

East Cheshire Quaker Meeting

**To be held as a blended meeting at Disley Methodist Church,
70 Buxton Road, Stockport, SK12 2EY**

Saturday 14 September 2024 at 10.30 am

Agenda

1. Friends present
2. Reading
3. Caring for Friends
4. Between meetings minute (26 July 2024)
The Future of British Quakerism. Further to Minute 24.03.21, Nominations Committee has nominated Keith Braithwaite to attend this conference at a cost of £380 plus travel. We agree to this.
5. Death of Martin Northrop
We have received the following minute from Wilmslow Meeting held on 8 September 2024.
Death of Martin Northrop
It is with great sadness that we record the death of Martin Northrop on 12th July 2024. Martin was already in Membership when he moved to Wilmslow at the age of 8 with his parents David and Pat Northrop and took part in the life of the Meeting. A Memorial Meeting was held on 1st August 2024 with over 60 friends and family gathered to remember Martin. We heard about his life from the many who gave Ministry.
We are thankful for the grace of God as shown in his life.
6. Report on membership visit
Further to Minute 24.07.09, we have received a report on Julia Horn and Sue Pounder's visit with Ian Parker who attends Marple Meeting.
7. Resignation of membership
We have received a letter from Catherine Bolton of Disley Meeting informing us that she wishes to resign her membership.
8. Area Meeting Annual Report and Accounts for 2023
Further to Minute 24.07.12 we hope to receive a revised copy of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 with the omission from our last meeting corrected. Apart from change to page 19 this is likely to be identical to the version circulated with the agenda of the July meeting.
9. Area Meeting appointments: nominations received from Nominations Committee
We have received the following nominations from Area Meeting Nominations Committee of Friends to serve from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2027 (unless otherwise stated):
Area Meeting Clerk: Peter Eccles (until 31 December 2025)
Assistant Safeguarding Officer: Anne Sumner

Quaker Life Representative: Gillian Smith
 Quaker Life Deputy: Bou Mowl
 Area Meeting Trustees: Susan Clark (Cheadle Hulme, second term), Sue Pounder (Marple second term)
 Elders: Peter Eccles (Cheadle Hulme), Sue Pounder (Marple), Annique Seddon (Disley), Geoff Thomason (Stockport)
 Pastoral Friends: Catherine De Haas (Frاندley), Elizabeth Lees (Wilmslow, until 31 December 2025), Ann Lewis (Disley), Anne Sumner (Disley)
 Organising Group for Glenthorne weekend 12-14 September 2025: Hilary Brooks, Celia Davies

10. Appointment of non-members to certain roles

We have received the following minute from Nominations Committee.

Nomination of Friends not in Membership as Elders and Pastoral Friends.

Referring to Minute 16 AM February 2010 and Minute 14 May 2010 and the report of Elders on the matter of “Area Meeting appointments – members or non-members”, it is recommended that a standing committee of Elders and Overseers is appointed to review nominations of non-members referred to them. (See attached). It was also recommended that this process is reviewed every 2 years.

We ask that Area Meeting consider simplifying this process and allow Area Meeting Nominations Committee to use their judgement on whether or not to forward a nomination directly to Area Meeting of a non-member for the role of Pastoral Friend.

The relevant minutes from 2010 are circulated with this agenda

11. Area Meeting appointments: nominations from local meetings

From Frاندley Meeting: to serve from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025:

Area Meeting Nominations Committee: Jacqui Moore

Area Meeting Nominations Committee Deputy: Hazel Todhunter

Area Meeting Children and Young People’s Committee: Patrick Jones

Other local meetings are asked to forward any other nominations to Area Meeting committees to November Area Meeting (in particular Crewe & Nantwich, Disley and Stockport for the Children and Young People’s Committee)

12. Reflections on Britain Yearly Meeting July 2024

An opportunity to share our reflections on Yearly Meeting.

13. Online Meetings

We have received the following minute from Stockport Meeting held 1 September 2024.

Online Meetings

Stockport friends have considered the question of the problems of Friends in attending meetings of all kinds including Meeting for Worship, business meetings, committee meetings and the proposed meeting with the archivist.

There will be people in all, or some, of the Local Meetings who are unable participate in online meetings. In such meetings as those with the archivist all LMs should ensure that any questions that these Friends have can be brought to the attention of those attending the online meeting so that their concerns can be addressed.

There are Friends who cannot access online meetings because of hearing problems. Lip reading is difficult to impossible online and subtitles are often inadequate. In Area and Local Meetings Friends could make use of a camera by having a pause after a Friend is called to speak so the camera can be directed at the Friend speaking. This

would involve all Meetings having a screen ready even if all participants are in the room.

We don't want to do away with online meetings as some Friends find attending a physical meeting difficult and online meetings are a way of including them. However, when meetings are blended meetings those online can feel like observers and ways must be found to make them feel part of the meeting.

There are no easy answers and there are arguments for or against all solutions. We need to be aware that there are a lot of arguments around these questions. We would like Area Meeting to consider all the possible problems of online meetings, accessibility to meetings and the possible solutions.

It may be better to consider this at our next meeting to be held at Stockport when more Stockport Friends are likely to be present.

14. Dates and venues of Area Meeting business meetings in 2025

A draft is circulated with this agenda.

15. Intervisitation schedule for 2025

A draft is circulated with this agenda.

16. Antisemitism awareness

The Area Meeting Racial Justice Group has sent us, as well as other neighbouring area meetings, the following proposal.

We are exploring the idea of a one-day training in antisemitism awareness for Friends. Antisemitism is an often-overlooked strand of racism and one that can creep into discussions of current affairs.

We could perhaps use the services of the Antisemitism Policy Trust, see <https://antisemitism.org.uk/educational-training/> As an indication, the APT's usual fee for this is around £1200 but that is open to negotiation.

Our thought was to combine such a focussed training into a day for Friends together to explore these issues, perhaps as part of a regional gathering or similar event. The Trust usually delivers their training online but might be able to do an in-person or blended session for us.

It could be that the Area Meetings underwrite the cost of the training and then seek asked donations from Friends attending to recover the cost.

Would your AM be interested in such an event?

17. Discovering Quakers

We have received the following minute from Marple Meeting held on 8 September 2024.

Discovering Quakers, including financial support.

Trevor [Bending] has spoken to us on this issue, and we agree to ask AM to consider the value of Discovering Quakers as a way to ensure the continuing existence of the Society of Friends, and if so how do we expect to see it funded? We have signed up as a meeting as have five other East Cheshire Meetings. Britain Yearly Meeting funded them to begin with, but that funding has now stopped, so they are seeking further funding.

We have also received a minute from Stockport Meeting held 4 August 2024

Discovering Quakers Fundraising Appeal

[The first part of the minute quotes Area Meeting Minute 23.03.22 which encouraged local meetings to consider signing up to the *Discovering Quakers* programme, a

description of the programme, and the decision by Stockport Meeting in May to sign up for the programme.}

Then on 31st July 2024 we received an email about the Discovering Quakers Fundraising Appeal which suggests a donation of £10 to £50 per month over several years. As Area Meeting minute 24.03.22 encouraged Local Meetings to consider signing up and on the understanding from the website that it was free we have some doubts about this. What is the reaction of other LMs to this? What would Area Meeting advise?

The fundraising appeal will have been received by local meetings signed up to the programme. It includes the following information.

Our base operating costs are £32,000 per year which covers paying for the people doing the work that is not carried out by volunteers, social media advertising, social media content creation, sending email newsletters, maintaining an up-to-date website and paying for the technology to do all of these things.

18. The Kindlers

Further to Minute 24.07.21 of our last meeting which asked whether we should arrange a Kindlers workshop for Area Meeting, we have received the following minute from Stockport Meeting held on 4 August 2024.

The Kindlers. We are concerned about the spiritual side of Meeting and think that such a workshop would be important. We feel that if this was arranged we should get something out of it. It should not be just a talking shop. Some Stockport Friends would be keen to attend.

Cheadle Hulme Meeting has also informed us that they hope that a workshop will be arranged.

19. Blended Meetings for Worship

Area Meeting Pastoral Friends have suggested that it would be useful to provide information about blended meetings for worship arranged by our local meetings and how login details may be obtained. If Friends would like this then if local meetings send the information to the Area Meeting Clerk then it can go in the Area Meeting Notices. It might also be usefully included in the List of Members and Attenders.

Lunch will be provided after the meeting by Disley Friends

Date and place of next meeting: Saturday 16 November at 1.45 pm at Stockport Meeting House.

Papers circulated with this agenda:

Minutes from 2010 regarding the appointment of non-members to certain roles

Proposed dates and venues for Area Meeting business meetings in 2025

Proposed Intervisitation Schedule for 2025