

Written evidence submitted by Quakers in Britain

The work of the Charity Commission, March 2020

Britain Yearly Meeting (also known as [Quakers in Britain](#)) is a national church and charity working on behalf of the 21,575 people who attend Quaker meetings in England, Scotland and Wales. Quaker faith is based on the belief that there is 'that of God in everyone'. We are submitting evidence in relation to the registration of church charities by the Charity Commission.

Britain Yearly Meeting is an umbrella body for around 70 Area Meetings (local groupings of Quaker meetings), which are separate charities under charity law. As churches, Area Meetings traditionally had '[excepted status](#)', meaning they did not have to register with the Charity Commission or submit annual returns.

Church charities were given a fixed period of time only to register when their excepted status was terminated. In 2011, the Charity Commission was given permission to extend this time period until March 2021 for excepted charities with an income under £100,000. This was '[to give the commission and denominational bodies time to help these churches prepare for registration by, or soon after, March 2021](#)'.

The Commission still does not accept registration of church charities with an annual income of £100,000 or less. Area Meetings with an annual income of more than £100,000 have been able to register as charities or charitable incorporated organisations. The 22 Area Meetings whose income is below £100,000 are waiting to register with the Charity Commission. It is now a year until the deadline. Denominational bodies do not now have enough time to put arrangements in place for the registration of the remaining church charities by March 2021.

We would like to know what plans the Commission has for registering these charities. The Commission has a duty to register charities in its role as guardian of public trust in charities. We feel that the Commission is failing in this key duty.

March 2020