

GLOUCESTERSHIRE AREA QUAKER MEETING ROLE DESCRIPTION

Supporting Friend (membership)

Each Local Meeting nominates at least two Friends for AM to appoint. Their task is to provide a process for Friends seeking membership to talk about their wish to become a member of the Society and work through questions about what that means.

If the SF is supporting one application in a year, working in partnership with a second SF, meeting two or three times, and attending the AM to which the application is taken, the time commitment is likely to be no more than 10 hours a year.

(The **Convener of Supporting Friends** is appointed by the gathered SF group)

Experience and qualities needed

A primary qualification for this role is that the SF is in membership. It is helpful if they also have firsthand experience of the life of the Area Meeting. The capacity for active listening and empathy is also invaluable.

Main responsibilities

Set out in the paper published in 2012 and accessible from our website:
<http://glosquakers.org/gloUCEstershire-area-meeting-2/resources/> in summary, these are to:

- 1 keep in touch with overseers and clerk in the LM as to their insights into an attender's possible interest in membership
- 2 in liaison with the SF convener, have initial meeting/s with the individual concerned, to explore together their interest in membership and respond to any questions they may have.
- 3 when both feel ready to move to the second stage, meet with the 'Area Meeting SF' identified from another LM to explore any further questions and prepare a minute of application
- 4 when ready, submit this to the AM clerk and, together, attend the next AM to present this to AM Friends.
- 5 attend meetings of SFs (yearly)

Support and learning

On membership, QF&P Chapter 11 is essential reading.

Gloucestershire AM's particular process of 'Supporting Friends', agreed in 2004, grew out of an invitation by Yearly Meeting in 2001 to experiment with the application process, reviewing and agreeing this three years later.

Meetings of SFs at local and Area level provide helpful mutual support.

July 2019