

# **YORK AREA QUAKER MEETING**

## **ROLE DESCRIPTIONS FOR AREA MEETING SERVICE**

This guide is for all Friends in York Area Meeting who are interested in widening their involvement and commitment beyond their Local Meeting.

It will be particularly useful to Area Meeting Nominations Committee and to Friends approached by them, but may also serve to provide a general overview of how Area Meeting is run and perhaps inspire individual Friends to play a fuller part in it.

Roles are listed in alphabetical order.

*York Area Meeting Nominations Committee, June 2019*

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## **Archivist**

The Area Meeting archivist has ultimate responsibility for storage and archiving of all the Local and Area Meeting papers and ensuring that the right ones are kept at Friargate and/or sent to the Brotherton Library.

### **Duties include:**

- 1 To oversee the correct keeping and safe storage of records within the AM
- 2 To ensure that appropriate records are presented in a manner satisfactory for archiving
- 3 To oversee their retention and eventual archiving at the Brotherton Library
- 4 To advise on the disposal of papers (what can be thrown away)
- 5 To advise those officers who are producing records on such matters as paper and ink, printing and binding, electronic storage and backup.
- 6 To liaise effectively with both Friends House library and Area Meeting.

## **AM Assistant Clerk**

The assistant clerk shares with the clerk responsibility for the right holding of Area Meeting and for necessary administration. The role has training value, but those appointed should not assume that they will become the next clerk.

The list of duties below may be varied by negotiation with the clerk.

- 1 To assist the clerk with planning of the Area Meeting sessions and preparation of agendas
- 2 To ensure that agendas and supporting papers are placed on the AM website and circulated through our Local Meeting clerks

- 3 To assist with drafting minutes at the table and completing the final version after the meeting.
- 4 To circulate the completed minutes
- 5 To attend either AM Trustees or AM nominations
- 6 To maintain lists of current AM appointments
- 7 To maintain a list of current agreed policies affecting the conduct of our affairs
- 8 To liaise with the archivist on the preparation of records for current use and for archiving
- 9 To maintain and update the Index of AM minutes.

## **AM Clerk**

The Area Meeting clerk has overall responsibility for the right holding of Area Meeting and ensuring that the meeting fulfils its responsibilities in accordance with Quaker Faith and Practice. The visible part of the clerk's job is to conduct business, discern 'the sense of the meeting' and draft minutes, but the clerk also does quite a lot of administration behind the scenes. Some of the work will be done by the assistant clerk, (see separate job description), and the remaining duties could be divided between two co-clerks.

### **Specific Duties:**

- 1 To Receive and prioritise minutes and correspondence, replying to it and delegating where needed
- 2 To plan the AM programme of speakers and activities for the year; the arrangement of individual events can be delegated
- 3 To arrange for the production and presentation of reports, ensuring copies of written reports are received before Area Meeting
- 4 To Prepare and send out agendas

- 5 With the support of elders, to conduct the business at the table in a spirit of worship and maintain proper discipline
- 6 To draft minutes, both in advance and at the table during Area Meeting
- 7 To send out the finished minutes and reports to LM clerks and others on the distribution list.
- 8 To Convey AM decisions in writing to anyone else who needs to know them
- 9 To attend Trustees' meetings (non-Trustee ex-officio), and Nominations Committee
- 10 To index and file minutes and reports and keep records up to date.
- 11 To take responsibility for data protection throughout the Area Meeting
- 12 To act as criminal records verifier
- 13

### **Requirements for the job**

The clerk of Area Meeting must be a member of the Religious Society of Friends, be thoroughly familiar with Quaker business method and have some knowledge of Quaker structures. Previous clerking experience is desirable.

### **Clerk of AM Trustees**

*The duties of trustees are set out later. This section contains a detailed description of the duties of the Clerk of Trustees.*

*The Clerk of Trustees is clerk in the Quaker sense and also Chair, Secretary and Chief Officer as necessary in terms of relations with statutory bodies.*

### **Duties**

- 1 To offer guidance to the Trustee body in terms of compliance with the spirit and letter of:
  - Quaker Faith & Practice
  - The Memorandum & Articles of Association - the legal document governing the activities of York Area Quaker Meeting Ltd.

- The Memorandum of Understanding (outlining the roles of Trustees, Area Meeting and Local Meetings)
  - Relevant legislation
- 2 To keep an overview of the work of Trustees
  - 3 To co-ordinate the work of any Co-Clerks or Assistant Clerks
  - 4 To carry out necessary tasks (to ensure these tasks are carried out where clerking is shared):
    - 4.1 Meetings of Trustees
      - 4.1.1 Preparation
        - Inviting Trustees to send potential agenda items and supporting documents; • Drawing up an agenda which also includes relevant items from the Calendar of regular items and from the Policy Review schedule;
        - Making the agenda and supporting documents available to all Trustees
      - 4.1.2 At the meeting
 

Clerking the meeting
      - 4.1.3 After the meeting
        - Circulating the minutes to all Trustees, the Area and Local Meeting Clerks;
        - Writing a summary report for “Quakevine” and the York Quakers website; and
        - Carrying out actions agreed in the meeting
    - 4.2 The Annual Report of Trustees –
 

Preparing the draft report for circulation to Trustees with the papers for the June meeting

Making the amendments agreed in the meeting

Signing the report

Sending the report with the Financial Statements to the Charity Commission, Companies House, Friends House, Quaker Stewardship Committee and the Friend managing the York Quakers website
    - 4.3 Providing non-financial information to the auditors
    - 4.4 Charity Commission and Companies House
      - 4.4.1 Notifying within ten working days any changes to the Trustee body
      - 4.4.2 Completing annual returns
    - 4.5 Reporting annually to Area Meeting in session
    - 4.6 Updating and maintaining the electronic record of Trustee minutes, associated documents and relevant papers

## 4.7 Area Meeting and Local Meetings

4.7.1 Reviewing the minutes of Area and Local Meetings for Business in order to alert Trustees to any matters of direct relevance to the work of Trustees

4.7.2 Offering advice to Local Meeting Clerks in respect of the areas of competence listed in the Memorandum of Understanding

### **Regular items for Trustees' meetings and for Clerk**

**Note:** References to the February, June and October meetings of Trustees reflect the current pattern; Trustees are free to arrange any suitable dates for meetings.

<b>January</b>	Notify Companies' House and Charity Commission of any changes to Trustees – by 14/01
<b>February</b>	Receive Safeguarding Report Check/update the Property Register, Report on Property Health & Safety (even)/ Risk management (odd) – report/check (alternate years) Receive quinquennial surveys/ prompt if any are overdue
<b>March</b>	Annual online Return to Companies House and pay fee
<b>April</b>	Update annual report to accompany the accounts
<b>June</b>	Annual Report and Accounts Appointment of Clerk by Trustees and note AM appointment of Treasurer for next year Appointment of auditors for next year Data protection - annual check
<b>July</b>	present annual report to AM
<b>September</b>	Annual online Return to the Charity Commission once Annual Report & Accounts agreed Ask Auditors to file Accounts at Companies House by 30/09 Send annual report & accounts to Friends House Helen Griffith helen@quaker.org.uk
<b>October</b>	Budget and quota Report on burial grounds

Report from employment group – cost of living pay rises for following year

Agree Trustee areas of oversight for following calendar year

### **Each meeting**

Trustee clerking meeting to ask for agenda items and papers by Thursday 3 weeks before meeting,

Prepare and distribute docs and agenda on Thursday 2 weeks before meeting.

After meeting, send out minutes, write report for “Quakevine” (copy to York Quakers website) and deal with all actions arising from meeting. *(Currently Barbara Windle edits “Quakevine”, Raymond Williams looks after the website.)*

## **Convenors of AM Elders/Overseers**

Elders and overseers are appointed by Area Meeting on the recommendation of Local Meeting nominations committees. Their duties are covered in Quaker Faith and Practice chapter 12. From their number they will appoint convenors. The additional duties of the convenor whether for Elders or Overseers are similar and are described below - each should be read as referring either to Elders or to Overseers but is written as Elders/Overseers.

- 1 To ensure that AM Elders/Overseers meet at least twice a year, going to Local Meetings in rotation
- 2 To book the room for each meeting and check whether there are any special local issues to be raised
- 3 To prepare and circulate agendas
- 4 To conduct meetings according to the Quaker business method, drafting minutes for the main items in the usual way
- 5 To circulate finished minutes and communicate decisions, being very careful about confidentiality

- 6 To provide a point of contact and communication for LMs/AM Clerks/BYM when there is information to be passed on - for example, details of training opportunities.
- 7 To maintain a list of contact details for LM convenors of Elders/Overseers, and a list of useful contacts outside the AM, e.g. in neighbouring AMs and Quaker Recognised Bodies and at Friends House, and so be able to put local elders / overseers in touch with someone who can help them if they face an unfamiliar or delicate situation.

## **Health and Safety Co-ordinator**

The role of the Health and Safety Coordinator is to:

- Ensure the implementation of the York Area Meeting Health and Safety Policy and that Local Meetings' own arrangements are in accordance.
- Keep up to date with legislation as it may affect Area Meeting and constituent Local Meetings.
- Keep AM trustees informed regarding implementation of the policy every two years via a written report to include the names of those responsible for H&S at Local Meeting level, employees, training undertaken, claims made or potential claims.

## **Meeting for Sufferings Representatives**

Meeting for Sufferings is the standing representative body entrusted with the care of the business of Britain Yearly Meeting through the year.

Meeting for Sufferings has a visionary and prophetic role for the whole Society in Britain. It decides the priorities and sets the direction of the Yearly Meeting in the Long Term Framework. Meeting for Sufferings also plays a vital role in fostering communication throughout the Yearly Meeting and in reviewing and testing concerns referred to it by area meetings. It also gives guidance on policy issues referred to it by BYM Trustees.

## **Meeting for Sufferings**

- takes decisions
- receives information from other parts of the Yearly Meeting
- helps other parts of the Yearly Meeting
- informs Friends about its work

## **Duties of Representatives**

- 1 Attendance at 4 or 5 all day Saturday meetings per year, and (recently) one weekend session, near the start of a new triennium.
- 2 Thorough preparation for this: absorbing documentation sent and informing oneself as much as possible on the issues.
- 3 Reporting between MfS and AM.
- 4 Flagging up particular concerns in advance of planned future MfS.

## **Membership Clerk**

The membership clerk is responsible for everything to do with membership of the Area Meeting.

### **Duties include:**

- 1 To receive applications for membership, appoint visitors (in conjunction with local convenors of Overseers) receive the visitors' reports and ensure that these reports reach the AM Clerk in time for consideration at AM
- 2 To deal with transfers in and out of our AM
- 3 To communicate with those asking to resign their membership, making recommendations to AM about whether a visit is required and the names of suggested visitors
- 4 To help local Convenors of Overseers with any proposed terminations of membership
- 5 To maintain and update the various leaflets about membership

- 6 To complete the annual tabular statement (unless another Friend has been appointed to do this).

## **Northern Friends Peace Board Representative**

The Northern Friends Peace Board was founded In 1913 to advise and encourage friends in the north and through them their fellow Christians and citizens generally in the active promotion of peace. The work of the board grows out of the peace testimony of the religious Society of friends and is both spiritual and practical. It covers piece at all levels from the personal to the international. Although board membership does require time commitment, it also offers help an inspiration for friends already involved in peace work. If two representatives are appointed, it is desirable that they should differ in age and background.

The duties of representatives include:

- 1 To attend four meetings a year held on Saturdays anywhere north of the Trent, as well as occasional retreats. If two representatives are appointed, they don't both have to attend every meeting. Some venues are difficult to reach by public transport.
- 2 To respond to requests to serve on working groups, sub-committees or project groups or to represent NFPB on other bodies
- 3 To be a two-way conduit of information on issues of peace between the board and Area Meeting.

## **Quaker Life Representative Council**

Quaker Life Central Committee has a Representative Council which is made up of representatives from every area meeting. The Council provides a two-way channel of communication with Friends in their meetings, the main purposes being educational, inspirational and consultative. The function of Quaker Life Representative Council and the role of representatives are outlined in Quaker faith & practice 8. The council meets for two weekend gatherings a year. The meetings

include a variety of workshops and group sessions. York Area Quaker Meeting usually appoints two representatives who attend alternate meetings. Quaker Life is concerned with the life of meetings in the widest sense and in particular with the Spiritual Life of the meeting. It may inspire the post-holders personally to deepen their commitment, love and engagement for 'Quaker Life' in their own meetings.

Besides attending the meetings, QLRC representatives have two main duties:

1. To find out what is happening in their Area Meeting and be able to report achievements and failures, in writing and/or orally, to QLRC.  
This can be achieved by:
  - a. Cultivating personal contact with Friends in the Area Meeting and all its constituent Local Meetings, particularly with Clerks and QLRC correspondents where they exist;
  - b. Reading all newsletters produced within the AM, checking the website and making use of social media;
  - c. Leading discussion or focus groups or running informal surveys to assess local opinion on a contentious issue.
  
2. To report back from QLRC meetings, which can be done in several ways:
  - a. Speaking to Area and Local Meetings, picking out points of particular interest and allowing time for questions;
  - b. Sending written reports to Area Meeting (and perhaps Local Meetings);
  - c. Writing in newsletters and posting on the AM website and on social media;
  - d. Leading or participating in workshops and discussions.

QLRC meetings can feel overwhelming, but overall the role is not onerous and can be a source of inspiration and spiritual growth.

## **Quakers in Yorkshire Nominations Committee**

The committee is appointed by the 7 area meetings in the region and area meetings try to appoint 2 representatives each

QIY Nominations committee appoints friends to serve on 8 bodies as well as the QIY co-clerks, treasurer and committees. The 8 bodies are:

- Glenthorne
- The Retreat, York
- Breckenbrough School
- Bootham School
- The Mount School
- Brotherton library custodian of Yorkshire Quaker records
- North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on religious education ( SACRE )
- West Yorkshire Ecumenical council

Members of QIY Nominations Committee should know a lot of people in their Area Meeting. They will often be called on to find Friends who can make wise decisions under pressure.

Quakers in Yorkshire nominations committee meets 3 times a year. The first meeting is a brief introduction over lunch at Quakers in Yorkshire in January (Leeds) to outline requirements for the years appointments. The next 2 meetings take place on Saturday mornings, usually in Leeds, usually in May and September. Committee members may specialise in parts of the work. Much of the work can be done by email and is done in groups of 2 or 3 Friends between meetings.

## **Quakers in Yorkshire Outreach Projects Committee**

The objective of the Committee is to support and encourage all forms of outreach in the QiY region. The Committee does not itself undertake outreach. This is done by local or area meetings or other appropriate groups. The main forms of support are allocating grants and disseminating good practice.

### **Job Description for AM Representatives**

Representatives have two main roles. One is to participate in the Committee's discernment around the awarding of grants. The other is to act as the Committee's contact point with the Friends in their Area Meeting. This might involve advertising the possibility of applying for a grant towards outreach work, supporting Friends through the application process, and following the progress of projects as they go ahead.

## **Requirements for the AM Representative**

- Experience of outreach
- Knowledge of the whole Area Meeting, especially its outreach work
- Ability to attend a meeting once a year and communicate electronically between meetings.

## **Registering Officer and Deputy**

Since the mid eighteenth century Quakers have been allowed by law in the UK to conduct marriages following their beliefs.

The registering officer has a formal legal role to play in Quaker weddings. He or she has responsibilities both to the Area Meeting and the civil authorities, and the Registrar General must be informed of who has taken on this role. Chapter 16 in the fifth edition of Quaker Faith and Practice gives more detail.

1. The RO will be involved in early discussions with the couple intending to marry in order to explore if a Quaker marriage is the right way forward. The RO will involve Elders and Overseers and eventually Area Meeting in the process of discernment. A Meeting for Clearness may be helpful.
2. The RO will ensure that all forms, legal documents and processes are completed according to Quaker practice and the law and guide the couple through their part.
3. The RO will also ensure that there is someone to introduce the meeting and that he/she has the necessary information and that all attending, especially if there are to be many non-Friends, are sufficiently well informed to be able to feel a part of the Meeting for Worship.
4. On the day of the marriage the RO will oversee the proceedings. This involved liaising with Elders who are responsible for the Meeting for Worship, reading the marriage certificate in the Meeting and afterwards filling out the marriage registers and documentation.
5. The purpose of the Assistant RO is to support the RO, often with a view to learning the role and eventually taking over the position in due course.

## **Safeguarding Coordinator**

The role of the Safeguarding Coordinator is to:

- Act independently in reporting concerns of abuse to the statutory authorities, following the procedures set out in the Area Meeting Safeguarding policy
- Ensure the implementation of the policy at LM level by working with LM coordinators and facilitating training and support relating to Safeguarding issues in conjunction with LMs.
- Act as an advocate for children and vulnerable adults;
- Keep AM trustees informed regarding the implementation of the Area Meeting Safeguarding Policy.
- Provide a written report once a year to AM trustees. The report will include names of those responsible for Safeguarding at a Local Meeting level, induction and training undertaken, the organisation and management of volunteers, any concerns or disclosure of abuse that have arisen (whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality), and recommendations for any updates to the Safeguarding policy.

## **Treasurer**

The treasurer's duties include:

1. Preparing annual budget for Area income and expenditure.
2. Liaising with insurance brokers and LM treasurers; checking valuations; paying insurance.
3. Liaising with Auditors and volunteer accounts preparer.
4. Reconciling AM bank accounts: Triodos and Ecology Building Society.
5. Meeting and liaising with Local Meeting Treasurers.
6. Establishing AM, QIY and Property Quotas.
7. Membership of AM property committee; tracking expenditure on major repairs.
8. Working with Bookkeeper on Income and expenditure - budgets, payments, quota requests and receipts.
9. Considering and consulting on use of Area Meeting Reserves.
10. Receiving and distributing data from BYM on Member donations in each local meeting.
11. Dealing with Gift Aid, including claims.
12. Reporting to Area Meeting.

13. Attending and reporting to 3 or 4 Trustees meetings per year.
14. Submitting accounts/returns to Companies House, Charity Commission, BYM.

## **Area Meeting Trustee**

### **The basis**

Trustees appointed by the members of York area Quaker meeting have responsibilities for the business affairs of the area meeting.

The meeting Is a registered charity. Quaker faith and practice, together with the memorandum and articles of Association provides the framework within which the affairs of the charity must be managed, These terms of reference which may be amended from time to time describe the basis on which trustees of York area Meeting are expected to work.

### **The purposes**

The memorandum of Association defines the objects of the charity as “For public benefit to advance the religious purposes of the religious Society of friends Quakers in Britain in the area of the York area Quaker meeting and beyond”

The registration for the charity commission describes ways in which these objectives will be achieved such as

Strengthening the life and witness of Quaker meetings

Spreading the message of Quakers and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the religious society

Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad

Funding the concerns that Quaker meetings have adopted or agreed to support

Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attendance including assistance to those in need and for education

Maintaining and developing Quaker meeting houses as places for public worship and From which to carry out Our witness into the world

Administering and maintaining the organization of York area Quaker meeting and contributing to the support of Britain yearly meeting

## **Powers of trustees**

The articles of Association set up the powers which may be used to promote the objects Including amongst other things: The power to raise funds and incur expenditure, invest money, acquire and insure and dispose of property, employ staff and generally promote the interest of the company. All decisions will be taken in the manner of friends. ( see Quaker faith and practice 3.06 )

## **Appointments and duties of trustees**

Decisions on appointments will be taken at area meeting.

When considering appointments the nominations committee will have regard to the need for a mix of experience and skills in the trustee body and for each local meeting to have at least one member serving as a trustee.

Before taking up office trustees will be asked to sign a declaration of eligibility stating that

“ There is no disqualification to my serving by reason of any conviction for an offence making me an unsuitable person to have responsibility for work with children or vulnerable adults or , except with the consent of the Charity Commission, by reason of an unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty, or by reason of undischarged bankruptcy.  
I am aware of the policy on conflicts of interest and will declare any potential conflict as required, mindful of my work and circumstances. “

Potential trustees should be aware that each individual trustee is required to take on a particular task or responsibility At the moment these are

Convener/ chair

Treasurer

Membership

Property

Investments/social investments

Employment

Property, records, and archivist

Risk management

Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults

Trustees, who must be members of the area meeting, will be appointed to serve for 3 years and may be reappointed to serve for up to two further consecutive periods of 3 years

It is the duty of each trustee to exercise his or her powers and to perform his or her functions as a trustee of the charity in the way he or she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the charity

### **Meetings of trustees**

Trustees should meet as required and not less than twice in each financial year the clerk will normally make the arrangements but any trustee may call a meeting  
Decisions cannot be taken unless the quorum is present in one third of the total number of trustees subject to a minimum of three.