



Britain Yearly Meeting
of the Religious
Society of Friends

BYM Trustees

Could you be a BYM Trustee?

Here are the skills and experience we're looking for, followed by some general information about the role and how we work.

Essential:

- In membership of Britain Yearly Meeting.
- Experience of the Quaker business method.
- Enthusiasm for the centrally-managed work.
- Ability to both challenge and support.
- An understanding of the difference between governance (the Trustee role) and management (the staff role).
- Willingness to support and explain the discernment of the Trustee body.

Desirable

- Experience of trusteeship and/or governorship, Quaker or other.
- Previous involvement with the centrally-managed work and/or a willingness to learn about current work.
- An understanding of charities.
- An understanding of organisational structures.
- A sense of humour!

Your own skills and experience

Trustees come from a variety of professions and with a wide spectrum of Quaker roles. Financial skills are currently well-represented; legal and HR skills would be welcome although the ability to assimilate information and to contribute to strategic thinking are probably the most important skills.

Who we are

There are 15 Trustees appointed by the Yearly Meeting on a rotational basis, for a three year term. No Trustee serves for more than two terms. We see trusteeship as a form of service to Britain Yearly Meeting. The work is both challenging and rewarding. We are a strong, supportive, worshipping community and we make time to get to know each other, often over supper at our residential meetings.

Trustees as a worshipping community

Trustees are aware of the spiritual discipline of the work and of the importance of worship in our work. Our meetings always begin, continue and end in worship, and as part of our residential weekends we seek to meet for worship with local Friends. Two trustees are appointed as Elders to the trustee body.

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How we work

We normally meet five times a year. Two meetings (one of which is a training day) are one-day meetings at Friends House. One is residential from Friday evening to Sunday lunchtime, and two are residential from Friday lunchtime to Saturday lunchtime. We aim for at least one residential to be outside London.

Trustees are also members of Meeting for Sufferings and attendance at Meeting for Sufferings which meets five times a year is a key part of being a Trustee, although it is not necessary for every Trustee to attend every meeting.

Most Trustees also serve on one of three subcommittees: Finance & Property, Audit and Employment, or the Board of Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd. These meet 3-5 times a year, usually for half a day each time. In addition there are always a number of discrete projects where Trustees are involved, for example the refurbishment of the Large Meeting House.

On average, you can expect to commit at least twenty days a year to Trustee commitment work. Some periods are busier than others.

New Trustees

New Trustees are given an induction pack, have an experienced trustee appointed as their buddy or mentor, and are invited to attend a trustee meeting before their period of service begins. All are offered an induction meeting with the Recording Clerk.

Expenses for travel and accommodation at committee meetings and or committee work are paid for and Friends House will be happy to book accommodation. Where possible Trustees all stay at the same hotel and we try to eat together from time to time.

BYM Trustees usually have a training day each year, and are encouraged to attend training days at Woodbrooke and elsewhere.

What Trustees say about themselves

“No glory, but much joy!”

“We are all part of the Trustees collectively. This means joining a community and working together to do the essential work. Thus the discernment is not in isolation, but is very much a collective discernment.”

“I have found BYM Trustees to be a very welcoming group from the start. The common bond of us all being members of the Society is one factor, but I wonder if it is strengthened in this case from an awareness in each of us of the responsibilities which trustees carry at national level, and hence of the importance of being able to work together effectively and amicably in the Quaker way. This brings about a strong committee, sensitive to each other’s views, and, despite meeting fairly infrequently, warm, friendly, positive, constructive and open interaction amongst its members.”

Like to know more?

If you would like to talk about what is involved in being a Trustee, please contact Helen Griffith at Friends House (Heleng@quaker.org.uk) to arrange an informal conversation.