



**Darlington Friends Meeting House  
6 Skinnergate  
Darlington  
DL3 7NB**

## **Teesdale and Cleveland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain**

**Registered Charity Number: 1134519**

### **Role information: Volunteer Wardens: Darlington Friends Meeting House**

#### **Context:**

The Friends Meeting House, Skinnergate has been the centre of Quaker life in Darlington since 1839 and is a Grade II\* listed building. Whilst it is still first and foremost a place of worship, it is also a modern community venue. Our busy room hire operation is run professionally whilst maintaining intrinsic Quaker business ethics and ensures the future of the Meeting House and Burial Ground. It is a vital resource for many people in the local community.

Volunteer Wardens play a vital and much appreciated role within the Friends Meeting House, ensuring our premises are secure and safe for all visitors, facilitating the use of our space by our hirer groups, and acting as a welcoming presence for Friends and visitors. The role can be carried out by an individual but we also welcome applications from couples who could share the responsibilities.

As a Volunteer Warden you will enter into a volunteering agreement with Teesdale and Cleveland Area Meeting Trustees but your work will be for Darlington Local Meeting. The agreement is informal, but we ask volunteers for a time commitment of 10 hours per week (shared if a couple is appointed to the role) and we hope that you will stay with us for a duration of at least one year.

Regular meetings with your line manager will help ensure that you are happy and confident in your role and you will be able to take part in our Personnel Committee, a group designed to provide pastoral care and support and identify any concerns from workers.

The Volunteer Warden position is unpaid but you will be able to live in a spacious and pleasant self-contained two-bedroom flat on the first floor of the Meeting House. No rent or water rates are payable on the flat but you will be responsible for all other bills such as utilities and council tax. You may use the Meeting House's wireless broadband, subject to availability, if you wish. The flat is unfurnished but the current occupants may be prepared to leave some furniture and white goods – this can be discussed with the successful applicant.

Personal qualities and skills required will include absolute reliability, a clear ethical commitment, flexibility in working with others and alone, excellent communication skills, including a willingness to give and receive appropriate feedback, perseverance, and good problem-solving ability. Specific wardening experience is not required, and full training will be given, but you should be able to demonstrate experience in other hands-on, customer-facing roles. Practical property management skills and a working knowledge of health and safety issues would also be advantageous.

We see this position as an opportunity for an individual or couple to develop practical and customer service skills whilst benefitting from the stability of rent-free accommodation. The role can be busy but is also often tranquil and always rewarding.

### **Role description:**

The duties of a Volunteer Warden require some flexibility so the list below is not exhaustive and will be jointly reviewed informally on an ongoing basis with the Manager and formally once a year with the Personnel Committee.

Following the coronavirus pandemic, we anticipate that our ways of working will change and develop over time as we adapt to government guidance and best practice. As such, the duties of the Volunteer Warden may vary somewhat from those set out in this document. Any significant changes would be discussed carefully and agreed with you and always with your safety in mind.

### **Basic daily and weekly tasks:**

- Morning and evening rounds - checking all locks, lights, fires, thermostats etc. Ensuring building and burial ground are secure and in a tidy condition.
- Liaising closely with the Manager regarding room hire bookings and ensuring hirers have a safe, usable space with appropriate equipment as required.
- Setting of heating timers for each room based on bookings diary.
- Setting up of furniture and audiovisual equipment for hirers.
- Welcoming, locking/unlocking for hirers, new hirer orientations.
- Monitoring use of the Meeting House and car park. Communicating with users/visitors in the event of any issues.
- General visual checks for fire hazards, health & safety issues.
- Minor housekeeping tasks such as putting out bins, washing tea towels etc.
- Communicating with cleaner regarding supplies and any other building-related issues
- Monitoring and restocking supplies such as toilet paper, hand soap, paper towels
- Minor repairs, changing lightbulbs etc
- Providing new solutions and opportunities to improve our ways of working and reduce expenditure using imaginative and practical ideas which are congruent with Quaker ethics.
- Maintaining Quaker ethical practice when acting as representative of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and informing visitors about the Meeting House and grounds with reference to supplied historical and current information.

We estimate that these regular tasks will take around 5.5 – 6 hours per week, leaving 4 – 4.5 for additional tasks such as more complex repairs, gardening, improvement projects, meetings, basic cover for Manager’s holiday, staffing Quaker events, etc. These additional tasks will be agreed between the Volunteer Warden(s) and Darlington Local Meeting.

We do not expect more than 10 hours of work from our Volunteer Warden(s) but if you have special areas of interest where you would like to build your skills, there are ample opportunities for additional volunteering. These opportunities could be in areas such as business administration, gardening and environmental work, heritage research, tours and presentations or community outreach work.

### Person Specification:

<b>Education/Training</b>	Reliability, integrity, customer service, basic IT skills, and a willingness to work with hand and brain are more important than formal qualifications.
<b>Experience</b>	Experience of maintaining effective working relationships, with colleagues, customers and others. Experience of property maintenance and management especially in heritage buildings would be beneficial.
<b>Knowledge/Technical skills.</b>	IT literate including use of web-based platforms . Ability to plan and manage own workload and be conscious of the workloads of other staff and volunteers. Ability to understand basic health and safety legislation appropriate to the post. An awareness of equality issues and safeguarding issues Basic gardening and maintenance skills An understanding and empathy for the Religious Society of Friends and their Testimonies.
<b>Behaviours/Personal Qualities</b>	Excellent customer-facing communication – a personable, professional approach and a sensitivity to the differing needs of our hirers and visitors Utmost reliability is essential – our operation relies upon the Warden(s) fulfilling any agreed duties as regards room hire set-up and welcoming etc Good common sense and security-consciousness Ability to work independently and as part of a team. Flexibility and resilience Ability to think laterally and come up with problem-solving ideas with a customer focus An interest in Quaker heritage and Darlington local history is advantageous
<b>Special Circumstances</b>	A clean driving licence would be an advantage