

Resident Friend Volunteer, Westminster Meeting House

Information Pack

REPORTS TO: PREMISES COORDINATOR/PREMISES COMMITTEE
HOURS PER WEEK: UP TO 20 (DELIVERED MONDAY TO SATURDAY)

The Accommodation

- Address: 9 Hop Gardens, London, WC2N 4EH. (The front entrance to Westminster Meeting House (WMH) is at 52 St. Martin's Lane)
- There is a well-proportioned 3-bedroom penthouse flat above the Meeting House. The flat is reserved for the Resident Friend Volunteers (RFV's) rent-free. The accommodation comprises shared living room, kitchen, bathroom and toilet, and a conservatory. Each RFV has a bedroom. There is also a large shared roof garden.
- WMH is very well served for public transport. It is close to many bus routes, tube and mainline services. Nearest tubes are Leicester Square, Covent Garden, Charing Cross and Embankment. There is ample parking nearby, once a Residents' Parking Permit has been obtained.

Note: All applicants for this opportunity should be mindful of the need to ensure they have a plan for their future accommodation at the end of the term of this Agreement. You will be asked about this at interview.

What we are looking for:

- Applications from members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) or regular Worshipers are welcomed; however we also invite applications from others who are in sympathy with the Quakers.
- The position may suit a person in employment or studying so long as this is compatible with their volunteering.
- The accommodation is for two RFV's plus a spare room, which may be used, by prior arrangement, by someone who is providing cover when the RFV's are not able to carry out their voluntary role (due to holiday, illness, etc.).

Note: Each RFV is supported by the Premises Committee, a member of which is the RFV's designated contact.

Desirable attributes for the role of Resident Friend Volunteer (RFV)

- In sympathy with Quakers
- Reasonable degree of fitness and strength
- Of a practical and capable disposition
- Knowledge and experience of buildings maintenance
- Experience of outreach/community engagement
- Availability for 20 daytime hours per week
- Available one Sunday in two
- Able to manage invoices and receipts
- Reliable record keeping

Volunteer activity may include the following:

- To be an active, welcoming and responsible Quaker presence in the Meeting House with ongoing care for those who hire, visit or worship on the premises.
- Responsibility for the day-to-day care of the building. We hope that, in addition to these volunteering activities, you will play an active part in the life of the Meeting.
- At times to be the first point of contact for potential hirers, visitors and enquiries.
- The care, servicing and security of our building, undertaking and arranging minor repairs, and on occasion liaising with any contractors.
- Volunteering on occasions when the Premises Coordinator is not available.
- To support the Premises Coordinator in managing the logistics of hosting multiple group activities on the premises; this may include issuing keys or door-keeping, contributing to shared timetables and generally ensuring the smooth running of the building to meet the needs of hirers and visitors.
- Communicating with both the Premises Coordinator and the Premises Committee effectively on matters arising as and when needed.
- Preparing the Meeting House for various uses. This may involve moving chairs and tables and issuing a projector and screen.
- To support local outreach activity through developing networks with local organisations and neighbours. This could include attendance at local events.
- To attend part of each Premises Committee meeting and to present an Annual Report to Local Meeting.
- This list is not exhaustive!

More information

If you would like an informal conversation about any aspect of this volunteer service please get in touch with Clare Douglas, Clerk of Premises at the following email address: clerkofpremises@gmail.com, stating "Resident Friend Volunteer" in the subject line.

Overview

Westminster Quakers

Westminster Meeting House is in the heart of London's Covent Garden. It is primarily a place of Quaker worship. There has been a Quaker Meeting in Westminster since 1655, and it has occupied the current site in St Martin's Lane since the late 19th Century. It was rebuilt in the 1950s following wartime damage.

The building provides an oasis of calm in central London for contemplation, reflection, meditation, healing and spiritual well-being, and is home to a varied and dynamic community of spiritual groups, healing practitioners and people exploring other forms of personal growth.

It comprises a large meeting room for Quaker worship, kitchen, toilets, library, smaller meeting room and an office on the ground floor; a meeting room and a series of four rooms (one with toilet and washing facilities) hired and used by therapists on the first floor; two rooms in the basement and a three-bedroom flat with conservatory on the top floor. There is also a large shared roof garden.

Westminster Quakers is part of London West Area Meeting (a registered charity). The net income from hiring out our rooms is used to support the worshipful life of Quaker Meeting Houses throughout London.

There are Meetings for Worship at 11.00 each Sunday with Children's Meeting twice a month, a lunchtime meeting on Tuesdays from 13.00-13.30 and a meeting on Wednesday evening 18.15-19.00. These meetings attract many visitors especially from overseas. There is also a weekly Drop-in Silence on Friday evenings from 17.30-19.00, a craft circle, and other activities organised by the

Meeting. Meetings for worship used by others also take place here. There were five weddings at the Meeting House in 2022 and two memorial services, one in 2018 and the other in 2019.

The Meeting House seeks to enhance and nurture the spiritual life of Quakers and those wanting to know more about Quakers. Through our location we provide an important opportunity for outreach as well as a place for Quakers visiting London to access Meetings for Worship.

The RFV will have an integral role in our Meeting alongside the Premises Committee and the Premises Coordinator in order to foster a sense of community within the building and in the local area.

Terms and Conditions for Resident Friend Volunteers

Conditions of volunteering

- **Pay:** This is not a paid position. The Resident Friend Volunteers each volunteer their time for up to 20 hours per week. As there are two RFVs it is expected that you will cover every other Sunday.
- **Status:** This is a purely voluntary arrangement: nothing must be done or said that could be construed as creating a contract of employment or a tenancy.
- **Term:** The arrangement will be reviewed every six months and will last for a maximum of 2 years.
- **Termination:** The arrangement may be brought to an end by either side at any time, but we would give you at least one month in which to leave the accommodation. We require you to also give us a minimum of one months notice if planning to leave before the two year period comes to an end.
- **Accommodation:** You will share the top floor flat at 9 Hop Gardens, London WC2N 4EH. No charge will be made for this and you will occupy as a licensee only. You must vacate the premises at the end of the two year period or within one month of the arrangement coming to an end before that time.
- **Time record:** You should keep a record of time engaged in volunteering activities. Where the 20 hours are exceeded this should be discussed with your designated contact. You and the other RFV will be expected, between you, to cover 42 Sundays. The other 10 Sundays will be covered by Westminster Friends. You will not be expected to be present on the Sunday before and after Christmas.
- **Planned absences:** You are asked to alert the Premises Committee at least one month in advance.
- **Sickness:** The Premises Committee liaison Friend should be notified of any unavailability due to sickness as soon as possible.

What we offer...

We, Westminster Quakers, will do our best:

- To introduce you to how the Meeting works and your role in it and to provide any training you need.
- To provide regular meetings with a main point of contact so that you can tell us if you are happy with how the arrangement is working and get feedback from us.
- To respect your skills, dignity and individual wishes and to do our best to meet them.
- To reimburse reasonable expenses. We will reimburse expenditure incurred by you on behalf of the Meeting on production of valid itemised receipts provided that such expenditure is agreed and approved in advance. We cannot reimburse expenses without this.

- To consult with you and keep you informed of possible changes.
- To insure you against any injury you suffer or cause accidentally whilst carrying out volunteering activities.
- To provide a safe environment for your volunteer service.
- To provide a framework of equal opportunities, diversity and health and safety.
- To try to resolve fairly any problems, complaints and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us.

We will ensure that the property is repaired and maintained. We will pay reasonable utility bills and council tax. All other expenses relating to the property are your responsibility; this includes any tax liabilities that you may incur.

The flat is furnished and we have provided a well-equipped kitchen including cooker, washing machine and fridge freezer. We ask that you take care of these items and report any damage straight away, and that you leave the flat and all furniture, fixings and fittings in good condition when you leave.

There is a third bedroom which could, with the agreement of a Clerk of Premises, be used by others such as visiting Quakers or personal guests of the RFV's, or to provide holiday cover by other Quakers when RFV's or the Premises Coordinator are away or unavailable.

Occasionally, if there is pressure on space to hold a meeting with RFV's, we may ask to hold the meeting in the flat.

What you offer...

You, the Resident Friend Volunteer, agree to do your best:

- To help the Meeting by the service you volunteer to undertake.
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.
- To follow the Meeting's procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities.
- To maintain appropriately any confidential information to which you may become party in the course of your volunteering.
- To meet the expectations of the meeting based on agreement with you and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible.
- To provide references and to agree to a DBS (criminal records) check being carried out, if eligible, for the nature of your role.

Resident Friend Volunteer (RFV) – How To Apply

Closing date for applications: 6 pm on 2nd October 2022.

We expect to start interviews for the role from the second week of October 2022.

To Apply: Please attach or enclose your CV along with a covering letter explaining why you would be suitable for this role, to be received by the closing date.

In the covering letter, we would be interested to know of any DIY skills or IT design skills that you have and would be able to share with us.

Please email these to Clare Douglas, Clerk of Premises, at the following email address: clerkofpremises@gmail.com, with the reference "Resident Friend Volunteer" in the subject line.

If you have any queries about the application process, please get in touch via the same email address.