

## *Finding out more:*

Elders and Overseers are there to help if you feel you would like to discuss things, including membership. You may find a list of their names on the Meeting notice board.

Reading *Advices and Queries* and Quaker Faith and Practice, especially Chapter 10, Belonging to a Quaker Meeting and Chapter 11, on Membership will be helpful.

Your Meeting may also have a wide range of other books to borrow on various aspects of Quaker life and ideas. Just look through the bookshelves in the meeting room.

Quaker Quest is a relaxed and friendly course, which usually runs on one evening a week for just a few consecutive weeks each year. This is where Quakers share their spiritual experiences and life journeys with newcomers giving them a wide range of points of view. A Quaker Quest is usually held in Leeds most years, or you can visit [www.quakerquest.org](http://www.quakerquest.org) to find Quaker Quests held elsewhere.

Leeds Area Quakers have Meetings at Adel, Carlton Hill, Ilkley, Gildersome, Otley, Rawdon and Roundhay.

See [www.leedsquakers.org](http://www.leedsquakers.org) for details.

*“Our sense of community does not depend on all professing identical beliefs, for it grows from worshipping together, knowing one another, loving one another, accepting responsibilities, sharing and working together.” QFP 10.03*

*“How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.” A&Q 18*

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Leeds Area  
Quaker Meeting

## *Becoming a member*



If you have been coming to Quaker meetings for some time, you may be thinking about membership.

How do I start the process of becoming a member, and what do I need to think about?

## *What is membership?*

*Attenders* are those who come regularly to Meeting for Worship but haven't yet joined the Society of Friends as members.

Some people, who contribute greatly to the life of their meeting, are happy to remain as attenders for many years, but usually a growing sense of belonging prompts an attender to apply for membership.

Membership is saying to the Meeting, and to the world, that you accept at least the fundamental elements of being a Quaker.

Membership does not require a great moral or spiritual achievement, but it does require a commitment to Quaker values and practices.

Welcoming a new member means acknowledging their desire and commitment to follow a Quaker way of life.

You'll find a lot more about membership in Chapter 11 of *Quaker Faith and Practice* (QFP). QFP can always be read in, or borrowed from, Meeting and is freely available online at <http://qfp.quaker.org.uk>

## *When is the right time to move into membership?*

There are no rules about this but it helps if ...

- you have been attending Meeting for Worship for a reasonable length of time, perhaps a year.
- you have a basic understanding of the Quaker *testimonies*. This is not because you have to subscribe to them (they aren't creeds), but you should feel comfortable with them. There are testimonies (or Quaker principles of living) to Peace, Equality, Integrity and Simplicity. There's no official list but you can find out more in QFP Chapters 20 and 22–25.
- on occasions, you have attended an area business meetings so you appreciate how these work.
- you are able to accept the diversity of Friends and have a spirit of openness together with an honest and enquiring mind.

## *How do I apply for membership?*

When you feel you want to start the application process write to the Assistant Clerk (Membership) of Leeds Area Meeting, whose address is available from our Meeting Clerk, any Elder or Overseer or simply by consulting the *Quakers in Yorkshire List of Members and Attenders*.

The letter does not need to be elaborate; all you need to do is simply say that you wish to become a member, but it can also be helpful if you explain a little more about yourself, your experience of Quakers and why you have made the decision to apply for membership.

The normal practice, following your application, is that you will be visited by two members appointed by Area Meeting. One of the visitors is usually someone you will already know from your home meeting.

The final part of the process is consideration of application by Area Meeting.

If agreed, someone will then be appointed to welcome you into membership.