

## Membership of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Membership is a way of saying to the Meeting that you feel at home, and in the right place.

Membership is also a way of saying to the Meeting, and to the world, that you accept the fundamental elements of being a Quaker:

- Understanding of being led by the Spirit
- The manner of corporate worship and the ordering of the meeting's business
- The practical expression of inward convictions and
- The equality of all before God.

In asking to be admitted into the community of the meeting you are affirming what the meeting stands for and declaring your willingness to contribute to its life.

Britain Yearly Meeting 1999

### **Ready to commit to membership?**

When you have followed one of the paths described in this leaflet, just write a simple request to the Clerk of South East Scotland Area Meeting.

You can obtain their postal address from any Friend at Meeting – or you may email direct:

[clerk.sesam@outlook.com](mailto:clerk.sesam@outlook.com)

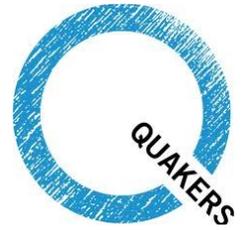
Scottish Charity No. SCO19165

***“Because we do not have any creed or fixed requirement for membership of the Society, there is room for growth and change.***

***On membership we are taking a path of discovery and further development and self-discovery.***

***It is fluid and on going. We go on seeking.”***

*Member of SE Scotland Area Meeting, 2012*



# Thinking about Membership



***A leaflet for those regularly attending Quaker Meeting in South East Scotland***

## ***Membership: why and when?***

When is the right time to join? Some people take a lifetime, and others may never do so but membership does show your commitment to Quaker worship, testimony and community.

If you feel you are ready to explore the road that leads to membership, then share that intention with experienced Friends in the meeting you usually attend.

In response they will be able to provide you with a copy of Quaker Faith and Practice (QFP).

## ***Applying for Membership***

When the time is right in your spiritual journey to join the Society as a Member you write a simple request to the Clerk of Area Meeting. See the address panel on the back for details.

Read QFP chapter 11 for guidance first. This outlines three roads that can lead you to make this request; they are listed in the next section.

Applications are considered by Friends gathered at Area Meeting where they hear an account of the journey which has led you to this point.

This account will have been prepared by the experienced Friends sharing this stage of your journey with you. Before you sign it, you will have the opportunity to amend it to ensure it is an accurate reflection of your experience.

## ***Preparing an account for Area Meeting***

- If you have been attending for some time and feel that you understand our faith and traditions well through your reading and experience, simply apply for membership to the Clerk. Two sympathetic Friends, including one from your own meeting, will be appointed by Area Meeting to meet with you. If they too feel you are ready for membership, they will prepare the written account with you.
- Or you may ask experienced Friends in your meeting for a series of discussions – maybe as part of a study group – about the Quaker way and what it means for them and what it means for you. This may lead to them preparing the account with you.
- If you are uncertain about any particular issue, you may ask your Local Meeting for a Meeting for Clearness. (See QFP 12.22-25). Addressing your issue may help you decide whether your path to membership is clear.

If one or more of these processes has been followed carefully it is probable that Area Meeting will discern that you are ready for membership. There is no ceremony; a member of your Local Meeting will welcome you into membership informally.

## ***Some considerations to review when preparing for Membership***

- Does Quaker Meeting meet your need for worship and fellowship and are you ready to make this your religious home?
- Are you comfortable with the Quaker testimonies to peace, equality, truth, simplicity, social justice and sustainability?
- Do you recognise the importance of the Meeting for Worship in nurturing the growth of the Spirit within each person?
- Are you aware of the wider family of Friends, which includes the Area Meeting, General Meeting and Yearly Meeting?
- Have you attended Meetings for Business?
- Do you seek “that of God “in everyone?”
- Do you accept responsibility for attending Meetings for Worship when you are able and for making such contribution to its work and witness as your own time and financial and other circumstances allow?