

# Quaker World Relations Committee & Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum

for the Consultative Forum see page 4, Section 6.



## TERMS OF REFERENCE

Enriching understanding between Friends worldwide and engaging Quakers in Britain in Quaker issues and concerns around the globe. [see *Quaker faith & practice* 9.06, fifth edition].

### 1. Summary of Purpose

- 1.1. Quaker World Relations Committee is responsible for maintaining and deepening the relationships of Quakers in Britain with Quakers in other yearly meetings, Friends' groupings abroad and with the Friends World Committee for Consultation.
- 1.2. The Committee is complemented by the Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum which provides a space for wider collaborative engagement in the work of the Committee who are all members of the forum. See Section 6, Consultative forum, for details of the forum.
- 1.3. Quaker World Relations Committee and the Consultative Forum work to further our Quaker witness, by encouraging collaboration between Britain Yearly Meeting and Friends World Committee for Consultation, and inter-visitation between Britain Yearly Meeting and other yearly meetings or Friends' groupings world-wide.
- 1.4. Through community building and by responding actively to the concerns of other yearly meetings, both the Committee and Forum promote understanding of the patterns of world-wide Quakerism today and enhance international and cultural linkages. (See also *Quaker faith & practice* 9.06, 5th edition).

### 2. Authority, Delegation and Relationships

- 2.1. The Quaker World Relations Committee is appointed by Meeting for Sufferings and is accountable to Britain Yearly Meeting through Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees.
- 2.2. The Committee acts as Britain Yearly Meeting's main link with other yearly meetings and other Friends' groupings world-wide, particularly through Friends World Committee for Consultation.
- 2.3. The Committee should consider concerns or issues from Britain Yearly Meeting which may be appropriate for forwarding to Friends World Committee for Consultation.
- 2.4. The Committee advises Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees as appropriate, on
  - (a) the nature of the relationship between Britain Yearly Meeting and Friends World Committee for Consultation (including its Europe & Middle East Section)
  - and
  - (b) the financial support needed by those bodies from Britain Yearly Meeting.
- 2.5. The Committee should monitor and consider the outcomes of its work in its area of responsibility, reporting its conclusions annually through Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees.

- 2.6. The Committee's annual report should help Trustees to ensure that the overall work is well-governed, coherent (in line with the vision expressed by Meeting for Sufferings), and appropriately resourced. The report should focus on the strategic role of the Committee, described in section 3.1 and include future plans. Staff work is reported to Trustees in other ways, which the Committee may need to draw on without reproducing the material.
- 2.7. The Committee will develop a dialogue with Meeting for Sufferings, engaging them on principles, exploring the framework vision, focussing on major changes and seeking guidance on the future.
- 2.8. The Committee should use the resources of the Quaker network maintained by Quaker Life to develop and support a World Relations cluster of interested Friends, involved in the work of the Committee. This cluster will enable a flow of information between Friends and the Committee. It will strengthen and support the links between geographically separated individuals and facilitate the development of Consultative Forum initiatives between the annual forum meetings.
- 2.9. The Committee should nominate and appoint two Friends to serve as Co-clerks, administrators and planners for the Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum. The Co-clerks will also co-ordinate and administer the World Relations network cluster (see section 2.8). The Forum Co-clerks will be supported by the Committee and will be able to attend Committee meetings ex-officio (see section 4.4). The Committee is expected to establish an effective nominations process and to work closely with Central Nominations Committee as required.
- 2.10. The Committee's meetings and work are conducted in faithful waiting on the spirit, in the expectation of being guided. We cannot constrain the spirit. If the Committee's leadings would take it out of the area outlined in these terms of reference it should record its leading in a minute to Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees who may discern the way forward or seek the guidance of Meeting for Sufferings.
- 2.11. The Committee may communicate by minute with Meeting for Sufferings, Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees and other Central and Standing Committees of Britain Yearly Meeting.

### **3. Duties**

- 3.1. The Quaker World Relations Committee should:
  - 3.1.1. Undertake work laid upon it by Britain Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, working within the resources made available by Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees;
  - 3.1.2. Work with Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees to develop and oversee the Committee's programme of work within the framework agreed with Meeting for Sufferings and the operational plan agreed by the Trustees;
  - 3.1.3. Monitor the programme of work and consider the outcomes achieved, reporting the conclusions to Trustees (including proposals to finance new work or major changes) to enable timely reports to Yearly Meeting;
  - 3.1.4. Together with the Consultative Forum, offer suggestions on possible ways to respond to relevant developments and issues;
  - 3.1.5. Maintain effective communications within the structures of Britain Yearly Meeting and operate within the policies on "speaking out" as regards external communications;

- 3.1.6. Consider communication opportunities from an early stage in the planning of all work, consulting with the Communication and Services department;
- 3.1.7. Ensure the holding of conferences and provision of speakers relating to the Quaker World Relations Committee and Forum's areas of responsibility;
- 3.1.8. Advise and guide Friends nominated by the Central Nominations Committee for appointment by Meeting for Sufferings as Britain Yearly Meeting members to other European yearly meetings and elsewhere as required. Receive their reports and to keep Meeting for Sufferings informed;
- 3.1.9. Together with Communication and Services and the Recording Clerk's Office, identify needs and opportunities for communication and fund-raising in its areas of responsibility and ensure that appropriate induction and training are provided for Quaker World Relations Committee and Forum members;
- 3.1.10. Provide co-clerks for the Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum;
- 3.1.11. Together with the Recording Clerk's Office and the Quaker network, arrange hospitality for Friends from overseas, especially those travelling in the ministry or on official visits, including organising and hosting a reception for overseas visitors to Britain Yearly Meeting when in session;
- 3.1.12. Prepare annual draft letters of greeting or epistles to be sent to other yearly meetings in session, including Ireland and those in the European and Middle East Section, to be signed by the clerk of Meeting for Sufferings on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting;
- 3.1.13. Monitor the progress of relevant minutes from Friends World Committee for Consultation and its events;
- 3.1.14. Report as required to Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings and Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, consulting Meeting for Sufferings as required in the circumstances laid down in section 7.03 of Quaker faith & practice (5th edition);

#### **4. Membership and attendance**

- 4.1. The Committee comprises the Britain Yearly Meeting representatives to Friends World Committee for Consultation, appointed on a rolling triennial basis by Meeting for Sufferings (section 9.06 of *Quaker faith & practice*, 5th edition). Currently (May 2014) these number six. Prior to these Terms of Reference one of these representative positions was held for the Recording Clerk, following the agreement of these Terms of Reference this will cease and all six positions will be treated identically.
- 4.2. The clerk is appointed by the Committee from within their number. An additional member to serve as a clerk may be appointed if no member is able or willing to serve.
- 4.3. Other Friends, specialists, serving officials of other committees or members of staff may be asked to attend by invitation of the clerk for specific agenda items or to help on particular issues on behalf of the Committee.
- 4.4. The Clerk of Meeting for Sufferings, the Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, the Co-clerks of the Consultative Forum (see section 2.9) and the Recording Clerk (or his/her nominee) may attend meetings ex-officio.

- 4.5. A member of staff, designated by the Recording Clerk, will normally attend Committee meetings to act as secretary to the Committee. Meeting without the secretary will only be with that person's or with the Recording Clerk's agreement.

## **5. Frequency of Meetings**

- 5.1. The Committee should meet as frequently as appropriate for discernment and accountability, normally three times a year, with meetings fitting within the calendar agreed with the Recording Clerk's Office.
- 5.2. Members of the Committee should also attend meetings of the Consultative Forum.
- 5.3. The Committee will meet sufficiently frequently to ensure the effective use of the resources it manages and to make timely contributions to the annual work planning and reporting cycle.
- 5.4. The Committee should agree a mechanism for conducting business between meetings.

## **6. Consultative forum**

### **6.1. Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum summary of purpose**

- 6.1.1. The Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum provides a space for knowledge sharing and wider collaborative engagement in the work of the Committee's members, who are all members of the forum.
- 6.1.2. Quaker World Relations Committee and the Consultative Forum work to further our Quaker witness, by encouraging collaboration between Britain Yearly Meeting and Friends World Committee for Consultation, and inter-visitation between Britain Yearly Meeting and other yearly meetings or Friends' groupings world-wide.
- 6.1.3. Through community building and by responding actively to the concerns of other yearly meetings, the Committee and Forum promote understanding of the patterns of world-wide Quakerism today and enhance international and cultural linkages. (See also *Quaker faith & practice* 9.06, 5th edition).
- 6.1.4. The Consultative Forum liaises with Quaker Life and Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committees, the Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations and others, working together as appropriate on matters of common concern and to further the living relationship between all of Britain Yearly Meeting and the world-wide community of Friends, including the holding of conferences and provision of speakers.

### **6.2. Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum duties**

- 6.2.1. The Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum acts as a channel of reporting for Britain Yearly Meeting's Friends World Committee for Consultation representatives, ensuring they are well supported to communicate the concerns of the yearly meeting in the wider Quaker context, and able to report appropriately when they attend the meetings of Friends World Committee for Consultation and its European and Middle East section.
- 6.2.2. The Consultative Forum will offer an opportunity to draw the attention of Britain Yearly Meeting to issues and concerns raised at world and section meetings of Friends World Committee for Consultation, and communicating developments and opportunities arising in the world-wide community of

Friends. Together with the Quaker World Relations Committee, it may offer suggestions on possible ways to respond.

- 6.2.3. The Consultative Forum should offer a focussed gathering which enables information sharing and cross-organisational links to be fostered between individuals involved in Quaker World Relations.
- 6.2.4. The Consultative Forum should provide appropriate opportunities for collaboration and advice for staff or volunteers working on projects that relate to the Quaker World Relations Committee and Forum's areas of responsibility.

### **6.3. Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum membership**

- 6.3.1. Members of the Quaker World Relations Committee are also members of the Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum ex-officio.
- 6.3.2. The following are invited to attend Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum meetings:
  - from Friends World Committee for Consultation World Office, the general secretary,
  - from European and Middle East Section, the secretary,
  - from the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations, the clerk or a representative,
  - from the Quaker Life Central Committee, the clerk or a representative,
  - from the Quaker Council for European Affairs, the Britain Yearly Meeting representative or alternate,
  - from the Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee, the clerk or a representative,
  - from the Quaker United Nations Office, one or more of the Britain Yearly Meeting representatives,
  - from Young Friends General Meeting, the International Secretary;
- 6.3.3. The Clerk of Meeting for Sufferings, the Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees and the Recording Clerk (or his/her nominee) may attend meetings ex-officio.
- 6.3.4. The forum is convened by the Recording Clerk and co-clerked by the Friends appointed by the Quaker World Relations Committee (see section 2.9).
- 6.3.5. The Co-clerks are members of the forum and may invite other Friends, World Relations Network Cluster members, Britain Yearly Meeting staff or specialists to help on particular issues on behalf of the Forum and to attend the meetings, so that Friends may be well supported in the World Relations aspects of their work and in developing strong links with each other.
- 6.3.6. A member of staff, designated by the Recording Clerk, will normally attend forum meetings to act as secretary to the forum. Meeting without the secretary will only be with that person's or with the Recording Clerk's agreement.

### **6.4. Quaker World Relations Consultative Forum frequency of meetings**

- 6.4.1. The Consultative Forum should meet annually, within the calendar agreed with the Recording Clerk's Office.
- 6.4.2. The Co-clerks of the Forum will work with the secretary to plan and administer the annual meetings and will co-ordinate the between meetings work so that the duties of the forum (see section 6.2) are taken forward.

## **7. Agreement of the Terms of Reference**

- 7.1. The Committee and Forum shall work within these terms of reference with effect from 1 January 2015 under the authority of minute BYMT-2014-10-15 of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees held 3 October 2014.
- 7.2. The terms of reference shall be reviewed at least triennially and may in the interim be amended by minuted decisions of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees.