

Sanctuary 2020 appeal

How Sanctuary Everywhere is making a difference

Sanctuary Everywhere provides resources, support and advice to almost 100 Quaker Sanctuary Meetings. Sanctuary Meetings make a shared commitment to:

- join local initiatives to build a culture of welcome
- oppose racism in all its forms
- work with others to change the laws on destitution, detention, deportations and removals.

Sanctuary Meetings are making a real difference in their communities through activities including:

- befriending and accompanying people seeking sanctuary
- lobbying local politicians
- holding public meetings, often led by people with migrant and refugee backgrounds
- running weekly drop-in centres
- organising donations and collections
- providing accommodation
- offering English language lessons and support
- volunteering at night shelters for destitute asylum seekers
- running workshops to explore how attitudes to migration are shaped by power and privilege
- hosting monthly lunches
- working with the local council and police to identify and tackle Modern Slavery
- making the meeting house available to asylum seekers and refugees to hold children's birthday parties.

Sanctuary Everywhere is a form of community peacebuilding. By forging links across local communities, Friends have built new relationships and helped reduce fear and racial mistrust. The support offered by BYM is helping to create the foundations for long-term engagement that is sustainable and embedded into communities. The programme is flexible so that individual meetings can adapt to local circumstances.

A midterm evaluation of the programme concluded: *“The programme has been hugely successful in its appeal, has created building blocks of increased understanding and concern, centring racial justice and partnership working, making the first steps in building a UK-wide network and giving Quakers as a body a voice on migration issues.”*

The evaluation found that the programme's skill-shares and retreats were especially valuable, enabling participants to learn from each other, build and practice new skills and identify opportunities for Sanctuary Meetings to work together. It also reported that several meetings found that being a Sanctuary Meeting had raised the profile of Quakers locally.

As one Friend said: *“There are some new people who have come into the meeting who are really interested in this whole area, I think it's helped attract them into the meeting... I think it has really raised our profile in the town more... People in the meeting now have more awareness of the issues and have had the opportunity to meet people who are seeking asylum. I also feel that it's brought the meeting together as a community because we've got a common purpose we're working towards.”*

Another Friend has said: *“[Sanctuary Everywhere] makes a difference in people's hearts and minds, helping to counter the negative rhetoric in the media around race and migration. This underpins so much of the hostile environment, so countering it is key.”*

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Questions and answers about the Sanctuary 2020 appeal

Q: Why do you need money now?

A: Sanctuary Everywhere was conceived of as a two-year project and funded by a one-off legacy grant until December 2019, when the work is currently due to finish. We don't have the regular budget to add in an extra programme, but we think we can manage a year's extension of this work through a combination of donations from Friends and squeezing our other budget lines.

Q: If you get the money, what will you do in 2020?

A: We'll continue to support meetings, with a focus on getting them to a stage where Friends can help each other rather than needing central staff support. The work on political advocacy and looking at our own power and privilege in the Society of Friends will be embedded in other pieces of work. All this was planned to happen this year, but when you have 97 Sanctuary Meetings rather than the 20–30 you expected, it throws your timetables off course.

Q: But I want it to continue longer! What will happen after this year?

A: Long-term, if Sanctuary Everywhere is going to become permanent, we will either need some reliable extra income to pay for it, or we will have to stop doing something else. The committee of Quakers overseeing all our witness work, Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee, is the body that makes these decisions and it will be reviewing its strategy and priorities in the coming year. That's the process: we have no assumptions about where the Spirit will lead this discernment.

Q: What happens if you don't raise enough for a whole extra year?

A: We are hopeful that, even if we do not raise enough money for a full year, we will raise enough for six months. Any less than that and by the time we've planned the extra work, it will be time to stop. If we don't raise enough for six months and have to end the programme as currently planned, we'll put unused donations towards our work on power and privilege, diversity and inclusion. We will need to make a decision about whether or not to extend the work in September 2019. To help us do that – wherever possible – we'd like to *encourage Friends to donate (or let us know about their intentions to do so) by the end of August 2019.*

Q: Our meeting doesn't have £785 to give, so what can we do?

A: The simple answer is ask other people. But because people may not want to just give to something if they're asked, you could do a sponsored activity or hold a community fundraising event. You could even make this into a Sanctuary event, helping people celebrate the work your meeting is part of and engage with the issues behind it.

Q: How do we send money to the Sanctuary 2020 appeal?

A: **Individuals** – send a cheque made out to 'Britain Yearly Meeting' to 'Sanctuary 2020, FREEPOST QUAKERS' (yes, that is the whole address, and no stamp is required!) or donate online at <http://bit.ly/sanctuary2020> (it's important that you use this exact link so that we know your donation is for Sanctuary Everywhere).

A: **Meetings** – treasurers can send a cheque or make an electronic transfer using the paying-in slips available at www.quaker.org.uk/treasurers (make sure to earmark the donation to 'Sanctuary Everywhere').