Help Desk Function

Time Interval	Tasks	Workload
12 months prior to YM start	Meet with Committee Convenor and some of your team to discuss the style you want to provide, and what you need	5 hours
6 months prior to YM start	Liaise with other coordinators to build effective working relationships. Develop plans for the service Negotiate appropriate space	10 hours
1 month prior to YM start	Develop plans. Delegate component tasks Brief local help Desk volunteers	5 hours
1 week prior to YM start	Develop roster for volunteers	2 hours
First 2 days of YM	Manage remaining check-in	
Whole of YM	Respond to ongoing (and changing) requests	
At end of YM	Pack up Help Desk	
1 month after YM		
Overall workload:		
Skills required to undertake this function	• A flexible approach. • A thick hide. • An ability to negotiate easily with others. • Ability to delegate	
This function works most closely with:	• Planning Cttee Convenor • IT Convenor • Registration Convenor • Transport Convenor	

Tasks included in this function

This function includes doing these tasks:

- Deciding on the services to be made available by the Help Desk
- Liaising with other coordinators the boundaries of responsibilities which overlap
- Decide on hours of Help Desk operation
- Arranging suitable space for the Help Desk
- Arranging suitable personnel to staff the Help Desk
- Provision of First Aid and medical facilities
- Deciding whether you want to ask for Help Desk volunteers on the registration form.
- Providing necessary materials for participant use
- Acquiring stocks of any leaflets you might choose to make available
- Acquiring or making a map of the venue for participants.

Decide what services you will provide and hours of availability

Check-in to YM at the start of the event is usually at the Help Desk. This ensures that everyone knows where it is.

Will you provide space for the computers that will be needed for typing up reports, minutes, etc?

Will the Transport services be accessed via the Help Desk?

Update the FAQ for your city and location

Negotiate suitable space

This is an important step to do early in planning for the use of the venue.

Liaise with other coordinators where you will be located

Organise tables, screens, etc

See what works, bearing in mind……

The Help Desk is likely to need at least:

- two trestle tables as customer interface
- three trestle tables for stationery, equipment,
- three computers, and connected printers, on separate desks
- space for a photocopier (and to arrange pages)

Determine how many pin-up screens/notice boards and a white board or electronic screen (to show changes in daily programs) are needed.

May need a person who oversees the use of pin-up space, and is prepared to enforce some discipline of it.

Can we borrow tables (from venue or Meeting House), or do they need to be hired?

Who will manage overall hire of equipment? [Hosting Function?]

Arrange equipment and materials from previous year

Contact previous planning committee convenor. It may no longer be available.

Consider equipment and supplies and information needed

Consult list of commonly-used supplies

Appoint a person to go shopping, and do it

Decide out of hour arrangements (for contacts, access passes, first aid, etc)

Seek volunteers

Preferable to use local people as much as possible. This could be done in association with Registration process. The registration form could ask for volunteers (or not). This needs to be clarified during the design of the Registration Form.

Assemble a team of people to be responsible for Help Desk. Increasingly the Help Desk interacts with IT. Local information can often be searched on-line (transport timetables, local traders), so it is good to have sufficient people who are adept at using such sources of information. Helping users with tasks such as typing up notes on unfamiliar equipment also requires IT skills

Preferable to have meetings and briefings for volunteers. Important to be clear about tasks and responsibilities.

Prepare rosters

- Essential that coordinator of Help Desk not be rostered. May be useful to have shift leaders (a local), who are very familiar with Help Desk processes and duties.
- Help Desk experiences high demand during first two days, then some tapering off is likely.
- Create a blank roster covering the hours of operation. We suggest two or three hour time-slots, two people for each shift. Allow extras for meals, to cover any rush of questioners, and allow for workers to get their meals
- Maybe useful to stagger shift-change times.
- Don't over-use any individual
- Preferable to have some local people on every shift

Arrange IT provision (with IT function)

Ensure that Help Desk has internet connection. During YM many Friends will need some assistance:

- Connecting to the internet
- Printing
- Typing up a report (possibly on an unfamiliar computer)
- Passing a file to another person
- How to log-in to an unfamiliar system

Provide 2 computers and two printers. Have some people who can assist with such things. Roster them to make them reasonably available. Know how to contact them if fast help is needed.

On-going check-in after initial rush

Once the initial rush of check-ins has happened, there will be Friends who arrive at on-going times. Make sure that you have had a hand-over of lists, procedures, keys, access tokens, etc from the check-in team.

Check-out procedures

The arrangements for checking out of Friends accommodation will vary depending on the site.

Need to check with the Accommodation convenor. If the venue has issued room keys or access tokens, these will need to be returned and accounted for. A procedure which implements this will be needed.

Lost property

Information dissemination processes (with IT function)

1. notices on display (possibly with Assistant Clerk)
2. displaying minutes, reports. etc (with Machinery of AYM)

Signs

Plenty of them!! To indicate to F/friends how to get to the YM Help Desk, the meeting rooms and their beds!

There is also a banner that can be displayed outside the YM venue.

Liaise with venue management ahead of time about their policy on user groups putting up signs. They may have some restrictions, for aesthetic reasons. They may have preferences about the kind of signs. One venue would not allow us to put Blu Tack on glass surfaces.

In Perth 2005, signs proliferated during the week and became redundant or outdated. Clear signs are important, as is someone overseeing them, and adjusting them as the time progresses. It is useful to have a laminator, so that new signs can be made. Remember to scan the venue at the end of YM, and remove any of our signs, so they are not left as junk for others. Quakers have a strong tendency to want to re-use everything that can be. However, the signs that may be saved and passed on to the next YM should be minimised, and only generic signs saved, and transported to the next host city.

First Aid

First Aid equipment for minor accidents should be available in the General Office and the Children/JYF's carers should carry one with them all the time. A list of local doctors, etc. should also be available for more serious injuries. Perth 2005 had an identified Doctor on Call.

Brisbane 2000 asked a Friend Pharmacist to put together three full St John's First Aid kits (Adults, children and JYF) on a 'sale or return' basis. Canberra YM purchased a complete St John's first aid kit.

In Adelaide in 2010, one volunteer had frequent, life-threatening episodes over the first few days, and this was resolved by asking the Friend to bring a designated helper when coming to the Yearly Meeting. This information should be collected as part of the registration information.

The Help Desk is provided with a list of First Aiders willing to assist during Yearly Meeting.

Epipens

JYF Coordinator to ensure that an adequate number of first aiders are present and that adequate first aid kits are available. Suggest that there should be at least two First Aid kits, and it would be good if every vehicle transporting JYFs have a basic kit. The kits to include **epipen** and an **asthma** inhaler, as not all JYFs may be identified as needing these but might need on camp!

Possible issues to deal with

- IT issues including access to website
- List of key people including Pastoral Carers and Elders
- Queries on venue site
- Queries on program
- Location of meetings/sessions and friends' accommodation
- Displays in helpdesk area - Share and tell sessions/ winter school location, lists of participants.
- Printed daily plan displayed as DIA timetable changes and location of sessions.
- Printed daily notices from the website for those with no access to internet
- Sales of Documents in Advance
- Information on local services (medical/dental/ public transport/ restaurants/shops/letter box)
- Lost and Found box
- Spare warm clothing box and umbrellas
- Spare mugs to borrow
- List of Friends with medical skills
- Stationery table - drawing pins, scissors, pens, sticky tape, printing paper, stamps, envelopes,
- Phone charger
- List of Children and JYFS responsible adult contacts
- Emergency contact numbers for all Friends.
- Left Luggage prior to room allocation and last day

- Reporting of Safety Risks to venue staff
- Complaints and suggestions