

Constitution of the Young Friends General Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

1. NAME AND PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The name of the organisation is Young Friends' General Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain ("General Meeting"), formerly known as Young Friends' Central Committee, and before that Young Friends' Committee.
- 1.2 Young Friends' Committee was established as a result of a conference of young Friends within London Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the conference having been held at Swanwick, Derbyshire, from 28 August to 4 September 1911.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objects of the General Meeting shall be within its area of operation:

- 2.1 The advancement of religion in accordance with the principles and practices of the Religious Society of Friends commonly called Quakers.
- 2.2 Such other purposes recognised as exclusively charitable according to the laws of England and Wales as the Trustees in their absolute discretion think fit.
- 2.3 And in furtherance of these objects the advancement of 'Concerns' that have been adopted by the General Meeting according to the principles and practices of Yearly Meeting of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. Advancement can include promotion of informed discussion among Young Friends and elsewhere, provision of resources, where appropriate, and the taking of action.

3. DISCRIMINATION

General Meeting shall not discriminate on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, nationality, disability or other irrelevant grounds. General Meeting shall not require members to subscribe to a credal statement, or exclude people on the grounds of credal statements.

4. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the General Meeting shall be open to Young Friends aged 18 to a limit decided from time to time by the General Meeting.

5. OFFICERS AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Two clerks and a Treasurer shall be appointed, and shall be Officers, together with such additional Officers' posts as the members at a business meeting shall decide. Additional Officer posts shall be recorded in the Financial Policy.
- 5.2 Officers shall be Young Friends appointed by General Meeting.

up to date as of 6 May 1997

- 5.3.1 The Officers, appointed from time to time, shall also be the Trustees of the General Meeting, provided that they are eligible to be Trustees.
- 5.3.2 The Trustees shall not be liable for any loss suffered as a result of the powers given by this constitution, or for any fall in the value of, or for the validity and sufficiency of investments, securities and others held by them or on their account whether made or retained by the Trustees, or for omissions, or for one another, or for solicitors, accountants, stockbrokers, agents or others employed by them, provided that the Trustees have at all times acted with prudence and due diligence.
- 5.4 General Meeting shall have the power to take out and maintain appropriate indemnity insurance to cover its liabilities.
- 5.5 General Meeting shall appoint a Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee shall be responsible for bringing forward names for appointments to be made by General Meeting. The members at a business meeting need not accept the recommendations of the Nominations Committee, but may make any appointment it deems fit. Nominations Committee shall not bring forward names for appointments to itself, but may, with the approval of members at a business meeting, co-opt for the duration of that meeting.

6. FINANCES

- 6.1 The funds belonging to the General Meeting shall only be applied in furthering the aims and objectives. General Meeting shall maintain a Financial Policy which indicates the procedures for the day to day management of its funds.
- 6.2 General Meeting shall appoint a Finance Committee which shall be empowered to oversee the running of all General Meeting Funds. The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer and other Young Friends as appointed by the General Meeting.
- 6.3.1 Bank accounts for money belonging to General Meeting shall be in the name of Young Friends General Meeting or the name of the committee or group concerned. The General Fund is funds not specifically allocated in the Financial Policy to particular concerns or activities of General Meeting.
- 6.3.2 General Fund Bank accounts shall have three signatories: the Treasurer, and the two clerks. For Withdrawals from any of the accounts one signature shall be required, up to a limit specified in the Financial Policy, after which two signatories shall be required.
- 6.4 General Meeting shall comply with its obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enhancement or modification of the Act) with regard to:-
 - 6.4.1 maintenance of proper accounts;
 - 6.4.2 preparation of an annual report, and its transmission to the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.
- 6.5 The accounts shall be audited or independently examined once a year and an annual statement for the preceding financial year shall be submitted to General Meeting.
- 6.6 Any land or investments held in Trust on behalf of General Meeting is to

be vested in Friends Trusts Ltd., Registered Charity Number 237698

- 6.7 General Meeting shall have the widest possible investment powers subject always to due prudence. In particular it shall have power to ensure that as far as possible that such investments do not compromise the objects of the General Meeting, its work or testimonies, nor those of the wider Religious Society of Friends. In keeping with the provisions of the Trustee Investments Act 1961 the General Meeting shall not be restricted by the general investment regulations of that Act or any successor legislation of a similar nature.

7. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- 7.1 The Officers shall be responsible for arranging business meetings, which will be open to Young Friends to attend.
- 7.2 The Officers shall give at least 21 days notice of a business meeting. Notice shall be given in whatever reasonable form the Officers deem appropriate to reach as many Young Friends as possible.
- 7.3 The quorum of a business meeting shall be two members of General Meeting.
- 7.4.1 The Officers are responsible for setting the agenda for each business meeting, and for the organisation of the business meeting. The power to prevent, on reasonable grounds, any person or member of General Meeting from attending a business gathering is given to the Officers.
- 7.4.2 Decision to prevent a person attending a gathering may be subject to an appeal to a group as outlined in the Financial Policy.
- 7.5 General Meeting shall conduct its business according to the principles and practices of Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. In particular, the two clerks shall prepare a minute and read it to the business meeting for approval. The approved minute shall record the feeling of the meeting. If either or both of the clerks are not present, a substitute or substitutes may be appointed by the present members for the duration of that meeting.
- 7.6 A Special Business Meeting must be convened at the request in writing to the Officers signed by no fewer than thirty members. The Officers must give at least 14 days' notice of a Special Business Meeting.
- 7.7 General Meeting may from time to time make and alter rules for the conduct of its business, the summoning and conduct of its meetings and custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this constitution.

8. EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF

- 8.1 General Meeting shall have the power to employ staff (either full-time or part-time). Positions may be created or discontinued by a minute of General Meeting.
- 8.2 General Meeting shall appoint a Management Group to oversee and co-ordinate the employment of such staff.
- 8.3 The Management Group shall consist of one of the clerks and such other members as General Meeting shall deem fit.

up to date as of 6 May 1997

- 8.4 The delegated power and authority of the Management Group as regard employment of staff shall be as stipulated in minutes of General Meeting from time to time.
- 8.5 Staff shall receive such reasonable remuneration and conditions of service or contract as the Management Group shall determine from time to time *under the broad direction* of General Meeting.
- 8.6 Staff may be invited to take part in the activities of any subgroup of General Meeting and to give advice as General Meeting may require. However, staff may be asked to, leave business meetings for certain items at the discretion of the Clerks and the meeting.

9. AMENDMENTS

- 9.1 Any of the rules of this Constitution may be amended in accordance with the feeling of General Meeting provided that:-
- 9.1.1 Any proposed amendment shall have been approved in writing by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.
- 9.1.2 Details of the proposed amendment shall have been included in the notice of calling the business meeting, and
- 9.1.3 No amendment shall be made to the Constitution which will have the effect of the General Meeting ceasing to be a charity in law.

10. WINDING UP

- 10.1 If General Meeting ceases to exist or it shall be decided by resolution at a business meeting to wind it up, then the net assets after payment of liabilities shall be transferred to London Yearly Meeting with the request that these funds be used for Young Friends in Britain and around the world.
- 10.2 A proposal for the winding up of General Meeting may only be considered if details are given in the notice calling the business meeting at which the proposal is considered.

Accepted as draft under Minute 93/26 3 May 1993
Amended under Minute 93/38 16 October 1993
Amended under Minute 96/22 25 May 1996
Amended under Minute 97/09 16 February 1997