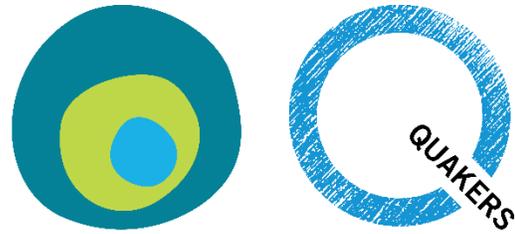


Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke working in partnership



To all Quakers in Yorkshire

28 April 2020

Dear Friends,

Re: expressions of interest in local development work

I am writing to let you know the outcome of considerations on the locations for the next group of local development workers, and for the pilot hub.

BYM and Woodbrooke Trustees have been clear that the intention is for *all* areas to be within reach of a local development worker within five years. The question we have been considering, then, is simply when is the right point within that timeframe to appoint a worker for each area. For the next group of staff, we have been looking to identify places where someone coming into post within a year would be able to establish themselves quickly, and could make an early, positive impact.

I am pleased then to tell you that the next cohort will include a local development worker covering Yorkshire. The other workers will cover Scotland, the North-East of England and the parts of Cumbria covered by Cumberland Area Meeting, and East Anglia.

I am also delighted to say that, having considered a number of possibilities, the preferred location for the pilot staff hub is 188A Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, which will be well known to many of you as the office suite attached to Leeds Carton Hill Meeting House. We're saying 'preferred location' because we still need to do some work with Leeds Friends to ensure the hub will work as expected for them and for Friends in the wider region, as well as for BYM and Woodbrooke. That work will take place over the coming months.

The world we are living in now looks very different to the one in which Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke trustees made the commitment to increase the number of local development workers and to experiment with a hub. Both organisations are having to take steps to ensure we can weather the difficulties presented by the coronavirus pandemic. At the same time, we need to keep looking ahead and planning for the future.

We had originally anticipated that the new local development workers would take up their roles, and that the hub would open its doors, in September. The public health situation has meant that we have revisited this timetable, and we will need to keep it under review as the situation evolves. At present, we expect both developments to take place in the first quarter of 2021, with the Yorkshire local development worker being based at the hub.

Letters are being sent today to all Friends who expressed an interest in hosting a local development worker or hub, telling them the outcome of the process. The news will be shared with all Quakers in the 30 April edition of *Quake!*

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those Friends who have engaged with this process so far. It has been a wonderful opportunity to learn more about what is already happening in Yorkshire and to explore how can work together to help Yorkshire's Quaker community thrive.

We'll need to continue those conversations over the next few months, particularly as we prepare for the new local development worker to start work. My colleague Rachel Matthews, who is BYM's Head of Local Development will soon be in contact the Quakers in Yorkshire clerks to work out the best way to do this and I look forward to hearing about those conversations in due course.

In Friendship,

Suzanne Ismail

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