

# Young Friends General Meeting

YOUNG ADULT QUAKERS IN BRITAIN

## **Documents in Advance part II**

### Hearts & Minds Prepared

#### **Young Friends General Meeting 20th - 22nd February 2026**

This is the second part of Documents in Advance for YFGM February

This document provides information on the items on our agenda for the weekend. It should be read in conjunction with part I of Documents in Advance, which covers information & practicalities about the weekend.

A reminder please that if you have registered for this event and are unable to attend please email [Logistics@youngfriends.org.uk](mailto:Logistics@youngfriends.org.uk). This may enable someone else to attend.

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## Introduction

Each YFGM is a mixture, a blend of the perspectives, passions, and thoughts that each person brings. It's a mix of different types of activities - some structured, some more free-form. This document contains information that will help you come to the weekend's sessions with, in the words of Advices & Queries, 'heart and mind prepared'. There are descriptions of the items we expect to consider as a community this weekend.

## Separated Reports Meeting

We will hold an online meeting on Tuesday, 17 February, 2026, 7:30pm (GMT). This will be open to anyone between the ages of 18-35 who wishes to attend. The meeting will receive the following reports:

- Trustee report
- Switchboard report
- Finance report
- Meeting for Sufferings report
- Report from our Planning Weekend Newcomers
- New Ways of Belonging Working Group report

A link to this meeting will be circulated to those registered to attend February's gathering and those on our mailing list.

This will not be a General Meeting of the charity and we will minute receipt of the reports in brief over the weekend. However, this will be an opportunity to hear more from members of our community about the life of our Meeting between gatherings, and to meet in anticipation of our weekend together.

We will also have a short introduction to YFGM in the meeting, asking the question 'What is YFGM like?', and providing newcomers the opportunity to ask questions.

## Nominations

Our nominations committee will be working all weekend to find people willing and able to take on certain roles, and to discern which names are the right ones at this time.

Roles we are looking to appoint to this YFGM are:

- Pastoral Committee
- Elders Committee
- Finance Trustee
- Trustee
- Fundraiser
- Nominations Committee
- Planning Weekend Newcomer

Details of the nominations process and how to make suggestions can be found in docs in advance part I and on the YFGM website, and will be given in the intro to nominations.

To submit suggestions:

<https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/documents-forms/nominations>

## Sessions

Our Concern: what do we do next?

(Saturday 14:15 - 15:30)

We will be holding a session to consider ways in which we can act on our Concern for trans and non-binary inclusion in the Religious Society of Friends. A main session will be held to develop ideas, alongside a quieter zine workshop for a more creative approach.

You can read our minute here: [2025.10.6 Concern](#)

Come with ideas for ways forward!

**We are seeking two Friends willing to help facilitate group discussions.** We will hold a meeting for facilitators before the gathering and another afterwards to feed back to clerks and elders. We will also provide materials on facilitation. Knowledge of YFGM's Concern

discernment would be beneficial to this service. You can let us know if you'd be willing to help out by emailing [clerks@youngfriends.org.uk](mailto:clerks@youngfriends.org.uk).

## Spirituality Session: Is too much business bad?

(Saturday 17:30 - 18:30)

Meeting for Worship for Business is central to every YFGM gathering- it is a core part of 'the Quaker way' and we use it both to support our own structures (through nominations, reports, and setting our budget) and to live out our faith in the world (recently regarding Palestine, Charles Mountbatten-Windsor, and transphobia in Quakerism).

However, with constant competing pressures on how we use our time at short weekend gatherings, we are led to explore the question of 'Is too much Business bad?'.

This of course raises other issues: can you even have too much business? What makes business bad in the first place? How can we make meeting for worship for business spiritually fulfilling? It's unlikely that an hour-long session on Saturday evening will give us the answers, but hopefully some rich conversation and worship, facilitated by the Eldership committee, will offer some direction.

## Meeting for Worship for Business

**Introductory business:** Saturday, 10:00-11:45

**Session 2:** Saturday, 16:30-17:15

**Session 3:** Sunday, 12:00-13:15

**Session 4:** Sunday, 14:15-15:00

In our business sessions, we make decisions together as a community about things we care about, using the Quaker business method which is rooted in Quaker worship.

We'll start on Saturday morning with an introduction to how the Quaker business method works.

We will share what items will be discerned in each business session at the weekend, both verbally and on a written agenda, but this may change at short notice so listen out for announcements. Each session is

open to everybody, although it is helpful for discernment if you can be present for the whole of an agenda item rather than coming and going part-way through. For some items, it will be very helpful to have read the available information in advance - which is what this document is for! If you have questions about any item, please contact the clerks, elders, or the person presenting the item.

## Changing our Name

Young Friends General Meeting has not always been our name. In 1993, we changed from Young Friends Central Committee to Young Friends General Meeting.

In May 2025, a Special Interest Group was held to discuss whether YFGM might change our name and, if so, what our next name might be. There was a range of views among those who attended the SIG. The acronym FGM being widely seen as referring to female genital mutilation was raised as a reason to have a different acronym. For this reason, some participants said they avoid calling our organisation YFGM when talking to non-Quakers.

The current name has no reference to where we are based geographically. Some people assume we are wherever they happen to live, so it may help to include reference to Britain if we change our name.

Some people found the term General Meeting very important, whereas others felt the opposite way. Now that General Meeting for Scotland has changed, YFGM is the only General Meeting in Britain Yearly Meeting that still calls itself a General Meeting.

Suggestions from the SIG were to change our name to (General Meeting of) Young Quakers/Friends in Britain. "General Meeting" could be part of the official name, but not always used. There wasn't a strong leading on whether to use Friends or Quakers, or whether to include the word "adult" before either Friends or Quakers.

## May Spiritual Review Weekend

In this session we will consider a spiritual review weekend to support our growing meeting.

There is an overdue need in our community for a spiritual review. To pause, breathe, look up from the frantic mess of running an event and ask: Where are we going? What does the spirit call us to be? What dreams do we have for what YFGM could be? How does this community look more like heaven five years from now?

We propose that instead of the usual May YFGM, we have a spiritual review. The agenda would be stripped back, and focused on reflecting about what sort of community we are, where we are going, and what the future looks like. We are a growing community, which is wonderful and challenging. We propose that those who attend in May will have been to a YFGM before so that they will be able to reflect on our purpose.

In practical terms:

- We are oversubscribed, we ran out of spaces in 12 hours!
- We are routinely running a large deficit
- We have a Concern which is outward facing and will draw on significant resources

How can we meet the demands of our moment?

How do we nurture our religious community?

How do we act on and hold our Concerns? Not just our current one.

We propose four core themes for the weekend:

- Why do we gather? What is our nature? What are we for?
- Who are we between gatherings? What sort of community?
- Are our processes and structures serving us? How can our structures enable bold and vulnerable service?
- How do we financially support this?

Some specifics:

- Community will be at the centre of the weekend.
- There will not be the usual YFGM sessions;
  - No SIGs,
  - No Spirituality Sessions,
  - No Entertainments,
  - Only include time critical business - accounts and necessary nominations returns.
- Committees' responsibilities will be minimised, to enable full participation.

- We may wish to ask local Friends to support us, with tasks such as cooking.
- The roles of Nominations Committee, Trustee, and Planning Weekend Newcomer are up for nomination in May. We propose that the Nominations committee be empowered to decide how and when these come to the General Meeting.
- This is a one off event that will hopefully support an ongoing sustainable practice of review and reflection. The 2023 Trustee reform asks us to run an annual Strategy Day for both Trustees and Switchboard. This has not happened since then due to limited organising capacity.
- We propose that there be ways for members of YFGM to contribute if they are not in attendance in May.
- We may wish to have external facilitators and cover their expenses.

If accepted by this Meeting, we ask that the planning of this Spiritual Review continues through the Planning Weekend in April in Darlington.

#### Receipt of a minute from Trustees re Admin Support

Trustees bring the following minute to the General Meeting about obtaining paid admin support. After January planning weekend we have continued discussions with BYM to move forward with the proposed admin support through them, scheduling a meeting with them just before this YFGM. We'll bring any further updates from this conversation along with this minute in meeting.

#### **Trustees Minute from 25/11/25**

Trustees explored a number of different issues when it came to the matter of replacing Mindful Business Solutions (MBS) who previously provided the General Meeting with administrative support on an ad hoc basis. We explored the possibility of directly employing somebody to be an administrative support for the General Meeting. It was felt that the administrative burden of doing so, including running payroll and becoming directly involved with employment law, was felt to be a considerable risk to the General Meeting that Trustees did not feel was in the meeting's best interests. Trustees decided not to move forward with this option at this stage.

Following this, we considered the possibility of a freelancer supporting the administrative needs of the General Meeting. When considering this, we

discerned that there might be a number of challenges. As the post would likely invite the interest of Friends in Membership of the General Meeting, the occasion for conflict of interest was simply too great, spiritually, pastorally and legally with particular attention to charity law where it might become unclear where a freelancer might simultaneously act as a Member or a freelancer in different capacities. As such, Trustees opted not to go forward with this option as a way to protect all involved from a future conflict of interest and to ensure that any arrangement had appropriate guard rails in place. There was also a risk to the General Meeting being exposed to the possibility of enforcement action by HMRC due to the off-payroll tax regulations ("IR35").

In the end, Trustees approached Quakers in Britain to find an arrangement where they could host an employee who would carry out work on behalf of the General Meeting. The proposal put forward by Quakers in Britain would see them employ a member of staff, who would be employed for one-day per week (0.2 FTE) at a cost of £9856 which would be inclusive of salary, management costs and IT costs. We discerned that this option protected the General Meeting from undue legal risk and administrative burden, and also helped build a stronger relationship with our Friends in Friends House. Additionally, due to the urgent need of onboarding administrative support to relieve the burden on Friends who are running the General Meeting on an entirely voluntary basis for a considerable period, it was felt that this was the quickest way forward.

We look forward to moving forward with this proposal and hope to have a staff member, hosted by Quakers in Britain, in post by May 2026. Initially, Quakers in Britain will employ this staff member on a 12-month Fixed Term Contract basis which will automatically end the employment 12 months from its commencement without any liability. We will have the option to make this arrangement permanent subject to the agreement of all parties at a future date.

Trustees noted the reservations that were raised at YFGM October 2025 about moving forward with this decision and held it as we discerned a way forward. Notwithstanding those concerns, Trustees recognise that they have a responsibility to all members of the community, not just legally but morally. Trustees sought assurances from our constitution that the decision we are taking today is in the right ordering, and we were satisfied that we could move forward with this decision.

We thank all Friends from all committees and none that have stepped up in the meanwhile as administrative support was absent. Their contribution meant our community carried on despite these challenges and Trustees offer their heartfelt thanks.

Trustees will send this minute to YFGM Planning Weekend January 2026. As a result, this minute will be received by YFGM February 2026, and will also feature in Docs In Advance.

## Code-phrase

As a thank you for reading Docs in Advance ii so carefully, visit the YFGM door-keepers over the weekend and say, "I've just been thrown down the steps of the Minster" for a reward.

## Reports

In this session we will hear summaries of reports in brief from members of the YFGM community, including:

- Trustee report
- Switchboard report
- Finance report
- Meeting for Sufferings report
- Report from our Planning Weekend Newcomers
- New Ways of Belonging report

For full details on the reports, we encourage you to attend the online Separated Reports Meeting. You can find details of this on page 2.

## Nominations (Noms) returns

In this business item we receive nominations brought by our nominations committee from their work this weekend, and discern whether to make the suggested appointments.

## Noms to Noms

This business item is part of our nominations work, in which we do our own nominations discernment aiming to appoint Friends to our nominations committee.

Although the nominations committee don't bring nominations for these roles, you can suggest yourself or others using the online nominations form or the noms box at the weekend.

## Special Interest Groups

Special interest groups (SIGs) are smaller sessions running in parallel in different spaces. We usually have quite a variety, with a mixture of discussion-based, movement-based, and creative sessions and different topics to choose from. SIGs don't have to take place at YFGM they can also take place online.

At this YFGM we have 2 SIG slots, which will each contain a selection of SIGs.

The SIG sheet is available at [this link](#), it is a live document so may change in the lead up to (and during) the event.

If you are bringing a SIG to this event please select a SIG slot and add a brief description of your SIG to the SIG sheet.

If you wish to bring a SIG which is not on the SIG sheet please email [logistics@youngfriends.org.uk](mailto:logistics@youngfriends.org.uk) and add your SIG to the document.

## Entertainments

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

This YFGM we will be having a quiz, which will be held in small teams.

As at previous YFGMs we will be offering a 'quiet ents' option for those who don't have the energy to take part in the main session but would still like to spend time with others, or would just prefer a quieter activity with a smaller group of people. This time, we will have two options: watching a film (TBC) or crafts (you can bring your own, use supplies provided, or just come along to socialise).

## **Mouths Prepared**

This is for the purpose of preparing you for the meals arranged by our lovely catering coordinator volunteers. All meals are vegan/vegetarian suitable. Alternatives will be provided for those with other dietary needs.

The Menu for YFGM is composed of the following:

Friday Evening - Pasta with tomato sauce

Saturday Lunch - Bean stew with bread

Saturday Evening - Chickpea & cauliflower curry with rice

Sunday Lunch - Rice & peas with spiced roasted vegetables (note: rice & peas is made with kidney beans, not actual peas)