

# Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC)



## Connecting with Friends Worldwide

Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC) helps Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) keep in contact with other Quaker meetings and groups abroad, understand their witness, communicate ours, and maintain mutual support.

### Making connections

QWRC liaises with the worldwide Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), and in particular with its Europe and Middle East Section (EMES).

- We exchange Epistles with other yearly meetings (YMs).
- We welcome and support overseas visitors at our YM.
- We collaborate with Central Nominations Committee to nominate Friends from BYM to attend other YMs in Europe, and nominate Friends in Residence at Pendle Hill Quaker centre in the USA.
- We represent BYM at the FWCC World Plenary Meetings (formerly International Representatives Meetings - IRM).
- We initiate the fundraising for FWCC and EMES.
- We work with Woodbrooke to enable the experience of the world conference to be shared more widely.

QWRC is working to strengthen the dialogue amongst British Friends on international matters, thereby facilitating mutual learning, coordination and collaboration. It has recently set up two mechanisms for this.

- An annual Consultative Forum to connect QWRC with committees and other bodies with international aspects to their work.
- An online network for discussion among British Friends on international activities and interests.

### How the committee works

Six of the eight members of QWRC are appointed by Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) for three-year terms. These six will usually attend the FWCC World Plenary Meetings as BYM's representatives. Two further members are appointed by the committee, to focus on the Consultative Forum and online network to increase dialogue in BYM on international matters.

QWRC reports to BYM Trustees. It meets four times per year.

BYM's representatives to FWCC are briefed by the committee and report to it on international gatherings that they attend. QWRC advises MfS on matters arising from other YMs that affect BYM.

## World Quakerism

As Quakerism has spread over the past 350 years, different patterns of worship have developed; unprogrammed, pastored, and fully programmed. The Quaker theological spectrum ranges from liberal to evangelical.

We share an understanding of the importance of inner, personal, spiritual experience, our business methods, and a commitment to the expression of peace and other testimonies in our lives.

Unprogrammed liberal Quakers like BYM account for 6% of all the Quakers in the world.

Most Quakers live in North and South America and East and Central Africa. Smaller numbers live in Mainland Europe, Asia and Australasia.

### Contact

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# Friends World Committee for Consultation

FWCC builds understanding and encourages the spiritual vitality of Friends by 'connecting Friends, crossing cultures, and changing lives.' Most yearly meetings are affiliated with FWCC and it is organised around the World Office in London and four Section Offices: the Africa Section, Section of the Americas, Asia-West Pacific Section, and the Europe & Middle East Section

FWCC's work includes:-

- Providing support for isolated Friends and worship groups through the International Membership programme.
- Organising periodical World Conferences of Friends, and a World Plenary Meeting for business and sharing of concerns.
- Overseeing the Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNO) operating in New York and Geneva. FWCC has "general consultative" status at the UN, enabling Friends' concerns to be expressed more effectively on the world stage.
- Enabling Quaker representation on the World Council of Churches and other international ecumenical bodies.
- Publishing *Friends World News* three times a year and periodic e-newsletters.

Contact: The World Office

Friends House Tel: 020 7663 1199 email: [world@friendsworldoffice.org](mailto:world@friendsworldoffice.org)

Further Information: [www.fwccworld.org](http://www.fwccworld.org)

## Europe and Middle East Section

EMES, of which BYM is a member, holds a three-day annual meeting for business and exchange of ideas and experience.

EMES's work includes:-

- Bringing Friends together from our 12 Yearly Meetings and supporting the growth of Quakerism across the Section where no Yearly Meeting is present, for example Iceland, Portugal, Spain and Italy, and increasingly in Central and Eastern Europe.
- Liaising with the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) in Brussels, which lobbies on human rights, peace, environmental and economic concerns with the European Union and the Council of Europe.
- Managing the John Warder Fund for inter-visitation.
- Managing the Amari Play Centre in Ramallah, Palestine.
- Organising the biennial youth pilgrimage (QYP), when Friends aged 16-18 enjoy hospitality from Friends from another of the FWCC sections.
- Publishing *Among Friends* three times a year and maintaining the EMES website.

Contact: EMES. PO Box 1157 Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9XQ

Tel: 01223 479 585 email: [emes@fwccemes.org](mailto:emes@fwccemes.org)

Further information: [www.fwccemes.org](http://www.fwccemes.org)

## How can I help?

Make yourself aware of the world community of Friends. Visit these websites and start a subscription to newsletters listed in this factsheet.

Welcome visitors from other countries to your meeting. Invite them and friends they know to your Meeting.

Tell QWRC that you offer hospitality at your home to Friends visiting from other countries.

When travelling abroad, visit the local Quaker meeting there. Take news of events in Britain, copies of *The Friend* or other items of interest. Bring back news, discernments and concerns, literature and pictures from other countries and share them with your meeting. Bring back versions of *Quaker faith & practice* from other countries, share news of them and/or donate them to the Libraries at Friends House or Woodbrooke.

## How can my meeting help?

Initiate fundraising by taking up a collection for the work of FWCC/EMES. Request a speaker from QWRC at your meeting.

Study the Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-justice individually and at your meeting. See FWCC website for information.

Consider twinning your local or area meeting with one abroad.

Let us at QWRC know of your language skills, or skills in IT, publishing or film.