

QIY Trustees Report to QIY July 2020

Trustee changes:

At the end of 2019 we said farewell and thank you to **Chris Love**, whose ex officio service with trustees ended when she completed her service as QIY's co-clerk. At the same time we lost three valued trustees, **June Lewis and Chris Fellowes** having completed two terms service. The third trustee was **Gavin Burnell**; not entirely lost to us since, released as a trustee, Gavin continues to join our deliberations ex officio as QIY's current co-clerk. Thank you to these Friends for their service.

A year ago I made the upbeat comment that trustees were finally back to full strength. Unfortunately, it was a short-lived honeymoon. We're delighted that **Digby Swift** joined us in 2020 as Sheffield & Balby's trustee representative and I trust that Leeds' new representative will have joined us before this meeting ends, but that will still leave a shortfall of one. Trustees are a strong team, currently meeting by Zoom of course and I am hopeful that perhaps continuing to meet partly by Zoom may make it easier for the remaining AM to fill its vacancy. I'm grateful for the support of those presently serving and for all the additional input that present circumstances have demanded of them.

Money matters:

As I said last year, our accounts are now examined by Crozier Jones of Doncaster. They gave the 2019 accounts a clean bill of health. While the formal report required by the Charity Commission is very necessary to ensure we fulfil our charitable objectives - and is of course available to anyone to read on the website - it does not exactly lend itself to painting a picture or bringing out the vivid life of an organisation. In view of events post-March, I will quote parts of one relevant paragraph:

"While the effects of the pandemic mean that the value of QIY's endowment fund investments have reduced (currently by about 16%) the charity's operations are unaffected. Reduced dividends... will affect what can be paid out...which will lower the charity's effectiveness but not its viability... It may reasonably be concluded that the charity will continue into 2021 as a going concern even if somewhat diminished financially."

I've been asked three questions on the annual report & accounts and will take these separately at the end.

Looking at 2020 so far, trustees are very glad that we have been in a position to allot Glenthorne a 'repayment holiday' this year (and it is good news that it will reopen for business very shortly). After a strong period of growth in outreach grants, calls on this funding have inevitably been much lower so far this year. We hope a resurgence of activity may be possible in 2021 - even perhaps in late autumn this year. QIY funds mean that we can help to promote the reinvigoration we all seek. I do encourage Friends to begin thinking about this new phase and looking at the website to see how our funds can help your meeting. Don't forget that we still have some Adult School Union Bequest funding and are keen to use it to enable meetings and individual

adults to deepen their understanding of Quaker thought and work. If you're not sure whether a project would qualify, ring or email me and we can talk it through.

Speaking of reinvigoration. I do hope you're keeping abreast of the group set up a year ago to 'Reinvigorate and Simplify Structures and Processes' and that you are looking for ways to simplify how your own meetings work. It's something easier said than done, but one thing covid proves is that we can change and change rapidly once awake to the reality of need. Without dire necessity, we would never have discovered that remote worship is not merely 'better than nothing' but can be the opportunity for living new experience. As David Olver's paragraph about GRASP highlights, our awareness of the centrality of meeting for worship has been deepened by current deprivations. We all have a part to play in ensuring that structures work for us, not us for the structures.

The main thing I am moved to flag up today is admiration for the way QIY's U19 volunteers are coping with what could have been a deeply disheartening shock to their 2020 plans for children and young people's activities. When Junior Holidays team had to take the unhappy decision to cancel June at Nell Bank, they turned it into a virtual event which clearly meant a great deal to the participants, as today's programme reveals. We don't yet know whether they can go to Barmoor in October – that's a decision for the start of September - but we do know there will be a very special weekend come what may. And for Yorkshire Friends Holiday School it has been a hard decision to be compelled to break a tradition of almost ninety years, but three days of virtual activity will create different memories and a new chapter in an illustrious history. Thank you to all those turning lemons into lemonade for Quakers in Yorkshire.

I turn now to the three questions received this week from our Friend Peter Jarman.
1 As the income of the Glenthorne Quaker Centre has been severely affected by the pandemic, would the Trustees consider releasing all the remaining Linton Taylor funds to Glenthorne and cancel the remaining £28,000 of the outstanding loan to it? The Linton Taylor bequest funds previously held by Westmoreland General Meeting were released by it to Glenthorne several years ago.

This question has been asked by the same Friend on a number of occasions and each time a full answer has been given. Circumstances have been altered considerably by the pandemic. As I've said earlier, Glenthorne trustees got in touch and asked to defer payment of their loan until later in the year. We said: don't make any loan payment this year at all. Glenthorne trustees have not asked for more.

None of us know what employment and health conditions will be in a year's time. We do know that if matters deteriorate, we shall be able to help Glenthorne. Had we released all the Linton Taylor capital when our Friend first argued for doing so, there would have been no such possibility. We still judge it better to be with them for the long haul.

2 What will the change of objectives of the Rawdon Friends School Trust achieve? These funds were not called upon during 2019 whilst its portfolio was valued at £364,880 at the end of 2019. Has a total returns policy been considered as

recommended by the Charity Commission for such long term endowment funds so as to release more of this endowment for the bursary needs of Friends Schools?

*A useful question. The purpose of the change **still under consideration** would be to spread the benefit of the Fund across all the teenagers involved with QIY, by means of a one-off grant when they leave school, to be put towards the educational or training needs which inevitably arise at this point in life.*

*I have provided for the website a short version of what we have been discussing. **Our discernment about the matter was not complete the last time we were able to meet in person.** Once there is unity among trustees, it still has to be put into the shape most likely to be agreeable to the Charity Commission. **We would really welcome the thoughts of QIY Friends.** Please do look at the website material and email me before September.*

3 What is the Building Fund? Is this part of the Rawdon Trust funds?

NO. It relates specifically to three Area Meetings: Brighouse West Yorkshire, Craven & Keighley, and Leeds. All the information is on QIY website under column 2 ABOUT. The section headed 'Trusts & Responsibilities'. Within this Section, part 4.1 deals with the Forrest Meeting House Fund. It is followed by 4.2 The Buildings Trust where you will find all you need to know.

Barbara Windle

Clerk to trustees

18 July 2020