



Cumberland Area Quaker Meeting

Registered Charity No. 1161207

Adopted policies

As revised in November 2021

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Definitions

- “shall” - indicates a mandatory requirement
- “should” - indicates a preferred requirement
- “may” - indicates a discretionary option

1. Equal Opportunities

1.1 Cumberland Area Quaker Meeting (CAQM) is firmly committed to the principle of equality. It strives to create an environment in which all Friends, attenders and other users of our buildings and services are treated with dignity without discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, class, language, disability, sexual orientation, beliefs, appearance or age, or economic circumstances.

1.2 CAQM opposes all forms of discrimination and prejudice that fail to respect the individual. Local Meetings (LM's) are encouraged to adopt this policy in their own Meetings.

2. Safeguarding of Children, Young People, and Adults in need of care and support

2.1 CAQM is committed to providing an environment in its Meetings and other gatherings where children, young people (i.e. anyone under the age of 18 years old) and adults in need of care and support may be involved, where they can feel safe from harm and can be nurtured spiritually, mentally and emotionally.

2.2 CAQM recognises that all involved in its Meetings have a responsibility to protect children, young people and adults in need of care and support from physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect, and to respond without delay to any allegation or complaint that suggests that a child, young person or adult in need of care and support may have been harmed. If abuse is discovered or suspected, it shall be reported, and there shall be cooperation with relevant statutory services.

2.3 CAQM shall adopt a rigorous approach to the recruitment of those who work on its behalf with children, young people and adults in need of care and support, giving support, providing them with oversight together with support, training and adequate resources. The CAQM is committed to following the Home Office Code of Practice 'Safe from Harm' and adopting the procedures and recommendations provided by Britain Yearly Meeting and the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) and any new and updated documents.

2.4 CAQM shall foster a safe caring community within its Local Meetings where potential threats are identified, whether that be the physical environment or the presence of known offenders against children, young people or adults in need of care and support. CAQM shall ensure that, within reasonable boundaries, pastoral care is offered to anyone who is attending our Meetings who is known to have harmed a child, a young person or adult in need of care and support.

2.5 In furtherance of the above commitments CAQM shall appoint two Safeguarding Co-ordinators and a Children's Coordinator to ensure the implementation of this policy. The Safeguarding Co-ordinators shall provide and update a manual of Safeguarding information for each Local Meeting including guidelines as to how to respond to allegations, observations or disclosure of any abuse. The Children's Co-ordinator shall give support and guidance to Local Meetings Children's Committees on the right keeping of Children's Meetings. These include the need to keep records of children and adults present, activities undertaken, and any unusual occurrences. Advice and support shall be provided to those Local Meetings which have only occasional attendance by children.

2.6 CAQM shall subscribe to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

2.7 The Safeguarding Co-ordinators have responsibility for setting up, maintaining and monitoring all those, including volunteers, who are responsible for activities with children, young people and adults in need of care and support. Day to day administration is delegated to the Local or Area Meeting Clerks as appropriate.

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2.8 The Safeguarding Co-ordinators shall have oversight of maintaining a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) register of all those, including volunteers, with responsibility for activities with our children, young people and adults in need of care and support. The DBS register shall list the name, Local Area Meeting, and the date when the person was entered on the register, whether they have signed up to the update service, subsequent renewals, and when they withdraw from activities requiring registration.

2.9 Local Meeting Clerks are the verifiers for DBS checks for all those in their Meeting responsible for running activities involving children, young people and adults in need of care and support. Local Meeting Clerks are required to forward the results of DBS checks to the CAQM Safeguarding Co-ordinators. Local Meetings shall inform Quaker Life when there is a change of Clerk, Assistant Clerk or Co-Clerk as Quaker Life are responsible for updating the list of verifiers

2.10 As part of any hire agreement, Local Meetings shall require that other groups using their premises can show that they have policies that comply with all safeguarding requirements and legislation in respect to children, young people and adults in need of care and support.

2.11 CAQM shall ensure that all the premises it and Local Meetings use have insurance cover for employer's liability, public liability, personal accident, and false allegation.

2.12 Records appertaining to Safeguarding matters shall be kept confidential in accordance with the CAQM policy of 'Right Keeping of records' and shall be retained indefinitely in accordance with the recommendations of the Goddard Inquiry.

2.13 A notice informing people of the existence of this policy, the location of the Guidance manual, and the contact details of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators shall be displayed in a prominent position in all Local Meeting Houses.

2.14 This policy shall be reviewed at least every 3 years.

3. Risk Management

3.1 CAQM shall regularly monitor the risks involved in its activities. These risks shall be reviewed at least annually, and shall be recorded. The risks concerned are those to individuals (Safety and electrical risks), risks to property (fire and water) and risks to the organisation itself (financial and legal compliance).

3.2 Procedures shall be largely practical in terms of who does what and when, and how it is recorded, and the triggers for action to be taken. This shall cover the six areas mentioned in section 3.1 above.

4. Health & Safety

4.1 In concern for the well-being of everyone using CAQM properties care shall be taken to ensure internally and externally the buildings, plant and equipment are in a safe condition and that all equipment and hazardous materials are stored safely.

4.2 CAQM shall comply with current Health & Safety legislation, including Food Hygiene regulations, by ensuring an annual Health and Safety risk assessment of our properties and grounds is carried out to ensure that all and any defects or shortcomings are properly considered and repairs or improvements implemented.

4.3 CAQM shall ensure quinquennial surveys, including a full electrical examination, are carried out by professionally qualified people on all its properties and burial grounds.

4.4 CAQM shall ensure emergency evacuation procedures, fire appliances, and first aid kits are maintained and that safety notices are displayed in prominent locations in all of its Local Meeting Houses. Organisers of events using CAQM premises and grounds should seek permission from the Local Meeting regarding the use of candles, naked flames, and alcohol.

4.5 Local Meetings should ensure that users of their Meeting House take care, on leaving the premises, that everyone has left, that windows and doors are securely locked, and that keys to the property are returned promptly to those responsible for them.

4.6 Whilst the Trustees are responsible for overseeing the compliance of the Health and Safety Policy the day to day management of the policy shall be with the Members of Local Meetings. Local Meetings shall be responsible for making sure users/hirers of their premises conform to Health and Safety conditions particularly in respect to any electrical appliances they bring into the premises.

5. Data Protection.

5.1 The Data Protection Act 1988 sets out rules for collecting, keeping and using personal information about living individuals. CAQM as a charity in its own right shall comply with it and register with the Information Commissioner.

5.2 The Clerk of CAQM shall serve for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998 as data Compliance Officer and is responsible for ensuring that the recording and processing of data held by the Meeting conforms with the law.

5.3 CAQM and LM's storing information about their members and attenders on computers or other electronic devices or in manually processed paper files should be sensitive to the need to protect such information from unauthorised use and shall comply with all legal requirements for data protection. Basic information on members such as addresses can be kept by the CAQM on the official register of members without notification of those concerned. Such information may be passed to the Yearly Meeting database, except that members may then request that information other than their names be withheld. Non-members need to give their permission before information about them is disclosed to others outside their Local Meeting.

5.4 Information on attenders and non-member partners of members shall only be held with their explicit consent. Information on children not in membership may only be held with the explicit consent of their parent or guardian. Completed consent forms for inclusion in the CAQM and the Yearly Meeting database shall be obtained.

5.5 Friends should be made aware of the difficulty of maintaining perfect security of the printed lists made available to members and, frequently, to attenders, and should be given the opportunity of deleting some or all of their personal details.

5.6 If CAQM or LM's record any other information on members and attenders, whether electronically or in paper-based records, for example in connection with nominations work or with applications for membership, the persons concerned shall be informed that their information is held and that they may see and approve their own record.

6. Grant Making

6.1 Grants from restricted funds are only made in accordance with the criteria laid down in those funds.

6.2 Grants and expenditure from unrestricted funds are made from time to time by the decision of CAQM. In the case of a grant or donation to a non-Quaker charity this shall occur only with those projects which come within the Quaker ethos and are in line with our Charitable objectives, and then with the agreement of CAQM, and duly recorded in a minute. In such cases the trustees shall record such a grant or donation in their annual report where the relevant AM minute shall be recorded.

6.3 Each Local Meeting may make designated collections towards other charitable organisations doing work locally, nationally, and internationally. Donations and grants from Local Meeting general funds to both Quaker and non-Quaker projects should be made at meetings for church affairs either locally or by the Area Meeting itself. In the case of grants and donations to non-Quaker charities such grants shall not be made from Local Meeting funds but by a 'special collection' where the treasurer acts as an agent for the collection made by the members. Special collections may also be used for donations to organisations that are not charities, for example Amnesty International.

7. Investment

7.1 The aim of our investment is to ensure that the best interests and the concerns of the CAQM and of the beneficiaries of individual trusts are accounted for in the choice and performance of investments.

7.2 In investing funds the CAQM seek to ensure compliance with the best interests and concerns of CAQM and the Religious Society of Friends in Britain and with the provisions of the Trustee Act 2000, and any subsequent legislation.

7.3 The CAQM should apply criteria for socially responsible investment, maximising exposure to companies or funds with positive ethical practices or criteria, and minimising exposure to companies or funds with poor records in any area of social or ethical responsibility.

7.4 The CAQM shall invest at low or medium risk and maximise returns within these levels of risk and the ethical criteria above specified.

7.5 The CAQM should maintain and preferably enhance the capital value of the invested funds.

8. General Reserves

Unrestricted Funds

8.1. All Meeting Houses and Burial Grounds are owned by Cumberland Area Quaker Meeting. [Presently Penrith and Mosedale MHs and Newby Head BG are not owned by CAQM but are treated as if they were, and will become so once a Charity Commission Scheme is completed].

8.2. Funding of major repairs to MHs (ie > £5k - £10k) is the responsibility of CAQM's Premises Fund, and not of Local Meetings. CAQM is responsible for the exterior of the MHs, and things like electrical re-wiring or major changes to plumbing in the interior. The LM Premises Committees will remain responsible for progressing such work, but will need to liaise with AM Trustees about the funding.

8.3. All repairs and maintenance of BGs is the responsibility of CAQM.

8.4. Local Meetings should not hold reserves for major repairs to MHs.

8.5. Reserves held by CAQM will allow for the types of buildings owned; for past historical expenditure; and for reasonably expected future expenditure. The Premises Fund should aim to hold 2½% of the total insured value of the premises for which CAQM is responsible. The actual amount in the fund may fluctuate. [Note: The figure of 2½% reflects the fact that CAQM is responsible for several old properties some of which are listed.]

8.6 After incidents of flooding in 2005 and 2009, the Meeting House at Keswick was flooded again in 2015. The repairs carried out at that time included substantial work to try and make the building more robust in the event of another flood. This was paid for by the insurer and as a consequence, insurers are no longer willing to provide cover for flood damage. Trustees have considered various scenarios in the event that Keswick MH is flooded again (despite all the additional resilience measures that have been adopted).

Based on previous repair costs, trustees believe that a sum of £100,000 should be held in addition to the amount defined in 8.5 above. This would mean a total reserve of £217,500 be held.

As at 01 January 2020 CAQM held about £270,000 in reserves (including funding held by LMs – see 8.8 below). Trustees thus conclude that CAQM does presently hold sufficient reserve funding, but without significant excess. In any case, in the event of another catastrophic flooding in Keswick it may be necessary to sell the residential properties in Keswick – see 8.11 below.

8.7. Other reserves for unrestricted funds held by CAQM and those held by LMs will be a minimum of six months' normal expenditure, and not more than one year's normal expenditure.

8.8 Any sums held by LMs in excess of one year's normal expenditure shall be considered to be part of CAQM's reserves in the Premises Fund.

Restricted Funds

8.9 The endowed capital in the following funds cannot be spent and so they cannot be counted towards reserves: Scotby Meeting House and Burial Ground Trust, Orton Field Trust, Allonby Meeting House Trust, William Temple Trust, the Wright's Estates Charity and the David Beatty Legacy.

8.10 The proceeds from the sale of Wigton Meeting House, Eaglesfield Meeting House and Whitehaven Meeting House can only be used for the purposes agreed with the Charity Commissioners.

8.11 The residential properties known as Rogerfield and 25, St. Herbert Street in Keswick were bequeathed subject to a number of conditions, though when certain conditions are fulfilled, or *in extremis*, they may be sold. Current policy and practice is to hold £20,000 as a repairs reserve for Rogerfield and £10,000 for 25, St. Herbert Street. Beyond those amounts accumulated income may and should be used for the purposes for which the Marjorie Pollock Bequest and the Doris Liversidge Bequest were given.

8.12 Bequests to CAQM valued over £10,000 which are available for the general purposes of CAQM, though part of the CAQM General Fund for accounting purposes, may be held for up to ten years to enable CAQM to consider the best use to which the bequest may be put.

9. Policy for the right keeping of records

9.1 There shall be a standard policy across Cumberland Area Quaker Meeting (CAQM) for the creation, indexing, retention, security and deposit or disposal of CAQM and Local Meetings (LM) records for which oversight lies with two Custodians of Records appointed by CAQM.

9.2 The basic guidelines to be followed are those contained in the summary 'Your Meetings Records', which was prepared by Friends House Library Committee.

9.3 Records kept shall include minutes and other significant documents to include property plans, an outline of major structural developments undertaken, and annual financial statements. Records kept should be clearly labelled with the name of the LM, the nature of the record, the dates covered by the records, and the retention qualification instructions i.e. permanent, destroy after 10 years, etc. No records shall be destroyed without consulting one of the Custodians of Records. Records regarding Safekeeping need to be kept indefinitely.

9.4 The documents held at home by Friends shall be kept to a minimum ideally in a safe or metal cabinet.

9.5 Documents held by CAQM and LM's should be no more than the current minute book or file and the book or file prior to them held locally, and in any case covering no more than past 10 years. Earlier records with the exception of Nominations Committee and Elders and Overseers should be given to one of the CAQM Custodians of Records who should arrange for them to be lodged at Cumbria County Council Archives Centres. Elders and Overseers minutes shall be deposited provided that an embargo of 50 years is imposed on public access.

9.6 Records of purely local archival interest for example visitors' book, photographs or videos could be held for longer, while interest remains, if held in a fire secure place, and thereafter forwarded to the CAQM Custodians of Records for depositing at Cumbria County Council Archives Centres.

9.7 Materials used should be such that deterioration is minimized for example on archival standard quality paper (i.e. lignum free, acid resistant papers) and, if handwritten, with permanent ink. Unless minutes are hand-written in a bound minute book, a four-hole file is considered more secure for filing. Papers should not be stuck into books with cello tape, glue, or fixed with staples or paper clips. Do not consider electronically stored records to be permanent.

9.8 All Meetings shall retain photographs of their meeting house, at least of the exterior view, noting the date on which it was taken.

9.9 Photographic quality is best kept in polyester wallets or interleaved with archival quality paper in an album.

9.10 If records are taken away by other than the Local Meeting Clerk this shall be noted and signed for. Their whereabouts should be checked at least annually.

9.11 Local Meeting Clerks should maintain a duplicate minute book for local working purposes in order to facilitate the early deposit of original documents.

9.12 The extent to which this policy has been followed shall be recorded by the Local Meetings and the CAQM Trustees.

10. Privacy Policy

10.1 Cumberland Area Quaker Meeting is the data controller for the personal data we collect for the administration of the meeting. The address and contact details for Cumberland Area Quaker Meeting are:

Cumberland Area Quaker Meeting

Penrith Quaker Meeting House, Meeting House Lane, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 7TR

am.clerk@cumberlandquakers.org.uk

10.2 We collect personal data from our members and people closely associated with the organisation for the legitimate interests of our organisation. This includes:

- Basic membership data
- Contact info
- Biographical data for nominations procedures

10.3 We collect some data for the performance of contracts such as:

- Employment data for our employees

10.4 Where appropriate we will ask for consent for collection and management of personal data, such as

- Data collection from non-members
- Data collection from children
- If we share data externally

10.5 We shall never sell any personal data.

10.6 We shall take appropriate measures to ensure data we collect is kept securely. This includes:

- Keeping certain data in locked storage areas
- Securely shredding personal data
- Ensuring only the relevant people have access to personal data
- Taking measures to ensure security of data on digital systems such as ensuring our devices are password protected and have up to date anti-virus software

10.7 If you are unhappy with how your personal data has been managed, please contact: am.clerk@cumberlandquakers.org.uk.

If you are still unhappy after discussion with the Area Meeting, you can contact the Information Commissioners Office here: <https://ico.org.uk/>

CAQM Policies

Published 2016

With revisions in 2021

Revised reserves policy, and new Privacy policy

Future updates will be put on the CAQM website www.cumberlandquakers.org.uk/Policies.htm