

Open to New Light?

On July 29th at 8pm on zoom, there will be a meeting to consider further how QiL will work.
How can we build on the past and open ourselves up to different ways of working?

Background

Last October JLAM agreed to a committee structure for QiL on conventional lines – an Arrangements Committee (QiLAC), an Elders and Pastoral Friends Committee (EPFC), an Outreach Committee and a Children's and Young People's (CYP) Committee. QiLAC and EPFC are already in place and working.

What is not covered

This is a good starting point but it leaves out important matters :

- How to engage younger friends and those not steeped in Quaker ways
- How the relationship between Quakers in London (QiL) and local meetings can best work
- How to ensure we can continue with the kinds of activities and events initiated and carried forward by London Quakers – eg gender diversity, reparations, housing and much else
- How communications among between ourselves and with the outside world can best be managed

How might we cover these matters and who will be responsible?

The purpose of the meeting on July 29th is to hear ideas from friends across London. One idea is described below but this is not the only way of organising ourselves, far from it. We would like friends to come prepared to offer relevant experience and to focus on what will actually work in practice for our community.

The idea that has been put forward by two members of the London Development Group reflects how other denominations are beginning to work. The idea is to create one “Centre” or “hub” or “Life and Witness Committee” (the name can be decided later) with a wide inward and outward-looking remit to support local meetings, encourage them to develop projects and form clusters for particular activities. It would have a connector/enabler/amplifier role, linking to Outreach, CYPC and EPFC. The hub would work mainly through sub-groups and time-limited task groups, co-opting friends to serve. It could be better able to draw in younger friends who cannot commit to a long spell on a formal committee but could contribute more locally or on a short-term basis. The hub could:

- Be the knowledge base for what is going on in QiL and local meetings, keeping its ear to the ground
- Support local meetings who wish to link with others or initiate new work
- hold events (supported by QiLAC), begin new initiatives, run or support campaigns
- offer opportunities for preparation of new topics coming to QiL for deeper discernment
- support our development worker and interfaith coordinators

The hub would report to and be accountable to QiL in session. QiL could also hear directly from task groups.

Questions

1. what would be the strengths and weaknesses of such a hub?
2. How else might we cover the gaps In the structure now coming into place
3. Is this the best way to foster connection with and strengthen local meetings?
4. Should such a hub also be responsible for communications, social media, website?
If not, who should?

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