

Trustees' & Treasurers' News

A newsletter from Quaker Stewardship Committee



Issue 15: Summer 2019

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1. Welcome to *Trustees' & Treasurers' News Issue 15.*

We hope you'll find this holiday season issue of TTN useful. Maybe a little distraction from turbulent times? We include our usual round-up of news from the Charity Commission (Section 2), some guidance on annual reports and independent examination (Section 3), a piece from Mary Aiston on Stewarding in the Spirit (Section 6) drawing from her workshop at our March 2019 Conference. There is information about ACAT's treasurer training offerings (Section 5) and on cashless collections (Section 7). Huw Davies gives us his final contribution on Property Matters (Section 8). And finally, conferences past and present (Section 9) – news on our next Trustees Conference in March 2020. See the BYM sheet for an update on the Simpler Meetings project and for a reminder about the Treasurers' cluster.

The editorial team, tnews@quaker.org.uk

2. Charity Commission and HMRC related items

Annual Return

If you have not completed an Annual Return for the CC recently, you may find that there are now some new questions. You may wish to prepare yourself by looking at the guidance: <https://bit.ly/AnnReturn>
In any case, an Annual Return must be completed before submission of the Annual Report and Accounts.

Spotting and reporting fraud and cyber crime

Useful guidance is available at: <http://bit.ly/SpotCyberCrime>

Connection with a non-charitable organisation

Care is needed when working with a non-charitable organisation. The overriding principle is that our own charity's purposes must be seen to be being furthered. Quite detailed guidance is provided at: <http://bit.ly/WorkNonChar>

The Essential Trustee (Charity Commission Document CC3)

If you have not looked at this document for a while, be aware that it does get updated from time-to-time. The last update was in May 2018 and can be found at: <http://bit.ly/EssentialTrustee>. It included more guidance on safeguarding and further reasons for disqualification from acting as a trustee.

Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme (GASDS)

Please note that from April 2019 GASDS may be claimed on donations of **up to £30** (increased from £20). Please remember that cash collections on which you wish to claim GASDS top up payments must be paid in to the meeting bank account with the **actual cash received** and you should record the denomination of coins and notes collected. £50 notes cannot be included in the collection. This is so that in the event of an audit by HMRC, the paying-in book will show the actual cash received.

We will avoid abbreviations in *Trustees' & Treasurers' News* where possible, but some will occur:

CC – Charity Commission LM – local meeting BYM – Britain Yearly Meeting AM – area meeting
OSCR – The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator QSC – Quaker Stewardship Committee

Increase in personal tax allowance

Friends need to be warned that if the rise in personal tax allowance means that they pay insufficient tax to cover the Gift Aid on their charitable donations, they will need to repay HMRC. (Although it is the donor's responsibility to ensure this, it might be worth a reminder.)

Queries for trustees

9. What steps have you taken to ensure that the meeting holds secure copies of all essential records?

Advices & queries on Quaker stewardship

(www.quaker.org.uk/documents/advices-queries-for-stewardship-2015)

3. How are area meetings doing with their Annual Reports?

The Charity Commission recently reported that only 22% of charities correctly reported the amount of reserves held. We are doing better, with 34% of registered AMs correctly stating the level in 2017. You can refresh your knowledge by reading CC19 – <http://bit.ly/ReservesCC19> and/or going to the QSC guidance on reserves policy at: www.quaker.org.uk/trustees under **Model policies** and then **Reserves**.

Independent Examination – Five points to check:

- Is your Independent Examiner appointed by your Area Meeting?
- Is that person knowledgeable and capable of performing the examination?
- Have you shared with them their 13 duties as laid out in section 3 of CC32: <http://bit.ly/ExamDutiesCC32>
- Have you shared with them the checklist for 2018 on our website at: www.quaker.org.uk/trustees under Area meeting report & accounts?
- Is the examiner's report in the correct form, signed, and dated after the Trustees have accepted and signed the Trustees' Report & Annual Accounts?

If you have any problems in these or other areas then please contact your Link Friend. Please send your TARAs and checklists to Helen Griffith to pass to your Link Friends by the end of October:
Helen Griffith, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ or heleng@quaker.org.uk

4. QSC at Yearly Meeting 2019

We were there, but it may have been hard to find us amid the tumult of other things going on. If you were at every session, you will have heard the report on the work of QSC in our Clerk's report. You can find the video at <http://bit.ly/QSCvideo> and a Word document with the report at <http://bit.ly/QSCreport>.

5. Guidance on Training

Woodbrooke provides quality training sessions for Quaker treasurers and trustees but do check the ACAT website where you will find a number of single day sessions covering a wide variety of topics. They also have a set of films available online covering the fundamentals of a treasurer's role: Preparing accounts, Fund accounting, Planning and Budgets and Gift Aid and GASDS. Treasurers are advised of the ACAT login/password details each Spring by Helen Griffith: heleng@quaker.org.uk

**To update treasurer contact details and for treasurer support please contact:
Gaby Scott, 020 7663 1045, gabys@quaker.org.uk.**

6. Stewarding in the Spirit – Mary Aiston

What do you say when someone asks you about your role as a treasurer or as a trustee? Do you talk about accounts and risk registers? Or perhaps you talk about legal compliance and the charity commission?

Or do you talk about the spiritual basis of your work? As Quakers we are advised to:

Bring the whole of your life under the ordering of the spirit of Christ. (Advices & queries 2).

Our work as treasurers and trustees is just as Spirit led as the work of other role holders such as Elders and Overseers. It's perhaps not surprising if we don't always frame it that way because *Quaker faith & practice (Qf&p)* – which I usually find has the answer for most things – is, a bit light on the spiritual side of what we do. My interest in this was sparked by what *Qf&p* has to say about the role of Quaker Stewardship Committee (*Qf&p* 14.38):

The aim of Quaker Stewardship Committee is to give help, guidance and active monitoring in order to meet the requirement of charity law in the stewardship of finance and property, encouraging openness, accountability, transparency and integrity in all our affairs.

I quite like the second half of this which at least says something about why we do what we do. But there's nothing specifically spiritual, never mind Quaker, about this description. It could just as easily apply to any charitable organisation.

I'm hoping we can do a bit better in the revised book. You may already have some ideas of what more we can say, in which case do please share them. To get us started, at a workshop at the recent conference for trustees and treasurers we considered:

- The parable of the talents, Matthew 25 verses 14–30
- The story of Martha and Mary, Luke 10 verses 38–41
- *Quaker faith & practice*, Chapter 19 introduction
- *Advices & queries* 14, 27, 35, and 37
- *Quaker faith & practice* 15:01, 02 and 03

And the next time someone asks me what I do as a treasurer I might just say 'I'm helping to deliver the Kingdom of God' and take the conversation from there.

Planning for calamities: How well would you – and your meeting – cope if you and your computer completely collapsed? Plan to be resilient and test your plans.

7. Cashless Collections

Cashless commerce is commonplace now, and those of you who pass through urban centres may have noticed that pop-up coffee stalls and even buskers offer cashless payment. Several churches do this too. The Church of England has investigated and offers guidance through its parish buying services. Here are the links: <http://bit.ly/CashlessPay1> and <http://bit.ly/CashlessPay2>. They include advice on procedures and organisation and identify two suitable providers, Sumup and iZettle.

A Card Reader costs £29 and the App which runs the card reader from a Smartphone is free; both firms take about 1.75% of each transaction. We will welcome feedback from Meetings that have introduced card reader collections.

8. Property matters

I expect many of you who will join us in good wishes to Huw Davies who is moving on from his role as Property Adviser to BYM. Here's his parting guidance about listing of Meeting Houses.

Historic England (HE) recently announced that 11 Quaker meeting houses have been newly listed and six others have had their listing grade increased. This adds to the 140 existing listed meeting houses in BYM. Listing brings a building (and sometimes land) under the consideration of the planning system so that it can be protected for future generations. There are three grades of listing for buildings: II, II* and I (roughly equivalent in Scotland are C, B and A). Grade II denotes special interest, II* particularly important and I exceptional interest. All carry the same level of protection in legal terms. The higher grades get more attention from national bodies including Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland and Cadw in Wales.

Owners of listed buildings must get Listed Building Consent from their local authority for any alterations. This may be needed even if planning consent is not required. However maintenance, such as painting the windows or replacing the boiler does not normally require consent. A request for Listed Building Consent, is generally handled by a Conservation Officer who will understand the issues and can identify whether alterations will affect the special interest of the building.

While listed status means that there are some restrictions on what can be done, it does not mean change cannot take place. Consult the local authority early if alterations are being considered. Individual Conservation or Planning officers, may have different approaches to change, but negotiation should always be possible.

Listed status can open the door to grant funding from organisations interested in heritage buildings that would not have been available to an unlisted building. In particular the 'Listed places of worship grant scheme' enables the VAT to be recovered for work on listed meetings houses. See the BYM website property page at www.quaker.org.uk/property for more details. Thanks to Alison Clarke (ex HE listing advisor) of York AM for input to this article.

Queries for treasurers

1. Do you have adequate and regular support, such as a support group or an assistant treasurer? Having others who understand your work will make it easier to share some tasks and duties, particularly at busy times – and to find a successor in due course.

Advices & queries on Quaker stewardship

(www.quaker.org.uk/documents/advices-queries-for-stewardship-2015)

9. Past and future conferences

We think that our Trustees and Treasurers Conference this March was a success – and so do quite a lot of you, based on the feedback forms. Thanks for the many supportive and interesting comments.

We'll hold a one day Trustees Conference at Friends House on 21 March 2020 'Being and becoming a Registered Charity' and an event for Treasurers during Yearly Meeting Gathering at Bath next Summer; details to be coordinated with YMG arrangements Committee.

And in 2021 we will organise another joint conference for Trustees and Treasurers, probably at The Hayes, in late March.

Notices from Britain Yearly Meeting



Summer 2019

2020 contribution materials – change in timing

We are changing when we send out the material for the annual appeal for contributions. The materials for 2020 will be sent out in the autumn of 2019. Meetings should receive them early to mid-November. As the contribution materials for 2019 were sent out at the end of March this year we will use the information you gave us when we asked for updates for the 2019 mailing to send the 2020 materials. Some people contacted us with changes after the deadline for updates for the 2019 mailing and we have already updated our records with that information ready for the 2020 mailing. However, if there is a significant change in the quantity you need (that is a change of 50 or more leaflets or forms) or you know that the address we should send the material to has changed since 1 April 2019 please contact Gaby Scott, Treasurers' and Clerks' Support Officer, at gabys@quaker.org.uk or on 020 7663 1045 by **Monday 16 September**.

Why are we making this change?

Traditionally we have asked for contribution material updates in November each year, at the same time as we ask for other role-holder updates. This has led to a bottleneck in updating our records as we have had to process all the treasurer role holder updates and the contribution mailing updates before we can send out the contribution material. This is why meetings have had to wait until March for the contribution material to arrive. By changing the timing of the mailing we can get the material to you ready for the beginning of 2020.

Area meeting treasurers' cluster

A new email group for Quaker area meeting treasurers came into being in April. If you were known to us as an area meeting treasurer then you will already know about it. If you have not been receiving emails please contact Gaby Scott (gabys@quaker.org.uk). Do make use of it. Someone else will almost certainly have encountered the same problem as you and they may well have a solution.

ACAT subscriptions

Please remember that all local and area meeting treasurers have a subscription to ACAT and that this is often the best way to clarify technical treasuring issues. Treasurers are advised of the ACAT login/password details each Spring by Helen Griffith: heleng@quaker.org.uk. Please contact Helen directly if you are new in role and haven't received these details as part of your handover.

Simpler Meetings Project

Update from Jonathan Carmichael, Simpler Meetings Project Manager

Model policies

We are developing a set of model policies and templates that area meetings can adapt and adopt, to avoid re-inventing the wheel. The AM Trustees web page at www.quaker.org.uk/trustees now shows where you can find all the model policy documents currently available on the BYM website. Policies on Equality & Diversity, and Bullying & Harrassment have recently been added to the Employment Resource at www.quaker.org.uk/employers. The model Safeguarding Policy and Procedures should be available for consultation by October.

Producing model policies has taken a new turn, thanks to the opportunity to co-operate with a project being undertaken by London Quakers Property Trust. They have commissioned consultants to produce model policies for their area meetings. So I have re-focused, to work alongside them. We have also involved members of Quaker Stewardship Committee in reviewing the drafts (to avoid re-inventing the wheel again!). There will need to be some adaptations to some London ones, to reflect the way area meetings more typically handle property. We hope to have the first crop available in late September or October.

Thank you to everyone who sent me their current policies. These will help the project, and show where gaps are widest, and provide examples where we do not have models. If you need some examples while the model ones are being produced, do contact me.

Considering significant changes?

Another part of the project is to work with a few area meetings on major changes they want to consider or pursue. This could be internal changes, or working together more closely with other area meetings. If you would like to explore this, do get in touch, as there may be lessons we could all learn and share.

Discussing Simpler Meetings?

I am aiming to have a new Simpler Meetings web page up and running by the end of September, with some new resources, including a set of short videos for discussion groups. In the meantime, do let me know if I can help.

Contact Jonathan Carmichael, Simpler Meetings Project Manager,
jonathanc@quaker.org.uk

TRAINING FOR TRUSTEES & TREASURERS

Autumn 2019



A selection of courses aimed at equipping and supporting trustees and treasurers within Quaker meetings and organisations. Courses include both practical training from experienced tutors and exploration of the spiritual basis of the roles.

Managing our Meeting Houses

Monday 2 - Wednesday 4 September 2019

£245 residential £170 non-residential

This training and support event for meeting houses of all sizes and functions includes: Witnessing to Quaker values; workshops for staff and employers on employment law and good practice and on health and safety legislation; as well as sessions on meeting house administration matters, and on building working relationships and support networks. The course aims to respond to the needs of participants so everyone will gain increased enthusiasm, skills, confidence and knowledge to enhance the life of their meeting house.

Book online via www.woodbrooke.org.uk/managing-our-meeting-houses

Being a Quaker Trustee : an online course

Monday 7 October - Sunday 17 November

£115 online course

This six-week online course will provide easy-to-understand information and enjoyable learning, to make trusteeship approachable and rewarding. We will be factual and practical, but all we do will be underpinned by the spiritual question of what trusteeship means within Quakers? What does God require of us? What does the law require? What is considered good practice for charities? How does this fit with Quaker good practice? How do trustees, area and local meetings relate to each other? How can trustees best serve our meetings? This course is particularly suitable for new/less experienced Area Meeting trustees.

This course involves a time commitment of approximately two to three hours per week.

Book online via www.woodbrooke.org.uk/being-a-quaker-trustee-online

Being a Quaker Treasurer

Friday 17 - Sunday 19 November 2019

£325 residential £250 non-residential

For new and prospective treasurers, and those who still feel uncertain. We will cover all the main tasks, from first entries to year-end preparation of accounts, principles, responsibilities, and legal requirements. You will find sympathetic companionship with other treasurers, and explore the spiritual basis of the role.

Please note: the course starts at 11:15am on the Friday with Basic Book-keeping (this runs to 5:45pm and includes lunch). Those without much experience need these sessions. If Friday attendance is difficult, the exercises will be available online to complete at home beforehand. On the Sunday there is an optional session on the Quaker spreadsheets which runs from 1:30pm to 3.00pm.

Book online via www.woodbrooke.org.uk/being-a-quaker-treasurer



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