

**Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
East Cheshire Area Quaker Meeting**

Health and Safety Policy for Area Meeting

1. This Policy is drawn up on behalf of Friends, Attenders or visitors at any Area Meeting or gathering, whether the event is held within an East Cheshire Area Meeting House or another building.
2. This policy covers Health and Safety practices when gathering as Area Meeting and all its constituent sub-meetings such as Elders and Overseers, Nominations, Trustees, Children and Young Peoples Committees and so on.
3. All relevant aspects of the Health and Safety Policies for Meetings with and without premises apply to Area Meeting gatherings.
4. In drawing up this policy for any Area Meeting occasion it has been noted that if a Fire Alarm sounds or there is an occasion for an Emergency Evacuation, the Trustees have been informed of examples where not all Friends have left the building or been accounted for.
5. A particular concern of Trustees is that Friends need to adapt their routines so that the arrangements for the evacuation of the building should be strengthened on behalf of all Friends, but particularly the more vulnerable who may be unaware that emergency procedures are in place or are in need of particular assistance to leave the building quickly.
6. Trustees share the issues below and expect that Friends will learn to implement a few additional measures. Some issues are covered by being aware of arrangements within and particular to the building before the event starts. Other issues are covered by giving Friends information at the start of the meeting or gathering.

Area Meeting Clerks, Convenors and Members of the host Local Meeting should ensure they can:-

- ☐ Be able to provide information and instruction as necessary to ensure the health and safety of all at the premises.
- ☐ Ensure they are aware of the means of access to and egress from the premises which is safe and without risks to health.
- ☐ Are aware of the arrangements for dealing with First Aid. (*e.g. a person who could help, the location of the First Aid box and the Accident Book*)
- ☐ Have read the Fire Plan for the building and know who is serving as a Fire Marshal or "last person out" as in accordance with the Fire Plan for that occasion.
- ☐ Be aware of the number of Friends attending the meeting or session.
- ☐ Be aware of Friends attending who are likely to need help leaving the building.
- ☐ Be aware of the address and post code of the building should Emergency Services need to be contacted.

Emergency Evacuation of the Building, should the need arise.

At the start of any meeting Friends should be informed by the Clerk or Convenor of the meeting of the following:-

1. The location of the Emergency Exits.
2. Which routes are best for less mobile Friends, which routes for other mobile Friends
3. The location of the Meeting Point where Friends gather outside.
4. The name(s) of Friends serving as “fire marshal” or “last person out”.

Role of the Fire Marshall or “last person out”

1. The Fire Marshall, leaves the building last, ensures that all the rooms are evacuated, checks all the toilets, kitchen, walk-in stores and so on, leaves knowing that the building is empty.
2. Has an assistant or two helpers, if the building is large, has two floors or there is a separate building, in accordance with the building’s Fire Plan.
3. Directs, reassures or requests help of Friends to leave immediately if observing a Friend returning or hesitating to leave.
4. Try to ensure all Fire Doors are closed as they check the building.
5. Go to the Meeting Point and report to the clerk or convenor.
6. Check that the Emergency Services have been contacted with the address and post code. *(Emergency Services may travel from out of the immediate area and the personnel arriving may be unfamiliar with the neighbourhood)*

Who can serve as a Fire Marshall or “last person out”?

1. This could be the doorkeeper or a person asked to serve on that occasion.
2. This Friend must know the location of the emergency exits and check they are open/in working order and the location of toilets and additional rooms.
3. The person needs to be sufficiently mobile and well organised to ensure all areas of the building are checked quickly and they exit as soon as possible to ensure their own safety.
4. The Friend should have confidence to speak clearly to or ensure assistance for any person hesitating to leave to ensure they reach the meeting point as soon as possible.

Emergency Exit Rehearsal

1. It is suggested that occasionally, once a year, each ECAM group at least “talks through” what they would do, where they go, who does what” or better still for larger gatherings actually rehearses an evacuation. This would uphold clerks, Fire Marshals and Trustees.
2. This would be best to happen in a different location each year.
3. It is recognised that such disturbance does not fit well with a calm start to a gathering, so we leave it to clerks/convenors to rehearse evacuation at a time that is of least impact on the success of the occasion, perhaps at a midway point.

Security after the meeting or gathering

1. After the meeting or event, the Clerk or Convenor should check with the Fire Marshal/”last person” out that all the Emergency Exits are now locked or secured as appropriate.
2. Also that no Friend is remaining and could be locked within!