**Lancaster Quaker Meeting House Letting Policy**

**Authority**

Lancaster Quaker Meeting House is owned by the Trustees of Lancashire Central & North Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) – Charity No: 1134224. This policy describes the principles and procedures for letting rooms in Lancaster Quaker Meeting House (LQMH).

**Delegation**

Trustees delegate to the Lancaster Quaker Meeting’s Wardenship Committee and LQMH Wardenship staff team the responsibility for implementing the lettings policy and for setting the Terms and Conditions and hire charges. The Local Meeting is responsible for determining the discounts for Quaker bookings.

**Policy Vision**

For Lancaster Quaker Meeting House (LQMH) to be a place of Quaker worship, the local home of Quakers and a uniquely attractive venue, working towards sustainability, for all who meet, worship and work here.

**Aims**

For LQMH to be recognised as:

• A principal local venue to host regular Quaker Meeting for Worship;

• An active spiritual home for Quakers locally, nationally, and internationally;

• An inviting and accessible venue for Quakers and others to meet, work, build community and explore their faith and action to challenge peaceably what they think is wrong in the world;

• A resource, with which we have been entrusted, for service to the community

• A showcase for Quakers past and present, bearing witness to the Quaker testimonies to peace, equality, truth, sustainability, and simplicity; and

• An exemplar of Quaker business operations, generating surplus whilst acting with integrity, always respecting people and the planet.

**Principles**

The letting of rooms in LMQH is undertaken to raise income and to help pay the running and maintenance costs of the building and the work of Quakers in Lancaster. It is also a means of introducing Quakerism and Quaker work to a wider audience.

The hirers of rooms are expected to:

• Respect the Quaker commitment to truth, equality, simplicity, peace, and sustainability, and in particular:

– not advocate in any circumstances for the use of violence,

– not make any statement that denigrates or undermines either the dignity of an individual, group or nation, or the actual or perceived identity pertaining to an individual, group or nation (including, but not limited to, racial and ethnic identity, sex or gender identity, and sexual orientation).

• Respect the long-held Quaker belief in the importance of people coming together to hear opinions across divides, expressed with due care and consideration for other people’s rights and dignity.

• Respect the aim to manage and operate the building in the most sustainable way possible.

**Procedure for hiring rooms**

Any organisation or individual may make a request to hire any part of LQMH normally available for lettings. New clients will normally be asked to provide details of their aims and policies so that we can assess the nature of the event and its impact. New clients will normally receive a response within one working week.

Details of the booking procedure are set out in the LQMH Terms and Conditions with Booking Form. Please email the office at lancasterquakers@gmail.com. Please note that the office is normally staffed Monday to Friday 09:00-16:00 so you may not receive an immediate response.

**Grounds for refusal or cancellation**

In considering whether to accept a booking, we will assess whether the booking organisation, topic, speakers, or publicity:

1. Conflicts with the principles set out above,

2. Endangers the credibility of LQMH and Quakers more widely, making its work less effective, or contradicts an established position of Britain Yearly Meeting, or

3. Compromises the Quaker belief in the importance of people coming together to hear opinions across divides.

A booking may also be refused if:

• The event will interfere with the worship, meetings, or other activities of Quakers in Lancaster.

• Gambling and games of chance of any kind, alcohol, or other forms of addiction are promoted by the topic, the hirer, or the speakers.

• The likely tone, content or conduct of the event undermines our policy on staff dignity at work.

• Contravention of fire or health and safety regulations may reasonably be expected.

• There is evidence that unacceptable behaviour has occurred at a previous meeting arranged by the organisation or individual in question in this venue or elsewhere.

• The request for a booking is found to be dishonest or misleading.

• A hirer has breached the LQMH Terms and Conditions

**Cases causing concern**

Requests to hire rooms which raise concerns as to whether they adhere to the principles will be referred to the Convenor of Wardenship Committee in the first instance, who will consult relevant people in the local and/or Area Meeting. A decision normally made within two working weeks. Where a decision will take longer the hirer will be informed with a reason for the delay.

If the client disagrees with the decision, a request for review may be made in writing to the Clerks of Lancaster Quaker Meeting who may escalate the request to the Trustees of the Area Meeting. They will aim to make a final decision within two working weeks.

In all cases, the prospective client will be informed of the reasons for refusal.