

Outreach Projects Committee Report for 2017

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Report on activities in 2017

The Outreach Projects Committee (OPC) was set up in 2013 to support and encourage all forms of outreach and inreach, receive grant applications and provide funding for projects from any Quaker Meeting in Yorkshire not fully funded locally. The committee comprises a representative from each of our seven Area Meetings, plus the clerk, and primarily operates as a working group by email. Unfortunately we were not able to have our face to face committee meeting this year, largely due to my own health problems, but we hope to be able to meet up in 2018.

This year the OPC has approved the funding for six projects, amounting to grants of £4,014, varying in size from £345 to £1250. Not quite the ‘bumper’ year of 2016 (when eleven projects were funded) but nonetheless it is apparent that Friends in their Local and Area Meetings are becoming more aware of the availability of funds from Quakers in Yorkshire (with a budget of £10,000). In addition, some enquiries about funding have been made from other Local Meetings about possible applications for the future. Most enquiries and applications come directly to me as the clerk, usually directed by the Quakers in Yorkshire website, but it is also possible to apply via our Area Meeting representatives who are also able to give help and advice before an application is made, and to guide Friends through the application process. The Committee warmly welcomes applications for funding – in particular this year we have noticed the lack of applications for small amounts. Hopefully these projects are being funded from elsewhere (Local or Area Meetings?), but sometimes less expensive projects can have a significant impact with outreach, and groups should not be deterred from applying for small amounts.

The projects funded this year have included the distribution of white poppies around the time of Remembrance Day (Huddersfield and Hebden Bridge LMs); activities during Quaker Week, including two talks and the refurbishment of an historic picture, from Malton LM; two grants to the Northern group of Kindlers, for funding publicity materials including the purchase of t-shirts to help increase their visible presence, and to support a series of Kindlers workshops on the theme of ‘Journeying in the Light’ to be held in York in the first part of next year; and funding for a short residential trip for asylum seekers from Leeds to the Bamford Quaker Community in Derbyshire, led by Pauline Leonard from Carlton Hill LM. The reports for these events are available from the lead Friend involved, details of which have been circulated to Area Meetings under the heading ‘Spreading the Word’ and are also available for you today.

As part of the OPC report to Quakers in Yorkshire in January we hope to hear from three Friends who have been part of Quaker groups that have benefitted from grants from the OPC, about how their funding has made a difference to their project, to the outreach/inreach in their Meeting/Group, and also how taking part in these projects may have contributed to their own spiritual development. Taking on a project means asking Friends to give service that goes beyond the usual needs of their Quaker community, so it is heartening that Friends are prepared to do this at a time when it is often difficult enough to find Friends able and willing to give service at a local level. Reaching out into our wider community and giving others an opportunity to come to know us and what it means to live our lives as Friends can be a transforming experience and lead to a deepening and enriching of our own spiritual lives and that of our Local and Area Meetings.

Annabel May, Clerk (December 2017)

Quaker Outreach Projects in Yorkshire 2017

Please find below the outlines of projects funded (or funding agreed but yet to take place) by the Quakers in Yorkshire Outreach Projects Committee in 2017. If you are considering a similar project to any of these, it may be helpful to contact those involved – as well as practical advice, past projects sometimes have materials that they can lend out.

Annabel May, clerk, QiY Outreach Projects Committee
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Local/Area Meeting or Group	Format	Theme	Venue	Date applied	Report available from/Contact
Pauline Leonard (Carlton Hill LM)	Short residential trip for asylum seekers from Leeds	A relaxing break with activities	Staying at Bamford Quaker Community, Derbyshire	April 2017 (Took place July)	Pauline Leonard
Northern Kindlers	T-shirts and publicity material	Quaker outreach	Initially Britain Yearly Gathering, then Yorkshire and the North	July 2017	James McCarthy
Huddersfield LM	White poppies to distribute around Remembrance Day	Peace	Huddersfield University	August 2017	Ann Bettys
Malton LM Outreach/ Inreach Cttee	2 x public talks, reframing of historic painting	Quaker Week	Central venue, Malton & FMH Malton	September 2017	Chris Newsam
Hebden Bridge LM	White poppies to distribute around Remembrance Day	Peace	Hebden Bridge & Todmorden	September 2017	Ann Banks
Northern Kindlers	Series of 4 workshops in York	Journeying in the Light	Friargate FMH	November 2017 (to take place Jan-April 2018)	James McCarthy

Reports on OPC funding received for Kindlers and Hebden Bridge Meeting 2017

Kindlers

Kindlers was started about 8 years ago, as many other lively Quaker enterprises have been, by Alec Davison of North West London AM. His vision was to revitalise and deepen the spiritual life of our meetings by providing the opportunity for deep discussion and raising awareness about our spiritual lives through a series of intriguing and sometimes challenging activities. Any Friend who has been to a Kindlers event - and how many have? will have experienced the kind of things that make up a Kindlers workshop. Alec is now 80+ and, determined not to let the grass grow under his feet, is, along with Tony Biggin (both of Greenham Common fame) involved in a new venture called 'Friends in Tune'. This is a celebration of 100 years of 'inspiring Quaker Music Making'. Some early Friends may be turning in their graves!

So there is a largely, but not entirely, new group of Kindlers, equally committed, many of us in Yorkshire, who last year took over the running and direction of the Kindlers. Needing some way to raise our profile, we came up with the idea of a new logo which was arrived at quite magically by committee and resulted in the logo you see on this banner. We also thought t-shirts in a variety of flame coloured shades would make us stand out in a crowd. And then we'd need some new leaflets to let Friends know who we are, what our purpose is and that we are very happy to receive donations to further our work! There are currently 3 strands to our activities, 2 of these a northern and southern series of new workshops - we held our first at Friargate last Saturday - an in depth look at discernment. Three more to follow. These events provide us with the opportunity try out new ideas for workshops and have some fun and fellowship too. So guinea pigs required please! 10 pounds a the door, bring your own lunch. The southern series is beginning in Bournemouth today with a new offering of 'Living Adventurously'. The third strand is a series of 8 on the road workshops which you can request from our administrator for your meeting or area meeting. There are leaflets at the back with all the details on - please take them. So where does the QIY outreach project come in?

Speaking to our Friend Annabel May, who is sad not to be with us today, at Malton last August, she was very quick to respond to our request for funds for this and here you see the product of that investment - it's probably not very often that you have an actual fashion parade at these events but here we are! Are there any other Kindlers in the hall? - if so would you stand up and give us a twirl! Most Friends have been very positive about our new look, apart from one at Yearly Meeting Gathering who accused us 'of going corporate' and was clear that Quakers shouldn't fall for that kind of branding! However, it's not as if we are attempting to make a profit - we all work for free, claiming only our expenses so we are very grateful for the money forthcoming from QIY. We are also indebted to you for the money to cover our Northern Series of 5 workshops last year in Leeds.

Hebden Bridge White Poppy Project

Now with another of my many Quaker hats on this is a report about generous funding for 500 white poppies and leaflets to go with them for our meeting in Hebden Bridge. As in often the case with our meeting a suggestion for an action is made, someone organises for it to happen and then there is a deathly hush! Anyone else's meeting like that?? But as is also the case, Friends rally at the last minute and we had a good presence in the town during the week up to Remembrance Sunday. Reports came in of a very positive response from most people approached on the street. Some were delighted to find white poppies available. One Friend was taken to task about white poppies and what about the red poppies for remembering the dead? She was able to point out that this in no way disrespected those who had fought and died in the wars, but that this was to suggest there might be other ways of dealing with conflict that would bring about more peaceful outcomes. The resulting conversation was rewarding in that his sons, both scouts, had been going door to door with red poppies and had encountered some opposition so he was able to tell his sons that there is an alternative to war. On the Sunday morning I was at the wreath laying in the local park where red and a single white wreath were laid. Looking across at the row of scouts opposite me I was

delighted to notice that 2 scouts and one of the leaders were sporting white poppies. Being out in the town and speaking to people was a great way to connect both with the local people and, as we worked in pairs, a good way of seeing other Friends in action. The funniest experience in my time on the street was in approaching a man who was very dismissive - yes but it's for peace, do you think that might be a better way - No! I'm only interested in supporting REAL people!' There's not much you can say to that! There are a few remaining copies of our leaflet at the back which which you are welcome to take away. These could easily be modified to have details about your own meeting on the back. I'm thinking after something I read in the Friend recently to add Red Poppies for Remembrance so that the message is clear. I have run this leaflet as it now stands past Jane Dawson our communications officer at Friends House and Paul Parker - both were quite satisfied with it. Please contact me if your meeting can see a use for this leaflet for next year.

Ann Banks