

# EXPERIMENTS IN FAITH

Providing meeting-centred support

Bringing central work closer to your Quaker community through local development workers and Quaker offices



Britain Yearly Meeting  
and Woodbrooke  
working in partnership



## Expressions of interest

Are you interested in having a local development worker (LDW) and/or a hub or cluster of Quaker staff situated in your area?

This will help to move central work closer to you.

Our invitation builds on the success of the Vibrancy in Meetings Pilot Programme and has arisen from a long process of discernment by Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke trustees. We're aiming to reshape the way the two bodies work together and improve the way we work with and serve Quaker communities across Britain.

Paid LDWs already work with Quaker communities across four different parts of Britain. They respond to the needs and aspirations of Quaker meetings and support them to thrive.

Creating a hub or cluster would mean basing a group of BYM and Woodbrooke staff in an area outside London and Birmingham. They could work from a dedicated office or be a looser grouping in a wider area.

Read on to find out how these two exciting developments could support your Quaker community. Please use the online form at [www.quaker.org.uk/mcs](http://www.quaker.org.uk/mcs) to express an interest in getting involved.

### Local development workers offer support by:

- listening, encouraging and reassuring
- connecting Friends with people and resources
- signposting to other BYM and Woodbrooke services
- facilitating sessions on a variety of themes
- helping to review existing activities or processes
- assisting with major projects.

## Local development workers

We aim to have an LDW within reach of every Quaker community in Britain within five years. We will recruit four workers to start in September 2020 in new regions, while continuing existing LDW areas. We want you to help us decide where these new workers will be placed.

Our Vibrancy in Meetings Pilot Programme began in September 2016. LDWs were placed in four different parts of Britain to test whether locally based support better enables Quaker communities to thrive.

After just two years, a report by the independent NCVO Charities Evaluation Services told us that Friends in these areas felt more connected, confident and supported. A third of meetings with access to an LDW were making changes to reduce demands on role-holders while others reported that the programme was helping to bring meetings together as a community.

## Trialling a local hub or cluster

Our two trustee bodies have agreed to create a pilot hub or cluster as a base for BYM and Woodbrooke staff outside London and Birmingham, thereby moving central work closer to Friends.

We are not about to leave Friends House, and Woodbrooke's programme of learning extends beyond support for meetings, but we see many opportunities in thinking more flexibly. Our aim is to build better connections between Quaker communities and the work being done on their behalf. We hope to become more relevant to Quakers in all parts of Britain, build resilience and reduce our carbon footprint.

We need your help to decide where to create a hub or cluster. It would serve a broad geographical area and comprise staff from Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke. In time it could also become a home for other Quaker projects or groups.

## Next steps

Fill in the online form at [www.quaker.org.uk/mcs](http://www.quaker.org.uk/mcs)

We invite expressions of interest from anyone involved with Quaker communities.

You could:

- discuss this meeting-centred approach at a local, area or other group business meeting, and share your minute with us
- discuss this informally in a Quaker setting and share your thoughts with us via the online form
- share an idea or opinion with us individually.

**Please submit your expressions of interest to us by 1 December 2019**

The expressions of interest process is part of a wider discernment process. We may be in touch with you to find out more, and we will bring all the information to a working group that will make the final decisions about what happens next.

As well as the needs and energy of different parts of the yearly meeting, we have to take other information into account, such as geographical spread, being a three-nation yearly meeting, manageable areas for workers, transport, and available services.



**Find out more at [www.quaker.org.uk/mcs](http://www.quaker.org.uk/mcs) or by emailing [mcs@quaker.org.uk](mailto:mcs@quaker.org.uk)**