

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CLERKSHIP
TEAM 2018

Quaker Faith and Practice [QF&P] references for roles: 3.12 to 3.20; 4.01 to 4.27 (and other sections referred to therein).

Meeting of Friends in Wales has national responsibilities on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting in Wales, to represent and advance the life and witness of Quakers as set out in QF&P 5.04 and in Welsh in 5.05.

The clerk needs to have a spiritual capacity for discernment and sensitivity to the meeting. In conducting the meeting and drafting minutes on its behalf, the clerk's abilities are strengthened by an awareness of being supported by the members of the meeting. Friends who have not known the unforeseen joy which comes from this experience may gain encouragement from this knowledge, should they be invited to serve. If the clerk's service is under concern in the certainty of God's presence and help in the meeting, then strength beyond her or his normal powers will be given. QF&P 3.12 (part)

The full Clerkship Team consists of the two co-clerks assisted by the assistant clerk. Having co-clerks based in different parts of Wales enables the Clerkship Team between them to have a good geographical knowledge of Quakers in Wales and the different Area Meetings. The geographical distribution also helps should they be asked to attend a meeting as Quaker 'church leader' to represent Quakers in Wales or for other purposes. It is helpful if one at least is a Welsh speaker.

There is also a part time paid Administrator, who works with the Clerkship team and aids it considerably.

THE CO-CLERKS

Each co-clerk is appointed for a period of 3 years but may be invited to serve for a further term. The co-clerks are responsible for the right holding of Meeting of Friends in Wales and for ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities in accordance with *Quaker faith & practice*. It is the function of this team to conduct the meeting for church affairs, to discern the 'sense of the meeting', and to draft minutes that reflect this.

The clerkship team *are the servant[s] of the meeting* QF&P 3.13 (part). As for the meeting as well as its clerks it should be remembered that: '*Above all, it is your responsibility to come with heart and mind prepared*' (QF&P 3.13).

In addition to the preparation and conduct of the business meeting the team is responsible for the general administration of MFW. This includes ensuring that minutes are acted upon, that tasks undertaken are carried out, that enquiries are dealt with, and that MFW as an organisation functions satisfactorily.

The clerks work with Trustees to ensure all work for MFW is covered. At least one clerk attends the annual meeting with the Recording Clerk, clerks of Meeting for Sufferings and of General Meeting for Scotland. Annually one clerk will present a report to Meeting for Sufferings. MFW's Trustees, its Wales Focus Group, its representative on Sufferings and other Friends, as appropriate, support the preparation for these tasks.

The co-clerks will distribute the clerkship workload between themselves, the assistant clerk and the Administrator, taking account of the individuals' skills and aptitudes. One clerk will act as line-manager of the administrator.

The clerkship team of co-clerks and assistant clerk liaise frequently through the year, including prior to each tri-annual meeting, so as to discuss the agenda and specific arrangements for the day. Clerks determine the best modes of contact for themselves and also the frequency of contact.

Assistant Clerk

The service of the assistant clerk can be of great benefit both to the clerk and to the meeting. ... It is recommended that the assistant clerk be enabled to share in all of the clerk's duties as much as possible. ... The assistant clerk will gain experience and maybe the confidence to accept nomination as clerk in due course. Planning for an apprenticeship through assistant clerkship can provide for smooth transition. The assistant clerk does not have a specifically defined role. It is a role which supports the work of the Co-Clerks in running MFW and the duties are distributed to them by the co-clerks. These may include tasks such as: dealing with the sign-in list at tri-annual meetings; sending appointment letters; helping draft minutes for some MFW reports.

Minimum commitment:

There are three meetings of MFW each year which the full clerkship team normally attends. Each requires prior preparation and subsequent follow-up. Correspondence and, as required, attendance at other meetings is ongoing throughout the year. Friends who may be interested in undertaking any of these roles should be referred to one of the current co-clerks to talk about it.

Requirements for the roles:

Refer to QF&P 3.12 - 13. The clerks must be experienced members of the Society, with a good background and understanding of the Quaker business method and of the organisation of the Society. The clerks need to be good listeners and to balance confidence and humility when exercising authority. Internet access and familiarity with IT are important, particularly given the geographic challenges of MFW.

Term of service:

Normally one triennium though exceptionally appointments may be for a shorter period and a second triennium may be considered.

The clerkship team shall work within these terms of reference, under the authority of Minute of Meeting of Friends in Wales held in Lampeter on February 24th 2018. The terms of reference will be reviewed during 2022. Should amendments be required in the meantime, the clerkship team may propose these to the Meeting of Friends in Wales.