

# Yearly Meeting: Accessibility statement

We want to make Yearly Meeting (YM) an accessible and inclusive event. You can help us by letting us know your needs. These are some of the things we are doing to support wider access to YM:

- When you register to attend Yearly Meeting, please indicate any access needs on your booking form. We will use this information to notify the facilitators of events you are attending so that they are aware.
- All event facilitators are provided with guidance on how to ensure their event is accessible to ensure that you have the most inclusive experience possible. [See the guidance \(PDF\)](#).
- We will have a helpdesk in any meetings we organise who can be contacted via the chat function.
- If you need to discuss your access needs we encourage you either to contact us or to record on your booking form that you would like a staff call.

## Attending in Friends House

- All rooms in Friends House that are in use during Yearly Meeting have step free access.
- There is an induction loop in The Light (Large Meeting House) which will be available during all Yearly Meeting Sessions. There are loop facilities in other rooms. If you need these, please let us know.
- Speech to text transcription (captions) are also available during Yearly Meeting.
- For those who need to move around more easily, or to lie down, the overflow room will stream all Yearly Meeting sessions and provide space for you to do this.
- There is always a Quiet Room available which also has camp beds and mats to lie down on.
- Our pastoral support Friends are on hand to welcome and support Friends, old and new. Pastoral support Friends provide a listening ear and seek to signpost to support where relevant. They cannot provide long-term befriending or support.
- The Community Hub will provide a space to take time out of Yearly Meeting sessions where you can relax by yourself or socialise with others.

## Toilet facilities at Friends House

All our public facilities are trans inclusive. This means that toilets labelled with a 'female' sign are intended for cis women, trans women, and non-binary and intersex people for whom this toilet is the best aligned with their lived experience. Toilets labelled with a 'male' sign are intended for cis men, trans men, and non-binary and intersex people for whom this toilet is the best aligned with their lived experience.

We also have self-contained facilities (cubicles with toilet and washbasin) on the first and second floors.

## For those with visual impairment

In meetings, facilitators have been asked to ensure they describe any visual elements orally, for those who cannot see these. Documents will be made available in a range of formats (see below). We have tried to ensure good colour contrast on our website, the YM Planner and in our documents.

## Support for blind screen reader users

There is space on the registration form to inform us that you usually use a screen reader.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to make the online Yearly Meeting Planner accessible to screen readers. If you use a screen reader, we will provide details in an alternative format and assist you with your booking. In Yearly Meeting sessions and preparatory sessions, we will limit online chat to communication with the hosts only. Where we know a screen reader user is attending an event, we will notify the host of this so that they can consider doing likewise.

## Document formats

All documents will be made available as home printable PDFs on the Yearly Meeting website. Other formats are available on request (e.g. Word, large print, 'accessible' PDF). Please let us know your needs at the time of booking.

## For those with hearing impairment

For onsite events we will always get speakers to use a microphone. For online events, where possible we will get scheduled speakers to use a headset with a built-in microphone to reduce background noise and improve sound quality. We will ask people to stay muted unless they are speaking and remind people to speak clearly, without rushing so that you have time to take in what they say and to assist the captioner.

## Speech to text transcription (captions)

Many meetings will be held on Zoom. Captions will be available at every Yearly Meeting session, and we ask those running other events to do the same.

All Yearly Meeting Sessions, the preparatory sessions, and the regular lectures (Swarthmore, Salter) will be captioned by professional captioners. This can be viewed via the closed caption button in Zoom or (for Yearly Meeting sessions) via a standalone link called StreamText. You may prefer captions in Zoom because the text is in the same window as the meeting; however, it has a delay and is always at the bottom of the screen. StreamText is independent of Zoom, visually customisable (e.g., size and colour of text) and there is less delay. You will be able to switch between these options if you choose. We will make a link to StreamText available in all sessions where this is provided, and in the event description in the YM Planner.

## Times and breaks during sessions

We understand that spending prolonged periods of time in online meetings can be challenging. We have therefore structured the programme to allow for breaks between sessions. No event organised by Britain Yearly Meeting will last longer than 90 minutes without a break.

The start and end time of all events and sessions is stated in the YM Planner. We will stick to the times stated.

Use of your camera when using Zoom allows us to see each other, replicating the experience of sitting together. However, we recognise that sometimes keeping one's camera permanently on can be a challenge. We ask that you ensure your full name and Quaker worshipping group is noted in your screen name.

There is also the option to join Yearly Meeting Sessions through the livestream in the Overflow Room (in Friends House), via the YouTube livestream, or by following the StreamText feed (see speech to text transcription). This will eliminate any use of your camera and microphone, though you will not be able to give vocal ministry.

## Taking care of yourself:

We encourage everyone to only participate in as much of Yearly Meeting as they can comfortably manage. Ensure you remain hydrated and eat as you need to, particularly if you are managing health conditions such as diabetes. Note: food and drinks (other than bottles of water) are not allowed in the Large Meeting House. You are not required to attend all Yearly Meeting sessions.

## Help with the technology (e.g., using Zoom, the YM Planner)

We are aware that some people are less experienced at using online services and may find this challenging. We hope that for many Friends, there will be people local to you (e.g. in your Meeting) who will be able to help you. However, we recognise that some people will need additional support. We will provide technical support via the Yearly Meeting Help Desk, both in advance of YM and during YM. For setting up your computer/device, AbilityNet gives instructions on setting up your technology to suit your needs <https://mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk/>

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