

# **THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) IN BRITAIN**

## **THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING**

### **GOVERNING DOCUMENT**

Adopted on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of October 2007 by Minute 07.37 of East Scotland Area Meeting.

#### **Definitions**

- i) The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain refers to the church in Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, in its entirety, including all its Local Meetings for Worship and its constituent meetings for church affairs, as well as all their work [referred to below as the Religious Society].
- ii) Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) [Britain Yearly Meeting] refers to the centrally held and managed policy, property, employment and work of the Religious Society.
- iii) Meeting for Sufferings is the standing representative body entrusted with the general care of matters affecting the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.
- iv) Area Meetings are the main regional business meetings for church affairs. They are the level of the Religious Society at which individual membership is held. Each Area Meeting is a separate charitable entity and may be registered as such with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.
- v) General Meeting for Scotland acts on behalf of Friends in Scotland in dealings with the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Executive and matters relating to governance in Scotland. It acts on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting in relation to ACTS (Action Together of Churches in Scotland).
- vi) The charity constituted by this document is East Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain [referred to below as East Scotland Area Meeting or the Area Meeting].
- vii) The current edition of the Book of Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain is *Quaker faith & practice* (London, 2005) [referred to below as the Book of Christian Discipline].

- viii) The term Friend refers to a member of the Religious Society.
- ix) The term Attender refers to a person who is not a member of the Religious Society but who regularly attends its meetings for worship.

## **1. Governing Document**

East Scotland Area Meeting and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with the provisions in this governing document. Further guidance is contained in the Book of Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

## **2. Name**

The name of the charitable body constituted by this document is Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) East Scotland Area Meeting (abbreviated as East Scotland Area Meeting).

## **3. Object**

The object of East Scotland Area Meeting is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain in the area of East Scotland Area Meeting and beyond, as laid down in the Book of Christian Discipline referred to in Clause 1 of this document.

## **4. Application of the Income and Property**

Within East Scotland Area Meeting income and property are used to further the Area Meeting's object by work such as:

- i) strengthening the life and witness of Quaker meetings both in the area of East Scotland Area Meeting and beyond;
- ii) spreading the message of Quakers and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Religious Society;
- iii) undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad;
- iv) funding the concerns that Quaker meetings in the area of East Scotland Area Meeting or beyond have adopted or agreed to support;
- v) providing for the pastoral care of individual members and Attenders including assistance to those in need and for education;
- vi) maintaining and developing Quaker meeting houses as places for public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world;
- vii) administering and maintaining the organisation of East Scotland Area Meeting and contributing to the support of General Meeting for Scotland and of Britain Yearly Meeting.

## **5. Dissolution**

If at a meeting of East Scotland Area Meeting the members decide that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Area Meeting or to amalgamate with another Area Meeting and this is agreed by Meeting for Sufferings, the trustees shall have the power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the Area Meeting. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall, with the agreement of Meeting for Sufferings, be given or transferred to another Area Meeting, to General Meeting for Scotland, to Britain Yearly Meeting, or to some other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to that of the Area Meeting, and failing that for such other charitable purpose as Britain Yearly Meeting shall direct.

## **6. Amendments**

- i) Amendments to this governing document shall be agreed by East Scotland Area Meeting in session and recorded by minute of the Area Meeting.
- ii) No amendment may be made that affects the object of the Area Meeting (Clause 3) or the benefits to trustees (Clause 16) without the prior written consent of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, nor may the charitable status of the Area Meeting be affected.

## **7. Membership**

- i) The membership of anyone in East Scotland Area Meeting begins when a record to this effect is made in the minutes of East Scotland Area Meeting.
- ii) East Scotland Area Meeting shall maintain an official register of members under the care of the membership clerk . No alteration shall be made to the register save in accordance with decisions minuted by East Scotland Area Meeting.

## **8. Termination of Membership**

- i) The membership of anyone shall cease when a record to this effect is made in the minutes of East Scotland Area Meeting.
- ii) If a member is dissatisfied with a final decision of the Area Meeting affecting her or him, the member may appeal in writing to Meeting for Sufferings against the decision of the Area Meeting.

## **9. Meetings for Church Affairs**

Meetings for church affairs, in which the Religious Society conducts its business, are meetings for worship based on silence, carrying the expectation that God's guidance can be discerned if members are truly listening together and to each other. The unity

that is sought depends on the willingness of all to seek the truth in each other's utterances. There is no voting in the meetings, because the Religious Society believes that this would emphasise the divisions between differing views and inhibit the process of seeking to know the right way forward, the will of God as expressed in the sense of the meeting.

The clerk of the meeting bears the final responsibility for preparing the business, conducting the meeting and drafting the minutes of the meeting. Minutes are drafted by the clerk during the course of the meeting, but the final decision about whether the minute represents the sense of the meeting is the responsibility of the meeting itself, not of the clerk.

- i) East Scotland Area Meeting shall meet at such frequency, times and places as the Meeting itself shall direct. The clerk may arrange for a special Area Meeting to be held if necessary.
- ii) The sessions of Area Meeting are open to all members of the Area Meeting.
- iii) The business and activities of the Area Meeting shall at all times be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the current edition of the Book of Christian Discipline.
- iv) It shall be the duty of the Area Meeting in session to appoint an auditor or independent examiner of the Area Meeting accounts.

## **10. Constituent Meetings**

- i) East Scotland Area Meeting includes all constituent Local Meetings contained within its area, as listed in the accompanying schedule.
- ii) Arrangements for the establishment, running or dissolution of such constituent meetings shall be in accordance with the Book of Christian Discipline.

## **11. Appointments**

- i) The Area Meeting shall appoint a clerk, assistant clerk, treasurer, registering officer, a membership clerk, convenors of elders and overseers, and members of a nominations committee who shall be members of the Religious Society, and will make such other appointments as are necessary for conducting the business of the meeting.
- ii) Appointments shall be made for a term of generally not more than three years. Only in exceptional circumstances shall an appointee remain continuously in post for more than six years.

## **12. Trustees**

- i) The Area Meeting shall appoint Friends, from its own membership, to act as a body of trustees ordinarily containing not fewer than five or more than fifteen persons. The Area Meeting will provide induction and guidance to trustees to support them in carrying out their role.
- ii) The trustees shall, as far as is practicable, include the Area Meeting clerk, the assistant clerk and treasurer, the convenors of elders and overseers<sup>1</sup> and representatives of each Local Meeting contained within the Area Meeting, but not any employee of the Area Meeting.
- iii) The clerk to the Trustees shall be chosen by the Trustees.
- iv) The appointments shall be reviewed at intervals not exceeding three years. A trustee can be reappointed on no more than two occasions to give an unbroken term of service as a trustee of the Area Meeting not exceeding nine years. That person cannot then be reappointed as a trustee of that Area Meeting until three years have elapsed after the end of the last period of service in that capacity.

### **13. Eligibility, disqualification and removal of Trustees**

A member who is appointed to act as a trustee may hold office unless he or she

- i) notifies to the clerk of the Area Meeting a wish to be released from service as a trustee;
- ii) ceases to be a member of East Scotland Area Meeting;
- iii) is determined by the Area Meeting to no longer be a fit or suitable person to carry out the duties of a trustee;
- iv) is believed by the Area Meeting to have become incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her own affairs;
- v) comes to the end of his or her term of service.

Removal of a trustee under the terms of (iii) or (iv) above shall require a decision of the Area Meeting. An individual trustee may make an appeal against such a decision to Meeting for Sufferings, whose decision shall be final and binding.

Members of the Religious Society who are legally ineligible to act or who are disqualified from acting as trustees shall not be able so to act nor continue so to act.

Release of a trustee from office shall be recorded by minute of the Area Meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> When an area meeting office is combined with a trusteeship, and is held by two people acting conjointly, both these persons shall be appointed as trustees.

#### **14. Duties of Trustees**

The duties of Trustees are to:

- i) carry out the duties laid upon them by legislation;
- ii) act in the interests of East Scotland Area Meeting having due regard to Area Meeting decisions;
- iii) seek in good faith to ensure that East Scotland Area Meeting operates in a manner that is consistent with its object;
- iv) act with due care and diligence;
- v) ensure that East Scotland Area Meeting conforms to legal requirements.

#### **15. Powers of Trustees**

The trustees shall have the following powers, in exercise of which they shall at all times be guided by the Book of Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain:

- i) To raise funds from contributions; from legacies; from grants and other sources outside the Area Meeting; from investments and the use of assets; and from the sale of goods or services provided in furtherance of the Area Meeting's object;
- ii) To buy, lease or acquire property, and to sell, grant a lease or dispose of property, subject to the terms of Clause 17 (vii) below;
- iii) To borrow money and to give security for loans (but only in accordance with the restrictions imposed by the Charities Act 1993 as amended from time to time);
- iv) To set aside income as a reserve;
- v) To make investments in accordance with legal constraints and the ethical testimonies of the Religious Society;
- vi) To co-operate with other charities or to enter into partnerships;
- vii) To establish or support trusts or institutions formed for charitable purposes within East Scotland Area Meeting's object;
- viii) To employ staff;
- ix) To pay pensions;

- x) To obtain and pay for goods and services;
- xi) To reimburse reasonable expenses, including those of the trustees, incurred when acting on behalf of East Scotland Area Meeting;
- xii) To open and operate bank accounts;
- xiii) To effect insurance;
- xiv) To delegate their powers or functions as set out in Clause 18, below;
- xv) To establish committees or working groups for carrying out agreed programmes of work;
- xvi) To authorise any of the Area Meeting's constituent meetings or committees to open a bank account and to appoint signatories; such action to be recorded by minute of the constituent meeting or committee and reported without delay to the trustees;
- xvii) To ensure that Area Meeting is made aware of the requirements of legislation and their implications;
- xviii) To apply the income of the Area Meeting according to aims of Section 5 above;
- xix) To do any other lawful thing that is necessary or desirable for the achievement of the object of the Area Meeting.

#### **16. Trustees not to be personally interested**

- i) Subject to the provisions of sub-clause (ii) of this clause, no trustee shall acquire any interest in property belonging to the Area Meeting (otherwise than as a trustee) or receive remuneration or be interested (otherwise than as a trustee) in any contract entered into by the trustees.
- ii) Any trustee for the time being who possesses specialist skills or knowledge may charge and be paid reasonable fees for business done by her or him or his firm when instructed by the other trustees to act on behalf of the Area Meeting, provided that at no time shall a majority of the trustees benefit under this provision, and that a trustee shall withdraw from any meeting at which her or his own instruction or remuneration, or that of her or his firm, is under discussion.

#### **17. Meetings and proceedings of the trustees**

- i) Trustees shall conduct their meetings according to the Quaker business method as described in the Book of Christian Discipline.

- ii) The trustees shall hold at least one meeting each year, separate from the body of the Area Meeting. A special meeting of the trustees may be called at any time by the clerk to the trustees or by any two trustees upon not less than four days' notice being given to the other trustees of the matters to be discussed. This period of notice may be waived with the consent of all trustees.
- iii) If the clerk to the trustees, or the assistant clerk is absent from any meeting, the trustees present shall choose one of their number to be clerk at that meeting before any business is transacted.
- iv) An effective working strength of the trustee body, normally represented by at least half of the trustees for the time being, should be present for decisions to be made in right ordering.
- v) Minutes are to be made in the meeting and accepted and signed in accordance with Quaker business method as set out in the Book of Christian Discipline. The trustees shall keep minutes of the proceedings at meetings of the trustees and of any sub-committee.
- vi) The trustees may from time to time make and alter arrangements for the conduct of their business, the summoning and conduct of their meetings and the custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this governing document.
- vii) The trustees shall report to East Scotland Area Meeting at least once a year. They shall also refer to the Area Meeting in session any major decisions such as those involving the acquisition, disposal or major alteration of land or buildings.

#### **18. Power of Trustees to delegate**

- i) The trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a committee but the terms of any such delegation must be recorded by minute.
- ii) The trustees may impose conditions when delegating, including conditions that:
  - a) the relevant powers are to be exercised exclusively by the committee to which they are delegated;
  - b) no expenditure may be incurred except in accordance with a budget previously agreed with the trustees;
  - c) specify the reporting and accountability arrangements
- iii) The trustees may revoke or alter a delegation.

## **19. Annual Report and Accounts**

- i) The trustees shall ensure that an annual report and statement of accounts for East Scotland Area Meeting (including those of the constituent Local Meetings) is prepared in compliance with current charities legislation.
- ii) The report and statement of accounts must be presented to Area Meeting in session for consideration and acceptance not later than eight months after the end of the financial year.
- iii) The trustees shall submit an appropriate annual return to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator in compliance with current legislation.

## **20. Income and Expenditure**

- i) The funds of East Scotland Area Meeting shall be safeguarded by depositing in a bank account. The bank account or accounts shall be held in the name of East Scotland Area Meeting or in the name of any of the Local Meetings or committees contained within the Area Meeting and not in the name of any individual.
- ii) The funds belonging to East Scotland Area Meeting shall be applied only in furthering the objects of East Scotland Area Meeting as defined in Clause 3, above.

## **21. Property and investments**

- i) Ordinarily the trustees shall cause the title of all real property and investments held by or in trust for East Scotland Area Meeting to be held in the name of the trustees for the Area Meeting. However, nothing shall prevent the continuing holding of property of the Area Meeting in the name of the office bearers. When property is held in the name of the trustees a majority of the trustees shall sign any documentation relating to disposal or purchase of the property.
- ii) It is the responsibility of trustees to insure all property, including buildings and contents, for replacement values which shall be reviewed regularly. It is also the trustees' responsibility to maintain in force all appropriate liability insurances, including employer's, occupier's and public liability.

## **22. Registered particulars**

East Scotland Area Meeting shall be registered as a charity with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator which shall be notified of any changes to this governing document.

Approved at East Scotland Area Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and signed on its behalf

Date:

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Alyson Buchan  
Joint Clerk of East Scotland Area Meeting

Date:

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Philip Bryers  
Joint Clerk of East Scotland Area Meeting

**SCHEDULE OF CONSTITUENT LOCAL MEETINGS**

The constituent Local Meetings of East Scotland Area Meeting are:

- Angus Local Meeting
- Dundee Local Meeting
- Perth Meeting
- St Andrew's Meeting

Alyson Buchan  
Robert Mackay

Joint Clerks  
East Scotland Area Meeting  
Date