

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

D R A F T as of lunch time 7 June 2025

25/06/09 Transition to Quakers in Scotland

Minutes 25/03/17 and 24/11/26 refer. Paper B informs our business today. General Meeting for Scotland and Scottish Area Meetings agreed to the establishment of 'Quakers in Scotland' as a potential new structure with a single trustee body for all Scottish meetings.

This trustee body has been set up and would be responsible to a single Quakers in Scotland meeting for business, with General Meeting, the four Area Meetings and the Dundee Friends Property Trust transitioning or joining the new body when and if ready to do so.

We receive minute 2025/05/09 (Quakers in Scotland) of South East Scotland Area Meeting (SESAM) held 6th May 2025 and are pleased to learn of the discernment made at that meeting. We note that SESAM asked the Quakers in Scotland Co-ordinating Group (QiSCG) and the Trustees of Quakers in Scotland to offer:

1. Plans for how key issues will be handled following the transfer of responsibilities: specifically sharing of finances; management of property; safeguarding;
2. An outline of whether fewer jobs (other than trustee roles) will be needed;
3. Proposed arrangements for maintaining eldership and pastoral care under any new, more flexible system;
4. Proposed systems to guard against local meetings becoming isolated: from surrounding LMs, from QiS, and/or from BYM;
5. Ideas for how the current Area Meetings might work together, and together with QiS, as an interim measure or for the foreseeable future.

SESAM wishes through this process to reach a position where it can make an informed and guided decision as to dissolving SESAM in order to be part of Quakers in Scotland.

We note that East Scotland, North Scotland and West Scotland Area Meetings, and the Dundee Friends Property Trust, are all planning to join Quakers in Scotland by the end of this year.

The next stage is for General Meeting to transition to the new body in order that it can start to function and work on how it will operate.

The manner in which Quakers in Scotland will operate will become a function of the new body, to evolve as Friends then see fit. The Quakers in Scotland Co-ordinating Group have prepared papers towards this, and posted drafts on the GM website for

Friends to view. The pre-meeting held on 4th June was an opportunity for Friends to meet informally with members of the Co-ordinating Group to discuss these. The present, mainly working, drafts are: [LIST TO BE CHECKED]

- Governing Document
- Draft General Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Draft Finance Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Possible arrangements for Spiritual and Pastoral care
- Possible committee structure and nominations process
- Possible financial structure and organisation
- Summary of how Intermediate Meetings IMs might work
- What difference might it make to the number of roles

They are on the GM website at Quakers in Scotland Co-ordinating Group documents on: <https://quakerscotland.org/general-meeting/qis-documents>

At the pre-meeting, discussion took place on how the combined business of General Meeting and four Area Meetings could be managed, with opportunities seen for operating in new ways. Discussion involved the technicalities of transferring membership to the new body so that business could be conducted. A Friend likened the whole transition process as being like moving house. We pack all our possessions (ways of doing things) into boxes to move, and afterwards gradually unpack them to find what we need and what we don't. We will return to the papers in September and onwards as we establish how Quakers in Scotland will operate to fulfil its purposes.

We are clear today that in particular we consider how the required business is taken and how intermediate meetings will work.

General Meeting for Scotland is asked to approve:

- that trustees apply to OSCR to wind up GM, with the aim that at the meeting on 20th September, subject to approval from OSCR, General Meeting formally minutes its dissolution and the functions of General Meeting for Scotland be transferred to Quakers in Scotland;
- that the Trustees of General Meeting for Scotland are asked to transfer the assets of General Meeting for Scotland to Quakers in Scotland on 20th September;
- that current General Meeting service appointments transfer to Quakers in Scotland on 20th September, other than those for the GM Treasurer and GM Trustees. The new body will then appoint them for itself.
- that Friends are asked to transfer membership to Quakers in Scotland before the target date of 20th September.

We agree to the transition of General Meeting for Scotland to Quakers in Scotland as defined above. We appoint the existing GM clerks as clerks designate of QiS, to serve until the end of 2025. This means they can call QiS as body for 20th

September, a day in which GMS will also be called, but then laid down and QiS formally holding its first meeting.

In order to bring Quakers in Scotland into operation as a body for Friends in Scotland, a QiS Treasurer is required so a bank account can be set up and assets transferred. A nomination is to be received this afternoon. GMS Trustees are working to facilitate the transfer required. We will also transfer the Administrator's employment to the new body. Further QiS trustees are required and Nominations Committee and Area Meetings are working on this. Appointments may be made by our between-meetings procedure if required.

Work continues on the manner in which the membership transfer can take place and Friends will be contacted in due course. The membership transfer is an administrative consequence of the new charity being a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and does not affect continuing membership of area meetings for the time being.

The Half Yearly Meeting for North Britain was established in 1786, becoming General Meeting for Scotland in 1807. We have now reached the next stage in its history and evolution.

We ask Meeting for Sufferings to approve the transition of General Meeting for Scotland to Quakers in Scotland, and suggest that the current GMS responsibilities as set out in *Quaker faith & practice* 5.03 become responsibilities of Quakers in Scotland. All Friends in Scotland would become part of Quakers in Scotland for these purposes. Further work is in hand to define the new responsibilities and status of Quakers in Scotland as and if the four Scottish Area Meetings and Dundee Friends Property Trust become part of it too.

We are aware of the exciting opportunities before us as we begin thinking as Quakers in Scotland. It is up to us to make it work for building and strengthening our community. Our exercise today has strengthened this resolve to find ways forward for all of us. We thank the Co-ordinating Group and others working on our behalf to make this happen

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings and the Recording Clerk.