

# Our Community Agreement

Australian Quaker Practice at on-line events

**By attending an on-line Quaker meeting or gathering you agree to follow the behaviours outlined in this agreement**

Quaker gatherings are enriching experiences which help build positive, inclusive communities. It is important for us all to consider what impact our behaviour and words might have on others. We all need to practice listening and speaking to each another with care to ensure all have this enriching experience.

Quakers are not immune from the bad behaviour which can easily occur online, particularly with social media activity. Interactions between Friends can result in pain and distress - online and in person. This may arise from unconscious patterns of behaviour. Behaviours such as bullying, harassment and verbal abuse are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. If you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour by anyone in our community, please contact an Elder, Pastoral Carer or other trusted Quaker. Contact details are available at [www.quakersaustralia.info/resources/administration-resources/regional-meeting-resources](http://www.quakersaustralia.info/resources/administration-resources/regional-meeting-resources).

## **For any Australian Quaker online gathering:**

- Please follow the guidance provided for each event on safeguarding and security
- When talking or writing to other participants be compassionate in your communication. For example, pause before pressing 'send' in an email or an online chat message; consider whether you are saying something you would later regret.
- Be mindful of how sensitive an issue may be to others when discussing views and beliefs.
- Respect the experiences and opinions of others even if they differ from your own. Be open to change.
- When sharing your comments, express your own view. Think before you claim to speak on behalf of others.
- Avoid the temptation to chat to others during an online meeting, in the same way we would not chat to neighbours during a face-to-face Quaker meeting.
- Friends who are closely involved in facilitating online events may need uninterrupted reflection time during session breaks.

We all need to maintain our discipline of coming together to know God's will for the gathered group as we face the challenges of meeting remotely. If someone does not abide by these guidelines, Clerks and Elders must consider ways to protect the safety of the group, which may include blocking access to an event.

*“Respect the wide diversity among us in our lives and relationships. Refrain from making prejudiced judgments about the life journeys of others. Do you foster the spirit of mutual understanding and forgiveness which our discipleship asks of us? Remember that each one of us is unique, precious, a child of God.”*

*Australian Quaker Advices and Queries 24*

This document has been adapted from the Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) Community Agreement which all BYM participants are obliged to agree to as part of BYM registration