

Agenda & notes

Compiled for Yearly Meeting,
Friends House, London and online
23–26 May 2025

Yearly Meeting of Quakers in Britain



Proceedings

A number of documents will help us meet with hearts and minds prepared. Collectively, these are the '*Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain 2025*'.

The full set comprises:

1. *Preparing for Yearly Meeting*, including community guidelines.
2. *Agenda and notes*, with introductory material for Yearly Meeting and annual reports of Meeting for Sufferings and other related bodies
3. *Testimonies*, including index of epistles
4. *Trustees' annual report*, including financial statements for the year ended December 2024 (this will be published later in the year)
5. *Patterns of membership*, including the 2025 tabular statement
6. *Minutes*, which are distributed after the conclusion of Yearly Meeting.

All documents will be available online at www.quaker.org.uk/ym. Many Friends will read the documents online, but if you need printed documents, they will be in a printer-friendly PDF format. We ask Friends to print their own copies or to seek assistance from someone in their meeting. This will help us to save costs and reduce the environmental impact of Yearly Meeting.

If you require accessible documents, please request these when booking for Yearly Meeting. If these do not meet your accessibility needs, or the needs of someone you know, please email ym@quaker.org.uk.

All *Quaker faith & practice* references are to the fifth edition, which can be found online at www.quaker.org.uk/qfp.

You can read about Yearly Meeting in chapter 6 of *Quaker faith & practice*. Alternatively, contact Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee on 020 7663 1040 or at ym@quaker.org.uk or go to www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

1. Introduction and information

1.1 Introduction

Yearly Meeting is when Quakers in Britain come together to worship, make decisions, and spend time as a community.

Yearly Meeting is also when we can learn, practise, improve, and take back to our local meetings ways of conducting business that are rooted in Quaker discipline and our own experience, yet also meet contemporary challenges.

Yearly Meeting is a blended event: this allows people to attend the same meeting either online or at Friends House.

We all need to approach this style of event with care, patience, and compassion.

The purposes and functions of Yearly Meeting are described in *Quaker faith & practice* 6.02–6.11, which also gives the background to the business agenda.

This year's event

The primary business sessions of Yearly Meeting 2025 will be held from Friday 23 May to Monday 26 May.

A range of online preparation events will be held before Yearly Meeting, from Sunday 27 April to Saturday 3 May.

Details of Yearly Meeting in session and preparation sessions on the main topics of Yearly Meeting are included in this document.

To access the full schedule of events (including preparation events), you first need to register to attend Yearly Meeting. You can do this online at www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

The screenshot displays the 'SCHED' interface for 'YM 2025'. At the top, there's a header with the SCHED logo and 'YM 2025'. Below that is a large banner for 'Yearly Meeting 2025'. A navigation bar includes 'Schedule', 'Groups', 'Contacts', 'Attendees', and 'Search'. There are also buttons for 'Event Schedule' and 'My Schedule', and a 'View' dropdown. The main content area shows a calendar for 'Sunday, April 27'. Events are listed with their start times (4:00pm BST and 7:00pm BST) and titles. Each event has a 'Spaces available' button. On the right side, there are filters for 'Filter By Date' (Apr 27 - May 26, 2025), 'Filter By Venue' (Friends House, London and online), and 'Filter By Type' (Lecture, Orientation, Preparation Session, Special interest meeting, Worship, Yearly Meeting Session).

Once your registration has been confirmed, you will be sent a link to the online Yearly Meeting planner (Sched). Please refer to the Yearly Meeting planner for details of all sessions, including the Swarthmore and Salter Lectures, orientation, worship, special interest meetings, and Yearly Meeting preparation sessions, at <https://ym2025.sched.com>. You will not be able to use this until your registration has been confirmed.

Young Adults at Yearly Meeting

This is a way for 18- to 35-year-olds to attend Yearly Meeting and be in a smaller community too. It gives young adults a chance to prepare for and reflect on their own experience of Yearly Meeting together. There will be a hub in Sarah Fell, in Friends House, for young adults who wish to gather informally and for scheduled activities.

Youth, Children & Families programmes

The Children's and Young People's programmes are central to Yearly Meeting. Children and young people attending these programmes will also be using Quaker practice and discipline, in ways appropriate for their ages.

They may share their discernment with the whole Yearly Meeting through minutes during different sessions. They will build an exciting, challenging and creative community. All under-18s attending Yearly Meeting need to be registered by their parent or guardian.

Junior Yearly Meeting (ages 15 to 18) is a residential event held at the same time as Yearly Meeting. It will be based in Northamptonshire. It is arranged by a group of young people, with the support of adult volunteers and staff. Junior Yearly Meeting will be exploring the theme 'How do we as Quakers create the peace that is needed in ourselves and our communities?' Bookings for JYM closed on 23 February.

Young People @ Yearly Meeting (ages 11 to 15) is a residential event held at the same time as Yearly Meeting. It will be based in Northamptonshire. It is arranged by a group of young people, with the support of adult volunteers and staff. The theme this group is exploring is 'Peace inside + out'. Bookings for YP@YM closed on 23 February.

The Children's Programme (ages 0 to 11) will be exploring the topic of 'Peaceful inside and out'. The programme runs at Friends House in the mornings and afternoons from Saturday to Monday. There is also a programme for 5- to 11-year-olds running alongside the Swarthmore Lecture. Bookings close on Monday 31 March.

A family space will be available between sessions of the Children's Programme in the All-age Community Hub. Children are the responsibility of their own adults at this time.

1.2 Contact details

Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee

Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ

Please send comments on business or the agenda to Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee at arrangements@quaker.org.uk.

General enquiries

Quaker Church Affairs

Telephone: 020 7663 1040

Email: ym@quaker.org.uk

Website: www.quaker.org.uk/ym

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/quakerspace

Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/quaker.org.uk>
#BYM2025

2. How does Yearly Meeting work?

2.1 Discipline of Yearly Meeting sessions

The principles of the Quaker business method are the same for Yearly Meeting as for area and local meetings. Please read the guidance found in chapter 3 of *Quaker faith & practice*.

“In our meetings for worship we seek through the stillness to know God’s will for ourselves and for the gathered group. Our meetings for church affairs, in which we conduct our business, are also meetings for worship based on silence, and they carry the same expectation that God’s guidance can be discerned if we are truly listening together and to each other and are not blinkered by preconceived opinions.”

Quaker faith & practice 3.02

Community Agreement

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee asks all of us to share responsibility for creating a safe and loving community by upholding Quaker discipline at this blended Yearly Meeting. When registering to attend Yearly Meeting, all Friends are asked to agree to our Community Agreement – a copy is available at www.quaker.org.uk/documents/yearly-meeting-2025-our-community-agreement.

Because Yearly Meeting is such a large gathering, unlike at a local business meeting, not everyone who requests to minister will be invited to do so. All ministry, whether spoken or unspoken, contributes to the discernment of the meeting. It is useful to remember this:

“Not all who attend a meeting for church affairs will necessarily speak: those who are silent can help to develop the sense of the meeting if they listen in a spirit of worship.”

Quaker faith & practice 3.05

The agenda gives the timings of sessions. Published starting times indicate when the clerk will formally open the sessions; please aim to arrive before

that time, so the meeting can gather in silence beforehand. To help create and maintain a gathered meeting, it is helpful, if at all possible, for Friends to avoid arriving late, leaving early, or moving around – whether attending online or at Friends House.

The Quaker business method is a discipline in which all participating should focus on worship and discernment of the matter at hand. Please avoid any activity that detracts from this discipline.

However, Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee is aware that some Friends with particular needs will find it easier to concentrate if using their hands. If this is the case for you, please let elders know by emailing ym@quaker.org.uk and they will be in touch prior to Yearly Meeting.

You may use electronic devices to access Yearly Meeting documents, as long as you do not disturb others. Please make sure your device is on ‘silent’.

Resist the temptation to check emails or post on social networks while in sessions.

Outside sessions, please think carefully before posting to social networking sites about the business. What stage have we reached in our discernment? Are you being tempted to anticipate a decision? Remember, ministry given in session has been offered in the context of a gathered meeting for worship and therefore might not be appropriate to share in a public forum. Yearly Meeting has not made a decision until a minute has been agreed.

Safeguarding the health and well-being of our community

The following section sets out the action we will take to safeguard the well-being of the most vulnerable members of our community. There are various respiratory and flu-like illnesses in circulation. Please do not attend Yearly Meeting if you feel unwell, have tested positive for Covid-19 or have had close contact with someone who has a contagious illness.

You may consider wearing a face-covering when indoors if you feel more comfortable doing so.

Please always check with individuals to see whether they are comfortable hugging or shaking hands before making physical contact.

Please follow good hygiene procedures such as regular handwashing for 20 seconds and coughing/sneezing into your elbow rather than your hand.

2.2 Spoken ministry and discipline

How might we encourage ministry that is faithful, loving, and deeply rooted in the Spirit's gathering and guiding presence among us? Clerks and elders have worked with Woodbrooke to draw together *Advices & queries for Yearly Meeting*, which can be found at www.quaker.org.uk/ym/documents.

We also invite Friends to consider:

If you feel a prompting to minister, please test this first as you would in any meeting for worship. The following questions may be helpful. Is my message rooted in love for the Friends present? Is it spirit led? Is it a message for me alone or for others? Does it need to be said now? Will it help the meeting towards faithful and well-discerned unity?

When offering spoken ministry, "try to sum up what you have to say in as few words as possible. Speak simply and audibly, but do not speak for effect." (*Quaker faith & practice* 3.10)

Section 2.5 sets out the role of elders in relation to ministry and discipline at Yearly Meeting.

2.3 Spoken ministry and discipline: online participation

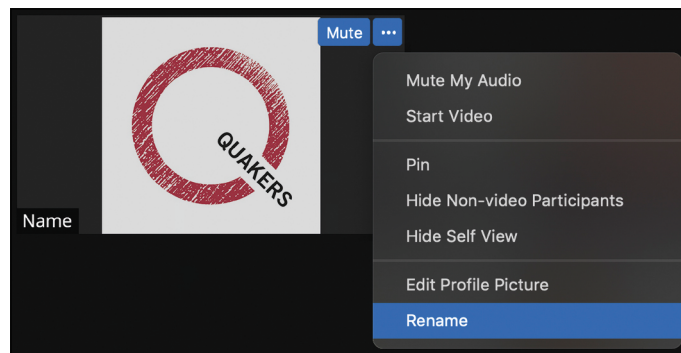
Friends joining a blended session online will use Zoom. Yearly Meeting sessions will open ten minutes before the start time so that the meeting can gather in silence beforehand.

If you need to move away from your computer, please turn off your camera.

The following notes explain how Yearly Meeting will be conducted using Zoom.

Your name and how it should appear

- Use 'rename' so that your screen name includes both your first/personal name and surname/family name.
 - If you are concerned about displaying your full name on screen, please email ym@quaker.org.uk in advance of Yearly Meeting.



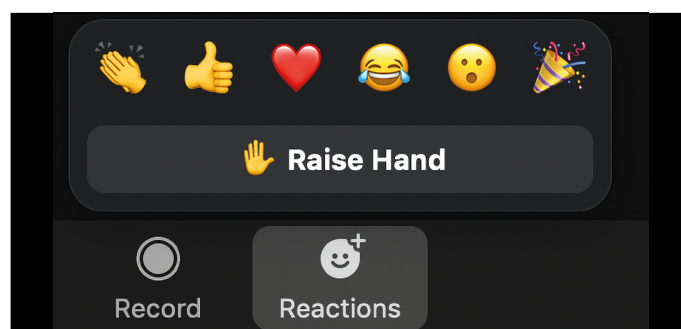
- Add the name of your area meeting, if known, or your local meeting or other worshipping community.
- Visitors from other yearly meetings should add the name of their yearly meeting.

How to indicate that you feel moved to speak or minister

After each contribution, there will be a pause to allow reflection. Please do not raise your hand at this time.

When the clerk feels the time is right for a further contribution, they will say so. If you have tested your ministry and feel that the meeting needs to hear it to reach unity, you should raise your hand at this point:

- Use the 'raise hand' feature, found by clicking 'Reactions.'

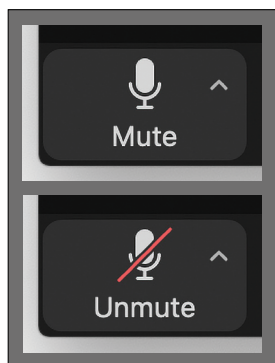


- Wait until a clerk calls you by name.
- When a clerk calls a Friend to speak, all other raised hands will be lowered. If the clerk invites further ministry and you still feel led to minister, you will need to raise your hand again.
- Do not raise your hand while someone else is giving ministry.
- If you are called, you will receive an onscreen message asking you to unmute;
 - click 'unmute' and you may then speak
 - tell everyone who you are and where you worship before you begin your ministry (e.g., 'X Area Meeting' or 'attending X Local Meeting or worshipping community').

- When offering spoken ministry, “try to sum up what you have to say in as few words as possible. Speak simply and audibly, but do not speak for effect.” (*Quaker faith & practice* 3.10)
- When you have finished, your microphone will be muted, and your hand will be lowered by the technical support staff.

Note about microphone controls

- A red diagonal line through the microphone shows your microphone is muted and you cannot be heard. A microphone without a diagonal line shows your microphone is ‘live’ and you can be heard.
- You will not be able to ‘unmute’ your own microphone unless invited by a technical support staff member on instruction from a clerk.



2.4 Spoken ministry and discipline: participation at Friends House

Entering late or leaving early can disturb other Friends. If you need to do so, please wait for a break or, if necessary, leave at the end of an item of business. Please avoid leaving or entering when the clerk is standing, or a Friend is giving spoken ministry.

The clerk will aim to conclude sessions by published closing times, but if it is necessary to extend sessions, the clerk will indicate when those who need to meet participants in the Children’s Programme, or who have other pressing matters, can leave.

One door only will be used for latecomers, so please follow the directions of doorkeepers and wait quietly until a doorkeeper indicates you can enter.

Friends will be reminded at regular intervals to turn mobile phones to silent. Please do so. Even a phone set to vibrate can be distracting to Friends sitting near you. The exception to this rule will be parents or guardians with children in the Children & Young People’s programmes, who need to be contactable in case of emergency.

We meet in a large room and therefore rely on the use of microphones. If you feel called to give spoken ministry, please stand or raise your hand and wait for a microphone.

If you rise and another Friend is called, please sit down. Do not rise when someone else is giving ministry.

If you are called, please share your name and where you worship before you begin your ministry (e.g., ‘X Area Meeting’ or ‘attending X Local Meeting or worshipping community’).

Each contribution should be heard in silence. Audible indications of approval or disapproval of spoken ministry are not part of the discipline of Britain Yearly Meeting.

After each contribution, there will be a pause to allow reflection. Please do not stand at this time.

When the clerk feels the time is right for a further contribution, they will say so. If you have tested your ministry and feel that the meeting needs to hear it to reach unity, you should stand or raise your hand at this point.

2.5 How Yearly Meeting will agree minutes

When the clerk discerns that the time is right, they will say they are ready to draft a minute. At this point, any Friend in Friends House should sit down or lower their hand; hands raised online will be lowered automatically. While the minute is being drafted, please uphold the clerks in prayerful silence.

When the clerk asks if a minute is acceptable, please reflect on whether the minute is good enough. You may choose to answer “I hope so” or to remain silent. There is no need to indicate active assent. If, after reflection, you are clear that an amendment is necessary, stand or raise your hand and wait to be called; however, do not present fresh material at this point.

2.6 Elders and Pastoral Support at Yearly Meeting

Elders at Yearly Meeting

The role of the Elders team at Yearly Meeting is to lovingly support all present to deepen awareness of the Spirit at work amongst us. They may sometimes speak with words of guidance to help the meeting in its task. They are present online and in Friends House at each session and at morning and evening worship. They work alongside the Pastoral Support team, Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee and Arrangements Committee.

Elders are nominated for three years by Central

Nominations Committee who seek a group to represent the diversity of Britain Yearly Meeting.

Elders meet regularly in worship in the months beforehand to hold in the Light all preparation for Yearly Meeting. They provide spiritual support for the clerks during this time and throughout Yearly Meeting. They wear purple sashes so they are easily identified. Those online will have “YM Elders” on their screen. If you wish to consult Elders about the conduct of the Yearly Meeting please engage with them straight after a session. They will do their best to support you.

You can also contact Elders before and during the event through the Yearly Meeting planner or in writing at Friends House via a box at the main entrance.

Pastoral Support

You can contact the Pastoral Support Friends by email or via the Yearly Meeting planner. Please leave your email and phone number. They will then arrange to contact you. Email pastoralcare@quaker.org.uk.

During Yearly Meeting, you can also phone a Pastoral Support Friend by calling 07845 696 228

Pastoral Support Friends will be available in Friends House at the following times:

- Friday, 15.00–21.00
- Saturday, 09.30–17.30
- Sunday, 09.30–17.30
- Monday, 09.30–16.00

The Pastoral Support desk will be in the café. Pastoral Support Friends will also be in the Large Meeting House (during and immediately after Yearly Meeting sessions) and around Friends House. They will be wearing green sashes.

Supporting each other is an important part of our community’s witness. We hope that Quaker meetings and communities will support their own participants as far as possible. Yearly Meeting Pastoral Support Friends provide a listening ear and seek to signpost to support where relevant. They cannot provide long-term befriending or support.

Help desk

For general help about Yearly Meeting, or if you have been unsuccessful making contact with Elders or Pastoral Support using the details above, please contact the help desk via email at ym@quaker.org.uk or by calling 020 7663 1040.

2.7 Photography and video

Quakers in Britain staff will be taking photos and videos of activities and interactions for use in Quaker communications. These are used to illustrate what happens at Yearly Meeting online or in printed materials to attract new enquirers and encourage people to take part in our activities or contribute to our funds.

Filming takes place in Yearly Meeting sessions. Footage is livestreamed to registered participants and may also be used for Quaker communications purposes to illustrate Yearly Meeting in session. Most recorded videos will be used with different sounds (i.e. music or a voiceover), and additional consent will be sought from anyone who might feature prominently in published videos.

If you do not want to appear in Quaker communications after Yearly Meeting you can request a coloured lanyard, so you can be kept out of published images.

2.8 Orientation

Woodbrooke will host online orientation sessions leading up to Yearly Meeting as follows:

We all make Yearly Meeting

This session is for everyone, whether you have been a Quaker for many years or have recently found a home with Quakers. It is for both those attending online and at Friends House. We will consider how joining hundreds of Quakers on Zoom can be exciting, but it’s also very different from meeting and discerning together in the same location. We will look at the basis of spirit-led discernment; how discernment works at Yearly Meeting, in particular; what is different about blended discernment; and how to come with hearts and minds prepared but not made up.

- Thursday 1 May, 16.00–17.00 (online)
- Wednesday 14 May, 19.00–20.00 (online)
- Friday 23 May, 16.15–17.15 (blended event, online and in Ada Salter, Friends House)

How does Yearly Meeting work?

This session is suitable for all. We will explore the way the Quaker business method will work for this Yearly Meeting. We will talk about other events happening during Yearly Meeting and offer practical tips on getting the best from our blended sessions. There will be a chance to ask any questions that you might have. There is no such thing as a silly question!

- Tuesday 29 April, 16.00–17.00 (online)
- Tuesday 13 May, 19.00–20.00 (online)
- Friday 23 May, 17.45–18.45 (blended event, online and in Ada Salter, Friends House)

Please refer to the online Yearly Meeting planner for full details and to book online attendance.

Orientation material from these sessions will also be recorded and available on the Yearly Meeting website at www.quaker.org.uk/ym/programme.

2.9 Spiritual preparation and theme-related sessions

In the document *Preparing for Yearly Meeting*, Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee introduced the main topics being considered this year. *Preparing for Yearly Meeting* also suggested some spiritual preparation and resources (see www.quaker.org.uk/ym/documents).

To help Friends prepare for discernment at Yearly Meeting, there will be some online preparation sessions from Sunday 27 April to Saturday 3 May. In some cases, additional background materials will be provided for some of these sessions. These will be available online via the Yearly Meeting planner.

For details and to book, please refer to the online Yearly Meeting planner.

Holding of continuing Yearly Meeting sessions

Sunday 27 April 2025, 16.00–17.00 (online)

Note this is a different time slot from other preparation sessions.

At Yearly Meeting 2025 we will receive the terms of reference for a new agenda planning committee, as well as considering proposals for clerking arrangements for future Yearly Meeting sessions. You can find more details about both topics in Appendix C of this document. We will also hear about other aspects of the planning, e.g. in relation to the arrangements for the appointment of representatives and for funding their expenses.

In this preparation session there will be an update from Britain Yearly Meeting staff, covering the items coming to this Yearly Meeting and looking ahead to some of the matters that will need to be decided at Yearly Meeting in May 2026. There will then be time for questions.

Thinking Peace, Building Peace

Tuesday 29 April, 19.00–20.00 (online)

Violence has occurred in many of our communities this last year. If the peace testimony calls on Quakers to wage peace, what does waging peace look like in times such as these?

This session will explore peace thinking and some of the drivers of conflict in our communities, and the work our staff are doing on our behalf. We hope it will inspire you too.

Are we prophets identifying something that is wrong and speaking out against it? Or are we reconcilers, healers seeking common ground? John Lampen, in *The Friend* last year, said “Both roles are necessary; both are important aspects of Quaker witness.” The Epistle of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2021 notes, “Prophets are visionaries, calling out those in power, and reconcilers stand in the middle of conflict: in this both run great risk”. Adam Curle asks how we can have a relationship with those committed to violent solutions to their problems. “Do we tell them we disapprove of what they are doing or urge them to repent and desist?” (*Quaker faith & practice* 24.35). Barbara Deming writes in *Revolution and Equilibrium* (1971) that we need the two hands of nonviolence, the hand that says, “Stop what you are doing” and the other hand that stretches out to say, “I won’t let go of you or cast you out of the human race.”

We will explore some of the challenges, dilemmas, and wisdom from those working on peace in communities. We will hear about some of the ways weaving connections can help us to hold strong in the difficult times. What does love require of us?

We will hear from Lisa Cumming, a member of the Quaker Peace & Social Witness staff team in Quakers in Britain. We will also hear from Tariq Bashir, an activist in inter-faith and inter-community relations in Yorkshire.

How can Quaker meetings build a culture of peace?

Wednesday 30 April, 19.00–20.30 (online)

“I meet so many, who do not see what they can do to alleviate the miseries of the world. But the great issues are built on a foundation of countless smaller

ones. Every time we sow love where there was hatred we readjust the balance of the cosmos.”

Adam Curle,
Swarthmore Lecture 1981

What are our Meetings doing to promote peace? What else could we do? Some Meetings have set up peace education groups. There are also Friends working with those in their local communities experiencing physical or structural violence, and harmful conflict. Listening to the needs of their communities, they have sought to heal division, to protect from harm, and to build stronger communities.

We will hear stories about:

- Quaker peace education locally
- services aiding people most affected by structural violence, including those seeking or denied asylum
- positive cooperation between different faiths.

We will explore some of the common threads that lead Friends to undertake this service. How are Friends working for peace without fuelling further division in our volatile society? What can we learn? And is it possible to discover joy in this work?

We will hear from Rebecca Bellamy, a member of the Quaker Peace and Social Witness staff team in Quakers in Britain.

Radical Peacemakers: Defend Our Juries

Thursday 1 May, 19.00–20.30 (online)

At Yearly Meeting, we will be asking the question, ‘How do we welcome, accept, and nurture the radical peacemaker in ourselves and others?’ In this preparation session, we will explore a real-life example of radical peacemaking in the UK through the work of Defend Our Juries. We will hear from Quaker Trudi Warner, whose silent, spirit-led action highlights the growing threat to the independence of juries, particularly in cases involving matters of conscience, such as climate protests. Together, we will reflect on the enduring relevance of Quaker history, the peace testimony, and connections to justice, truth-telling, and addressing the climate crisis.

3. Explanation of business to be taken at Yearly Meeting

3.1 Nominations and appointments

Yearly Meeting nominations and appointments

Yearly Meeting itself will nominate and appoint Friends to serve on Yearly Meeting Nominating Group and the Committee to Examine Minutes.

Yearly Meeting Nominating Group (YMNG) (see *Quaker faith & practice* 6.22)

To find out more or to nominate somebody, please complete the short form, which can be found on the Get Involved section of www.quaker.org.uk/ym, or visit the Nominations section of the Yearly Meeting planner.

You will need permission from the Friend(s) you are nominating and up-to-date contact information for them.

An online meeting of all interested Friends will be held on Saturday 24 May, 18.00–19.00 to explain the role, answer questions, and see if it is possible to nominate the final group. The nominations will then be brought to Yearly Meeting in session.

You can only nominate Friends who will be attending Yearly Meeting. A list of nominated Friends will be shared with the Yearly Meeting on the Yearly Meeting planner, and any objections should be made to Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee (at nominations@quaker.org.uk) by noon on Sunday 25 May.

Committee to Examine Minutes

Yearly Meeting will nominate and appoint Friends to serve on the Committee to Examine Minutes (*Quaker faith & practice* 6.24). This operates during Yearly Meeting and is responsible for checking the minutes at the close of each session and correcting any slight inaccuracies.

Friends can be nominated to this committee in advance of Yearly Meeting. Friends must be attending Yearly Meeting to serve, have access to a computer,

and be comfortable with working with an online document. Further information can be found at www.quaker.org.uk/ym/get-involved. The deadline for nominations is noon on Thursday 22 May. If we receive nominations for more than ten Friends, Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee will determine the names to be brought before Yearly Meeting on Friday 23 May.

Nominations from Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees

BYM Trustees nominate the Clerk of BYM Trustees and the Yearly Meeting Treasurer.

Nominations from nominating committees

For the remaining vacancies, two different nominating committees bring the names of Friends to Yearly Meeting: Central Nominations Committee and the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group.

The Friends named by these committees have been identified after a careful and prayerful process of discernment. Their names will be published in the Schedule of nominations, which will be available on the Yearly Meeting website, www.quaker.org.uk/ym, before Yearly Meeting.

If you see a problem with the service of any of the Friends nominated, you should contact:

Penny Finch, Nominations Secretary, either by email at nominations@quaker.org.uk or telephone on 020 7663 1106.

This must happen as soon as possible and in good time before the session involved.

3.2 Receipt of annual reports

Yearly Meeting is the final constitutional authority of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. Consequently, Yearly Meeting receives the annual reports of the committees appointed to carry out its business between Yearly Meetings. These reports are from the following groups:

- Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee is responsible

for planning the agenda and use of premises for each Yearly Meeting. At the beginning of each Yearly Meeting, Agenda Committee reports on the planning of that Yearly Meeting and sets the agenda in context. See *Quaker faith & practice* 6.18.

- Meeting for Sufferings is the body entrusted with the general care of matters affecting BYM in the intervals between Yearly Meetings and the making of decisions and issuing of statements in the name of BYM. See *Quaker faith & practice* 7.02–7.06.
- BYM Trustees are responsible to Yearly Meeting for the right stewardship of the centrally managed work and the assets and property of the yearly meeting. See *Quaker faith & practice* 8.17–8.20. Trustees are accountable to both Yearly Meeting and the charity regulators.
- Central Nominations Committee is responsible for bringing the names of Friends for service to both Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings. Consequently, they have an overview of the number of Friends who have offered their service and are involved in encouraging Friends to consider service. See *Quaker faith & practice* 6.21.
- Friends Trusts Ltd is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It is the denominational trust corporation for Quakers in Britain and, in this capacity, holds property and investments as custodian trustee or nominee for meetings and other bodies within BYM. It receives legacies that are to benefit some aspect of the Society or its work and manages a number of Quaker trusts. See *Quaker faith & practice* 14.45.

Friends Trusts Ltd's audit will not take place until after Yearly Meeting, so no report is included in these documents. The Annual Report will be available on the website, together with the company's annual report and financial statements when they have been approved by the relevant governance bodies. We expect BYM's annual report and accounts to be brought to Meeting for Sufferings in October 2025.

See www.quaker.org.uk/annualreport.

- Quaker Housing Trust is the yearly meeting's own national housing charity. It makes grants and loans to social housing projects. Independent of BYM funds, its income comes directly from Friends and meetings. See *Quaker faith & practice* 8.15.

Yearly Meeting Epistle

The Yearly Meeting Epistle is the letter sent from this Yearly Meeting to Friends everywhere: to other yearly meetings worldwide and to local meetings in Britain. It is sent to all local meetings in Britain, immediately after Yearly Meeting so that it can be read out at meeting for worship at the first available opportunity.

Quaker faith & practice 6.23 outlines the process for creating the epistle. The details for our blended Yearly Meeting are set out below.

Any Friend may give written advice on the content of the epistle by contacting the Epistle Drafting Committee before 17.30 on Sunday 25 May (either by placing it in the box on the information desk in Friends House or via the Epistle Drafting Committee box in the Yearly Meeting planner online).

The Epistle Drafting Committee will then produce a Draft Epistle, which will be made available to Friends on the morning of Monday 26 May (on the information desk in Friends House and on the Yearly Meeting planner online).

Comments on the content, text, style, grammar, language, etc., of the draft Epistle should be sent to the Epistle Drafting Committee no later than 12.35 on Monday 26 May.

A revised draft Epistle will be presented at the final session on Monday 26 May, 14.30–15.30, when no further revision (except perhaps excision) will be invited.

4. Agenda and notes

4.1 Preparation ahead of Yearly Meeting

Online events, including preparation for Yearly Meeting and special interest group meetings, will happen from Sunday 27 April to Saturday 3 May.

Ahead of Yearly Meeting there will also be a range of special interest meetings about Quaker work and witness offered by Quaker Recognised Bodies and some committees and work programmes of Quakers in Britain. For more details on these, see the online Yearly Meeting planner.

4.2 Opening hours

Friends House

- Friday, 12.00 cloakroom and café available
- Friday, 15.00–21.45 registration from 15.00
- Saturday, 8.00–21.45
- Sunday, 8.00–21.45
- Monday, 8.00–16.30

Café and bookshop

- Friday, 12.00–19.00
- Saturday, 08.00–19.00
- Sunday, 08.00–19.00
- Monday, 08.00–16.30

The All-age Community Hub, Waldo Williams Suite

Open throughout Yearly Meeting. There will be a host present at the following times:

- Friday, 15.00–20.00
- Saturday, 08.30–18.45
- Sunday, 08.30–18.45
- Monday, 08.30–16.00

The Library

Open for special events listed below and throughout the weekend, during the breaks between and after sessions.

- Friday 23 May, 14.00–19.00
- Saturday 24 May, 12.45–14.15 – Groups fair
- Sunday 25 May, 13.15–14.45 – Quakers in Britain fair
- Monday 26 May, 13.00–13.45 – Dining with diplomats, praying with gunmen book re-launch (blended)

Staff will have limited access to the Library archival strongrooms during Yearly Meeting. If you have research questions or contributions for the collections, please contact the Library beforehand.

4.3 Activities

Details about spaces, activities and events in Friends House can be found in the Friends House Information document.

Online socialising

Do you want to connect and build community with others planning to join Yearly Meeting online?

There will be two online sessions for facilitated socialising for Friends attending Yearly Meeting online:

Monday 28 April (during the Yearly Meeting Fringe)

Friday 23 May (at the beginning of the Yearly Meeting weekend).

Please see the Yearly Meeting planner for more details.

Worship

Online and in Friends House (Ada Salter room, except where noted)

There will be opportunities to worship (online and in Friends House) at the start and end of each day as follows:

- Friday 23 May, 21.00– 21.30, in the Large Meeting House following directly after the opening session, Epilogue, led by Yearly Meeting Elders
- Saturday 24 May, 08.30–09.00, semi-programmed worship led by Quaker World Relations Committee
- Saturday 24 May, 21.00–21.30, Epilogue, led by Yearly Meeting Elders
- Sunday 25 May, 08.30–09.30, unprogrammed worship upheld by Yearly Meeting Elders
- Sunday 25 May, 21.00–21.30, semi-programmed Epilogue led by Young Friends General Meeting.
- Monday 26 May, 08.30–09.00, semi-programmed worship led by Quaker World Relations Committee

Each worship time will be upheld by Yearly Meeting Elders. All are welcome.

A note on different ways of worshipping

Friends in different parts of the Quaker world have different ways of worshipping. For Quakers in Britain and most of Europe and Asia West Pacific, worship is unprogrammed.

Unprogrammed worship is based in silent waiting. Quakers will speak if they feel moved by God/the Spirit to offer ministry. This could be in the form of a vocal ministry, a short passage from the Bible or other text, or sometimes singing out of the silence.

Programmed worship follows a structure with music, readings, and a sermon – often with a pastor to lead the service. In other parts of the Quaker world – Africa and parts of the Americas – worship is programmed.

Semi-programmed worship is partly unprogrammed (with silence and space for those to speak who feel moved to) and partly structured worship through song, prepared ministry, and readings.

Epilogue is a time of quiet reflection and worship at the end of the day.

Early morning worship and Epilogues at Britain Yearly Meeting have often been semi-programmed, particularly if led by Friends from the programmed tradition.

Further details of worship sessions will be available on the Yearly Meeting planner.

Creative activities at Yearly Meeting

In Friends House and online

Yearly Meeting is a community made up of many parts. This year, we would like one of those parts to be actively creative. Communities that create together also build strength, unity, and fun. We learn to listen more confidently to one another as we share skills and stories. As we work, we find ways around challenges and celebrate success together.

Activities in the All-age Community Hub

There will be a variety of ways to be creative during Yearly Meeting:

- Make things to display during the outdoor silent witness.
- Learn or share skills and experience in mending clothes or making them more individual. Through small acts, this can have many consequences. It can help each of us use our own resources more sustainably. Wearing something you have fixed yourself can lead to new pleasure in old things. Mending can even be an act of quiet resistance towards fast fashion.
- Be part of making a big Quaker Quilt. Working together and learning from each other, we will make a quilt that represents what peace means to us all. Starting at this Yearly Meeting and continuing throughout the year, we encourage everyone to get involved. What does peace mean to you individually? What colours, or materials, or patterns show what peace means to the wider Quaker community, Meeting, or group you most enjoy being part of? This quilt will bring together everyone's perspectives, creating a diverse and beautiful whole.

How to prepare

- Check out these websites on quilting and craftivism: <https://new.express.adobe.com/webpage/ps30JoatHVuEc>.
- Start thinking about what peace means to you, and how you might show that in a visual way. This can include sewing, knitting, crocheting, or even using fabric pens; there is space for every way of expressing your vision.

What to bring with you to Friends House

- Fabric to add to the Quilt. This can be any material you would like to use yourself or share with others, but please be a bit restrained in how much you bring! Think of it as a bring-and-share meal and bring enough for yourself and a couple of others, not enough to feed everyone at Yearly

Meeting. Please let the organising group know what you're planning to bring by emailing ym@quaker.org.uk.

- That favourite jumper with a hole in the elbow, or your torn jeans, or the unfinished project you need the inspiration to tie together. Could now be the time you've been waiting for to finally fix it?
- If you have your own creative equipment, please be practical about what you choose to bring with you. We will have scissors, needles, and other essential equipment to share. Remember that these activities will be taking place in the All-age Community Hub, where people of all ages are very welcome. Please don't bring anything very precious or potentially dangerous, just in case.

Please see the Yearly Meeting planner for details, time-specific creative activities happening in the All-age Community Hub.

Friends joining Yearly Meeting online

There will be opportunities for online Friends to be creative together, please see the Yearly Meeting planner for more details.

Green Spirits

Saturday 24 May

Friends House Garden and Waldo Williams

The Green Spirits group, from Dartmoor in Devon, visually portray nature and biodiversity. Through theatrical and collaborative silence, they peacefully invite the public to 'see things differently.' At Yearly Meeting 2025, Friends will have opportunities to experience the Green Spirits' witness in the garden of Friends House, to meet the participants and learn more about their leadings and practice, and to go with the group to lay a wreath for the ecological cost of war at Gandhi's statue in Tavistock Square. You can read about Green Spirits in this [story on our website](#).

4.4 Events

Swarthmore Lecture: Emily Provance

'The meaning of Quaker community'

Organised by Woodbrooke

Saturday 24 May, 19.00–20.15

Woodbrooke Online and in the Large Meeting House

In her lecture, Emily will engage with the challenge of how people can live and cooperate in a community, especially when those communities are not ones that we have chosen. Emily will present a Quaker testimony of community drawn from books of discipline used across Friends' theological spectrum

and in many parts of our global community. In her lecture, Emily hopes to provide a "sense of the meeting," using the collective wisdom of our immensely diverse Society to suggest how all people – Quaker and not – can survive and thrive as an immensely diverse humankind. The Swarthmore Lecture will be held on Saturday 24 May at 19.00 in Friends House, and live-streamed via YouTube.

For more information and to sign up to receive the link for the livestream, please see www.woodbrooke.org.uk/swarthmore. There will be another opportunity to watch the Swarthmore Lecture as a YouTube Premiere on Wednesday 28 May at 19.00. Friends are invited to watch together at that time and discuss with others via YouTube's live comments. After it has premiered, the lecture will be available to watch in your own time via www.woodbrooke.org.uk/swarthmore.

The Swarthmore Lecture is part of the work of Woodbrooke.

Meet the Swarthmore Lecturer

Monday 26 May, 12.45–13.45

Online and in Benjamin Lay 3

An opportunity to join Emily Provance for a session reflecting on her lecture.

Please refer to the online Yearly Meeting planner for full details and to book.

Salter Lecture: Abimbola Johnson

Organised by Quaker Socialist Society

Sunday 25 May, 19.00–20.15

Online and in the Large Meeting House

The 2025 Salter lecturer will be Quaker lawyer Abimbola Johnson. Abimbola read law at Oxford, was called to the Bar in 2011, and has recently been appointed to chair the Independent Scrutiny & Oversight Board, which provides overview and external scrutiny of the Police Plan of Action on Inclusion and Race. Her topic will be chosen from the fields of equality, law, and policing.

Friday 23 May, 19.00–21.00: Yearly Meeting Session 1 – Opening session

1. Appointment of clerks	Central Nominations Committee nominates the following Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerks for Yearly Meeting 2025, serving until the first session of Yearly Meeting May 2026: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clerk: Adwoa Burnley, East Scotland AM• First Assistant Clerk: Fred Langridge, Sheffield & Balby AM• Second Assistant Clerk: Mary Aiston, Kingston & Wandsworth AM
2. Welcome to all	
3. All-Age Yearly Meeting	The clerk will outline what it means to be an all-age Yearly Meeting, including the age-related programmes happening in parallel with Yearly Meeting sessions, and the times when we will all come together.
4. Appointment of Committee to Examine Minutes	The names of those nominated to serve on the committee will be read out and Yearly Meeting may approve them. Friends should refer to page 11 for an explanation of the nomination process.
5. Agenda introduction	The Clerk of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee will introduce the report of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee. The report can be found in Appendix A and Friends should refer to page 11 for an explanation of the role of the committee.
6. Eldership and Pastoral Care at Yearly Meeting	
7. Central Nominations Committee	We will receive a report of the work of Central Nominations Committee (Appendix B), who are responsible for seeking names to bring to Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings for a number of committees, groups, and roles.
8. Nominations received	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Central Nominations Committee brings forward nominations as specified in Table 3 of the Schedule of Nominations. Friends should refer to the guidance on page 11.b. Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees bring forward nominations as specified in Table 2 of the Schedule of Nominations. Friends should refer to the guidance on page 11.
9. Report of Yearly Meeting Nominating Group (2024–25)	The Nominating Group appointed at Yearly Meeting 2024 brings forward nominations as specified in Table 5 of the Schedule of Nominations.
10. Nominations required	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. We ask Central Nominations Committee to bring nominations to Yearly Meeting May 2026 as specified in Table 4 of the Schedule of Nominations. Friends should refer to guidance on page 11.b. We ask Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees to bring nominations to Yearly Meeting May 2026 as specified in Table 4b of the Schedule of Nominations. Friends should refer to guidance on page 11.
11. Book of Discipline Revision update	Our Book of Discipline Revision Committee, which is working on our behalf to revise <i>Quaker faith & practice</i> , plans to bring a first draft of the new book to Yearly Meeting in 2027. We will hear a brief reflection from the Committee about their work and ideas for how Friends and meetings might prepare themselves to receive the new draft.

12. Letters of Greeting

13. Introduction to International peace work

Our testimony on peace dates from the very early days of the Society of Friends. We have a proud history and hold the Nobel Prize for Peace. Our witness continues both as individuals and as part of Britain Yearly Meeting. Quakers in Britain's Quaker Peace and Social Witness team enables, informs, and coordinates our witness. One of their programmes is the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI).

In this session, we will hear from two Friends about service in EAPPI, what prompted their call to serve, what they experienced and what they did, and how this service has enriched their lives. We might find inspiration that will assist in the Yearly Meeting's discernment over the weekend. What does love require of us as individuals and as the Society of Friends? Do we make time to consider and support what is being done in our name? Do we think prayerfully of others' witness?

Saturday 24 May, 09.30–12.30: Yearly Meeting Session 2 – Radical peacemakers

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| 14. How do we welcome, accept, and nurture the radical peacemaker in ourselves and others? | <p>In this session, we will ask: ‘How do we welcome, accept, and nurture the radical peacemaker in ourselves and others?’ In a world challenged by injustice, war, systemic racism, and a worsening climate crisis, how can we live out our peace testimony? What holds us back from acting – fear, responsibilities, or the scale of the issues – and how can we support one another to move forward in the Spirit?</p> <p>How can we, as a community, create spaces of compassion and care and support those who are arrested, prosecuted, or imprisoned for their peaceful witness? How do we contribute to a more just and sustainable world, and what does it mean for each of us to be a radical peacemaker?</p> |
| 15. Receipt of tabular statement | <p>We will formally receive the Tabular Statement printed in <i>Patterns of Membership</i> (www.quaker.org.uk/ym/documents).</p> |
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Saturday 24 May, 14.30–17.30: Yearly Meeting Session 3 – Continuing Yearly Meeting

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| 16. Planning for continuing Yearly Meeting Sessions | <p>Last year, we agreed to make changes to our structures, to lay down Meeting for Sufferings, and to move to holding continuing Yearly Meeting sessions (see YM 2024 minute 31 and minute 37 for more information).</p> <p>In this session, we will hear some updates and make some decisions on matters that were requested in YM 2024 minute 37:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will receive the terms of reference for a new Agenda Planning Committee (see Appendix C for the document, including information on how to comment on it before Yearly Meeting).• We will consider proposals for clerking arrangements for future Yearly Meeting sessions (see Appendix C for more details).• We will hear about how other plans are going, e.g. in relation to the arrangements for the appointment of representatives and for funding their expenses. <p>(Nominations to the new Agenda Planning Committee will be considered in session on Monday 26 May.)</p> |
| 17. The work of our national representative body: receipt of annual report from Meeting for Sufferings | <p>We will receive and consider a report of the work of our national representative body, Meeting for Sufferings, which acts on our behalf between Yearly Meetings. The written report can be found in Appendix D.</p> |
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Sunday 25 May, 10.30–11.30: Yearly Meeting – All-together worship

This will be a huge meeting for worship, taking place across Britain in homes, meeting places and at Friends House. We will come together as a single loving, inclusive and all-age community across the length and breadth of BYM.

As well as individuals joining online from home, local Quaker communities are invited to take part via a live link. We hope those unable to connect online will either join others connecting online locally, or worship with us together in spirit.

Preparation materials for worship will be sent to local and area meetings and those signed up to Journeys in the Spirit. We hope to provide a list of participating meetings, so those wishing to attend can check where to join at www.quaker.org.uk/ym/programme.

If you wish to join All-together worship online from home, please register for Yearly Meeting.

Sunday 25 May, 11.55–13.00: Yearly Meeting Session 4

18. **The work of our trustees: report on Trustees' work in 2024**

In this session, trustees will report on the work done by BYM's staff and committees. They will share their response to Yearly Meeting 2023's request to consider a new committee structure, and why they are not taking forward proposals for change at this stage.

We will receive a verbal report on the outturn of the previous financial year from our treasurer.

The annual report, including financial statements, will be published as a separate document later this year; due to the timing of Yearly Meeting this year, Yearly Meeting 2024 asked Meeting for Sufferings to accept the audited accounts on its behalf in 2025.

Sunday 25 May, 15.00–18.00: Yearly Meeting Session 5 – Conflict in our communities

19. **How do we as Quakers address violence and conflict in our local communities and across Britain?**

Riots in 2024 have prompted us to revisit what Quakers have done – or not done – to address violence and conflict in our own communities and across Britain. Much of the exploration of what has been done already will be happening in the preparation sessions, which we hope Friends will try to attend. This session will be mostly open discernment to identify things we can work on. We expect that it will start with a short introduction of key points from the preparation sessions which might include:

- what are some of the causes of conflict in local communities?
 - what examples of good practice can we draw from locally?
 - what examples of good practice can we draw on nationally?
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Monday 26 May, 09.30–11.00: Yearly Meeting Session 6 – Required business; as led

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| 20. | Yearly Meeting Nominating Group: appointment | |
| 21. | Yearly Meeting Nominating Group 2025–2026 | We ask Yearly Meeting Nominating Group to bring nominations to Yearly Meeting May 2026 as described in <i>Quaker faith & practice</i> 6.22. |
| 22. | Central Nominations Committee: Agenda Planning Committee appointments | Central Nominations Committee brings forward nominations as specified in Table 3 of the Schedule of Nominations. Friends should refer to the guidance on page 11 . |
| 23. | Receipt of other reports | We will formally receive the following report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quaker Housing Trust (Appendix E) |
| 24. | As led | |
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Monday 26 May, 11.30–12.30: Outdoor silent witness

Before lunch on Monday, we will hold an outdoor silent witness to communicate our message of peace to the world. We will start together in the Large Meeting House at 11.30, following which we will move in silence to stand around the outside of Friends House.

We will have printed postcards with our peace message that Friends can hand to passers-by. Friends House will provide posters and banners. Friends will be invited to create their own personalised messages of peace to the world and an inward message of peace to themselves in the All-age Community Hub earlier during the weekend.

The witness will last for 30 minutes. Everyone is very welcome to join the witness for the full time or for just a few minutes, or to come and go. The witness will include Friends House Garden, where there will be chairs set out so people who feel more comfortable sitting will be able to do so. There will be stewards to make sure everything goes smoothly.

Everyone is welcome to join this witness – but no one should feel pressured to be part of it.

Monday 26 May 14.00–15.30: Yearly Meeting Session 7 – Our all-age community, closing session

25. Receipt of the Yearly Meeting Draft Epistle

26. Minute of Record: Epistles

27. Minute of Record: Testimonies

28. Minute of Record: Friends from other yearly meetings

29. Minute of Record: Inter-church and inter-faith visitors

30. Minute of Record: Meeting for Sufferings membership changes

31. Receipt of Epistles from the Children's Programme and Young People @ Yearly Meeting

32. Receipt of Junior Yearly Meeting Epistle

33. Meeting for worship with those participating in the Children's Programme, Young People at Yearly Meeting, and Junior Yearly Meeting

34. Thanks

35. Reading and signing of the Yearly Meeting Epistle

36. **Naming of clerks for Yearly Meeting May 2026** Central Nominations Committee names the following Friends as its intended nominees to serve as clerks for Yearly Meeting in May 2026:

- Clerk, Fred Langridge, Sheffield & Balby AM
 - First Assistant Clerk, Mary Aiston, Kingston & Wandsworth AM
 - Second Assistant Clerk, Jane Harries, South Wales AM
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5 Appendices

A: Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (YMAC)

annual report

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee has, from the beginning of its planning, felt a strong leading to centre our Yearly Meeting in 2025 on our peace testimony. This rose to the surface at our first meeting with attention to YM 2025, back in September 2024, when we gathered with Friends from Quaker committees and other bodies to hear how the Spirit was moving in their work and what might be brought to Yearly Meeting. It also reflects ministry we heard at Yearly Meeting 2024.

In further discernment, we have been led to focus on the areas described in more detail in *Agenda & notes*: conflict and violence in our local communities and across Britain; radical peacemakers; and aspects of the international peace work done on our behalf. We have planned creative activities, opportunities to experience the themes of Yearly Meeting through making as well as through minuted discernment. In 2024 we held a time of silent witness outdoors, around Friends House, and this was felt to be so valuable that we're planning to do it again in 2025.

We note that Emily Provance's Swarthmore Lecture will look at the meaning of Quaker community and the challenges of cooperation, and that Abimbola Johnson's Salter Lecture will draw from the fields of law, policing and equality. We hope that our Yearly Meeting agenda will complement these topics without treading the same ground.

We have some work to do to implement our decision to move to a continuing Yearly Meeting, made last year. Many Friends have been working to take us

all from this big decision to bring proposals for its implementation. These have been agreed in principle by Meeting for Sufferings and will come to Yearly Meeting for approval. The YMAC reporting to you now will not be the committee planning the new continuing Yearly Meeting – which will begin after May 2026 – but we will share what we can to help that new committee with its work. This YMAC – a committee of about sixteen Friends – now has one final YM to plan, for May 2026.

Our committee work is not limited to discerning the agenda for Yearly Meeting. We also have responsibility, with staff support, for: preparatory materials, social opportunities, other events in Friends House during Yearly Meeting, pastoral support, communicating all of this clearly to Friends, listening to your feedback... and other tasks – including some that emerge along the way. It's hard work but very rewarding. We feel that in the community we build along the way as well as in the event of Yearly Meeting itself.

YMAC members (and clerks) are Friends of different ages and experiences and from different parts of Britain. During our planning we also meet with members of the arrangements committees of Junior Yearly Meeting and Young People @ Yearly Meeting, to keep live the links within and between our events.

We are grateful for the upholding provided by Yearly Meeting Elders throughout our planning work, and for the upholding we feel from Friends throughout and beyond our Yearly Meeting. As always, the planning only takes us part of the way, and we look forward to finding out where the Spirit leads Friends when we gather in May 2025.

B: Central Nominations Committee annual report

As a Yearly Meeting Committee, Central Nominations Committee (CNC) reports to you every year. Of necessity, this report in documents in advance is prepared well before the work about which it reports is completed. It will highlight what has been different this year, our verbal report to Yearly Meeting 2025 will contain more facts and figures and reflections on the year.

Documents in advance also contains the fruits of our labours: the *Schedule of Nominations*. The Friends who have said they are willing to serve the yearly meeting on its various committees, either for the first time or as a re-nomination. CNC has carefully considered every name, both in its search groups of two or three Friends who find the names to bring to CNC and in CNC itself – before bringing them to you for appointment. But we can get it wrong.

That is why yearly meeting appointments should not be a quick rubber stamp, but a thoughtful consideration on everyone's part. Everyone at yearly meeting will probably know at least one of the names. Please consider, are they the right person for that service and that committee? If not, please tell us before Yearly Meeting, by emailing Penny Finch, Nominations Secretary, at: nominations@quaker.org.uk. It is very difficult to withdraw an appointment, much easier not to appoint.

Not all our nominations are in the *Schedule*. CNC also finds Friends for appointment by Meeting for Sufferings and other Quaker bodies. We thank all those Friends on this schedule and those who have agreed to nomination to other Quaker bodies from the bottom of our hearts. Both the adventurous ones agreeing to serve centrally for the first time, and the ones who have come back for more.

What were differences this year? With YM 2024 being at the end of July, the time we had to find names was compressed – basically, five months from September to the start of March. In September, an unusual number of Friends asked for release from CNC, all for very good reasons. We were able to co-opt one Friend who had only just retired from the committee and agreed to return. Despite this very helpful addition, this year CNC was smaller than desirable. Particularly as we had to find Friends to take forward the decision to move to a continuing YM.

We have pressed forward with strategies to bring a

greater diversity of Friends to you for appointment. We hope to bring younger and newer Friends into central work and one of our number acts as a link between young Friends' groups and CNC. We have found that very useful because a smaller proportion of the 18-24 age group complete a Quaker Service Information Form offering service compared with other age groups. We are also starting to talk to the four main committees about how their expectations around time commitments and pre-existing experience could be modified to enable younger and newer Friends to join in their work. We have contacted Quaker groups such as the Quaker Disabilities and Equalities Group, Black, Brown People of Colour Fellowship and some Quaker Recognised Bodies to discover if they could use their structures to bring names to us for consideration. That work is in its early stages.

We are making greater efforts to look for you. But you can come to us. The Quaker Service Information Form (QSIF) on the website at www.quaker.org.uk/give-time has been renewed. It is easier to use. We could improve our explanation of what might happen after it has been filled in, but we can assure you everything is read at some point. We need you to complete a QSIF and tell CNC about yourself, your experience and what you are interested in. And this applies not only to 'members' but also attenders, as CNC can now approach attenders for a wide range of roles. We have yet to see that step towards diversity reflected in the QSIFs we receive.

Completing a QSIF doesn't mean we will immediately contact you. It might be some time before the jigsaw of appointments has a space with your shape. When we do contact you, you don't have to agree to serve. Your own discernment is as important a part of the process as ours. We don't hound people or try to persuade them to agree when they say no.

This might be the place to say that recent analysis of service at LM, AM and YM levels shows that central work for which CNC find names takes up 22% of all the service Friends give to keep Britain Yearly Meeting functioning. Most service happens at Area and Local level.

Just six big Area Meetings provide a fifth of QSIFs. Please, nomination committees look around your meetings and ask yourselves "Who would benefit from serving at a national level? And who do national committees need to hear from?" See if you can persuade those Friends to fill in a QSIF.

What a breadth of experience these QSIFs reveal. Between them, these Friends speak 37 different languages. There are 26 published authors, citing 50+

works between them. There are the founders and directors of companies; Friends who have never had paid employment; Friends who have been to prison; Friends who are prison chaplains; Friends who are ambitious;

Friends who are modest; Friends who are proud of their careers; Friends who are willing to do more.

Finally, CNC's role is to serve the committees to which it nominates. We hope our nominations and your appointments help to build community within each committee. We would encourage committee clerks to talk to us proactively about the sort of Friends they need – even to suggest names. As Peter says in his first letter, “like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God”. We hope to build for yearly meeting committees of living stones.

Gill Greenfield and David Lewis
Clerks, Central Nominations Committee

C: Planning for continuing Yearly Meeting Sessions

Terms of reference for a new agenda planning committee and clerking arrangements for future Yearly Meeting Sessions

YM 2024 [minute 37](#) asked the Recording Clerk to bring draft terms of reference for a new agenda planning committee to Meeting for Sufferings in December 2024 so that nominations could be sought before the terms of reference were finally laid before Yearly Meeting in session in 2025 for adoption. Minute 37 also asked for these terms of reference to include a mechanism for the appointment of a clerking team for the new agenda planning committee and the continuing Yearly Meeting.

Meeting for Sufferings [minute 24/12/11](#) accepted a draft in principle to be used by Central Nominations Committee in its search for clerks and members of agenda committee. The Recording Clerk has received some further comments on that agreed draft and has made some small changes to reflect the issues raised. To avoid confusion, especially during the transition period when two agenda committees are at work, the new committee will be known as the Agenda Planning Committee for Yearly Meeting.

Section 7 of the terms of reference deals with the appointment of clerks for Yearly Meeting Sessions (not for agenda committee). Up to now, the Yearly Meeting clerks have also been asked to clerk the Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (YMAC). The new Agenda Planning Committee for Yearly Meeting will have its own clerk and assistant clerk. So that the clerking teams for the agenda committee and the Yearly Meeting can work closely together, the size of the Yearly Meeting clerking team will be reduced from three to two. This change will happen during 2026, as we move to hold more frequent sessions.

The proposed draft terms of reference below are now before the Yearly Meeting for acceptance. It can be difficult to address amendments to a text in a Yearly Meeting business session so if any Friend needs to raise any issues about the draft they should email rco@quaker.org.uk as soon as possible.

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

Terms of reference for the Agenda Planning Committee for Yearly Meeting

1. Summary of purpose

Agenda Planning Committee:

receives minutes and other communications from meetings, Quaker communities and other bodies;

- pays attention to the Spirit moving through Britain Yearly Meeting, noting what issues may need discernment by the Yearly Meeting in session;
- liaises with committees and other groups to understand their work and how it may relate to current or potential Yearly Meeting business;
- tests potential items of business to discern whether they are ready to come to Yearly Meeting and suggests further testing if they are not yet ready;
- discerns and plans the agenda for every session of Yearly Meeting;
- ensures appropriate information about Yearly Meeting sessions is made available to Friends in advance;
- recommends dates & venues for Yearly Meeting sessions, including residential sessions, to Yearly Meeting (which will make the final decision);
- supports the right holding of Yearly Meeting sessions, including by ensuring that there are adequate arrangements for eldership and pastoral care;
- does anything that Yearly Meeting in session may from time to time ask it to do.

2. Membership

2.1 Agenda Planning Committee shall consist of the following members appointed by Yearly Meeting on the nomination of Central Nominations Committee:

a clerk

an assistant clerk

nine other members

In addition, all serving and nominate clerks and assistant clerks of Yearly Meeting may attend Agenda Planning Committee. The clerks of Yearly Meeting shall between them ensure that at least one of their number is present for each meeting of Agenda

Planning Committee.

If the clerk or assistant clerk of Agenda Planning Committee is temporarily unavailable and a Friend is needed to serve in their place, then Agenda Planning Committee may appoint one of its own members to serve. If the absence continues and a request for release is made, Agenda Planning Committee shall report this to the next session of Yearly Meeting.

The normal term of service for the clerks of Agenda Planning Committee shall be three years. The maximum possible total term of service as clerk and/or assistant clerk without a break shall be six years.

The normal term of service for appointed members of Agenda Planning Committee shall be two years. Reappointment up to two times is possible, giving a maximum possible total term of service of six years. A member who has served for six years may exceptionally be appointed to further service as clerk or assistant clerk.

2.2 Agenda Planning Committee may invite representatives of other committees, or other Friends, to attend meetings.

2.3 The clerk to Britain Yearly Meeting trustees, or another trustee designated by the clerk, shall be permitted to attend meetings of Agenda Planning Committee as required.

2.4 The Recording Clerk shall appoint a member of staff to act as secretary to Agenda Planning Committee.

2.5 The Recording Clerk or their designate shall normally attend every meeting of Agenda Planning Committee.

2.6 A member of staff with responsibility for the Yearly Meeting programmes for children and young people shall normally attend every meeting of Agenda Planning Committee.

2.7 Other members of staff may be asked to attend by invitation of the clerk of Agenda Planning Committee.

3. Duties and responsibilities

3.1 Agenda Planning Committee discerns and plans the overall agenda for Yearly Meeting.

3.2 For each session of Yearly Meeting, Agenda Planning Committee will prepare a draft agenda for acceptance by the meeting.

3.2.1 In considering items for the agenda, Agenda Planning Committee will consider:

required business notified to it, e.g. by the Recording Clerk;

- continued business from previous Yearly Meeting

sessions;

- any minutes of Yearly Meeting;
- any minutes received from area meetings, general meetings, central and standing committees, BYM trustees, Quaker Recognised Bodies or other bodies permitted to communicate by minute with Agenda Planning Committee;
- suggestions made during Agenda Planning Committee meetings.

3.2.2 In addition to considering what items might be suitable for inclusion in a Yearly Meeting agenda, Agenda Planning Committee will consider what time the Yearly Meeting has available, and how possible items might fit into that time.

3.2.3 Over the course of a 12-month period, the agenda for Yearly Meeting sessions will involve a mix of business sessions (being meetings for worship for business where Friends may be invited to hear reports, explore topics and/or to make decisions), other worship time (where business items are not under direct consideration), and time spent in community with others (for example in discussion groups, activities or having fun together). Agenda Planning Committee will keep in mind the purposes of Yearly Meeting sessions, as recorded in our book of discipline, which include decision-making, learning together, seeking and offering inspiration, hearing calls to action, and being in community.

3.2.4 Agenda Planning Committee will at any one time aim to keep an overview of the next few years, looking beyond the immediately upcoming Yearly Meeting and noting in outline what might come to future sessions of Yearly Meeting.

3.3 Agenda Planning Committee will agree a process to be followed upon receipt of any minute from a Quaker meeting, committee or other body. This agreed process will include a process for testing and seasoning any business that the sending body has proposed as suitable for exploration in a Yearly Meeting session. Agenda Planning Committee will report on its agreed process to Yearly Meeting in May 2026. Following such a report a description of the process will be appended to these terms of reference.

3.4 Where necessary, Agenda Planning Committee will arrange for items of business to be appropriately introduced and will liaise with any committees or groups that have relevant expertise. Agenda Planning Committee will ensure that any introducers have adequate support and will aim for a diversity of voices.

3.5 Agenda Planning Committee will ensure that appropriate information about Yearly Meeting sessions is made available to Friends in advance. This will include information forming part of the formal proceedings of the Yearly Meeting (published as 'documents in advance'), and may include other information, e.g. pages for the website, explanatory videos, etc. Agenda Planning Committee will agree deadlines with staff for the sharing of such information. Where appropriate, Agenda Planning Committee will work with staff and with existing committees or groups who have been involved in the development of the issue in question.

3.6 Agenda Planning Committee will work with the staff and volunteers co-ordinating the programmes for children and young people to ensure that the agendas for all ages are appropriately integrated. Opportunities for all-age sessions should be sought, while recognising that not all age groups will have the same needs or interests.

3.7 Agenda Planning Committee will work with staff to ensure that Yearly Meeting sessions are inclusive and accessible for as many Friends as possible.

3.8 Agenda Planning Committee will promote attendance at Yearly Meeting sessions and will monitor patterns of attendance, including of representatives. If appropriate, Agenda Planning Committee will propose changes to the arrangements for Yearly Meeting and/or the system of representation for decision by Yearly Meeting.

3.9 Agenda Planning Committee may permit any suitable activities (such as public lectures or organised vigils) to take place at the time of Yearly Meeting. If any such activities are organised then Agenda Planning Committee will liaise with the organisers and give clear instructions for their holding.

3.10 Agenda Planning Committee will delegate practical arrangements for Yearly Meeting (such as the provision of rooms, catering, accommodation, etc.) to staff. The secretary will ensure that relevant information is shared with Agenda Planning Committee as they plan and develop the Yearly Meeting agenda.

3.11 Agenda Planning Committee will have the power to delegate any aspect of the implementation of its

decisions to the Recording Clerk, the secretary to Agenda Planning Committee, or other members of staff suggested by them.

3.12 Agenda Planning Committee will ensure that there is an evaluation after every Yearly Meeting. Each evaluation will specifically include questions relating to accessibility and to inclusion. All feedback received through the evaluations will be noted and considered. Where feedback is contradictory then consideration will be given to how to balance different needs.

3.13 Agenda Planning Committee will liaise as required, normally through the Recording Clerk, with Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, who will ensure an appropriate budget for Yearly Meeting is in place and who will address and be responsible for all aspects of legal compliance (including safeguarding, health and safety, employment issues and risk).

4. Frequency of meetings

Agenda Planning Committee shall meet as frequently as needed, with meetings fitting in the calendar agreed with the Recording Clerk. In general, it shall meet at least once between every Yearly Meeting session.

5. Subsidiary bodies

Agenda Planning Committee may set up and lay down subcommittees and working groups, which shall report to Agenda Planning Committee regularly and shall have terms of reference and membership determined by Agenda Planning Committee. Where appropriate, Agenda Planning Committee may appoint Friends from outside its own membership to serve on such groups.

6. Authority & accountability

6.1 Agenda Planning Committee shall work within these terms of reference under the authority of minute xx of Yearly Meeting 2025.

6.2 Agenda Planning Committee is accountable to Yearly Meeting in session.

6.3 Agenda Planning Committee shall report to Yearly Meeting at least once during the calendar year.

7. Mechanism for the appointment of a clerking team for Yearly Meeting & Agenda Planning Committee (as required by YM 2024 minute 37)

7.1 Number of clerks

7.1.1 Following the implementation date for these terms of reference there shall be two clerks of Yearly Meeting, the clerk and assistant clerk, appointed by Yearly Meeting on the nomination of Central Nominations Committee.

In an emergency or short-term absence of the clerk or assistant clerk of Yearly Meeting, the Yearly Meeting may appoint an additional member of the clerking team on the nomination of Central Nominations

Committee.

7.1.2 There will be two clerks of Agenda Planning Committee, the clerk and assistant clerk, appointed by Yearly Meeting on the nomination of Central Nominations Committee.

7.1.3 At least one clerk of Yearly Meeting will be present at all meetings of Agenda Planning Committee and at least one clerk of Agenda Planning Committee will be present at all sessions of Yearly Meeting.

7.1.4 The clerk and/or assistant clerk of Agenda Planning Committee may assist the clerks of Yearly Meeting by sitting at the clerks' table during sessions of Yearly Meeting and making notes, giving notices, or doing such other tasks as shall be agreed between them.

7.2 Appointment of clerks of Yearly Meeting and Agenda Planning Committee

7.2.1 Clerks will normally be appointed to serve for three calendar years at a time. For continuous service starting after 1 January 2027, the maximum possible total term of service as clerk and/or assistant clerk without a break shall normally be six years.

7.2.2 Clerks will normally be appointed to terms that start and end with the calendar year.

7.2.3 Clerks will normally be appointed at a Yearly Meeting session during the calendar year before their term of service is due to start.

8. Review

These terms of reference will be reviewed as needed and by no later than 31 December 2031.

D: Meeting for Sufferings annual report

This report covers the work of Meeting for Sufferings (Meeting for Sufferings) during 2024. October 2024 was the first meeting of a new triennium.

Our experience of being a Quaker in Britain might be focused on the life of our local Quaker meeting, and expanded beyond that by engaging with Friends at our area meeting. We might find our knowledge of the bigger picture of Quaker life in Britain fragmented and confusing. But our Meeting for Sufferings representatives can help our area meeting build up a fuller picture of what is going on across the country, for all seventy area meetings are represented at Meeting for Sufferings, as are Yearly Meeting Trustees, Central Committees and other Quaker bodies. Thus Meeting for Sufferings is a conduit for communication between all layers of Quaker life in Britain.

Meeting for Sufferings meets four times a year and its tasks and responsibilities are listed in *Quaker faith and practice* 7.02. They are carried out methodically and with care. Meticulous records are kept so that business items don't fall through the net. We have a forward plan, we know what reports we have received and when the next ones are due. This may seem very mechanical, but I am describing the work of a house well run, ready to support our spiritual life.

Prayerful worship, upheld by our elders, underpins all Meeting for Sufferings' discernment. At this time of change it is important for us to know experientially that our decisions are coming from the leadings of a gathered meeting. We hope that those who are not present to experience this clarity will uphold and trust us as we carry out our task. Here is a glimpse of our work in 2024.

Moving towards a simpler church

At this time of transformation to a simpler church, Meeting for Sufferings is grappling with proposals for changes to our structures and practices aimed at sustaining our worship and witness now and in years to come.

The Group to Review Yearly Meeting, Yearly Meeting Gathering and Meeting for Sufferings reported to Meeting for Sufferings in March. We were grateful for their thorough review and carefully prepared report, which presented a clear proposal that Meeting for Sufferings should be laid down and there should be a continuing Yearly Meeting four times a year to deal with the business currently handled by Meeting

for Sufferings and Yearly Meeting. After prayerful discernment, whilst acknowledging our sadness at the laying down of Meeting for Sufferings, we endorsed the report, which was subsequently agreed at Yearly Meeting in July. Meeting for Sufferings will be laid down the end of Yearly Meeting May 2026.

Revision of the book of discipline

The Book of Discipline Revision Committee is under the care of Meeting for Sufferings. In their annual report we heard that their work is progressing well and the first draft of the revised *Quaker faith and practice* is expected to come to a Yearly Meeting session in 2027. The committee aims to bring the complete and final text to a session of Yearly Meeting in 2030, for adoption.

Changes are happening to some sections of *Quaker faith and practice* now. While a new book of discipline is being prepared, Yearly Meeting delegated responsibility for factual and minor amendments to Meeting for Sufferings. In 2024, two such changes were made:

- A new paragraph was added to Chapter 12 explaining that all area meetings have been asked to stop using the term 'overseer' for those responsible for pastoral care, but the many references to 'overseer' in the current edition of *Quaker faith & practice* will remain. The term will not be used in the new book.
- *Quaker faith & practice* was updated to reflect the Meeting for Sufferings decision in December 2023 to allow a choice of pronouns in the marriage declaration. Changes to the wording of the marriage declaration itself can only be made by Yearly Meeting.

Caring for our communities and the book of discipline

Quaker Life Central Committee and Meeting for Sufferings continue to develop their discernment on the meaning of membership and related issues. Meeting for Sufferings considered whether Friends not in formal membership might be appointed to area and local meeting roles, including trustees and treasurers. Our discernment was that this is already the practice in many meetings and our discipline needs to align with it. We are recommending this change to Yearly Meeting, with the caveat that legal advice be taken on the implications for trustees and treasurers

Engaging with area meetings

During the year, Meeting for Sufferings received 17 minutes from area meetings, covering a range of matters. Initially, these go to Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group for a decision on the next appropriate steps. A record is kept of the minute and the actions taken, and this is updated until the matter raised has been addressed. The area meeting is kept informed of the process.

Nearly forty area meetings responded to the consultation on possible changes to the Quaker marriage declaration. Friends were not of one mind. Responses were considered at Meeting for Sufferings in October. In worship sharing, we listened deeply to heart-felt ministry but there was no settled view on changes to the declaration. We were clear that marriage, in Quaker understanding, is a commitment of the couple held in the Light, witnessed by the supporting meeting. We asked Quaker Life Central Committee to do further work on this.

The online Meeting for Sufferings preparation session in June was open to all Friends. In the run-up to the forthcoming General Election, it provided an opportunity for the BYM advocacy and public relations team to speak about support and resources available to help Friends engage with constituency candidates on Quaker issues.

Area meeting compliance

This was the first year of the new arrangements for checking area and general meeting compliance with various responsibilities required of charitable bodies, whereby Quaker Life Central Committee oversees the annual return from AMs and GMs and reports on this to Meeting for Sufferings.

In June, we received a report from Quaker Life Central Committee on area meeting compliance in 2023. At the time of the report, 62 out of 73 returns had been received and the Recording Clerk was seeking assurance from the remaining meetings that they were fulfilling their legal obligations. The bulk of meetings have fully met their responsibilities as charities and all area meetings have safeguarding and health and safety policies, which were being regularly reviewed by trustees. However, a few meetings are not registered with a third-party Safeguarding Advisory body. There is no place for complacency: 21 area meetings reported having safeguarding concerns in 2023. As far as other policies are concerned, about half of area meetings have a complaints policy, fire safety policy and code of conduct for employees and volunteers. Again, about half of area meetings regularly consider and manage their key risks. Noted concerns regarding a few meetings include tardiness in reporting to the charity regulator, poor recording

of key information, and difficulty finding Friends to serve in key posts.

This new process of reporting is working well and is highlighting areas of weakness, which we have asked Quaker Life Central Committee to address. We are hopeful that this will lead to improvement year-on-year. We hope to update Friends at Yearly Meeting in May with the results from 2024.

Hearing about our central work

At each Meeting for Sufferings we receive a report from Trustees on their work. Meeting for Sufferings acknowledged the faithful stewardship they continue to offer us. This year, we heard from Central Nominations Committee. In 2024 Meeting for Sufferings appointed Friends to 68 central roles. We are mindful that they need our prayerful support.

Living out our faith in the world

One of the tasks of Meeting for Sufferings is to maintain the Prison and Court Register, recording names of Friends whose witness has led them to break the law, and details of their actions. In 2024, there were eight entries in the register. Most of this witness was aimed at stopping climate chaos.

Young Friends General Meeting sent a minute to Meeting for Sufferings challenging the language used by BYM to describe the situation in Palestine and Israel. We consulted QPSW and others on this. Seeking to honour our commitment to speak truth in love, we acknowledged the sensitivities of the situation, and the potential to cause hurt. Going back to basics, we reaffirmed that ultimately our task is to engage in peace building focused on ending the illegal occupation and seeking justice for all who live there and the surrounding region. In the current situation, our primary role is to bear witness and to state the problem clearly and honestly. After much prayerful consideration, we were led to align ourselves with the ruling of the International Court of Justice, that the term apartheid is an accurate description of the situation in occupied Palestine and that there is a plausible risk of genocide in Gaza.

We were impressed with BYM Reparations Group's approach to their task and progress during their first year. The group are keen to engage with Friends and to share their findings about British Quaker involvement in transatlantic chattel slavery, colonialism, and economic exploitation.

Quaker Recognised Bodies

A QRB is an independent group where concerned Friends explore a common interest, seek affirmation,

or carry out witness. Meeting for Sufferings is responsible for the registration of Quaker Recognised Bodies. The process of registration and re-registration is being reviewed.

Beyond these shores

The full picture of Quaker life and work includes what Quakers are doing across the world. Friends attending the World Plenary Meeting 2024 had the opportunity to share this in person and through the epistle. We were reminded in the report from Quaker World Relations Committee of the spiritual call from the World Plenary to engage further with its themes of Ubuntu, care for creation, and healing historical injustices.

We connect with other European Yearly Meetings by sending representatives and in 2024, we received epistles from Yearly Meetings in Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Post Brexit, BYM continues to be represented on Quaker Council for European Affairs General Assembly. We heard about current priorities of the work of QCEA, notably migration and peace, climate justice and peace, and dialogues for transformation. In solidarity with Quakers in other European countries, we believe another world is possible and together we can try to build it.

This report summarises the faithful contributions of many Friends to help sustain the life and work of Quakers in Britain.

“Our discipline and structures do not exist by themselves. The life of our Society is made up of the lives of its members. The faithfulness of our Society consists in the faithfulness of each and all of us. And none of us can expect ‘the Society’ to be more faithful, more committed, more loving, than we ourselves are prepared to be.”

Quaker faith & practice,
Chapter 18, Faithful lives

Elizabeth Allen
Meeting for Sufferings Assistant Clerk

E: Quaker Housing Trust annual report

Background

The Quaker Housing Trust (QHT) was set up by Yearly Meeting in 1967 to take forward Friends' concerns on housing and homelessness. With donations from Friends, QHT provides grants and loans for social housing projects for those in genuine housing need. This is typically support to small and medium-sized charities to provide housing for vulnerable people, particularly those at time of transitions in their lives. QHT supports projects which provide comfortable, secure and long-term homes, built to high energy efficiency standards, both so running costs for tenants are lower, but also fulfilling our sustainability testimony.

Work of the Quaker Housing Trust in 2024

In 2024 the Quaker Housing Trust paid out seven awards totalling £98,379 to Arisaig, Ella's; East Kent Area Meeting for Canterbury Refugee House; Consolidated Almshouse Charity of Swanscombe and Deptford Ragged Trust. Two Quaker asset feasibility studies for the provision of affordable housing were made to West of Scotland Area Meeting and North Somerset Area Meeting.

We are working with a further ten organisations who have been offered grants and loans totalling £135,000.

The Quaker Housing Trust has three separate funding programmes. The main programme supports projects for building or refurbishing accommodation to provide long-term homes to people at transition points in their lives. The Audrey Deacon legacy has been used to support similar projects for older people. Additionally, QHT supports projects at an early stage, working with organisations to strengthen them and prepare them to undertake a project delivering new or refurbished homes. These feasibility grants are limited to £6000 and can focus on environment assessment or financial feasibility. Our funding programmes are oversubscribed. There are brilliant charities out there creating housing and we would like to support more of them. There has been a significant fall in donations made by Meetings and Friends in recent years, which severely limits our ability to make awards. Twelve meetings held collections for Quaker Housing, however, most of our funds come from repaid loans from earlier awards; in this way, a single donation can fund multiple projects.

We would like Friends to consider their own housing

position and their ability to help those in housing need through donating to QHT. Regular donations would increase the number of projects we can fund. Leaving a legacy to QHT would allow Friends to ensure their fortunate housing position can be used to house people who are less fortunate.

Fundraising and awareness raising

Two key focuses for 2024 and into 2025 are fundraising – to ensure we can continue to support as many projects as possible – and awareness raising. We are regularly told by Quakers that they had not heard of us before and so we are investing time in developing better communications with Local and Area Meetings to share information about who we are and what we do with Quakers.

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

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

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

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

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

Registered charity number 1127633

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