
Documents in Advance Part I

Information & Practicalities



This information & practicalities document provides information about the YFGM's gathering, which will be held:

on:	14th - 16th February 2025
at:	Edinburgh Meeting House 7 Victoria Terrace EH1 2JL

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Expenses

YFGM covers the costs of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in attending YFGM for role-holders and for newcomers. There is also an access fund for those who need to sleep off-site. You can find further information on this here:

<https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/claim-expenses/>

If you have any questions about the access fund, please contact pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk. If you have any other expenses questions, please contact finance@youngfriends.org.uk.

Before YFGM:

Join the YFGM Discord server to chat to other YFGMers and ask any questions:

<https://discord.com/invite/UNjHwQh8CQ>

If you have access needs or practical concerns please email pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk; for questions about the agenda or business, get in touch with clerks@youngfriends.org.uk.

The Meeting House

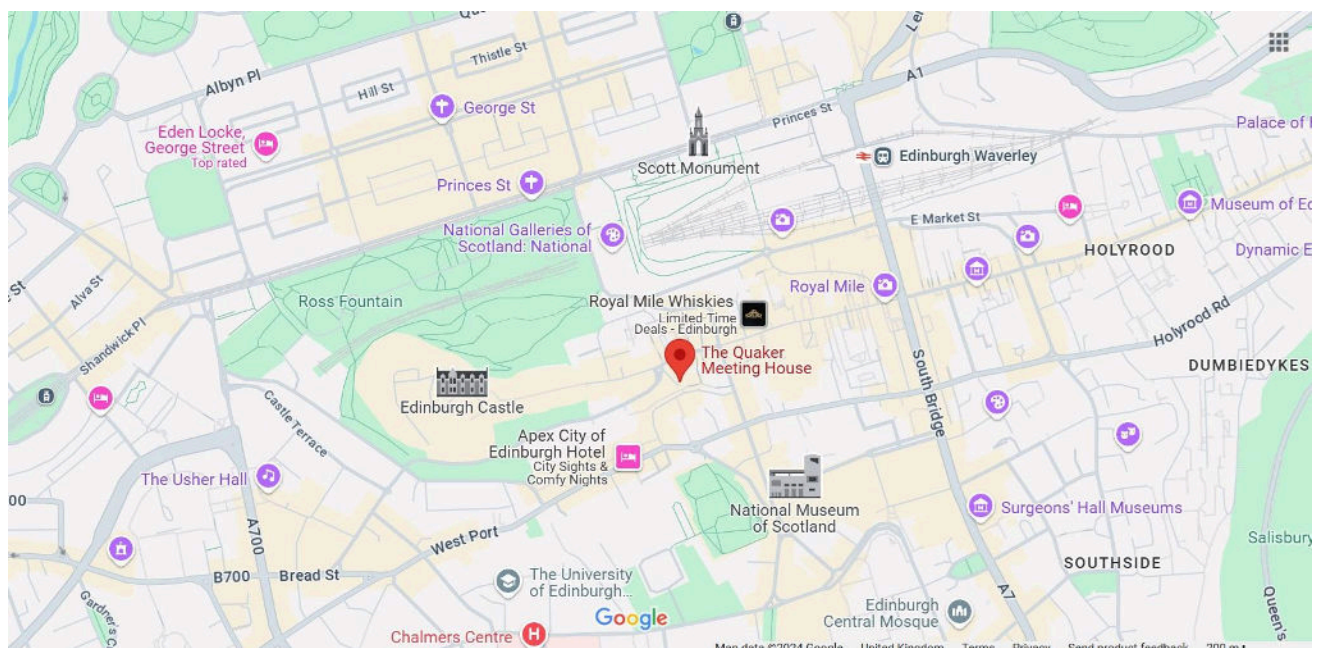
YFGM is being held at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. The address is: 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2JL

The nearest train station is Edinburgh Waverley 0.4 miles from the Meeting House (approx 8min walk).

Buses 23 and 27 pass along George IV bridge. Many buses serve Princes St and North Bridge, both under 10 minutes walk away.

There is metered parking nearby (free on Sundays) in Johnston Terrace, Victoria Street and Grassmarket. There are larger car parks at Castle Terrace (10 minutes' walk) & St John's Hill (15 minutes' walk).

If you need to park at the meeting house for accessibility reasons please contact logistics on logistics@youngfriends.org.uk who will help organise access.



Arrivals

On Friday, arrivals start at 6pm and we begin with Opening Worship at 6:30pm. If possible, please arrive in time for the opening session at 8:15pm, which will include an introduction to YFGM and essential notices.

Some YFGMers will be at the Meeting House earlier than 6pm, helping to set up, if you are able to arrive earlier (no earlier than 5pm) and can help with cooking on Friday please email logistics@youngfriends.org.uk we will be grateful for this assistance.

Newcomers

If it's your first time at YFGM (or you haven't been in a while, or you simply feel new), please do join our Discord server for YFGM: <https://discord.com/invite/UNjHwQh8CQ>. Within this, you can ask any questions in the 'info for newcomers' channel, as well as talk to members of our Pastoral committee. If you would like to speak to Pastoral privately, you can email pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk

During the weekend, there will be specific newcomers' sessions, led by Pastoral. These are optional sessions that you can come along to, to help get to know each other and ask questions.

Accessibility

Making our events as accessible as possible is a priority for us. If you have any access needs that you feel YFGM needs to be aware of, or any queries about accessibility, please mention it in your registration or email pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk.

Wheelchair access to the Meeting House is from George IV Bridge along Victoria Terrace. There is also access from the Upper Bow from the Lawnmarket or from the steps up from Victoria Street.

What do I need to bring?

A weekend's worth of clothes, toiletries, medication, and any other personal items you need. If sleeping in the Meeting House a sleeping bag and pillow, plus we recommend a mat or air mattress for comfort.

You don't need to bring any food or drink with you, as we'll cook and eat together; however, if you do bring additional snacks, please be mindful of common allergies and avoid bringing nuts (or shellfish!).

During YFGM:

Sleeping Arrangements

There will be a number of separate sleeping areas designated during the weekend. Each room will have a set "lights out" time - at least one each of 11pm, midnight, and late (no specific time).

In the mornings we've put a "Bell Time" on the agenda half an hour before the end of breakfast - this is when we are likely to wake up anyone still sleeping and get you to move your things to the bag room so that rooms are ready for their daytime use. If you are sleeping in the room used for eating/serving breakfast, you will need to be up earlier than this so that the room is clear when breakfast starts.

For those who require off-site accommodation (i.e. a bed), there are plenty of nearby hotels and youth hostels.

Bag rooms

During the day, a room will be designated as a 'bag room'. Please make sure that you put your bags (and sleeping bags, shoes, air mattresses etc.) away in this room during the daytime, to keep other rooms tidy and accessible.

Photography

There will be a photographer from Discovering Quakers who will be present to take pictures for Discovering Quakers social media and publicity. You will always be made aware before any pictures are taken.

If you do not want your pictures taken for the use of Discovering Quakers (not affiliated with YFGM), and have not already requested no YFGM photos on the registration form, please let someone on logistics know.

Safeguarding Information

We are committed to keeping everyone safe at YFGM. We have a designated safeguarding lead and deputy lead to ensure that this happens. They will make themselves known to you during the welcome session, and we would encourage you to speak to them if you have any concerns during the weekend.

If you are unsure if your concern falls under safeguarding, but you are still worried about something, please speak to any member of the Pastoral committee, and they will be able to help.

Sometimes, we have young children coming to YFGM with their parents. We would ask that you refrain from taking photographs of any children, and that you check in the background of any photographs you are taking, if there is a child present. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please speak to the safeguarding lead, or email safeguarding@yfgm.org.uk.

Cooking, cleaning & sharing a space

For the duration of a weekend, we form a short-lived intentional community; we share a living space. As part of keeping that space usable we ask that everyone contribute to the best of their ability with the cooking, washing up and cleaning.

We also take turns minding the door to the meeting house, to make sure that new arrivals are welcomed, curious passers-by are greeted and that the fire register is kept.

Kitchen tasks involve preparing the meals or cleaning up afterwards. When you arrive you will be given stickers for the door rota and community tasks, please write your name on them and assign yourself to a task slot of your choice. Depending on the number of people attending YFGM we ask that people complete between 2-3 task slots. Be sure to look through the timetable before the event to see if there is anything you do not want to miss - or when you might feel that a bit of time on the door or in the kitchen would be nice!

Please look out for other opportunities to help out. If furniture needs rearranging, water jugs need refilling, something needs cleaning, or if the washing up is taking longer than expected, etc, then please lend a hand - it will make everybody's YFGM more pleasant.

Eating together

The meals at YFGM will be vegetarian or vegan, with vegan options available. Please let us know about allergies or intolerances when you register, so that we can make sure suitable options are provided when putting together the menu. We'll aim to include the planned menu in Docs in Advance Part II, but these may be subject to change at short notice.

Nominations

As a Quaker organisation, YFGM uses the Quaker nominations process to find people to fill volunteer roles within the Meeting. Nominations are a key part of Quaker process, and while much of it takes place behind closed doors, it is central to the life of any Meeting.

We ask our whole community to make suggestions for people they think might fill particular roles. This is very valuable, since we are a large enough community that a small group can't possibly know everyone well.

YFGM nominations committee will approach people who have been suggested during or in the run up to the next YFGM event to find out if they are willing and able to be in the role or roles their name has been suggested for. They will discern, using the Quaker business method, who is right for a given role at a given time, and bring that forward to the Meeting for appointment. You are very welcome to suggest your own name.

Almost every role within YFGM is appointed following a nomination by the Nominations Committee - the big exception is the Nominations Committee itself. While the key work of discernment is done by the Nominations Committee, the whole Meeting is responsible for nominations and needs to support the committee by upholding them, by making suggestions, and by considering approaches with a frank and open mind.

This YFGM gathering we will be nominating roles including:

- **Planning Weekend Newcomer:** Someone who hasn't previously attended a YFGM planning weekend, who attends, feeds in, and provides a report to YFGM on their experience.
- **Logistics Committee:** Ensure the smooth running of YFGM events, dealing with practicalities and delegating tasks to YFGMers (as a committee of 5 people)
- **Trustee:** Ensure there is good governance of YFGM, communicate with the charity commission, create policies for YFGM (as a committee of 5 people).
- **Media Officer:** Responsible for communication between YFGMs, publicising our events, and updating our social media channels.

Please go to the YFGM website <https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/> for details on roles and the nominations process, and to submit your nominations. At YFGM, please

find a Friend on the Nominations Committee or use the submissions box that will be advertised.

YFGM TIMETABLE:

Friday

18:00 - 18:30	Arrivals
18:30 - 19:00	Opening Worship
19:00 - 20:30	Evening mealtime, including:
19:45 - 20:15	<i>Newcomers' welcome session</i>
20:15 - 21:15	Introduction & welcome session
21:30 - 22:00	Epilogue (evening worship)

Saturday

08:30 - 09:30	<i>Breakfast</i>
09:30 - 9.45	Opening Worship
09:45 - 11:30	Meeting for Worship for Business, including:
	<i>Introduction to Quaker Business Method</i>
11:30 - 12:00	<i>Break</i>
12:00 - 13:00	Special Interest Groups 1
13:00 - 14:15	Lunch
14:15 - 15:45	Business 2
14:15 - 15:00	Newcomers session
15:45 - 16:15	<i>Break</i>
16:15 - 17:15	Special Interest Groups 2
17:15 - 17:30	<i>Break</i>

17:30 - 18:30	Business 3
18:30 - 20:00	Evening mealtime, including:
	<i>Big Notices!</i>
20:00 - 21:15	Entertainments
21:15 - 21:30	<i>Break</i>
21:30 - 22:00	Epilogue
22:00 -	Unscheduled social time
00:00	Meeting House doors locked

Sunday

07:30 - 08:30	<i>Breakfast</i>
08:30 - 09:30	Cleaning the meeting house
09:30 - 10:30	Spirituality: What happens in Meeting for Worship?
09:30 - 10:15	Edinburgh Early Meeting for Worship
10:30 - 11:00	<i>Break</i>
11:00 - 12:00	Meeting for Worship
12:00 - 12:15	<i>Notices / Break</i>
12:50 - 13:30	Lunchtime with local Friends
13:30 - 14:30	Business 4
14:30 - 14:45	<i>Break</i>
14:45 - 15:15	Final clean
15:15 - 15:45	Closing Worship
15:45 - 16:30	Departures

Explanation of Sessions

This gives general information about types of sessions run during the weekend. Details for specific sessions / items this YFGM will be available in documents in advance part II.

Meeting for Worship

Meeting for Worship is when we come together as Friends to sit in stillness. In the quiet we look for a sense of connection; this might be a connection with those around us, with our deepest selves, or perhaps with God. Sometimes we may feel called to speak to our experiences in Meeting, and this is called 'ministry'. The Meeting usually lasts about an hour and ends when Friends shake hands or provide another signal. This YFGM we will be worshipping on Sunday with the local Meeting for Worship.

Epilogue

Epilogue is a period of Quaker worship at the end of each day. It is a form of Meeting for Worship, and usually quite reflective. There will sometimes be a reading by the Elders or some prompt or activity as a focus. We tend to encourage sitting on the floor / lying down / cushions and blankets to make epilogue a cosy experience.

Meeting for Worship for Business

YFGM, like other Quaker groups, makes decisions in Meetings for Worship for Business. As the name suggests, these are Meetings for Worship with the specific task of considering a question (or more likely several questions in turn) put before it. Rather than a debate or a discussion, we listen for leadings of the Spirit and contribute in ministry in order to discern an answer.

We all hold a collective responsibility for the discernment that happens in these sessions and the decisions that result, whether or not we attend them (but we really encourage you to!). In our business meetings we might be looking at how our community functions - appointing people to roles within YFGM, changing what those roles are, agreeing to put money or energy towards new activities - or at

wider things, such as our response to world events. Details of the specific items for this YFGM will be available in documents in advance part 2.

You can read about the business process we use on the YFGM website at youngfriends.org.uk/about/explainers/quaker-business-method, which includes some YFGM-specific practicalities so we encourage you to look at this even if you've had experience with other Meetings. We also ask that you attend our first business session on Saturday at 9:45, in which Elders will introduce how the Quaker business method works at YFGM.

We will aim to start each business session on time with 5 minutes of worship, followed by an opportunity to come in before the item starts. We won't let people enter the Meeting during a business item, however there will be a brief moment between items for people to come in.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups (known as SIGs) are smaller sessions based around specific interests or topics. These might be discussions on a particular topic, craft activities, walks, or anything else - previous YFGMs have included tasting a selection of tea varieties, discussions about membership, learning about Moravian side wound theology, and getting in the sea. Any member of YFGM is free to contribute a session, and we will usually have several running in parallel - hopefully quite a variety! Please speak to the Logistics Committee ahead of or during YFGM (before the SIG slots) if you would like to run one.

Entertainments (Ents)

Entertainments (known as Ents) is a block of time dedicated to socialising with the YFGM community through structured activities.

Big Notices!

A YFGM tradition is Big Notices during the last evening meal. Have you been doing something exciting that you want to tell people about, or have an opportunity for people to get involved with?

Maybe you've published a book, had a baby, produced a play, or maybe you want to find other people interested in running a campaign in your area; any of these and more could be a Big Notice.

If you have a Big Notice to share with everyone, get in touch with the Clerks before the Saturday evening meal or email clerks@youngfriends.org.uk to let them know. You can also put Big Notices in the relevant channel on Discord.