummins (to end April)

Judy Mason (to end April)

Janet Scott (to end April)

Evelyn Shire (to end April)

Liz Eddington (from January)

Wendy Pattinson (from January)

Thecla Geraghty (from May)

Lynne Kirtley (from May)

Hillary Stringer (from May)

## **QCCIR Co-options to date**

### **Inter church working group:**

Rowena Loverance (co-opted to 31 Oct '26)

Ian Marshall (co-opted to 31 Oct '26)

Carole Rakodi (co-opted to 31 Jan '28)

Janet Scott (co-opted to 30 April '28).

### **Interfaith working group:**

Jan Lethbridge (co-opted to 31 Dec '25)

Claire Bowman (co-opted to 30 April '28)

Evelyn Shire (co-opted to 30 April '28)

Roderick Keefe (co-opted to 31 December '28)

### **Theology and spirituality commissioning working group:**

Madeleine Pennington (co-opted to 31 Dec '26)

Mark Russ (co-opted to 31 Dec '26)

## **Minute from Quaker Life Central Committee: Quaker Life Representative Council**

### **Summary**

At their November meeting Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC) received a report from the co-conveners of the Planning Group for Quaker Life Representative Council (QLRC). That report recommended that QLRC should now be laid down. QLCC supported this recommendation and has sent its minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

Meeting for Sufferings is asked to record the decision of QLCC and to ask Church Government Advisory Group to recommend appropriate changes to Quaker faith & practice.

### **Minute QLCC 25.68 Quaker Life Representative Council**

We have been joined by Jen Neal and Katie Evans, Quaker Life Representative Council (QLRC) Planning Group Co-Convenors, to speak to their paper on the Representative Council (QLCC 2025 11 01).

#### **2. Future of Rep Council**

The Council has explored new ways of working this year, following a fallow period 2024. As a Planning Group, they feel there is no clear purpose for QLRC at present that is not already better fulfilled by other channels. They see this as an indication of the success of new ways of working and communicating that have developed in recent years, and an opportunity to simplify structures. We note the range of options for the future of QLRC and their recommendation that it be laid down.

We are reminded that some of the functions of Rep Council can be available in the future independently of a continuing Council and we ask Quaker Life staff and Woodbrooke staff to be aware and report any opportunities or gaps they see. We also note the responsibility in Quaker Faith & Practice 8.09 that "Quaker Life Central Committee is responsible for maintaining and encouraging communication and networking, so that Friends can share both spiritual and practical experience of living their Quaker lives".

We wish to support the discernment already done by the Planning Group. We support the laying down of Quaker Life Representative Council and see its legacy flourishing in the future.

We thank Katie, Jen and Helen for their work.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings for information.

## **Minute from Quaker Life Central Committee: Membership**

### **Summary**

At their November meeting Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC) received a paper on non-geographic membership. A key proposal from the paper was the creation of a new, non-geographic body (known as an Anchor Meeting) that would function like an Area Meeting for non-geographic and online communities. The Anchor Meeting would process and confer membership for these communities.

Meeting for Sufferings has been part of the discernment that has led to the development of this work. The proposals in the paper represent a significant change in our structure and a decision on them could only be made by Yearly Meeting. QLCC has sent its minute to both Meeting for Sufferings and Agenda Planning Committee.

Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group recommends that Meeting for Sufferings should formally receive this minute but that discernment on the proposals should be left to Yearly Meeting.

### **Minute QLCC 25.69 Membership**

We have received a paper on non-geographic membership (QLCC 2025 11 02) and Zelig Gross has spoken to this. We have been joined for this item by Ingrid Greenhow and Siobhán Haire, clerk and secretary respectively of Agenda Planning Committee.

Many Quakers in Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) today belong to non-geographic or online communities, not to local meetings. This leaves some people with no practical way to become members of BYM. This report proposes, among other things, to create a new, non-geographic body in this paper referred to as an Anchor Meeting that would function like an Area Meeting for these groups and could process and confer membership. Individual online or affinity-based Quaker groups could be referred to as Home Meetings, supporting people locally (spiritually, not geographically) through the membership process.

The report seeks to suggest changes that aim to:

- Provide a legitimate path into membership for Friends whose primary community is online or non-geographic.
- Let different forms of Quaker community (geographic and non-geographic) coexist equally.
- Adapt Quaker structures to how people actually meet and worship today, especially online.

We have asked our clarifying questions and considered the questions from the group on page 12 of the report. We feel the report is comprehensive, engaging, exciting and ready to be considered by Friends more widely.

We are aware that some of this work has been difficult for the group without a comprehensive handover of previous work done on Non-Geographic Membership by this Committee. This has led us to consider how we ensure longevity and 'institutional knowledge' for this committee. We thank the group for their work.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings and Agenda Planning Committee for their discernment as to which body takes it forward due to the laying down of Meeting for Sufferings in 2026. We ask the New Ways of Belonging Working Group to be prepared to take this work forward with the relevant body when the time comes.

## **Minute from Sussex West Area Meeting**

### **Summary**

In November 2025 an article about protesting against the proscription of Palestine Action appeared in the Brighton Local Meeting newsletter. Concerns were raised as to whether the headline and/or the text of the article could be said to be supportive of a proscribed organisation, and therefore whether publishing it could be said to be a criminal act. It remains very difficult to know where the boundaries lie when it comes to speaking out against the proscription of an organisation under the Terrorism Act.

The trustees of the Area Meeting sought advice from Quakers in Britain staff. The trustees' discernment was that the risk of prosecution justified withdrawing the newsletter from circulation. The incident caused considerable concern and distress.

Brighton Local Meeting sent a minute to Sussex West Area Meeting (SWAM), which has in turn sent its minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

Over the past 12 months Meeting for Sufferings has considered various issues relating to the right to protest and Quakers in Britain staff continue to campaign on this issue. Meeting for Sufferings may wish to place on record the concerns of Friends about the impact of proscription on their freedoms.

### **Minute**

From Sussex West Area Meeting held at Bognor Regis Meeting House and on Zoom on 17 January 2026

### **26.03(c) Minute from Brighton Local Meeting**

Brighton Local Quaker Meeting: Minute 134(a)/25

We receive the following minute 134(a)/25 from Brighton Local Quaker Meeting.

*We are grateful to the editor of our newsletter and the writer of the article. We thank them for covering matters of import to our Quaker community.*

*We thank our Area Meeting Trustees for their discernment and action on this. We note that they were placed in an unenviable position and appreciate they had to make a tough decision.*

*We want to be clear that the proscription of Palestine Action has affected the spiritual and community life of our Quaker meeting. We are distressed that our church newsletter needed to be withdrawn and destroyed. This has obviously caused alarm in our meeting, and a great deal of concern. As Quakers, faith and action are inseparable. Quakers have a rich history of protest, nonviolent direct action and speaking truth to power. They are intrinsically linked to our*

*experience of worship. The threat of being criminalised as terrorists for expressing ourselves on these matters impairs our ability to function as a church.*

*We are grateful to staff at Friends House for their advice on this matter. We also appreciate that they saw the danger of the ban of Palestine Action to the life of our church. We hope that they continue this vital advocacy and support to meetings.*

We receive the above minute from Brighton Local Meeting. Sam Walton, an Elder at Brighton, gives us a detailed account of the way that this minute has been agreed. He has emphasised the considerable hurt and dismay expressed by Friends and attenders in Brighton Meeting about the need to restrict their ability to express their faith and nonviolent protest in the face of increased legal penalty. We note that two attenders from the Local Meeting have left as a result.

We hear the anger, sense of intimidation and frustration of many Friends about the effect that legislation by the previous and current government is having on our ability to put our faith into action, especially in relation to the right to protest.

We agree to forward Brighton Local Meeting's minute to Meeting for Sufferings with this minute.

## **Report from BYM Trustees**

Trustees met on 7th February online. This report accompanies the minutes of the meeting, which we hope you will have had a chance to read.

We welcomed a new trustee, Teresa Murray, and this was Ruth McTighe's first full meeting.

Our routine business (**BYMT/26/02/02** and **03**) included the receipt of several sets of minutes from other committees, and regular annual reports, such as the Whistleblowing report (one matter dealt with, successfully, during the year), the Employment Committee, and on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion from the Equity Cluster. We also received a report from our own Internal Audit and Risk committee, with details of their plans for work to be carried out in 2026/28.

We considered several items of finance business (**BYMT/26/02/04**), which the Treasurer will report on below.

We reviewed the progress during the year on the operational plan for 2025-2027 (**BYMT/26/02/05**) and were pleased to see that 87% of tasks are on target. We congratulate the staff and managers who have worked hard to overcome the usual impediments – sick leave, staff turnover, unexpected events - to deliver such good performance.

We believe that we have now completed the work on updating our strategic priorities (**BYMT/26/02/10**). We are bringing you a final draft, which we hope you will be led to endorse.

We also approved a **Library & Archives Collections Development Policy** (**BYMT/26/02/06**). This policy means that our collections development focus will shift away from offering a traditional library service (which is ultimately not one of our charitable aims). The priority will be ensuring the continuing preservation of our archive, which involves developing our ability to manage digital records over time, and preserving and showcasing our existing 350-year-old collection. We understand that the changes outlined will be an exciting move towards a bold way of working for some, but it will be a significant change for Friends who have been familiar with the previous library service. We believe that the rapid changes in the way people create, communicate, record, and interrogate documentation require new ways to manage our information well and tell the Quaker story. We are confident that this policy is in the best interests of the longevity of the collection and ensures a proportionate and sustainable future.

Some of you may be interested in reading about the final report on the Climate Crisis: Spiritual Nurture and Learning Project (**BYMT/26/02/06**) which Woodbrooke ran over the past five years. We look forward to receiving the external evaluation report in due

course, and are pleased that some of the learning from the project will be embedded in Woodbrooke's programmes and offers.

We commend to you and to your Meetings the [Challenging Antisemitism: Reflections for Quakers on recognising and responding to anti-Jewish prejudice](#) guide (BYMT/26/02/07) which was launched in January after long and careful preparation. We know that this guide makes for very difficult reading for some Friends, as it touches on very sensitive issues, differing perspectives, and deeply held beliefs. It is important to note that the guide sits alongside, and does not seek to subvert in any way, the Yearly Meeting's stated policies and commitments, particularly in respect to Israel and Palestine. The guide is firmly focussed on our own context as Quakers in Britain, our relationship with Jewish communities through our everyday contact and interfaith work. We hope that raising awareness of our own conscious and unconscious biases will help us align with our own testimony of Truth, and strengthen the impact of what we say in support of justice and human rights.

We were pleased to learn that our insurance costs had reduced, thanks to a better deal on travel insurance, and a good claims record.

We noted that our Finance IT & Property Committee had emphasised the need to ensure our budget planning for IT should be robust enough to ensure we maintain our defences against cyber attack, and were reminded that the weakest link in all our systems is the people who use them, so that training had also to be maintained.

We heard that we have established a good relationship with the contractors who are responsible for the HS2 works in Euston Road. These will impact the access to our building, and plans are being prepared at the contractor's expenses to mitigate this.

We were delighted that accidents had decreased from 21 in 2024 to 16 in 2025, but that this was accompanied by an increased in reported incidents (or near misses), which indicates an improving safety culture.

The likely financial outturn for 2025 is a deficit, which we planned for. Unfortunately, donations decreased. You have often heard our treasurer remind you of the importance of donations to maintain our work. The attacks on civil society, and the increasingly illiberal attitude of governments means that we need to even more so that we don't just stand still but push back. This takes time and money.

As ever, questions and comments are welcome.

Marisa Johnson (she/her) Clerk  
Kit King (they/them) Assistant Clerk  
Paul Whitehouse (he/him) Yearly Meeting Treasurer

## **Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees**

Held on 7 February 2026, 9.30am-4.30pm Online on Zoom

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Catherine Brown, Lis Burch, Kit Fotheringham, Ursula Fuller, Jo Hills, Chris Jardine, Marisa Johnson (Clerk), Kit King (Assistant Clerk), Liz Law, Ruth McTighe, Teresa Murray, Silas Price (from BYMT/26/02/06), Elizabeth Redfern (from BYMT/26/02/01 to BYMT/26/02/05), Paul Whitehouse (Treasurer)

**In Attendance:** Libby Adams, Head of Library & Archives (BYMT/26/02/09), Simon Best, Head of Programmes and Partnerships, Woodbrooke (BYMT/26/02/06), Sarah Donaldson (Senior Change Leader), Siobhan Haire (Deputy Recording Clerk), Vipin Narang (Finance Director), Paul Parker (Recording Clerk), Oliver Robertson (Head of Witness and Worship)

**Prevented:** Lisa San Martin (Chief Executive Officer, Quiet Company)

### **BYMT/26/02/01 Welcome and Introductions, Agenda Check, Conflicts of Interest Check**

During our opening worship, we heard read a prayer for courage offered daily in the Croí (pronounced, "cree", Irish Gaeilge word for 'heart'), the worship space at the Corrymeela reconciliation centre in Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland, which our clerk attended recently:

Courage comes from the heart  
And we are always welcomed by God,  
The Croí of all being.  
We bear witness to our faith, knowing that we are called  
To live lives of courage, love  
And reconciliation  
In the ordinary and extraordinary moments  
Of each day.  
We bear witness, too, to our failures  
And our complicity in the fractures of our world.  
May we be courageous today.  
May we learn today.  
May we love today.  
Amen.

There are no unrecorded conflicts of interest.

We considered our agenda and accepted it.

We have received a list of continuing minutes.

The Clerk welcomed Friends, in particular Teresa Murray attending her first BYM Trustees meeting.

## **BYMT/26/02/02 Minutes Received**

We receive the following minutes:

- Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee November 2025
- BYM Internal Audit & Risk Committee December 2025
- Yearly Meeting Agenda Planning Committee November 2025
- Reparations Working Group January 2026
- Yearly Meeting Transition Project Board January 2026

## **BYMT/26/02/03 Items taken on draft minute**

### **a) Whistleblowing Annual Report**

We receive paper BYMT 2026 02 03a from the Recording Clerk on promoting the whistleblowing policy and procedure within the organisation. We note one whistleblowing case in 2025, which was resolved by the Clerk of Trustees.

### **b) EDI Annual Report**

We receive paper BYMT 2026 02 03b from BYM's Equities Cluster, which outlines BYM's progress with our commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion. It includes description of the Cluster, a SWOT analysis, and the Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) report from Onvero, the new name for the Employers' Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI).

Siobhan Haire spoke to the paper and answered questions from Friends.

### **c) Internal Audit & Risk Committee Proposed Audit Plan 2026-28**

We receive the proposed audit plan for the period 2026-28 from the Internal Audit and Risk Committee, where, following the IT audit scheduled in 2026, finance and people management are the areas where reviews are planned most imminently, during 2026 and 2027 respectively. We look forward to hearing the committee's findings.

We endorse the annual plan and thank IARC for their work in producing it.

### **d) Annual Employment Report 2025**

We receive a report from the Employment Committee covering the year 2025. We note in particular the successful implementation of the salary review and thank the Deputy Recording Clerk for her leadership of this complex work. Policies considered and approved by the committee included Home Working Allowance, Sexual Harassment, and Pre-employment Social Media Checks.

In the coming year the committee hopes to hear more directly from representatives of those who work for the Quiet Company, as, during this reporting period, union representatives were all employees of the charity.

## **BYMT/26/02/04 Finance**

### **a) Insurance Report**

We note paper BYMT 2026 02 04a setting out a summary of BYM's main insurance policies. We are pleased to see a small reduction in cost due to a better deal on travel insurance.

### **b) Finance, IT & Property Committee: February 2026 Minutes**

We receive paper BYMT 2026 02 04b, the most recent minutes from Finance, IT & Property Committee (FIPC), following their meeting on 3 February 2026.

On the updated IT strategy FIPC noted the importance of cyber security, how people are actually the weakest link, and the importance of providing appropriate security tools as required.

FIPC requested that the budgeting process takes into account the need to spend on IT when it is required.

On Estates and Property, FIPC agreed to defer the decision to invest up to £500k to upgrade our self-contained toilet provision in Friends House until the expected new EHRC guidance is released, when they will revisit this decision.

FIPC received an update on the HS2 works adjacent to Friends House which are anticipated to impact pedestrian access, traffic flows, and delivery logistics during 2026 and 2027. Regular meetings are in place with HS2's delivery partner for Euston works.

On the Estates and Facilities strategy, the key priorities identified included refurbishing Friends House 3rd Floor and Drayton House to optimise income, enhancing flexible workspaces, managing heritage properties and land responsibly.

On Health and Safety, overall 2025 shows a positive trend: accidents have decreased to 16 from 21 in 2024, while increased incident reporting (57 vs 20) reflects improved safety awareness and a stronger reporting culture. All incidents have been investigated with follow-up actions completed.

### **c) Latest Management Accounts**

We receive paper BYMT 2026 02 04c, the most recent set of Management Accounts. We note in particular that, as of November 2025, BYM reports an operating deficit of £1.58m, an improvement of £1.10m (41%) against the budgeted deficit. Factoring in investment gains and depreciation, the net deficit stands at £1.58m, which is £1.81m (53%) better than the budgeted deficit of £3.38m and £307k better than the reported position in October.

FIPC considered an early high-level budget for Yearly Meeting Gathering being held 24-28 July 2027. Staff have been given clear parameters for negotiation with the

preferred venue and potential exposure to higher-than-expected costs is being managed.

### **BYMT/26/02/05 Report on 2025 Operational Plan**

We received paper YMT 2026 02 05 giving details of progress against the 2025 Operational Plan. The Deputy Recording Clerk introduced the report. We were very pleased to see that 87% of activities are on track – this is a noticeable improvement on past performance. The report covers every area of activity managed by Quakers in Britain.

On the work which fits our three strategic priorities, the report highlights:

- The eight delayed items under “Simple Structures” were concentrated in a small number of technically demanding and compliance-heavy areas.
- Under “Sustainable and Peaceful World” out of 49 activities 14 were delayed. These were concentrated in peace education and campaigns and advocacy, both areas where there have been staffing changes and reduced capacity.
- Only one project out of 30 was delayed in the “Thriving Quaker Communities” sector. The single delayed item relates to outreach communications aimed at engaging non-Quakers seeking spiritual insight.

We hope to share more information about all this work, and progress, in advance of Yearly Meeting.

### **BYMT/26/02/06 Woodbrooke Climate Crisis Grant Report**

We welcome Simon Best and receive paper BYMT 2026 02 07a containing the closing staff report for this grant and follows previous reports received in November 2024 and April 2025. A full, external review will follow, to be included in a final report which will close the project.

The Climate Crisis: Spiritual Nurture and Learning Project was a 5-year project run by Woodbrooke with funding from Britain Yearly Meeting. Its primary aim was to deepen the spiritual understanding of Quaker witness in response to the climate crisis and broader sustainability issues, while also supporting practical responses that express Quaker faith throughout Britain Yearly Meeting, fostering a journey toward spirit-led action and a deeper understanding of climate issues within the Yearly Meeting. Woodbrooke ensures that climate elements are woven throughout other programme areas.

We accept this report and authorise a final payment of the grant to cover ongoing costs and the external evaluation.

### **BYMT/26/02/07 Reflections on *Challenging Antisemitism* Guide**

The [\*Challenging Antisemitism: Reflections for Quakers on recognising and responding to anti-Jewish prejudice\*](#) guide was published recently, with a private online event held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026. Lis Burch and Marisa Johnson attended. This document is the product of over a year’s work. It has been produced with support from organisations

and individuals from the Jewish community and draws from experience from our own work.

We have heard an update on the reception the guide has received so far and taken time to reflect on our own response to it. Trustees did not directly commission the guide, but it is part of the work that we have overall responsibility for. We are deeply moved and challenged by the contents of the guide, which throws a light on often deeply internalised prejudices and tropes, some of which we are shocked to recognise in ourselves. This work is a study in how entrenched prejudice develops and we hope it will be a gateway to better recognition of emerging ill feeling towards other groups of people. We must be awake to the danger of pernicious and persistent antisemitism in our midst. We uphold the human rights, aspirations for justice, and well-being of every human being.

We are deeply thankful to the staff and partners that contributed to the creation of the guide, and we continue to hold this work in the Light.

### **BYMT/26/02/08 Recording Clerk's Report & Dashboard**

We receive papers BYMT 2026 02 06a and 06b, Recording Clerk's Report and Reporting Dashboard.

We note that the Committee Hub system is now fully operational – we are experiencing it ourselves, having migrated to it before this meeting. We are deeply appreciative for the hard work that the Governance team have put into creating this platform and thank them for their continued support in learning to use it. We recognise that some teething difficulties are still being resolved.

The Safeguarding Team will now include the recommendations from the Safeguarding Audit into their improvement plan. The audit showed that we have strong foundations in place – and in particular excellent practice in our provision for children and young people - and provided a helpful set of recommendations for further improvement.

Later in the year we'll be sharing an updated version of the model Safeguarding Documents for Area Meetings which, following a thorough review by 31:8, are significantly slimmed down with no significant changes to content.

The Sustainability Delivery Group is now active and met in November. The group comprises of senior managers in the organisation who are decision-makers, and who oversee departments that have more of an impact on our carbon footprint. We ask Employment Committee to look into referrals to Occupational Health and sickness absence and report on any trends that may need to be considered. We thank the Recording Clerk and Management Team Meeting for this report.

### **BYMT/26/02/09 Library & Archives Collections Development Policy**

We received papers BYMT 2026 02 09a & BYMT 2026 02 09b, setting out a new Collections Development Policy (CDP). Libby Adams, Head of Library and Archives, joined us for this item and spoke to the paper.

This policy presents major changes from our previous policy and approach, the implications in terms of how the work will proceed from this point, and where this sits in the context of risk mitigation and impact-led work in the next few years. The policy has been updated to reflect progress since 2021 and proposes a new approach to how our collection is managed and made accessible, and the service provided to users. This bold and positive new approach is necessary to move towards a proportionate and sustainable future, and to remain within our charitable aims. This radical policy will impact not only how the collections are managed but also the way this service is viewed by Friends in Britain and around the world.

We approve this policy.

### **BYMT/26/02/10 Strategic Priorities**

We receive paper BYMT 2026 02 10 from the Recording Clerk, which contains a final draft for BYM's strategic priorities.

We thank Jo Hills, Chris Jardine, and senior staff for their work in this process. We endorse this draft and ask staff to prepare a version incorporating some small changes suggested to be sent to Meeting for Sufferings.

### **BYMT/26/02/11 Clerks' Report**

We received a report from our clerks – paper BYMT 2026 02 11 – setting out the activities they have carried out between meetings and public statements that had been signed off, as follows:

- Child poverty statement coordinated by Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptists, Methodists and URC, 9 December
- Human Rights Day letter, 10 December
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign lobby day on right to protest, 12 December
- Netpol campaign on police accountability, 17 December
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign statement on right to protest, 17 December
- RAF Marham/nuclear-capable planes, 19 December
- Third Sector Against Transphobia letter to the Charity Commission, 19 December

### **BYMT/26/02/12 Trustee Training 2026**

We received paper BYMT 2026 02 12 setting out training opportunities available to trustees individually and also considered what we may like to arrange as a training session for the trustees' body as a whole. We ask the clerks to bring us some firmer proposal for a collegiate training session when we next meet in May, on the basis of the discussion we had today.

### **BYMT/26/02/13 Nominations and Appointments**

#### **a) Appointments**

We received the following nominations for appointment:

### **Programmes and Prioritisation Committee**

- Ginny Baumann, South London Area Meeting, to serve from 8 February 2026 to 31 December 2028
- Lis Burch to serve as clerk to 31 December 2027.

We note that there is still one vacancy on this committee. We agree with the suggestion to advertise for this role and ask staff and Nominations Group to arrange this.

### **Finance, IT, and Property Committee**

Nominations Group and FIPC suggest that we advertise to fill the vacancy with someone who has qualifications and experience in accountancy. We agree to this suggestion and ask staff to arrange this.

### **Investment Committee**

We note that Nominations Group are still searching for names to serve on Investment Committee. We ask the clerks to appoint these names through the between-meetings process when the names are found.

### **BYMT Assistant Clerk**

- Kit King, renominated to serve from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2029

We agree to the above appointments and proposals.

### **b) Nomination of BYMT Clerk**

- Marisa Johnson, renominated to serve from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2028

We forward this nomination to Yearly Meeting.

We thank BYMT Nominations Group for their hard work in preparing these nominations and proposals.

### **BYMT/26/02/14 Meeting for Sufferings Preparation**

We prepared for the last Meeting for Sufferings, which is due to take place at Friends House in London on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

### **BYMT/26/02/15 Reviewing the Meeting**

We reviewed our meeting.

### **BYMT/26/02/16 Time with Recording Clerk**

We spent some time with the Recording Clerk.

### **BYMT/26/02/17 Time without Staff**

We spent time without staff.

## **BYMT/26/02/18 Clerks' offering**

Our opening worship was a prayer asking for courage. When asked to take bold decisions we need courage to meet the challenge of resistance, even suspicion, that we may encounter, and the gift of communicating the vision and the excitement of new ways of doing things.

We need courage to speak our truth. We also need courage to see where we fall short, where we fail to see the pain our casual comments and utterances can cause our Friends. The guidance on antisemitism in our midst has reminded us sharply that we need to be humble when expressing our deepest concerns, because what we say, and what other people hear, is not always the same thing.

In the 1974 Swarthmore Lecture, Wolf Mendl reminds Friends are often called to be prophets and reconcilers. Prophets are called to speak truth to power – they identify injustice and wrongdoing in the world, seek to find that of God in those involved, and engage with it by speaking the truth. Reconcilers build bridges across divides, heal the aftermath of conflict, and foster strong relationships.

We thank God for the prophets and reconcilers amongst us in Britain Yearly Meeting and maintain that acting boldly, radically, and with love moves us closer to building the Commonwealth of Heaven on Earth.



Marisa Johnson  
Clerk



Kit King  
Assistant Clerk

## **Strategic priorities 2026-2030**

### **Background**

In 2025 Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees started the process to refresh the strategic priorities for the centrally managed work of Quakers in Britain. The document that follows has been developed in the light of discernment by Meeting for Sufferings, BYM Trustees and staff. It is intended to offer a framework for the next five years.

### **Strategic priorities**

*Our Faith in the Future*, agreed by Meeting for Sufferings in 2015, describes six broad areas of focus for the whole Quaker community in Britain. These are:

#### **In turbulent times:**

- Meeting for worship is the bedrock of living as a Quaker
- Quaker communities are loving, inclusive and all-age
- All Friends understand and live by Quaker discipline
- Quaker values are active in the world
- Quakers work collaboratively
- Quakers are well-known and widely understood

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees are responsible for the work, assets and property of Quakers in Britain. From time to time they work with Meeting for Sufferings to establish strategic priorities for the centrally managed work, set out in the document below, in realising the aspirations set out in *Our Faith in the Future*. The priorities are organised under the four charitable purposes described in chapter 8 of Quaker faith & practice, which govern all Quaker work (set out in full below).

These priorities are supported by the strategies developed by Quaker Life and Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committees, and other strategies developed by Trustees and staff, notably the Communications Strategy, the IT Strategy and the Governance Strategy.

#### **What gifts do Quakers have to offer? We bring:**

- a radical faith perspective rooted in core Quaker spiritual insights.
- a discerned ethical and spiritual position on many issues, which is embedded in the policies and practices we adopt.
- a network of committed and concerned individuals willing to pray, take action, contribute time & money and speak out.
- good levels of recognition and a respected moral voice.
- a long, valued and well-documented history both as a faith community and a force for positive social change through our work on peace, justice and equality.

- longevity and a willingness to stick with people, communities and concerns over the long term.

## **Context**

What are the drivers for these strategic priorities?

### **External context**

- We live in a time of multiple crises: climate breakdown, rising inequality, the drumbeat of war, and increasing isolation are creating both challenges and opportunities for spiritual community. The rise of polarisation and extremism in the UK may mean we are called to broaden and deepen our peace work. These crises may threaten our organisational resilience and we will need to be agile enough to respond.
- This political & social polarization, among Quakers and in society more widely, threatens our ability to build community and work effectively in broad coalitions.
- We are living through a time of rapid technological change, with many activities moving online and the rise of artificial intelligence both as a tool and a potential threat.
- The erosion of democratic norms, loss of accountability in public life and restrictions on freedom to protest are making our testimony to truth, integrity and peace more relevant.

### **The Religious Society of Friends in Britain**

- The demographics of the Quaker community are changing: an experienced, well-networked generation is growing older; meanwhile younger Quakers have different engagement patterns and needs. Many Quaker communities still lack diversity compared with the broader world; we are missing voices that would enrich the community. Different income patterns are a risk to income, engagement and volunteer recruitment.
- The geography of the Quaker community is also changing: we may see a decline in location-based communities and a move towards new models of connection and community which aren't tied to physical proximity, including online.
- We see an opportunity for growth in our Quaker community, noting that in recent population-wide surveying, there appears to be a significant group of people identifying as spiritual but not currently involved in organised religion, and a rise in young adults seeking a spiritual path.
- Many Quaker structures, especially at local and regional level, are changing to become fit for purpose, but some places are left behind. The Quaker property portfolio may also need to change to remain appropriate to the need.
- Some existing Quaker communities are not sustainable for the longer term unless something changes.

## **Our organisation, Britain Yearly Meeting**

- A once-in-a-generation constitutional change to Yearly Meeting, our ultimate decision-making body, provides an opportunity for a reset in our national structures. With the laying-down of Meeting for Sufferings, the relationship between Yearly Meeting and BYM Trustees will change, and more direct dialogue between Friends and their central organisation will become possible.
- We are a well-resourced organisation with stable income. However our income is not growing in line with our costs, so to be financially sustainable we must balance our budget and seek ways to remain impactful and provide a good service to Quakers within our financial constraints or find additional sources of income.
- The next generation of Quakers may have even less disposable income and time than the last to contribute to their Quaker communities.
- Britain Yearly Meeting is, by its nature, an organisation delivering across a wide range of purposes and interests, and as a result there is a risk that resources are spread too thinly over many objectives.

## **Commitments**

We commit to;

- remaining simple, radical and spiritual in all that we do.
- effective collaboration, partnership and solidarity wherever possible.
- the inclusion of young people, children and their caregivers as widely as possible.
- an approach which embodies equity, inclusion, anti-oppression and reparative justice.
- putting corporate discernment at the heart of our decision-making, ensuring our actions are underpinned by our theology.
- doing work which is well-planned and well-resourced, makes a difference, is impactful and provides good value for money
- being compliant except where we discern a need to be defiant.
- operating in ways which are both environmentally and financially sustainable.
- holding the inherent tension between speaking out with a prophetic voice and retaining the ability to play a role as reconcilers able to hold principled, impartial spaces in which unity can be reached across divides

## **Charitable purposes**

Our work rests within the four areas defined as the charitable purposes of Britain Yearly Meeting in Quaker faith & practice 8.03 (set out in the table below)

We see the first of these as crucial – we are first and foremost a church and national worshipping community – from with the others flow and without which the other purposes cannot be achieved.

Within each of these four areas we identify the following priorities for the next five years:

## Priorities

<b>Sustaining church and faith</b> organising and maintaining the whole of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain as responsive to the leadings of the Holy Spirit; this entails calling, briefing and running decision-making meetings with all the facilities necessary for them to work efficiently and effectively, and also conducting relations with other churches, faiths and ecumenical bodies.	
In order to deliver	We will
Inclusive, spirit-led Yearly Meeting sessions that drive renewal	Plan Yearly Meeting with inclusion and spirit-led discernment at the core
A transparent agenda-setting process for Yearly Meeting	Make our agenda planning process transparent, and publicise it well
Strong interfaith presence and solidarity with other faith groups and Quaker groups around the world	Maintain good relations through our committees for Christian & interfaith relations and world Quaker relations.
Clear understanding, articulation and embodiment of Quaker theology	Renew our Book of Discipline Support learning about the Quaker way
Safe and legally compliant operation of Quaker communities	Maintain and support governance and compliance functions for Quaker Communities
Fit-for-purpose local, regional and national structures	Support structural change in area / regional communities

<b>Supporting Quaker communities</b> supporting Friends in their local organisation by providing services and advice relevant to the current needs of the Quaker community: for example such work may relate to children, elderly people, those getting married, those looking after meeting houses, and those raising funds.	
In order to deliver	We will
A faith for our time grounded in deep worship and authentic ministry	Ensure that faith and worship are at the heart of all we do

Inclusive intergenerational communities	Develop more ways for Quaker communities to worship, connect and act
Communities engaged in the wider life of the yearly meeting	Encourage a wide understanding and knowledge in Quaker communities of faith, practice and spiritual discipline
Communities and Quakers who are outwardly connected, active and welcoming	Equip and support friends well to hold responsibilities and give service
Simpler structures using appropriate Quaker discipline	Provide opportunities for experimentation, exploration, creativity and growth

### Promoting Quakerism

raising awareness and developing understanding about the basic tenets of Quaker faith and practice, such as spirituality, peace and human rights, within and without the Religious Society of Friends in Britain.

In order to deliver	We will
Growth in Quaker numbers and new communities, as well as more sustainable existing communities	Support Quakers and Quaker communities to confidently share Quaker faith and witness nationally and locally; support people to find, attend, return to and join Quaker communities.
Increased public awareness of Quakers	Proactively communicate Quaker faith, theology and practices
Better public understanding of Quakerism	Promote Quakers as an inclusive intergenerational faith community
Visible Quaker witness, inspiring others to join	Communicate clearly about Quaker work and action

<b>Faith in action</b> putting Quaker thinking into practice in relation to the problems and needs of people at home and abroad: for example, through training, conferences, work with those in positions of power, and social and development projects.	
<b>In order to deliver</b>	<b>We will</b>
Effective action on behalf of Quakers on discerned areas of concern	Work on peace & peacebuilding, climate justice and reparation
Quaker communities who are visibly living their faith in the world	Support Quakers to be and to build resilient communities of faith-led action
Discernment and support for Quaker work	Use Quaker faith and theology to drive decisions about how and where we work
Public influence through advocacy, protest and quiet diplomacy	Lead in civil society and political engagement through effective coalitions
Quaker work rooted in integrity	Embed environmental sustainability in our communities, premises and programmes; align our investments and other Quaker assets with Quaker values and positions

### Things we'll explore further:

We'll explore:

- Whether we should offer some optional additional services on paid-for basis to area meetings, other Quaker communities and others.
- Whether we can fundraise in new ways, including from people who are not Quakers for certain types of work – for example, elements of our programme work on peace and climate justice – where these funders are aligned with our values.
- How we might make better use of restricted or hypothecated funding (i.e. earmarking of funding for specific purposes or projects).
- How we keep our core infrastructure in right proportion to our charitable activity, how we measure the difference we make, and work in the most impactful way.
- How we can work in a more integrated way, and how we can be experimental and innovative within our resources, taking risks where we are called to do so.

- How we can partner better with Quaker Recognised Bodies, other charities and faith communities to achieve our goals where our objectives and values are aligned.
- How Quakers can lend their voices and influence to causes aligned with our discernment.
- What is drawing people to Quakerism today and how will this affect the make-up of our meetings and the approach we should take to promoting Quakerism in the future.

### **Things we won't do:**

We won't:

- Do work which is not aligned with these priorities.
- Fund projects ourselves that could be paid for by someone else.
- Take on new work or continue programmes we can't resource properly.
- Duplicate work done by others.
- Work in an uncoordinated way where our resources are not used to best effect
- Take on work we don't know will be impactful or can't be measured.
- Take on work which doesn't require our specific contribution, grounded in the discernment of our Quaker structures.
- Take on work which partners could do better or are already doing.
- Speak out on matters where we do not bring a different and specifically Quaker or faith perspective to the situation.
- Allow the organisation to be put at risk through a lack of contingency planning or awareness of external factors such as political turmoil or climate change.