

Transferring from General Meeting to Quakers in Scotland ~ an explanation

At General Meeting on 7th June it was minuted that General Meeting GM hopes to lay itself down and transfer all its assets and responsibilities to Quakers in Scotland QiS at the General Meeting to be held in Perth and online on 20th September 2025.

This step is the easiest and results in minimal change within the community. Matters currently handled by GM would be carried out as QiS, and our current membership of GM would transfer to QiS. We would simply continue to be members of QiS (previously known as GM) and our Area Meeting AM as we are at present.

Once we transition to being members of QiS we can hold business meetings, appoint role holders and committee members and adopt the required policies as QiS.

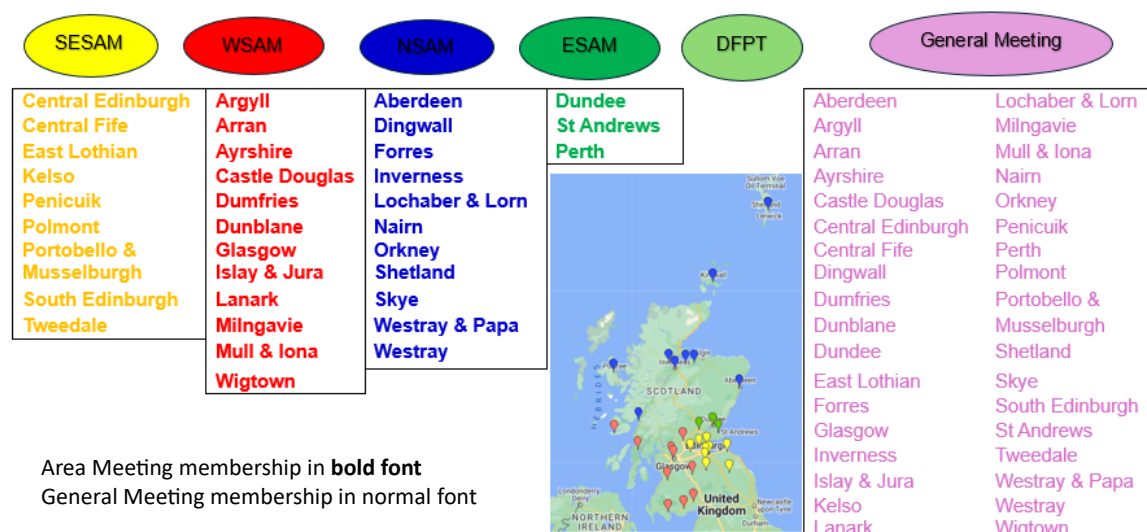
Our membership of our AMs will continue to be held by our separate AMs until each one decides independently if they wish to lay themselves down and transfer their assets and responsibilities to QiS.

Dundee Friends Property Trust will decide when and if it wishes to transfer their assets and responsibilities to Quakers in Scotland and lay themselves down.

How does this work for our membership

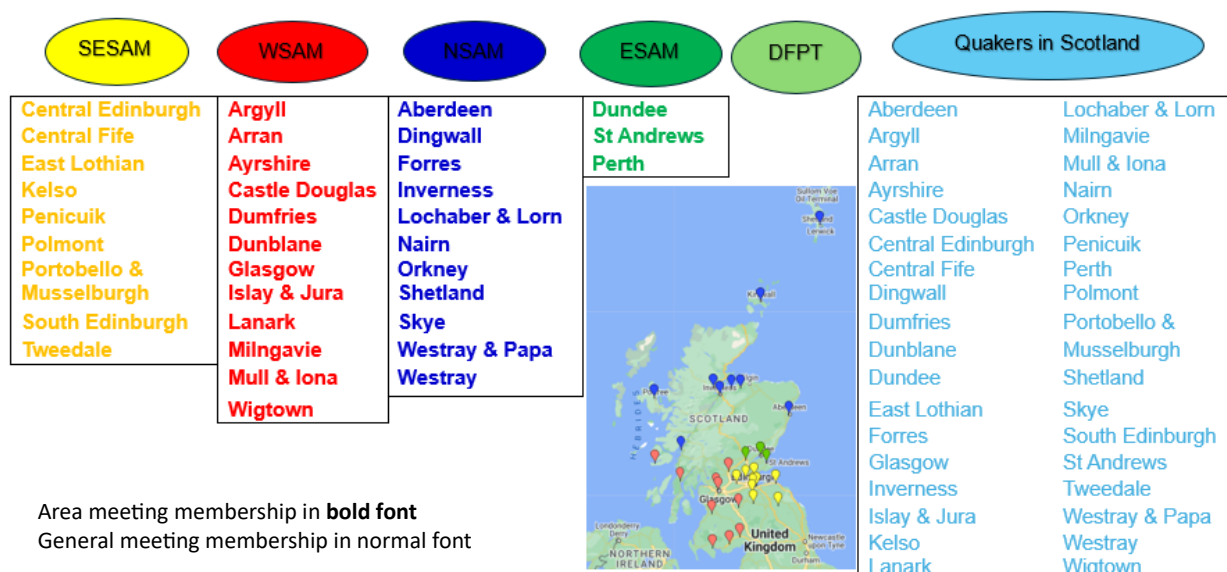
Currently our membership of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain is through our membership of our area meetings and is also our membership of Britain Yearly Meeting. GM records its membership as comprising of 'all members of the Scottish Area Meetings'. So, we have membership in two organisations in Scotland; AM and GM.

The diagram below represents our membership in four separate area meetings (**bold font**) and our membership of GM (normal font). Dundee Friends Property Trust is a separate charity which does not have any separate members.



When General Meeting transitions to Quakers in Scotland

When GM lays itself down and transfers everything to QiS, our AM membership continues to be with our area meetings (**bold font**) and our general meeting membership (normal font) will then be with QiS.



How will membership be transferred

We have been advised by OSCR that we cannot make a simple assumption that everyone's membership has transitioned to QiS. As QiS is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCIO, it is a new legal body and is required to hold a formal register of its members, which records each member's name, address, and date of joining.

Members are individual members, and each member needs to be notified of their acceptance into membership and to be aware of the responsibilities of membership of a SCIO, as opposed to our current unincorporated status. Membership of a SCIO carries a general duty of care to the charity and a requirement to act in the best interests of the charity. This is not new to us as Quakers we have always shared in these responsibilities, so it is just formalising it within the SCIO structure.

Currently the only members of QiS are the foundation trustees who set up the SCIO, plus the QiS treasurer (ex-officio trustee), appointed by GM in June. So, to comply with our Governing Document the current members need to accept those applying to be members of the SCIO. OSCR suggests following clause 14.2 of the Governing Document as the most appropriate process.

GM already holds members details in the GM database but needs permission from each person to transfer their information and their membership to QiS.

The proposed process is that:

- *The GM administrator will send an email to all members requesting consent for their details and their membership to be transferred to QiS.*

- Each individual will need to reply giving consent for their information and their membership to be transferred to QiS.
- The GM administrator will compile a list of names to be taken to a QiS trustee meeting, where two members nominate everyone listed to become members of QiS.
- Their acceptance would be minuted and record their entry into membership.
- An email will be sent to each person confirming their membership and inclusion in the register.
- The register would be updated to include all the new members

What do I need to do

Look at for the email from the GM Administrator and reply promptly.

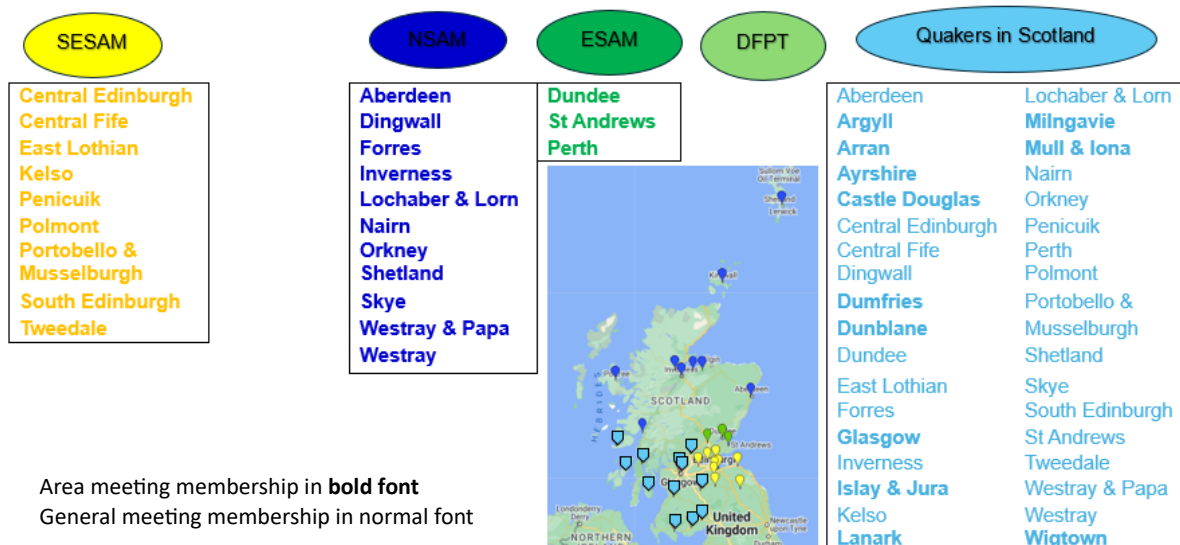
The email will be requesting your consent to transfer your data and your membership to QiS

The statutory duties of membership of a SCIO are shown below, see Appendix 1.

If you have any further questions or queries, please contact a member of the QiSCG

What happens when an area meeting lays itself down

When an AM decides to lay itself down and transfer all its assets and responsibilities to QiS this will create a 2 tier membership situation within QiS. QiS will hold the area meeting and general meeting membership for some Friends, and just the general meeting membership for others, this may require further explanation in Quaker faith & practice



Should all area meetings eventually decide to transfer all their responsibilities to QiS and lay themselves down for Quaker purposes, QiS could ask Meeting for Sufferings/Continuing Yearly Meeting for recognition as an area meeting for all Friends in Scotland.

Appendix 1

5.2 Membership requirements

The members of a SCIO differ from those of any other Scottish charity in two main ways:

- Membership of a SCIO may not be transferred from one member to another
- Members of SCIOs are also subject to some of the general duties of charity trustees set out at section 66 of the 2005 Act.

Because members of a SCIO have statutory duties under the 2005 Act, both the SCIO and OSCR must be clear about who the members are at all times. The members themselves must also know that they are members in order to fulfil their duties under the 2005 Act; it is therefore not possible for a SCIO to define its membership, for example, as all those dwelling in a particular geographical area or belonging to a section of the community (although these conditions may be used as eligibility criteria).

Instead, a SCIO must maintain an up to date register of its members so that they are clearly identifiable and therefore their decision-making powers can be seen to have been properly exercised (see section 5.3 for more details on the register of members).

5.2.1 Duties of members

As stated above, SCIO members are subject to some of the general duties of charity trustees; specifically, they must:

- act in the interests of the SCIO, and
- seek, in good faith, to ensure the SCIO acts in a manner which is consistent with its charitable purposes.

If the members fail to comply with this duty, it may be treated as misconduct in the administration of the SCIO.

OSCR recognises that members may not be in the day to day management and control of the administration of the SCIO. In assessing whether SCIO members have met their legal duties, OSCR will look on a case by case basis at whether the members have properly exercised those particular powers given to them both by the SCIO's constitution and the 2005 Act.

At a practical level, those powers are most likely to apply when members are considering changes to the constitution or taking part in elections of charity trustees. When exercising such powers, the members must act in the interests of the SCIO and seek to ensure that the SCIO continues to operate in line with its charitable purposes.

5.3.3 Register of members

Where the members of a SCIO are not identical to its charity trustees (that is, where it has a two-tier structure), it also has a duty to keep a register of its members, which is to be updated within 28 days of any change being notified to the SCIO.

As with the register of charity trustees, the register of members must contain additional information for any member which is a corporate body. The register of members must also retain some information about former members for at least six years from the date the person ceased to be a member of the SCIO.

There is no set format for the register of members but it must contain:

Name

Address

Date of registration as a member

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/managing-a-charity/responsibilities-of-scios-and-other-legal-forms/scios-a-guide/5-duties-and-requirements-of-a-scio/>