

# Young Friends General Meeting

14-16 February 2025

Edinburgh

## Minutes

**Those Present:** A Ballard, Aaron Longdon, Agnes Sales, Anya Nanning Ramamurthy, Anya Doliczny, Arjun Nanning Ramamurthy, Artemis, Becky Shirley, Bel Ingham, Beth Wild, Bobby Cooper, Bridget Holtom, Bronagh Sheehy, Caitlin Curtis, Calum Freeman, Ceridwen Jenkins, Charlie Evans, Charlie Appleyard, Chloe Scaling, Craig Wilson, Dan Dickson, David Wood, Dean McColl, Dominic Rawlinson, Ellie Giles, Ellie Harding, Elliot Mears, Elliot Kirk, Emil Brierley, Emily Brown, Ethan Sales, Felix Matthews, Fern Mills, Frankie de Vos, Freddie Brasher, Georgia Campbell, Georgie Rix, Gray Wood, Gwen Baines, Hannah Stranex, Hannah Ward, Iola Wallace, Izzy Hepburn, Jacob Webb, Jennie Atherton, Jenny Baines, Jessica Beck, Jessie Fenn, Johnie Hobday, Joseph Ingham, Juno Lee, Katie Aburizik, Kenneth MacIver, Kes Ward, Kim Edwards, Kit King, Limes Brighton, Lucy Cox Dodgson, Lucy Sproule, Mae, Maisy-May Gilhart, Miles Toon, Morgan Gasson, Nat Stacey, Nelle Crowgey, Nicole Marr, Osian Gold, Rachael Booth, Raph Thomas, Remy Dimmock, Robert Rayner, Robin Henderson, Rowan Queerly, Sage, Sammy Gilbert, Samuel Cooper, Sasha King-Smith, Sasha Lawson-Frost, Shaun Cairns, Sian Saul, Skye Dutton, Skye Simpson, Skye Watson, Tas Cooper, Thomas Sutherland, Tim Hall Farthing, Tim Rouse, Vanessa Balogh, Violet Grothey, Will Reed, Willow Bevington (92)

Co-Clerks:	Chloe Scaling, Hannah Stranex
Trustees:	At Open of Meeting: Leilani Rabemamanjara, Georgia Campbell, Bel Ingham, Kevin McNamara, Liam Lawson  At Close of Meeting: Georgia Campbell, Kevin McNamara, August Brown
Area & Local Meeting Representatives	Frankie de Vos- Cornwall Area Meeting Will Reed - York Area Meeting Gray Wood - Hampshire & Islands Area Meeting Nicole Marr - West Kent Area Meeting Bel Ingham - East Scotland Area Meeting

### 2025.02.1 [Minute of record: Intro to Quaker Business Method](#)

We have heard an introduction to the Quaker business method from Rachael Booth, one of our elders. We were reminded that our business meetings are

meetings for worship and we should be aware of what helps us settle into meeting for worship, as well as what helps those around us.

#### 2025.02.2 Minute of record: Intro to Nominations

Our Nominations process was introduced to us by Jess Beck, one of our Nominations committee members. Nominations is the process by which we bring to the meeting names suitable for the roles we are seeking Friends for this weekend, which are then discerned by the general meeting during meeting for worship for business. We are encouraged to think about who may be suitable for the roles being nominated this weekend, potentially including ourselves, and bring those to the nominations box.

#### 2025.02.3 Committee sizes

The Nominations committee has brought us a proposal to change the wording on the committee sizes for Pastoral, Logistics and Elders from “5” to “5 or 6”. This would allow for flexibility regarding the capacity of individual committee members, and to enable Nominations to compensate for times when a large number of the same committee come to an end of their term in the role.

We approve this proposal, acknowledging that this necessitates an increase in the potential expenditure for role holder travel, which has been accounted for in the proposed budget. We are hopeful that this proposal will allow us to accommodate varying needs of committee members while letting them serve and be served by the community to the best of their abilities. We accept that sometimes there are other issues present within a committee that cannot be solved by simply adding another member, and trust that Nominations will use this new flexibility with discernment and not to plaster over issues that need to be resolved in a different manner.

#### 2025.02.4 Nominations practice on age

This item has been brought to us by Nominations, regarding their practice regarding the age limits of committee members. YFGM did not used to have a hard upper age limit, but in 2021 it was discerned that we would have a more rigid upper age limit of 35. Nominations have been adjusting to that limit in the years since, and their recently established practice is to discuss age with Friends when they are being nominated for roles. Noms’ consistent approach over the past few events has been suggesting shorter terms to Friends who would otherwise age out during a three year role, respecting the upper age limit of 35, but still enabling Friends to serve. We acknowledge that past practice has involved encouraging friends who have been appointed to a role to continue to serve a full three year term past the age of 35. Nominations feel that their current practice is more fair and more consistent for everybody, regardless of length of contact with the community. The General Meeting approves Nominations’ current practices, appreciating the values of plain speech and equality that inspired it. Shorter role terms can present their own difficulties to role holders and committees, but we trust that Nominations will take this into consideration when discerning names and allow for

people's strengths to shine, regardless of their length of service. Using the upper age limit in this way is not painless, and runs counter to the instinct to hold onto each other as long as we can. YFGM does not stop existing or loving when we age out, and we might discuss options for supporting Friends past their time with us in the future.

#### 2025.02.5 Budget

The budget for 2025 has been prepared by our Finance committee, and presented by our Assistant Treasurer and Fundraiser. The budget as presented does not account for the £2,000 minuted in May 2024 to connect EMEYF and YFGM more closely - £1,000 for EMEYFers traveling to YFGM and £1,000 for YFGMers traveling to EMEYF. We add this planned expenditure to the budget. We also agree to increase our in-person donation income line from £250 for the year to £2,500. We are aware that deficit budgets like this are not eternally sustainable, but we are testing new ways of increasing our income in this budget, along with reducing our reserves. We approve this amended budget which is appended to these minutes in full.

#### 2025.02.6 Report from the Future of British Quakerism Conference

One of our representatives to the Future of British Quakerism Conference, Kes Ward, has presented a report written by our representatives together. The conference included the results of the latest British Quaker survey; a talk from Ben Pink Dandelion about being open to transformation; a session on visualising Quaker futures delivered by Paul Parker, the current Recording Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting; and five workshops on different topics that were mirrored during YFGM's weekend that happened at the same time. The evening included a talk from Rhiannon Grant, which was also streamed live at YFGM.

Reflections from the reps include disappointment at surface level exploration of themes due to repetition and shortness of sessions, being part of a very small age minority, struggling with accessibility issues during the event itself and hunger for deeper discussions among the attendees. The conference focused a great deal on declining membership overall in British Quakerism, but this is not reflected in the membership of YFGM, which has been steadily and joyfully increasing. Despite these issues, our reps and other young people were made to feel welcome at the event, and an appetite for inter-age communication and collaboration among Quakers has been made clear.

The written report is appended to these minutes.

#### 2025.02.7 Switchboard report

Georgia Campbell, our Finance Trustee and convenor of Switchboard, has delivered a report on the activities of Switchboard since our last gathering. She gave a short description of Switchboard as a "committee of committees", maintaining links and communication between roleholders between YFGMs. She spoke about Switchboard's responses to a difficult incident at October 2024's YFGM. And separately, the decision made to end our admin contract with Mindful Business

Solutions. Switchboard is in the process of discerning the needs of the current community regarding admin support and how we best meet that.

#### 2025.02.8 [Quaker Rainbow report](#)

Juno Lee, our representative to Quaker Rainbow, delivered a summary of his report, which is appended in full to these minutes.

#### 2025.02.9 [Complaints policy](#)

Our Finance Trustee, Georgia Campbell, presented a formal written version of our Complaints policy for adoption by the meeting.

We agree to the adoption of this policy with the following amendment: change the last word from “Quakers” to “individuals”. We ask our Nominations committee to amend the relevant role descriptions to include potentially being a part of the complaints resolution process. As the policy is regularly reviewed by our Trustees, we ask that they consider reasonable time limits to a complaint which could be added to the policy at a later date.

#### 2025.02.10 [Planning weekend newcomer report](#)

Remy Dimmock, one of our Planning Weekend Newcomers, delivered a report. A written version of the report is appended to these minutes.

#### 2025.02.11 [Meeting for Sufferings report](#)

Chloe Scaling, one of our Clerks, gave us a report regarding her attendance at Meeting for Sufferings since our last gathering. The papers and minutes of Meeting for Sufferings are available on the Britain Yearly Meeting website for friends who wish to look at them in more detail.

#### 2025.02.12 [YFGM trustee report](#)

Georgia Campbell delivered a report on the trustees’ activities since our last gathering, which included setting up a demographic survey for YFGM, which Friends are encouraged to fill out. We thank the trustees for their work in the last few months, and their thoughtful responses to the needs of the community.

#### 2025.02.13 [Special Interest Groups](#)

Special Interest Groups this weekend were:

- What Is a guest?
- Quaker Rainbow
- Cults and high demand religions
- Future Budget ideas
- Quaker badge making
- Pop-up choir
- Quaker-themed escape room
- Book of discipline revision consultation
- Far flung friends
- Questions about Quaker residential courses

We thank everyone who facilitated these sessions for us, and encourage friends to think of SIGs they might like to run at future YFGMs.

**2025.02.14 Minute from Nominations committee**

“Nominations would like to note its appreciation for our trustee committee and recognise the work that trustees do to support our community. We also recognise our responsibility as a community to uphold them, both in the short term and the long term.

As context, we have only been able to bring one name to the meeting where we have two vacancies. For additional context, Georgia is due for release in May 2026, Bel is due for release in October 2026, and Kevin is due for release in February 2027.

Names of Friends who can be co-opted until the next YFGM or for a limited length of service are encouraged.

We are also asking the meeting to consider an offers of service spreadsheet for ways in which Friends can support the committee; for instance, body doubling availability, policy drafting assistance, or wellbeing support. Trustees can then reach out for support as is constitutionally appropriate.”

- Minute of Nominations Committee, received by YFGM Gathering February 2025

**2025.02.15 Nominations returns**

We appoint the Friends named in the below table to the roles specified. We release Friends as indicated in the table and thank all those named below for their service.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Released</b>	<b>Appointed</b>	<b>Until</b>
Trustee	Leilani Rabemananjara Vacancy	August Brown Vacancy carried forward	May 2028
Finance Trustee	Liam Lawson (end of handover)	n/a	n/a
Logistics	Becky Shirley Jane Swinney-Seivwright	A Ballard Skye Dutton Iola Wallace	February 2028
Media Officer	Vacancy	Remy Dimmock	May 2028
Planning Weekend Newcomer	Remy Dimmock Sennen Cork Aaron Longden	Nessa Balogh Felix Matthews Eve Park	May 2025

Pastoral	Eliza Martin	Vacancy carried forward	n/a
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### 2025.02.16 Co-options

We note the following co-options to committees for this YFGM and thank the Friends below for their service:

Logistics: A Ballard, Skye Dutton

Elders: Calum Freeman

Nominations: Eve Park.

### 2025.02.17 Clerks' Offering

It's tempting, in every clerk's offering, to talk about laughter. As usual, we spent a lot of this weekend laughing, a great deal of it during ents when the clerks were mercilessly roasted for their late arrival at the first business session. The football-style commentary of a business session had Friends almost falling out of their chairs, but despite the shenanigans, business managed to avoid relegation. We were also reminded in ents of the amount of YFGMers who are fans of the Mountain Goats and wonder if we should add this as a question on our demographic survey.

We have been entertained in reports by Friends fleeing en masse from our Quaker Rainbow rep and diligent fundraiser, who later proved those Friends right to flee by threatening to steal everyone's wallets in their sleep.

One of our members talked to us about cults, and the SIG was so well attended that they may have the numbers to start their own. Happily, we came to the conclusion that Quakers don't quite fit the description of a high control group and we are cheerfully free to be our individual selves.

Despite the wider society panicking about shrinking numbers, we find our community to be joyfully growing in size and strength.

Edinburgh is a beautiful city to meet in, with little room for bags, but much room for fellowship, worship and reflection. We are grateful to have been together once again, and look forward to the next time we gather.

Chloe Scaling and Hannah Stranex, co-clerks

## Appendices & Further Information

- A. Planning Weekend Newcomers Report
- B. Quaker Rainbow Report
- C. Future of British Quakerism Conference Report

### Appendix A: Planning Weekend Newcomers Report

Planning weekend, for those who haven't attended one, is the weekend prior to a YFGM where role holders meet to plan the upcoming Meeting. Threshing is an

important part of planning weekend, where potential items to be brought to business meeting are discussed and discerned upon, following the leadings of the Spirit. These sessions can be quite different to a business meeting, being more discussion based and slightly less formal. In addition to threshing sessions, committees meet to discuss what needs to happen between events, and the agenda for the upcoming YFGM is set.

Attending our first YFGM Planning Weekend back in January was a really eye-opening experience. We could tell from attending YFGM that a great deal of care goes into creating such a well organised event, but being present at the planning weekend and seeing firsthand just how much work goes on behind the scenes gave us a new appreciation for all of the committees and individual role holders who are part of YFGM.

Compared with YFGM, planning weekend was a lot more intense, and as newcomers we found threshing sessions to be more mentally exhausting than we had anticipated, likely due to the nature of the difficult topics we were discerning on. There was a huge amount of information to get through in a fairly short period of time, which made the moments of community time, such as during shared meals, all the more precious.

Despite the fact that almost everyone at planning weekend already knew each other, we never felt like outsiders and the atmosphere was very comfortable and supportive, just like it is at YFGM. Between dramatic readings from Towards A Quaker View Of Sex (we learned all about homosexual difficulties, and our future successful heterosexual careers,) and intense games of Bananagrams, we really enjoyed interacting with YFGMers in a smaller group and getting to know people a bit better.

- Aaron Longdon, Sennen Cork, Remy Dimmock

## [Appendix B: Quaker Rainbow Report](#)

### History

In September 2023, with the support of a few Friends from YFGM, I posted a letter on Quaker Rainbow's Facebook Group<sup>[i]</sup> addressing the increase in transphobia in the UK, expressing a hope that Quaker Rainbow is committed to ensuring the safety and inclusion of all LGBTQIA+ members within Quakers, and asking that the community make its message and presence better known in the wider Quaker society. I got some enthusiastic responses from members of the group and was invited to speak on this concern at the following Quaker Rainbow Community Business Meeting in November 2023 where I was asked to collate and bring forward proposals on how to amplify Quaker Rainbow's message<sup>[ii]</sup>. The idea to create the Amplifying Our Message Working Group was formed.

In May 2024, Quaker Rainbow hosted their first residential weekend event since before the COVID pandemic. There, I ran a session to brainstorm ideas for the AOM's initial activity. I asked longstanding members of the community what Quaker Rainbow meant to them and what could Quaker Rainbow be doing now,

and in the future, to engage the rest of British Quakerism, and with other organisations, on issues that are important to us<sup>[iii]</sup>.

I chaired the first AOM meeting in July 2024. Since then, AOM have met five times, each time with new ideas on how to advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights and inclusivity within the Quaker society.

### AOM activity

Quaker Rainbow has empowered the Amplifying Our Message Working Group to work towards the goals highlighted in the lead up to the group's creation and develop ideas and projects as we feel led to<sup>[iv]</sup>.

To widen our online presence, AOM **launched a new Quaker Rainbow website** collating stories by our LGBTQIA+ members and publishing a calendar showing Quaker Rainbow's regular events.

We're drafting a letter **asking the government to follow through with their commitment to ban conversion therapy** and have the support of the Quakers in Britain organisation to publish it as representatives of the religious society.

I'm particularly excited by the opportunity to build and strengthen connections with other Quaker communities. We're working on this by:

- **Partnering with Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN)**
  - We're working together to produce a joint session to educate our members on the experiences of LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers and refugees today.
- **Consulting the Book of Discipline Revision Committee**
  - We've been approached by the BDRC to advise on drafting the next issue of the Book of Discipline. Members have asked the new draft acknowledge and affirm the existence of polyamorous relationships and highlight the importance of including trans and gender diverse Friends in Quaker communities.
- **Having a presence at Yearly Meeting 2025**
  - We've submitted a request for a Groups Fair stall at the upcoming YM in May. We hope to bring more attention to our community through activity during the event and encourage and empower our LGBTQIA+ members to contribute their voice to Yearly Meeting.

We're also seeking ways to support LGBTQIA+ Quakers on a local level to expand our outreach efforts and connect more with individuals in and outside our community. Some ideas include:

- **Developing, producing and delivering allyship workshops**
  - To be run at local meetings and Quaker events, exploring what LGBTQIA+ inclusion means, why it's important and how individuals and local meetings can be more LGBTQIA+ inclusive.
- **Participating in Pride events**
  - Quaker Rainbow have registered to be in this year's national Pride parade in July in London.
  - We want to be active and stable enough to support Friends across the country to participate in their local Pride events and work with



BYM to empower their Local Development Workers to represent Quakers at their local Pride events.

- o We want to pull together some of BYM's "Quakers Welcome the LGBTQIA+ Community" materials and send them in packs across the country to Friends to represent Quakers at their local pride events.

#### **Creating and publishing allyship materials**

- o Hopefully with the support of the Quakers in Britain organisation, we can build on the already existing "Quakers Welcome the LGBTQIA+ Community" materials and create branded informational materials on how to include trans and non-binary people in local meetings.
- o Create a database of resources that can be accessed through our website on LGBTQIA+ history, news, and allyship with a guidance on how to recognise homophobic and transphobic discrimination.

Separately to AOM, Quaker Rainbow have a pastoral care group created for LGBTQIA+ Friends under the name of Listening Friends. It was formed because the community felt that a service like this was needed particularly for friends part of local or area meetings where there is less understanding of LGBTQIA+ matters<sup>[vi]</sup> <sup>[vii]</sup>. Quaker Rainbow has asked any members of YFGM interested in pastoral care to consider becoming a Listening Friend as there is a need for ears younger than retirement age! The invitation is still open.

#### Supporting YFGM

After October 2024's YFGM event in Brighton, AOM along with a member of YFGM facilitated a discussion with Paul Parker at Quaker Rainbow's following Community Business Meeting focusing on how we can support Quaker bodies on matters relating to LGBTQIA+ conflict within meetings, public and internal outreach, and "speaking as Quakers". Whilst our Recording Clerk seemed caught between "sides of the debate", I felt members of Quaker Rainbow were more understanding of the nature of what YFGM were dealing with and more responsive to the persistence of this challenge presenting itself in Quaker communities, not just at YFGM. Quaker Rainbow is firm in their stance to support YFGM following this painful period, offering to facilitate further discussions between Brighton Meeting and YFGM on trans and non-binary inclusion and address this safeguarding issue with Sussex West Area Meeting and the Quakers in Britain organisation.<sup>[vii]</sup>

#### Conclusion

Quaker Rainbow is dedicated to celebrating the LGBTQIA+ community, being a fellowship, affirming each others' diverse identities, and supporting one another whilst advocating for LGBTQIA+ rights and inclusivity within the Quaker society. The community is determined to continue to provide a welcome, safe space, and affirming support for LGBTQIA+ Friends and allies. However, determination alone won't deal with emails, host online meetings, offer pastoral care through Listening

Friends, share information and news, convene in-person meetings, keep social media platforms (such as the Facebook Group) active, and run a website. Despite the creation of AOM, the Quaker Rainbow community feels deflated. There are members with a lot of passion but not a lot of energy. It's a shame that a group with such noble causes seem too exhausted to naturally run itself, let alone fulfil its potential.

It seems there is a natural connection that can be made between Quaker Rainbow and Young Friends General Meeting. I hope members of YFGM can look to Quaker Rainbow as an all-age community they can find belonging in and join the recognised body in their activities, whether that be contributing to the AOM group, attending the meetings in-person and online, or visiting their Groups Fair stall at Yearly Meeting in May.

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<sup>[i]</sup> [Letter on Quaker Rainbow's Facebook Group posted on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023](#)

Dear Quaker Rainbow,

In light of the concerning rise in anti-trans rhetoric in mainstream media and the recent activities of a group promoting exclusivity and prejudice within our beloved Quaker community (see this post on Reddit for more context:

<https://reddit.com/r/Quakers/s/s49tjlgJ6I> | Trigger warning: mentions of transphobia), I'd like to know what we as Quaker Rainbow are doing to address this issue.

I hope this group is deeply committed to ensuring the safety and inclusion of all LGBTQIA+ members within Quakers. I strongly feel it is vital that we raise our voices and make our presence known in the wider Quaker community, especially during these times of danger and uncertainty.

I'd like to propose that we take steps to amplify our message and become a more active presence within Quakers. Such as being more active on social media (create a Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram account) and use these platforms to collaborate with other LGBTQIA+ organisations and activists, promote educational resources to foster understanding and empathy to help all members become more informed allies, engage in outreach efforts to connect with other Quaker groups and communities, and advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights and inclusivity within the broader Quakers in Britain organisation.

I would like to hear the thoughts and ideas of those in this group (especially the clerks and members) and any who are willing to participate in initiatives such as these. We know people who are willing to do some of the work in setting up and moderating a larger social media presence, but we'd need content and guidance if we are to represent Quaker Rainbow.

In friendship,

Juno L

Hannah S

Alexandra B-B

Izzy H

<sup>[ii]</sup> [Minute from the Quaker Rainbow Community Business Meeting - 11<sup>th</sup> November 2023](#)  
2023/52 - 'Amplifying our message'

Juno Lee spoke to their concern, first expressed on our Facebook page. As QR is deeply committed to ensuring the safety and inclusion of all LGBTQIA+ members within Quakers, it is vital that we make our message and our presence better known in the wider Quaker

community, especially during these times of danger and uncertainty. Juno proposed that we take steps:

- to amplify our message through outreach,
- to become a more active, visible presence within Quakers, such as using social media platforms,
- to collaborate with other LGBTQIA+ organisations and activists,
- to promote educational resources so as to foster understanding and empathy to help all members become more informed allies,
- to engage in outreach efforts to connect with other Quaker groups and communities,
- and to advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights and inclusivity within the broader Quakers in Britain.

We want to say yes! to this concern and ask Juno and their friends to bring forward proposals for us to consider.

<sup>[iii]</sup> Minute from the Quaker Rainbow Community Business Meeting - 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
2024/32 - Residential Weekend report and what happens now?

We look to the Amplifying Our Message group to convene in the next few weeks, which Juno our YFGM rep. will do; examples of what they may look at doing would be providing workshops for members, putting together a database of resources available to us, and looking at the effectiveness of our online presence.

<sup>[iv]</sup> Minute from the Quaker Rainbow Community Business Meeting - 9<sup>th</sup> November 2024

The meeting accepted the recommendation of the Clerking Group that in between Meetings, the clerking group and AOM group together are empowered to make all decisions for the community. Matters of policy will still come to the community meeting for discernment.

<sup>[v]</sup> Minute from the Quaker Rainbow Community Business Meeting - 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022  
2022/34 - Eldership and Pastoral Care

The subject of Eldership and Pastoral Care has been discussed in the past but has not been acted on as yet. The clerks proposed the creation of a "Listening Friends" group organised in a similar way to the clerking group. We feel there is a need for pastoral care tailored to LGBTQIA+ friends both at meetings of the fellowship and outside. This could be particularly important where friends are part of local or area meetings where there is less understanding of LGBTQIA+ matters.

<sup>[vi]</sup> Minute from the Quaker Rainbow Community Business Meeting - 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
2023/06 - Listening Friends Pastoral Care Group

John reported that he, Clare, Kate and Susan want to talk to two or three key people about what they're seeking to do. They would like more knowledge and training to deal with things that Friends require support with, in order to be an effective listening ear. The core group will therefore meet together with others in order to do this.

Their hope is to be able to signpost Friends to access appropriate support - for example to resources that Friends can use, possibly through setting up a resource directory.

<sup>[vii]</sup> Minute from the Quaker Rainbow Community Business Meeting - 9<sup>th</sup> November 2024  
2024/48 - Conversation with Paul Parker, Britain Yearly Meeting Recording Clerk

Members of our Amplifying Our Message working group put questions and concerns to Paul for him to speak to. These included:

- Banning conversion therapy
- Supporting the building of connections with other groups (eg no pride in war/fossil free Pride)
- Quaker Rainbow's role as a recognised body within the wider Quaker community

Paul described the work to combine the mandate given by Friends and the lived experience of Friends to talk with the public and UK government. Paul hopes the continuing Yearly Meeting will help this work. The process for testing and seasoning concerns has been between Local and Area Meetings and Meeting for Sufferings. Paul hopes the process of discerning concerns from recognised bodies will be developed within the new arrangements.

- Supporting Quaker bodies on matters relating to LGBTQ+ Conflict within Meetings
- Public and internal outreach and "speaking as Quakers"

YFGM has experienced conflict and transphobic harassment with local Friends hosting their meeting in Brighton. Paul attended a Transgender Day of Remembrance service, the preparation and service helped him understand how far we have to go as Quakers to live our commitment to welcome trans and non-binary people. It took Quakers in Britain many decades to accept same-sex marriage. Paul acknowledged the lived experience of survivors of abuse caused by male bodies. Paul acknowledged the lived experience of trans people. Paul hopes we can move from a place of fear. Accompaniment for YFGM events may help. The peace building methods we promote externally may help us inside our own community. The first step is to acknowledge there is a conflict. Paul reflected, can we fully live out our commitment to welcome trans and non-binary people while the conflict is unresolved?

Friends described the challenges of discerning same-sex relationships and then marriage, some meetings were unwilling to take part in the discernment, and the significant challenge of and caused by eldership and oversight. The peace building methods we promote externally may help us inside our own community, was discussed, and the work London Friends have started. Friends describe the importance of love, and the difference between beliefs and behaviour.

Paul wondered if Quaker Rainbow and YFGM could accompany each other. Quakers stand against violence towards women. We as a Society have affirmed to welcome trans and non-binary people. There are parallels with Quaker work not questioning the right of Israel to exist, while challenging settlement in occupied Palestine. Training people on trans inclusion can help meetings. Ministry comes from God, if what we hear in meetings is hate speech it is not from God, and so is not ministry. Paul reflected that difficult concerns don't go away; they need continue work, love and effort. Paul reflected, can we speak to the public, before we have done the work internally in our community?

- Juno Lee

## [Appendix C: Future of British Quakerism Conference Report](#)

The Future of British Quakerism Conference 2024 was hosted by BYM and Woodbrooke on the 18th to 20th of October 2024 in Stoke-on-Trent. It was attended by more than two hundred people, both in-person and online.

The dates of the conference clashed with the last YFGM event of 2024. Woodbrooke had approached YFGM in the spring of 2024 proposing to merge the two events, have YFGM representatives attend the conference, or have a speaker attend YFGM and deliver a session that would contribute to the conference. After a lot of discernment, YFGM decided to send representatives from YFGM to the conference and for Woodbrooke to arrange a speaker to visit YFGM and run a session that would feed into the outcome of the conference.

The following report details the experience of the representatives from YFGM, and other young adult Quakers that YFGM did not send as a representative, who attended the conference and its online follow-up day a few months later.

### **British Quaker Survey results - Shena Deuchars**

On Friday evening, Shena Deuchars presented the results of the British Quaker Survey that was taken in 2023. This kind of survey is run every ten years or so to show results across time. The results show a decline in membership and attendance at Meeting, that the median age of Quakers is rising (from a baseline of already into the 70s), and that fewer new Quakers are coming from Christian backgrounds and more are coming from nonreligious, Buddhist and Pagan backgrounds.

The age categories in the survey results were broken down into 16-39, 40-59, 60-69, 70-79 and 80+. Thus we felt that the survey could not give us insights into the young Quaker demographic as we are all 'lumped together', though we appreciate the attempts to. We have designed and run a YFGM demographic survey in order to capture more detailed survey information about young adult Quakers.

### **Open to Transformation - Ben Pink Dandelion**

On Saturday morning, Ben Pink Dandelion challenged us to question whether we were "Open to Transformation". Some of us (including Juno) found this to be one of our favourite talks. He suggested ways in which we could be radical in our structures and how that can attract members to our society. It is our reluctance to change that restricts our attendees.

The talk was very similar to the 2014 Swarthmore lecture Ben gave (accessible at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRO-lGD9emM>). It's disheartening to see the way in which British Quakerism has not acted on that lecture such that Ben was able to repeat much of the same points ten years on and still feel so current and poignant.

In the following discussion about whether meetinghouses would need to be sold off due to shrinking numbers, a YFGM rep raised the YFGM need for meetinghouses to stay in, particularly the large meeting houses with accessibility and the space to host national events. We hope that Area Meetings will be able to maintain large 'hub' meetinghouses that will be suitable for community building even if smaller meetinghouses cannot be maintained.

### **Visualising Quaker Futures - Paul Parker**

This was followed by Paul Parker's talk on "Visualising Quaker Futures".

Paul painted two very different pictures of Quakerism in 20 years' time - a 'bad' one and a 'good' one. Through the contrast of the two scenarios, Paul highlighted the actions a Quaker meeting might need to take to reverse decline and actively create a future for itself. Things like midweek meetings; being more welcoming of asylum seekers and refugees as active Quakers rather than just as groups to donate to; more accessible meeting houses; making Quaker meeting houses places for hosting community groups; more openly welcoming new Friends from other faiths (non-Christian but spiritual backgrounds); singing in meetinghouses.

### **Workshops**

On Saturday afternoon, all of the participants were split into pre-arranged groups based on the preferences of the participants to speak on an assigned theme:

1. A Confident Quaker Voice;
2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Justice and Welcome;
3. Membership, Commitment and Belonging;
4. Resource - Maintaining Our Community;
5. Theology - Our Religious Perspectives.

A couple of individual thoughts from the workshops are detailed below.

#### *Membership, Commitment and Belonging*

Talked about creating routes for non-geographical membership - how do people who aren't connected to a local or area meeting come into formal membership? There are worries about creating a two-tier system of Quakerism that separates members, attenders and others who follow Quakerism without being in membership.

#### *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

The importance of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion workshop could not have been more painfully present as half an hour before the workshop ended, a parent with her child had to leave due to the session being unsuitable for their full attention and participation.

### **Looking for Leadings - Rhiannon Grant**

On Saturday evening, Rhiannon Grant presented her talk on "Looking for Leadings" (complete with a lot of hang-gliding metaphors). This was also livestreamed to YFGM itself, so we feel less need to report on it.

Of particular note, the Simpler Meetings project was raised - how do smaller meetings cope with less resource?

### **Next Steps**

On Sunday morning, all of the participants came together to discern further responses to the event and to write a minute on moving forward with the conference's outcomes. The minute will go to Quaker Life Central Committee.

### **Personal reflections**

Despite Woodbrooke holding many spaces for 25 YFGM representatives, only a handful of YFGMers felt moved to attend and take up those spaces, probably due to a clash with YFGM itself. Juno felt that attending YFGM instead of the conference would've been more worth their time.

The themes were explored at a disappointing surface level. The workshops were too short; just as the complexity and urgency of the topic was being revealed, time had run out and we were herded away to the next session or to dinner.

YFGM's presence was certainly welcomed by older participants. Attendees approached us to ask about our experiences and contributions through ministries. All seemed keen to learn more about YFGM life and how to further include Young Adult Friends. These were well meaning approaches that were sometimes isolating in practice, as we found ourselves explaining the same things over and over again which made very clear the yawning extent of the generational chasm we were attempting to cross.

Despite far more resources at hand, the event was somewhat unorganised compared to YFGM. A last minute suggestion to organise co-taxi trips for departures rendered a YFGMer drained and incapacitated. It was mentally inaccessible.

There was certainly a hunger for more discussion and action, and so many had such big ideas. The potential of what could come out of a conference of this nature was not realised. However, we hope that this is naught but the first of a series of wider discussions - many local, some more national - about how Quakers might meet the challenges we face.

We enjoyed the conference overall (Kes and Michael at least) but felt that the conference did not address the needs of younger Quakers - largely due to the fact that most of the attendees were not young Quakers. We feel it falls to YFGM itself to consider both the future of younger British Quakerism, and the ways in which as YFGMers age we will naturally become part of a changed future.

### **Follow-up Meeting on Saturday 25th January 2025**

There was a day-long follow-up meeting on Zoom attended by approximately 100 people from the conference.

We opened with a short Worship. We thought this quote spoke to us:

*“We need to make space for conversations, to share our stories, and listen to one another on those things about which we disagree. Are we feeling brave to share deeply, to listen to what we may find difficult, to hear the meaning behind the words?... We have trust in the Spirit, the process and each other.”*

We appreciate the tech guidance for new Zoom users. It must have been nerve-wracking to organise 100 Quakers in a zoom room for a day! There were also shuffle breaks, and some nice conversation between familiar faces occurred.

Throughout the day we were asked:

- Where do you feel the energy is in your meeting?
- It may be helpful to further explore the detail of the obstacles or hear in more detail about how people did it.
- How did you feed back? What worked well? What do you plan to do if you have not yet?

Generally this online meet suffered from the same problem as the conference itself: that just as discussions were deepening well, we were moved onto the next topic. There’s just too much to cover! Our thoughts as they pertain to YFGM as “our Meeting” are below.

### **What are we called to do to enrich Young Friends General Meeting for the future?**

- We need to plan for YFGM going over 90 in size.
  - Expertise/funding from Woodbrooke about holding larger events.
  - See what BYM could do to help? possibly
- How can we make YFGM more accessible?
  - Online (particularly business sessions): would be able to include Young Friends (nationally) not just Young Friends (geographically)
  - Generally YFGM is very good at in-person accessibility. However that’s never an excuse for not doing more.
  - Address the difference between asking people for access needs and providing them without request.
  - Increase first-time retention - we have a large number of people who attend once and not again. What are we doing to welcome and include them?
- What are other (older) Friends doing? What have they said they would do? How far in/out of step with the rest of the Society are we on these things?

Report by, Eliza M, Juno L, Kes W, Michael B

Links to the talks:

- Survey results
  - <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/British-Quaker-Survey-Primary-Results-Survey-Paper-3.pdf>



- Ben Pink Dandelion
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMT3RFjaFyQ>
  - <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Open-to-Transformation-Ben-Pink-Dandelion-Transcript.pdf>
- Paul Parker
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SK4qMKzM5I>
  - <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Visualising-Quaker-Futures-Paul-Parker-Transcript.pdf>
- Rhiannon Grant
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGBOW13XfH8>
  - <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Looking-for-Leadings-Rhiannon-Grant-Transcript.pdf>

# YFGM Budget 2025

## Expenditure

Category Group	Category	2023 Budget	2023 Actual
YFGM	Access	N/A	N/A
	Enquirer's Travel	£2,000.00	£722.35
	Food	£1,352.00	£1,100.00
	General Travel	£100.00	£326.33
	Other	£1,000.00	£95.88
	Role Holder's Travel	£4,400.00	£4,482.31
	Venue	£2,000.00	£200.00
	<b>Total</b>		<b>£10,852.00</b>
Planning Weekends	Access	N/A	N/A
	Food	£462.00	£572.41
	Other	£200.00	£17.33
	Role Holder's Travel	£2,800.00	£2,100.08
	Venue	£400.00	£0.00
	<b>Total</b>		<b>£3,862.00</b>
Administration	Admin support	£5,000.00	£2,448.84
	Insurance	N/A	N/A
	Licences	£1,380.00	£1,050.00
	Other	£180.00	£0.00

	<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,560.00</b>	<b>£3,498.84</b>
Bursaries	Bursaries (non-trustee role-holder)	£3,000.00	£2,455.20
	Bursaries Non - YFGM	£600.00	£0.00
	NETQT (North East Thames Quaker Tru N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,600.00</b>	<b>£2,455.20</b>
Grantmaking	EMEYF Grant	£500.00	£0.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£500.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
Other Events	Other Events	£1,000.00	£0.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
Role Holders and Activities	Concerns	£500.00	£0.00
	Fundraising	£1,000.00	£0.00
	Media	£500.00	£0.00
	Outreach (General)	£0.00	£0.00
	Professional Advice	£1,000.00	£0.00
	Representatives	£500.00	£0.00
	Training	£4,000.00	£1,031.00
	Website	£2,000.00	£78.06
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,500.00</b>	<b>£1,109.06</b>
Contingency	Contingency	£1,000.00	£0.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£36,874.00</b>	<b>£16,679.79</b>

## Income

Category Group	Category	2023 Budget	2023 Actual
Donations	In-person contributions	£0.00	£1,411.96
	Online contributions	£3,000.00	£0.00
	Regular donations	£1,000.00	£1,092.20
	Quaker meetings	£5,000.00	£2,731.92
	<b>Total</b>		<b>£9,000.00</b>
Grants	Charitable trusts	£15,000.00	£12,696.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£15,000.00</b>	<b>£12,696.03</b>
Other Income	Interest	£1,500.00	£384.86
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,500.00</b>	<b>£384.86</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£25,500.00</b>	<b>£18,316.97</b>
<b>Surplus / Deficit</b>		<b>-£11,374.00</b>	<b>£1,637.18</b>

## Reserves

Liquid assets (as at 31/12/2024)	£23,659.11
Office costs for 6 months	£3,116.17
Office costs for 1 year	£6,232.33
Activity costs for 6 months	£18,702.74
Activity costs for 1 year	£37,405.47
Are the reserves above the minimum?	Yes

Are the reserves above  
the maximum?

No

2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 Budget Spent	2025 Budget	Change from 2024 Budget
£3,050.00	£5,816.81	#NAME?	£6,000.00	£2,950.00
£2,340.00	£2,773.93	#NAME?	£2,500.00	£160.00
£2,990.90	£2,045.65	#NAME?	£3,000.00	£9.10
£400.00	£279.70	#NAME?	£300.00	-£100.00
£500.00	£215.64	#NAME?	£250.00	-£250.00
£5,400.00	£5,149.12	#NAME?	£5,500.00	£100.00
£2,084.00	£1,200.00	#NAME?	£2,000.00	-£84.00
<b>£16,764.90</b>	<b>£17,480.85</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£19,550.00</b>	<b>£2,785.10</b>

£1,500.00	£2,461.34	#NAME?	£3,000.00	£1,500.00
£750.00	£1,121.81	#NAME?	£850.00	£100.00
£300.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£100.00	-£200.00
£4,000.00	£3,078.50	#NAME?	£4,000.00	£0.00
£1,000.00	£251.70	#NAME?	£600.00	-£400.00
<b>£7,550.00</b>	<b>£6,913.35</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£8,550.00</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>

£3,500.00	£5,599.89	#NAME?	£3,000.00	-£500.00
£600.00	£512.44	#NAME?	£600.00	£0.00
£120.00	£120.00	#NAME?	£120.00	£0.00
£500.00	£30.53	#NAME?	£100.00	-£400.00

<b>£4,720.00</b>	<b>£6,262.86</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£3,820.00</b>	<b>-£900.00</b>
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£1,000.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£1,000.00	£0.00
£1,000.00	£450.00	#NAME?	£1,000.00	£0.00
£4,170.00	£4,170.00	#NAME?	£0.00	-£4,170.00
<b>£6,170.00</b>	<b>£4,620.00</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£2,000.00</b>	<b>-£4,170.00</b>

£1,000.00	£1,000.00	#NAME?	£2,500.00	£1,500.00
<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£2,500.00</b>	<b>£1,500.00</b>

£1,000.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£1,000.00	£0.00
<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>

£500.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£100.00	-£400.00
£1,000.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£1,500.00	£500.00
£500.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£100.00	-£400.00
£500.00	£213.63	#NAME?	£500.00	£0.00
£0.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£250.00	£250.00
£1,000.00	£879.78	#NAME?	£750.00	-£250.00
£4,000.00	£35.00	#NAME?	£2,000.00	-£2,000.00
£3,000.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£250.00	-£2,750.00
<b>£10,500.00</b>	<b>£1,128.41</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£5,450.00</b>	<b>-£5,050.00</b>

£1,000.00	£0.00	#NAME?	£1,000.00	£0.00
<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>

**£48,704.90    £37,405.47**

**£43,870.00**

2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 Budget Attained	2025 Budget	Change from 2024 Budget
£0.00	£45.00	#NAME?	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
£2,000.00	£3,402.73	#NAME?	£3,000.00	£1,000.00
£1,500.00	£720.00	#NAME?	£1,000.00	-£500.00
£5,000.00	£3,664.25	#NAME?	£5,000.00	£0.00
<b>£8,500.00</b>	<b>£7,831.98</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£11,500.00</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>
£10,000.00	£15,135.13	#NAME?	£15,000.00	£5,000.00
<b>£10,000.00</b>	<b>£15,135.13</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£15,000.00</b>	<b>£5,000.00</b>
£2,000.00	£2,045.46	#NAME?	£2,000.00	£0.00
<b>£2,000.00</b>	<b>£2,045.46</b>	<b>#NAME?</b>	<b>£2,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>£20,500.00</b>	<b>£25,012.57</b>		<b>£28,500.00</b>	
<b>-£28,204.90</b>	<b>-£12,392.90</b>		<b>-£15,370.00</b>	





## Comments

We have significantly increased this budget line item due to the increase in access claims in 2024, and to take into consideration the YFGM's based in Edinburgh and Bristol this year.

We have increased this budget line item due to the overspend of last years budget caused by an unexpectedly large number of newcomers at last year's YFGMs.

We have slightly increased this budget line item, despite having an underspend last year, to reflect an average of £1.78 per meal per person (assuming 80 attendees per YFGM). This takes into account annual inflation, and encourages the use of local and sustainable produce

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect 2024 spending.

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect 2024 spending.

We have increased this budget line item (despite an underspend in 2024) to accommodate an proposed increase in committee sizes.

We have slightly decreased this budget line item to reflect the assumption that at least one meeting house will charge us (roughly £800), and the rest would appreciate donations (£600 each).

We have significantly increased this budget line item due to the increase in access claims in 2024 and to accommodate an anticipated increase in committee sizes.

We have increased this budget line to reflect an average of £1.78 per meal per person (assuming 25 attendees per PW).

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect 2024 spending.

We have kept this budget line item the same, despite an underspend last year, to accommodate a proposed increase in committee sizes.

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect 2024 spending.

We have decreased this budget line item, despite an overspend last year, due to planned changes to our contracted admin support.

We have kept this budget line item the same, despite an underspend last year, to accomodate any increases to our insurance premium.

We have kept this budget line item the same to reflect the cost of our accountancy software.

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect 2024 spending.

We have kept these budget line items the same to provide bursaries in line with our finance policy.

This line concerns a historic grant that we have received in previous years but have not historically spent. We are no longer applying for these funds because they weren't being spent, with last year being an exception, so this line item has been kept the same at £0.00

This budget line has been reduced to reflect the annual donation of £500.00 that YFGM has committed (by minute 2024.05.06) to making to EMEYF. As minuted at the February 2025 YFGM, £2000 has been added to reflect our prior commitment to providing bursaries for travel

We have kept this budget line item the same as these funds will be going towards a gathering in remembrance/celebration of a member who passed away.

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect 2023 and 2024 spending, and as we currently have no active concerns.

We have increased this budget line, despite an underspend last year, to fund the creation and distribution of 2024 YFGM report, flyers, and further requests for donations.

We have decreased the budget line item to reflect 2023 and 2024 spending.

We have kept this budget line item the same to fund promotional materials for Yearly Meeting and other events.

We have increased this budget line to allow for any professional advice that may be required this year.

We have decreased this budget line item as there are less events than last year that we would expect a YFGM representative presence at (e.g., World Plenary and the Future of British Quakerism conference).

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect 2024 spending, but have still allocated a substantial amount as we will be looking for a new co-clerk and new trustees this year.

We have significantly decreased this budget line item to reflect 2024 spending, while allowing for potential development on the website.

We have kept this budget line item the same in case it is required for any unforeseen expenses.

## Comments

We have increased this budget line item as we will have access to a card machine at YFGMs this year, which can be used to take in-person donations.

We have increased this budget line item to reflect the 2024 income of this type.

We have decreased this budget line item to reflect the 2024 income of this type.

We have kept this budget line item the same, despite a shortfall in 2024, due to increased fundraising efforts.

We have increased this budget line item to reflect the 2024 income of this type.

We have kept this budget line item the same to reflect the 2024 income of this type.