

Job Descriptions for North Scotland Area Meeting

Area Meeting Nominating Group

Area Meeting considers names for the appointment of members to the Nominations Committee put forward by a specially appointed Nominating Group. The Group is made up of seven members reflecting the geographical spread of the AM. The Nominating Group also bring forward to AM a name for the convener of the Nominating Group for appointment by the AM.

Area Meeting Nominations Committee

The main task of the Committee is to bring forward names for the consideration of Area Meeting for appointments to posts that are or will become vacant. Appointments are usually made for a 3 year period. Every 3rd year, at the start of the triennial period the Committee brings forward names in time for the Autumn AM. The Committee also brings names to AM at other times as requested, when vacancies arise.

The committee seeks names to forward to AM in a number of ways. It creates and sends out the offer of service forms which enable individual members and attenders to register an interest in serving the Area Meeting. The information from the forms is collated and available to all those involved in AM and GM nominations

The committee tries to find and develop people who have a breadth, depth and foresight of Quaker work who can represent a broad geographical area. Members are encouraged bring forward suggestions of names for consideration.

Nominations Committee meetings will often be on telephone conferencing, with two or three face to face meetings a year at as a central location as possible.

Nominations Committee Convener

Prior to Nominations Committee meetings the convener is responsible for

- * calling the meeting
- * sending out the agenda so that each member can consider the tasks prayerfully and consult with E/Os or others in the AM, if appropriate.

During the meeting the Convener

- * clerks the meeting (or delegates the clerking)
- * writes up the decisions

After the meeting the Convener

- * notifies the Clerk of the agreed names to put before AM
- * acts as collator/coordinator for members to report on the results of their approaches to individuals

Archivist

- * Ensure that the lists of records held by Local and Area Meetings are kept up to date as new records are added

- * Respond to requests for information in the archives from Friends and people outside the Meeting

- * Liaise, as appropriate, with Local and Area Meeting over requests for potentially sensitive information

- * Respond to requests / guidance from Scotland General Meeting Archive Group

- * In consultation, determine the most appropriate repository for historic records

Area Meeting Trustees

North Scotland Area Meeting is a registered Scottish charity (SCO4632).

Its affairs are governed by the relevant sections of Quaker Faith and Practice.

With the creation of OSCR, (The Office of Scottish Charities Regulator), churches' exempted status was revoked and all churches are required to draw up a governing document with the provision of the appointment of Trustees.

Trustees are appointed by the Area Meeting from its own membership. They will consist of (as far as is practicable), the AM Assistant Clerk, AM Treasurer and three other members

The trustees will appoint a convener from amongst themselves

Duties of Trustees are to:

- a) carry out duties laid upon them by legislation
- b) act in the interests of North Scotland Area Meeting having due regard to Area Meeting decisions
- c) seek in good faith to ensure that North Scotland AM operates in a manner that is consistent with its charitable objectives
- d) act with due care and diligence
- e) ensure that North Scotland Area Meeting conforms to legal requirements.
- f). ensure that arrangements are in place for the safeguarding and protection of Young People and Protected Adults within the AM

The primary decision making remains with the Area Meeting. Trustees have an oversight function and would draw the AMs attention to matters required by legislation (e.g. risk assessment on safety of premise).

Trustees provide financial oversight: annually to agree and sign consolidated accounts and a report and ensure it is sent in along with the annual return to OSCR. The AM Treasurer is accountable to AM Trustees. Trustees deal with matters remitted by AM.

Children and Young Peoples Work Advocate

“The Advocate role is intended to be a seed of collaboration and networking for children and young people’s work in Area and Local Meetings. “

*The Area Meeting Children and Young People’s Work Advocates network provides local support to those working with children and young people in their area.

*Advocates are appointed by the Area Meeting. Their role in the Area meeting includes: advocating the need for children and young people’s work; encouraging awareness and support of the needs of children and young people; developing networks between neighbouring area meetings and General Meeting for Scotland and developing and supporting joint initiatives such as Link Groups and summer schools.

*Advocates may offer resources and training to support C & YP volunteers in local meetings.

They may also help meetings that do not at present engage with children to think about how they can be ready to welcome them and how they may encourage families into the meeting.

Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy

The Trustees of North Scotland Area Meeting recognise the importance of ministry to, and work with, children, young people and protected adults. The Trustees acknowledge their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of those children, young people and protected adults taking part in North Scotland Area Meeting activities.

To this end, Area Meeting appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator and a Deputy who have three main functions:

- * to act as an advocate for children and protected adults
- * to act independently in reporting concerns of abuse to the statutory authorities, collating and clarifying the precise details of the allegation or suspicion in accordance with the Area Meeting procedures .
- * to oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding Policies for children and protected adults and ensuring that they are regularly reviewed. The Safeguarding Coordinator has responsibility for maintaining a register of volunteers working with children and monitoring applications for PVG registrations.

The Coordinator or Deputy act as the named contact with the Churches’ Child protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

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Clerk:

The clerk conducts the Business Meeting and drafts minutes on behalf of the Meeting. The clerk is the servant of the Meeting. The clerk's attitude and conduct of business creates a pattern of worshipful listening which should characterise Meetings for Church Affairs..

The clerks' experience of the ways of Friends and their understanding of the Quaker Business method is important in helping the Meeting discern God's will. Above all it is the clerk's responsibility to come with heart and mind prepared.

Minutes: The clerk checks beforehand all facts pertaining to the agenda and discusses the agenda with assistant clerks before AM

The factual part of the minutes are prepared in draft form prior to the Meeting to briefly provide sufficient background information to set the Meeting purposefully on its course.

The Clerk should seek advice if necessary on procedure

During the meeting, the clerk's main task is to discern the Meeting's united mind, whilst trying to remain detached from the discussion in the meeting

The meeting can be asked to wait while the minute is prepared

The minute needs to cover all the points on which a decision is required

Reports can be filed with the minutes, not written up in the minute.

It is good practice for the rough minutes to be signed before close of meeting during a period of silence.

Follow up work: This work is shared with the assistant clerks,

This includes the following

correspondence;

Sending off copies of the relevant minutes to those who are required to take follow up action after the meeting,

Arrangements and publicity for the diary of meetings through the year,

Liaising with the conveners of committees and the treasurer

Safekeeping the accepted minutes with the archivist's help.

Preparing next agenda and minute leadings, leave plenty of space between items

Checking back through minutes for regular agenda items for inclusion

Eldership/Oversight Committee

It is the custom in NSAM. to appoint joint Elders/Overseers who carry out the responsibilities of separate Elders and Overseers to be found in other Area Meetings.

The duties of Elders/overseers include the nurture of the spiritual life of the Meeting as a whole and of individuals within it, This involves the right holding of Meeting for Worship (the task of the Elders) combined with aspects of pastoral care, (the tasks of the Overseers),

This serves to build a community in which all members and attenders find acceptance, loving care and opportunities for service.

Telephone conferences of Elders/Overseers are held before each AM. Where a Local Meeting has chosen not recommend the appointment of E/Os, a representative of the Local Meeting is appointed to participate in these conferences. Face to face meetings may be held before the May AM and the Residential AM at Pluscarden in August.

Appointments are usually for a three year period and may be renewed for further three.

Elders/Overseers are appointed by the AM rather than the LM and it important that Friends appreciate that they are not in an elevated position but that it is recognised that they have the capacity to serve in a particular way.

E/O Convener

For some time the convenership of the E/O Committee has been shared by two people. This arrangement has worked well and it is proposed that it should continue.

The role of the Conveners includes attendance at Area Meetings, including the May and Pluscarden Meetings which have been the setting for the main face-to-face meetings. The conveners keep in touch with all the Local Meetings

The Conveners establish a pattern of regular meetings by telephone and also face-to-face meetings at least once a year. They propose the agenda for meetings, they clerk the meetings, write up notes and distribute them to all on the e/o committee, and undertake any follow-up.

Other duties of the E/O Conveners include;

Writing correspondence between meetings

Responding to AM requests e.g. to prepare for AM spiritual review

Looking into options for training

Overseeing e/o retreats e.g. Westray

NB. Quaker Faith and Practice 4.02 (the role of the Area Meeting) and 12.05-11 (eldership and oversight) are helpful in setting out what it is we aim to uphold.

General Meeting Function Groups

Agenda Function Group

One rep from each AM- appointed by the AM

- * Identify the topics and speakers for GM
- * Keep AMs aware that they can send items to GM

Nominations Function Group

One rep from each AM appointed by AM

- *To bring forward to GM names for the appointment to GM posts

Children and Young People Function Group

One rep from each AM appointed by AM

Coordinate children and young people's activities within Scotland

Advise GM regarding appropriate safeguarding of children taking part in Quaker activities

Northern Friends Peace Board; Area Meeting Representative

Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB) was set up in 1913

In 1985 the Board committed itself to:

- *developing as a resource for supporting Friends in Meetings
- *acting as a catalyst for action and thinking on peace, from the international to the personal levels
- *ways of working that reflected our Quaker foundation and commitment to peaceful means and ends.

“We need to be both realistic and visionary” they minuted, reflecting on the gifts that individual Friends can each give to the endeavour and to the corporate discipline and clarity that need to be nurtured and developed..

The following is a short list of the type of activities undertaken by NFPB over recent years:

- *Organising conferences, workshops and other events, for Friends and others.
- *Producing written publications, from printed to web-based materials.
- *Publicising opportunities for engagement and action on peace concerns, through our membership, through our links with Quaker meetings and through our web-resources

The biggest part of the Board membership is composed of Friends (and some Attenders) appointed by Area Meetings as Representatives. There are four meetings a year for Representatives, taking place at different parts of the North, normally at Quaker Meeting Houses. A number of Area Meetings also appoint Deputy Representatives, ensuring fuller representation.

The role of Representatives can be summarised as:

- *Being a two-way channel of communication between Area Meetings and NFPB
- *Being aware of Friends’ peace concerns and guiding the direction of NFPB’s work.
- *Serving in a range of capacities on various sub-groups and committees in partnership with the Coordinator to implement the work of the Board.

North Scotland Quaker Trust

The Trust was established in 1912, as the Aberdeen Two Months Meeting Trust, by a deed of trust. There are 5 trustees.

Its income comes from the letting of property attached to Aberdeen Meeting House and investments.

The trust gives money in two ways:-

1). directly, by supporting Quakers in travel to events and their children to attend various Quaker activities.

2). indirectly, by reimbursing the area meeting for those attending courses, conferences and meetings on behalf of the AM (as representatives).

The Trust can also give small grants to any Quakers in financial difficulty for any reason.

In addition, it maintains and refurbishes property owned by the Trust; and helps North Scotland local meetings establish new places of worship.

Pluscarden Arrangements Committee

The Pluscarden Arrangements Committee is responsible for;

- * booking Pluscarden St Scholastica's and St Benedict's and the Pluscarden Hall, if so required, immediately after the dates have been decided by AM
- * checking in January that the dates are in the Pluscarden Abbey diary.
- * arranging a topic for Pluscarden and making sure the topic speakers are booked
- * arranging a children's programme if required and ensuring that all necessary procedures are observed (all children's volunteers PVG registered etc.)
- *ensuring that St Scholastica's is kept clean during the weekend
- *ensuring that the building is left clean, the rubbish cleared away, the beds remade, the bedrooms cleaned, and the sheets washed. (this isn't the job of the monks - we use St Scholastica's for far more than it is designed for, ie. a small, women's retreat. (There is a lot of goodwill on all sides.)
- *always be on the lookout for alternative venues to offer to the AM

Quaker Committee For Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR)

Correspondent

The Committee has 15 members appointed by Meeting for Sufferings

Accountable to Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees, the Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations is responsible for keeping Britain Yearly Meeting informed of the various movements towards inter-church co-operation and opportunities for interfaith dialogue, and for responding on behalf of the Yearly Meeting so that Friends' views on issues of faith and order are represented to other churches and communities of faith. (Quaker faith & practice 9.13.)

The correspondent receives the QCCIR newsletters and disseminates the information to the AM in either verbal or written form. They may pass on any information about local interfaith activities to the editor of the newsletter.

An annual conference is organized by QCCIR and the Committee is often a partner on Woodbrooke's study programme

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Quaker Life Representative Council

Quaker Life Central Committee has a Representative Council which offers an opportunity for communication between area and local meetings throughout Wales, Scotland and England and two-way communication between meetings and the committees and staff at yearly meeting level.

Representatives (or their Deputies) from each area meeting gather at residential weekends twice a year to:

- *share experience and good practice with each other;
- * offer their meetings' guidance and comment on central work;
- * link central work with local action;
- *learn and consult, to inspire and receive inspiration.

Meetings, Quaker groups and individuals have used the Council to explore an issue, to test a concern in a wider forum, to gather information and to offer ideas, suggestions and queries to Quaker Life.

It is a vital part of the role to make regular reports to area meetings, whether in verbal or written form

Registering Officer and Deputy

This job has two main aspects: the straightforward one is to ensure that marriages within the Society are held in "right ordering". This involves briefing the couple about the legal and Quaker side of the marriage ceremony, ensuring that the AM is properly informed, that it duly appoints and holds the Special Meeting for Worship and that the marriage is legally registered. There are several differences between the marriage law in England and Wales and that of Scotland, so the Registering Officer has to be careful about using the information in Quaker Faith and Practice and the Registering Officers Handbook available from Friends House.

The second aspect is a pastoral role: holding preparative discussions with the couple, possibly organising a Meeting for Clearness together with Elders/Overseers and helping the wedding itself to go as smoothly as possible and as far as possible in accordance with the couple's wishes about how they would like the day to be.

Treasurer's Team

This consists of Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial Support and Collector.

The prime responsibility of the AM Treasurer, as an agent of the Trustees is to care and account for the financial resources of the AM and ensure that legal obligations arising from the Charity Commission Ac1992 and SORP 2005 are adhered to:

1. The maintenance of income and expenditure ledgers, allocating all sums of money to their appropriate category.
2. The receipt and paying in of monies connected with AM business.
3. The settlement of all bills and expenses incurred by the AM, including the reimbursement of expenses resulting from activities conducted on behalf of the Meeting. All transactions should be documented/receipted.
4. Preparation of Year End Accounts, liaison with the Independent Examiner (Auditor) and submission of such Accounts to AM Trustees.
5. Preparing estimates for expenditure for the next financial year, and recommending an appropriate annual quota figure for contributions from each constituent LM and advise the Trustees in the formation of a reserve policy.
6. Assisting the AM in deliberating on matters with financial implications including levels of contribution to the BYM Common Fund each year.
7. Liaison with and support and advice to LM treasurers when required.
8. Preparation of Consolidated accounts including AM and all LM transactions as required by Charity Law, seeing that they are examined, and with Trustees, having them signed and a written report of the NSAM activities, prepared. Submission of such accounts to OSCR along with the annual return.
9. Sending out the annual AM and BYM appeal letters and channeling contributions as instructed. (Collector)
10. Working with and delegating tasks to, the other members of the team, as necessary.
11. Serving as one of the AM Trustees. (ex officio)