



## THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers) IN BRITAIN

### THE SOUTHERN MARCHES AREA QUAKER MEETING

### CYFARFOD CRYNWYR RHANBARTH Y GORORAU DEHEUOL

Registered charity number: 1134528

*The Governing Document says, 'The object of Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain in the area of Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting and beyond.'*

*Quaker faith and practice (5th Edition - London, 2013) is the current Book of Christian Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain and contains guidance on the right ordering of Britain Yearly Meeting of which Southern Marches Area Meeting is a constituent part.*

It strengthens our witness as a religious society and encourages us in our living of the testimonies. It inspires us to action, corporately in our meetings or individually and in groups. It searches our spiritual depths and refreshes our spiritual life as individuals and corporately. It reinforces the sense of community in our meetings QF&P 6.01

*Our Governing Document refers directly to it for guidance and the way that we work. (See also <http://qfp.quaker.org.uk/> for an interactive version of Qf&P).*

Throughout this document the abbreviations; Area Meeting, A.M. and SMAQM refer to Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting; L.M. to the Local Meeting, BYM and YM refer to Britain Yearly Meeting and Qf&P refers to Quaker faith & practice

The purpose of this document is to help SMAQM Nominations Committee with their discernment and to describe to Friends who are approached with regard to this role the extent of the role and the demands that it will place on anyone who is appointed.

### **Job/Role Description: Local Meeting Elder**

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1. List of main responsibilities:

- To promote and be responsible for the right holding of Meetings for Worship
- Fostering helpful vocal ministry in Meeting
- To be responsible for the arrangements for and within Meeting for Worship, and for closing the Meeting
- Caring for individual Friends and those not in membership within the Meeting
- Encouraging the depth and broadening of knowledge and understanding of Quaker faith, ways and history
- With overseers, to care for children and young people in Meeting
- With overseers, to take care of the needs of enquirers and attenders, encouraging them to join in the life of the Meeting
- To encourage Friends to take responsibility in the life of the local community, welcoming those of all faiths and none into Meeting
- To consider the question of vocal ministry across the LMs of the A.M. area, giving support where there is a need to visit other Meetings.
- To prepare those not in membership for attendance at their first A.M.
- To arrange or facilitate Meetings for Clearness when necessary
- To support Area Meeting by prayerful thought and attendance, giving practical assistance where it is needful

2. Administrative tasks involved (e.g. preparation, reports, arranging meetings, records):

- Arranging meetings and other events on behalf of and within the local Meeting
- Contributing to, or writing, reports for trustees or to meet other requirements of Friends

3. Frequency, location and types of meetings involved:

- Meeting for Worship – often each Sunday, possibly during the week by arrangement
- Area Meeting – 8 to 10 a year
- Elders and Overseers Meetings – several times a year

4. Approximate monthly time commitment:

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5. Legal requirements, if any, relating to post:

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6. Trienniums expected (and progression):

- One, with the possibility of a request for a further period of service

7. Training needed to start, and ongoing:

- Training courses and events on Eldership and Oversight are offered at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre
- Learning from those who have been Elders previously

**Personal Qualities and abilities**

<p>8. Personal qualities and skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A concern for the spiritual life of the Meeting</li> <li>• The ability to listen and an awareness of the needs and motivations of other people</li> <li>• Clear thinking, with some organisational skills</li> <li>• Some leadership skills and a willingness to engage with any occasional difficulties that might arise in the meeting.</li> </ul>
<p>9. Technical, computer use or administrative skills needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to use a computer, and email, is very helpful</li> <li>• It is helpful to be accessible by telephone</li> </ul>
<p>10. Experience needed, or desirable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of the ways of Friends is necessary</li> </ul>
<p>11. Is membership required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> </ul>
<p>12. Knowledge of Quaker Business Method required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support in place for the post holder after appointment</b></p>
<p>13. Sources of support (including identified 'mentor/s'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings of Elders and Overseers Group</li> <li>• Elders and overseers already in service</li> </ul>
<p>14. Quaker Faith and Practice references:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 12.07 – 12.19</li> </ul>
<p>15. Other helpful sources of information and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "With a Tender Hand" A resource book for eldership and oversight: Zelig Gross</li> <li>• Information, advice and resources from Quaker Life: <a href="http://www.quaker.org.uk">www.quaker.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Quaker Life Network (see link above)</li> <li>• Living Eldership Practical Course – course materials for download (Quaker Life)</li> </ul>
<p>16. Help with expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From A.M. treasurer, on request</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comments and helpful information (e.g. from previous post holders)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rewards to be found in this service:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

**Date: 7 July 2017**