

Quaker Life Representative Council

The role of Representative

Council representatives are appointed by their area meeting, usually for a term of three years. Some but not all area meetings also appoint a deputy. The function of Quaker Life Representative Council and the role of representatives are outlined in [Quaker faith & practice chapter 8.09-10](#). The following are suggestions for how the role might be carried out in practice, which might differ significantly depending on the circumstances in different area meetings. A representative's main responsibility of being a two-way channel of communication need not be onerous, but it will require some planning for the channel to be effective.

Gathering information to bring to the council

This might be news of notable events or developments, or of needs and challenges in the area meeting or particular local meetings. Ways of gathering information might include:

- Circulating a request to each local meeting. It helps to establish good contact with a named person in each meeting - this might be the clerk, the convenor of elders / overseers, the Friend who compiles the newsletter, or just someone you know who will take the initiative to speak to relevant local Friends
- Putting out a request on your website or email group.
- Reading the area meeting newsletter, and being included on the circulation list of local meeting newsletters / notices sheets (then follow up anything that catches your eye)
- Asking the convenor of a particular committee / group to write about their work
- Checking AM minutes
- Making an announcement at AM requesting information
- Leading an activity at AM for Friends to reflect on what is happening in their meeting

Select from this information whatever strikes you as particularly useful or interesting and write a short account to send to QLRC planning group in advance of Council.

Reporting back to your area meeting after Council

There will be a follow-up mailing within a couple of weeks of Council, including the text of talks, Quaker Life news and other information arising at Council. During Council there may be handouts to reduce further the need for you to make detailed notes. A good piece of advice is to focus reporting back on what you personally found most interesting, involving or relevant. Whatever selective a view of Council this is, you will convey it better as a result of your own engagement.

Ways of disseminating a written report might include:

- Speaking to it at AM
- Posting it on your area meeting website or email group
- Having it published in a newsletter
- Sending a copy to each local meeting

Other ways of reporting back that representative have used include:

- Posting all papers and information in the follow-up mailing on a website or email group
- Passing relevant information directly to specific role-holders in the area meeting
- Speaking briefly at AM to tell Friends the theme and main activities of Council, and then responding to questions, so that what you report is what Friends want to know
- Facilitating a workshop at AM, with input from you and opportunity for small groups to discuss different issues or questions
- Visiting local meetings and speaking after meeting for worship
- Leading a special interest group on a Council's theme, or on particular topics
- Speaking to a committee or group having responsibility for an aspect of meeting life that connects with a Council's theme or certain matters that arose at Council