

Quakers in Yorkshire Group to Reinvigorate and Simplify Structures and Processes (GRASP)

Basic information about Quakers in Yorkshire

Constitutional position

Quakers in Yorkshire is a **regional gathering** in Britain Yearly Meeting. It is 'owned' by the seven area meetings (see below) and is a registered charity (No. 1139514).

The constitutional authority in Britain Yearly Meeting is the annual yearly meeting in session. Minutes of Yearly Meeting determine the structure of Quakers in Britain. The primary unit of business is the **Area Meeting** which is a grouping of **Local Meetings**. Each Area Meeting is a separate charity and is regulated by the Charity Commission (in England and Wales) – but only those with turn-overs of over £100,000 need to be registered charities. The chain of authority in Britain Yearly Meeting goes – from bottom upwards: Local Meeting to Area Meeting to Meeting for Sufferings to Yearly Meeting. Regional gatherings ceased to be part of the administrative structure of Britain Yearly Meeting in 2007. Most regional gatherings are now either laid-down or meet in-frequently. Four are active: Yorkshire, London, Scotland and Wales.

History of QiY

Quakers in Yorkshire can trace its history continuously back to 1665 when the first recorded minutes exist of **Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting**. Quakerism started in Yorkshire and North West England in 1651-52 when George Fox and other founders discovered a faith that they had been seeking. The early years were ones of rapid expansion, religious fervour and considerable persecution of Friends. In the 1660s George Fox established a hierarchy of meetings to provide networks and support. The Preparative (now Local) Meetings fed into the Monthly (now Area) Meetings which fed into the Quarterly Meetings which reported to London Yearly Meeting.

In 1966 Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting became **Yorkshire General Meeting** as part of a national simplification of the administrative structure of the yearly meeting. In 2005 the name was changed to **Quakers in Yorkshire**. In 2010 Quakers in Yorkshire became a separately registered charity.

Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting has met quarterly since 1665 and played an active part in the life of Quakerism both regionally and nationally. Outreach work was important in the 20th century. A special committee to do outreach was formed called the 1905 Committee which became the Yorkshire Friends Service Council in 1928 and Quaker Outreach in Yorkshire in the 1980s. In the 2000s this was laid down and replaced by an Outreach Projects Committee. Activities for young people have also been important. In the 1930s the Yorkshire Friends Holiday School was established and has met annually since then. Junior Holidays provides short holidays two or three times a year. For a time there was also a young people's Link Group. The 1905 Committee also began annual family weekends at Easter-time and 'Easter Settlement' continues to this day, now held at Cober Hill Guesthouse, near Scarborough.

The seven Area Meetings

The seven Area Meetings which form Quakers in Yorkshire are listed in the table below. Five of the AMs [Craven & Keighley, Leeds, Pickering & Hull, Sheffield & Balby and York] are registered charities (because their turnover is in excess of £100K pa); Brighouse West Yorkshire is in the process of applying to be registered.

The membership statistics and the most recently reported income are as follows: (data taken from **Tabular Statement** at end 2018 and most recently published Annual Accounts):

Area Meeting	No of Members	No of attenders	No of Local Meetings	Income (most recent year)
Brighouse West Yorkshire	162	101	5	
Central Yorkshire	130	45	6	
Craven & Keighley	121	76	5	£101K
Leeds	184	114	7	£249K
Pickering & Hull	179	95	7	£186K
Sheffield & Balby	213	74	4	£196K
York	381	192	5	£457K
TOTALS	1370	697	39	

Meetings and Meeting Houses

There are currently 38 Local Meetings in QiY – listed below. A meeting in Otley closed in 2018. The 3rd column in the table gives the number of Members plus Attenders listed in the 2018 QiY Book of Members and Attenders (Green Book). The 4th column gives the change since the previous Book. The 5th column states whether the Meeting has a Meeting House and the final column whether it is listed. We are unusual nationally in having a high proportion of meeting houses (34), a significant number of which are Listed either Grade II or II* (12).

Area Meeting	Meetings	2018 Members and Attenders	Change since 2015	Meeting House?	Listed
Brighouse West Yorkshire	Bradford	40	-7%	Yes	
	Halifax	25	+9%	No	
	Hebden Bridge	129	+11%	No	
	Huddersfield	80	-1%	Yes	
	Scholes	34	+10%	Yes	
Central Yorkshire	Ackworth	27	-46%	[Yes]	
	Barnsley	28	0%	Yes	Grade II
	High Flatts	23	-21%	Yes	
	Pontefract	25	-24%	Yes	
	Wakefield	37	-7%	Yes	
	Wooldale	40	0%	Yes	Grade II
Craven & Keighley	Airton	12	-25%	Yes	Grade II
	Bentham	19	-9%	Yes	Grade II
	Keighley	42	-12%	Yes	
	Settle	83	+8%	Yes	Grade II*

	Skipton	69	+2%	Yes	Grade II
Leeds	Adel	52	-10%	Yes	Grade II
	Carlton Hill	121	+8%	Yes	
	Gildersome	26	+13%	Yes	
	Ilkley	57	-2%	Yes	
	Rawdon	31	-18%	Yes	
	Roundhay	41	-7%	Yes	Grade II
Pickering & Hull	Beverley	75	-8%	Yes	Grade II
	Kirkbymoorside	43	-6%	Yes	
	Hull	45	-4%	Yes	
	Malton	33	0%	Yes	
	Pickering	34	-15%	Yes	
	Scarborough	78	-7%	Yes	
	Whitby	11	-8%	No	
Sheffield & Balby	Balby (Doncaster)	44	+13%	Yes	Grade II*
	Hope Valley	19	-14%	[Yes]	
	Sheffield Central	233	+7%	Yes	
	Sheffield Nether Edge	30	+7%	No	
York	Acomb	59	-24%	Yes	Grade II
	Friargate	269	-13%	Yes	
	Harrogate	179	+16%	Yes	
	New Earswick	113	-4%	Yes	
	Thirsk	36	-17%	Yes	

[Note: The number of Members and Attenders in the above table will differ from the numbers returned for the Tabular Statement because (a) not all Friends want their names in the Book; (b) the definition of Attenders is fluid and (c) Members can be attached to more than one meeting].

What does QiY do?

- Arranges Quarterly meetings on topics of general interest, at venues around the county. Attendance varies from 60 to over 100.
- Yorkshire Friends Holiday School (one-week holidays for young people, currently held at Bootham School).
- Junior Holidays (two weekend holidays for younger young people).
- Easter Settlement at Cober Hill.
- Outreach Projects Committee gives grants to encourage outreach activities.
- Triennial Book of Members and Attenders.
- Appoints governors for The Mount, Bootham and Breckenbrough Schools.
- Appoints trustees for Glenthorne Quaker Centre in Lake District.
- Appoints custodians for Yorkshire Quaker Archives at Leeds University.
- Gives grants for meeting house premises and refurbishment.
- Operate a website (www.quakersinyorkshire.org.uk)
- Publishes a quarterly newsletter.
- Trustees oversee a range of funds which have been given over the years.

Surrounding meetings

It is worth noting the statistics for the main area meetings which surround Quakers in Yorkshire. The map shows these with the basic membership data in the table below.



Area Meeting	No of Members	No of attenders	No of Local Meetings
Lincolnshire	142	59	8
Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire	259	195	9
East Cheshire	171	100	8
Manchester & Warrington	186	90	5
Pendle Hill	85	88	7
Lancashire Central & North	219	105	5
Kendal & Sedbergh	119	63	4
Wensleydale & Swaledale	28	37	2
Teesdale & Cleveland	136	53	6