# Guide to Maintaining the Meetinghouse and Grounds

## at Midlothian Friends Meeting

**(updated March 21, 2019)**

### Philosophy for Maintaining the Buildings and Grounds at Midlothian Friends Meeting

Upon associating with Midlothian Friends Meeting, a logical question may arise in your mind as to how we maintain the meetinghouse and grounds. For those Friends who may have come to us from another Quaker meeting or another religious organization, you may assume that a committee or contracted maintenance service takes care of this necessary activity.

While Midlothian Friends Meeting does have volunteer Building and Grounds (B&G) coordinators who oversee maintenance and safety of buildings and grounds, this committee is not expected to do all of the routine maintenance that any building and surrounding yard require. Nor do these coordinators take on major building and grounds projects of the meeting; instead, ad-hoc committees are appointed by the meeting to carry out these major projects.

So who takes care of these things? We encourage everyone associated with our meeting to take care of our spiritual home – just as you would do at your own personal home. If you notice something that needs doing in order to maintain our meetinghouse and grounds, please consider just doing it. Should you need a key to the meetinghouse so you can return at your convenience to help, just ask one of the Building and Grounds coordinators.

The Building and Grounds committee has provided supplies and tools at the meetinghouse for you to easily do most anything at your convenience. Within this document is some information on these items. Contracts, receipts, and warranties may be found in a three-ring binder kept in the **Utility Closet** off of the Committee Meeting Room. We encourage you to take a look around the meetinghouse and grounds so you are aware of what is available to you at the meetinghouse to help keep our spiritual home clean, safe, attractive, and useable.

### Routine Yard Maintenance

The shed in the back of the meetinghouse contains numerous yard tools. Usually, whatever you might need in order to maintain the grounds can be found in it. There are two or more lawn mowers, gasoline, weed & grass killer, a wheel barrel, step latter, electrical cords, various types of rakes, shovels, hoes, clippers, etc. kept in the shed.

Often in the Spring and Summer, the yard in front and to the side of the meetinghouse needs cutting frequently. Occasionally, the playground, rough area behind the meetinghouse, and the Creek path needs cutting. The parking lot occasionally needs trimming due to grass growing high through the gravel.

In the fall, areas need to be raked or blown of leaves due to our wooded location.

Trees on the property occasionally need to be removed due to disease or being dead. We need to be particularly sensitive to this hazard so that lives and the buildings are not threatened. Even if you are not equipped to remove these hazards yourself, if you notice this situation please notify one of the Building and Grounds coordinators immediately.

Flower beds, bushes, and ornamental trees need to be weeded and fertilized occasionally. If you enjoy nurturing a beautiful yard, we encourage you to go for it by adding your touch or starting an interest group at meeting to beautify our grounds. There are plenty of areas that could use your touch, such as the front yard, the playground area, the Meditation Garden, the Creek path, on and on.

Pest control for the outside may be found in the Hospitality Closet off of the foyer. Should you notice pests, swift removal of them is advantageous before they multiply. You may choose to take this on yourself or notify a Building and Grounds coordinator.

### Maintaining the Walkways and Decks

Often, the walkways, porches, and decks of the meetinghouse and RE Building require sweeping, blowing, or snow removal. Brooms and snow shovels are conveniently attached to the end of the meetinghouse between it and the RE Building. A small blower is kept in the Hospitality Closet off of the foyer. There are also brooms and shovels attached to the back of the meetinghouse at the deck.

Usually, there are plants in the planters surrounding the porches and decks. It is important that these have sufficient water to survive; check them when you come to meeting. You will notice that Friends have started setting (with their original

containers) perennial plants in these planters so that once they outgrow their original containers, they can be easily lifted from the planters and planted in a suitable location on our grounds. Fill free to take on this relocation if you have a "calling" to do so. Shovels and other garden equipment are located in the shed behind the meetinghouse. Then another Friend (perhaps you) may be led to replace them with a new batch of perennials in the porch planters.

The porches and decks have motion-activated light fixtures. Should the bulbs be out in these, there are bulbs located in the Hospitality Closet off of the meetinghouse foyer.

## Cleaning, Tidying, and Supplying the Meetinghouse

Various clean-up and tidying activities are certainly required inside the meetinghouse as is true for any home. General cleaning supplies are located in the closet in the kitchen, along with a vacuum, carpet shampooer, buckets, brooms, and mops. Supplies such as hand soap, paper towels, garbage bags, dusters, tissues, etc. are also kept in that closet.

Hand vacuums have been supplied for your use in the worship room (on the wall between the glass sliding door and the end of the kitchen cabinets), the library (to the right of the office door on the floor), the Committee Meeting Room (on the wall next to the TV), and the RE Building (on the wall near the door).

There is a utility sink located in the small closet next to the bathroom off of the Committee Meeting Room.

Located on top of each toilet you will find cleaning supplies for the bathrooms. Additional supplies for the bathrooms may be found in each bathroom sink cabinet. Toilet plungers are located in each bathroom by the toilet. Sink plungers are located in the sink cabinets of each bathroom.

Should light bulbs need to be replaced, these can be found in the **Hospitality Closet** off of the foyer. For replacing bulbs in the recessed fixtures in the worship room or library ceiling, there is a tool (it has a long yellow handle) hanging on the wall inside the **Maintenance Closet** off of the Committee Meeting Room.

Pest control items are kept inside the **Hospitality Closet** off of the foyer. Getting rid of pests immediately is important so they don't multiply, especially since our meetinghouse is abandoned most of each week.

If you notice any of these supplies are low, we always appreciate an in-kind donation of supplies if you are so moved to purchase these next time you go shopping. Just set what you purchase on the kitchen countertop, and someone who knows where they go will put them away.

## Fireplace and Associated Supplies

Occasionally the fireplace needs to be cleared of ashes. Simply get a plastic garbage bag out of the closet off of the kitchen to place the ashes in. Of course, be certain these ashes are dead and will not reignite. Take the ashes home with you to dispose of safely (as a precaution, do not throw them in the wooded areas of the meetinghouse grounds; nor leave them in receptacles at the meetinghouse).

We are always in need of firewood and kindling for the fireplace if you are able to donate some. You will note there is a firewood holder on the front porch and an excess firewood pile right off of the parking lot in the woods. Feel free to refill the porch firewood holder from that excess firewood. There is a rectangular basket kept near the fireplace to hold kindling.
Fire starting materials are kept in the **Hospitality Closet** off of the foyer. If these are low or absent, we welcome and thank you if you are moved to resupply them.

## Maintenance of the Meetinghouse

Tools (hand and power), paint and painting supplies, electrical supplies, gardening materials, step ladders, and heavy duty supplies/cleaners are kept in two closets off of the Committee Meeting room: the small **Utility Closet** (that also houses the utility sink) and the double door **Maintenance Closet**. It is best to look there before purchasing what you need.

Should there be a major issue or an emergency with systems or structures in the meetinghouse that require a contractor, please notify a Building and Grounds coordinator.