

**QIY Trustees: July 2017 report to QIY in session (Malton) i.e. the oral introduction to the formal written report provided for everyone present**

I am pleased to commend to you a shortened version of QIY's **annual report and accounts** and to outline briefly how we are seeking to fulfil the responsibilities we carry on your behalf. You know the process whereby QIY Trustees are responsible for approving the accounts and accompanying report; these then go to the Independent Examiner, who must pass the accounts before I send them and the narrative to Charity Commission, where they are rechecked before going on the CC website. We also send them to Quaker Stewardship Ctee. Michael Sturge, the Examiner, has already indicated to me that he sees no problems. Once the Examination is complete we shall be happy to put on the website a full electronic copy, including the report narrative, for to any Friend who wishes to see it.

**Trustee membership:** At the end of 2016 June Lewis completed her first term as trustee; she has been reappointed to serve from 2017- 2019. We thank Andrea Killen, who completed her service at the same time. Unfortunately it has not yet proved possible for Brighouse West Yorkshire AM to replace her so we are one trustee light at present.

Early this year George Race found it necessary to ask for release from the Treasurership. I've said something in the programme about my appreciation of the exemplary commitment he has brought to this work. He has fought to complete the 2016 accounts regardless of the physical difficulty this has caused him. I shall always be grateful to have worked with George, to enjoy his care for our meetings and for QIY activities with children and young people. His efficiency has been a great support, not to mention his sense of humour. I'm very grateful too that QIY Noms went quickly into action so that we were able to welcome Chris Petrie, appointed in April as George's successor. Thank you too to Chris Love for her great help during the interregnum.

**What else have we been doing and why do we need to look after money?** As one example I'll just mention today how fortunate we are to have the Forrest Meeting House Fund. A century hence some Quaker historian may go through over 100 years of accounts to work out how many meeting houses have benefited from grants or loans out of this fund. Recently High Flatts, Settle, York Friargate and even Brigflatts in the near future (ask one of us at lunchtime) have all applied successfully for help. So it's not just a line in the accounts, it's a very present help to meetings. We are careful to maintain its

value precisely so that we can go on giving this help where it's really needed and over the longterm.

Next a reminder that **we come to you today asking you find creative ways to spend one pot or money on deepening our faith experience and knowledge.**

We want to spend all the £31,500 bequest from the Adult School Union, if possible within ten years of making the first grant. How? Here are a few ideas. Bring Woodbrooke to your own AM – Woodbrooke on the Road. That costs a mini of £480 & could be twice as much depending on numbers. This is the fund that can make it affordable if your AM puts forward a good case. Take a meeting group to Swarthmoor Hall for the Women's Theological Conference – or to undertake a Fox's Footsteps Pilgrimage – or to study the Letters of John. Go to Glenthorne to study mysticism and the Quaker tradition- unless you prefer something on Paul's Letters – or a course on Allowing Forgiveness – or will it be Stillness Faith & Action?

Those are thoughts just plucked from a short look on three websites; so many other possibilities exist and by applying for a significant grant for your meeting, you could open them up at a greatly reduced cost to a number of people. What joy your meeting could gain from the relaxed fellowship of time together combined with spiritual nurture and inspiration. When you get home, blow up the article in the Newsletter, get it in a prime spot on your board - ask for ideas & offer some yourself. What a chance for enjoying ourselves, deepening our lives & getting a spiritual boost. And all without worrying about some being left out because of cost.

We do have other thoughts if Friends can't be persuaded to come up with their own, but we really can't believe the great do-it-ourselves crowd called Quakers would want us to do it for them! You'll need to take time to think it through and choose well – but don't take for ever! Early September would be good. We meet as trustees on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. I admit it's too ambitious to hope for an outline application from all 7 AMs - but surely we can manage two or three by then? And some more before we meet in February.

At the most recent meeting of York AM an elder read during worship Beth Allen's words para 8.25 QFP; I'd like to read it now.

'For some of us this does not seem sufficiently religious. I remember an outburst in Meeting for Sufferings, when Friends felt that Britain Yearly Meeting was becoming 'just a well-run charity'. 'I don't want to be part of a well-run charity, I want to be part of a religious group, a church,' said a weighty Friend. The point is that we need to be an ordinary well-run organisation, with good structures and sensible practices, which we then make extraordinary by transcending, not discarding them.'

As one of your Trustees I find that very helpful – and I felt the same when I was serving on Quaker Life Central Committee. These activities do not constitute the glamorous or exciting aspects of Quaker work but they are an essential bit of the bedrock. Like the foundations, you don't actually want to see them too often, but you feel safer if they're known to be solid, durable, and well-maintained. We do our best to see that they are and the Charity Commission's acceptance of our reports and accounts is part of that evidence. So is the ever-ongoing work of keeping the handbook up to date. It's like painting the Forth Bridge – and like that, it strengthens the basics and enables the vital work that can only happen when the structure really works.

It is good that Friends should take an informed interest in trustee work. Our Friend Peter Jarman, who was formerly a trustee and latterly a co-opted member, made a very significant and valued contribution towards creating QIY's ethical investment policy. He continues to take a concerned interest and has recently queried some financial decisions. These queries all relate to trustee decisions taken while Peter was a co-opted member and were discerned very thoroughly and on more than one occasion at the time. They have all been reviewed again since then.

Finally I'd like to thank all our trustees for their support, guidance and wisdom.

Barbara Windle

July 2017