

Minutes of a meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire

held online via Zoom on 17 April 2021

Representatives:

Brighouse West Yorkshire

None recorded

Central Yorkshire Area Meeting

Pauline Frykman, David Bunney and Ruth McTighe.

Craven & Keighley Area Meeting

David Olver, Chris Petrie, Alison Tyas

Leeds Area Meeting

Pat Gerwat and Barbara Parry

Pickering & Hull Area Meeting

None recorded

Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting

Margaret Lawson and Faith Rodger

York Area Meeting

Meg Forrest, Liz Bryan, Graham Torr, Rosie Roberts, Martin Birley, and Eleanor Tew

A total of 51 Friends have registered their attendance at our meeting in advance.

QiY 21/04/01 Reading

In our opening worship we have heard read Quaker Faith & Practice, paragraph 24.38.

QiY 21/04/02 Testimony: Barbara Bowman

We have heard read a testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Barbara Bowman of Settle Meeting as accepted by Craven and Keighley Area Meeting on 13 February 2021. We endorse the testimony and thank the Friends involved in its preparation.

QiY 21/04/03 Welcome

We have been warmly welcomed to our online meeting by our clerks who have explained how the meeting will be run.

QiY 21/04/04 Report from Breckenbrough School

Alison Clarke the clerk to the governing body and Simon Bannister the Head have presented a report on the work of Breckenbrough School and have shared a Powerpoint presentation to remind us of the School's position in the education system as a special school for boys with special needs, many of whom are on the autistic spectrum. A charitable trust and a Quaker foundation, it has seven Quaker

members on its governing body. Conflict resolution is at the heart of its work, and the ethos is genuinely inclusive and sharing.

Simon has explained the key goals of the school: each student is different and there is a lot of masking of individual issues, but there are some extraordinary skills behind the masks. One student can do the Rubik's cube in 27 seconds. But many of the students have communication difficulties, some have been bullied, and they can be fearful of failure as well as having difficulty responding to change. The mainstream education environment is not appropriate for their needs. Co-operation with others is often a big challenge, but because each is valued and can be themselves they learn to play and socialise together.

The School offers the standard national curriculum and public exams up to A-level and BTEC which would not be possible if the students were in mainstream schools. There is strong therapeutic support with the help of a long-serving educational psychologist.

Individuals have taken established transition routes into higher education, and to professions and trades where former students can receive one-to-one support after they leave the Breckenbrough bubble. We have been grateful to be reminded of the ways in which the school functions, and how it provides special holistic care, especially during the COVID crisis. We are reminded that there are opportunities for Friends to serve on the school governing body.

We thank Simon and Alison for their contribution to our meeting today.

QiY 21/04/05 Report and reflections on the work of CRESST

A report on the work of Conflict Resolution Education in Sheffield has been presented to us by the programme director, Carolyn Leary. CRESST is an independent South Yorkshire-based educational charity teaching conflict resolutions skills to young people. The body is entirely independent with Quaker membership on the board of Trustees. The body involves a team of professionals and volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds including community work, restorative justice, pastoral work with families, victim/offender mediation and educational theatre to enable young people to develop the skills to resolve issues and find effective paths through conflict.

Carolyn has shared with us a Powerpoint presentation showing how the process works in schools, enabling young people to become peer mediators. It helps staff to set up suitable schemes and invites lunchtime supervisors to be part of the peace-keeping process. Carolyn has explained the five key steps of GLIDE, a peer mediation process that enables young people to understand how they sense conflict. We all respond differently to conflict: the physiological tension that is there is experienced differently by everyone.

Each year there is a conference day when members of the Young Peacemakers groups participate in a range of activities together. In a recent event the groups were invited to share their hopes for peace, and the city's mayor participated with the children. The work is often more appreciated and more enjoyed when it takes place in deprived areas. Headteachers identified a wide range of behaviour improvements achieved by the children who took part.

CRESST runs different programmes in schools at primary and secondary level which include a conflict coaching scheme, to equip students to respond creatively to finding ways of understanding how the brain is aroused in moments of conflict. CRESST enables young people to find their own solutions by developing conflict resolution skills and managing their own anxieties.

We are grateful to Carolyn for joining us today and sharing the work of CRESST and wish her well the future. We will make her PowerPoint available on the QiY website.

QiY 21/04/06 Report on Funding Youth Development Worker

David Olver has reported that the excellent work being done by Lee Lester, the Youth Development Worker currently based in Sheffield, is to be continued for a further year. Lee is employed by Britain Yearly Meeting and was initially funded on a 3-year time-limited project that will end this summer.

Mindful of the strong support for the work from QiY in January, Quakers in Yorkshire Trustees propose to re-allocate the Adult School Union funds of about £25,000 which were given to Quakers in Yorkshire in 2015, to continue this work. This will pay for about half a year of the total annual cost which include all support costs.

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees have agreed to raise matched funding so that the work can continue as a full-time post for at least another year. They have also started to fund-raise which, with further matched-funding raised by Yorkshire Friends, will enable the work to continue for up to three years.

To date, Lee Lester has been based in the Sheffield area, although covering work across Yorkshire. In future Lee will be based out of the new BYM hub at Carlton Hill meeting house in Leeds and there will be a Support Group advising on the work to be done.

We thank QiY Trustees for considering how this work will be funded for the next year and endorse their proposal to designate the Adult School Union funds for this purpose and to pass it to Britain Yearly Meeting.

QiY 21/04/07 Racial Justice Action for QiY

Ruth McTighe (Central Yorkshire) and Rosie Roberts (York) have worked with Stephan Ball (Sheffield) and Susan Robson (Leeds) since our last quarterly meeting on the issue of Racial Justice. Ruth and Rosie have updated us on the responses of our local and area meetings to the issue and have shared with us a Racial Justice Action table to indicate the activities undertaken and progress made by Friends in our region.

The group has proposed the following questions for us to reflect on in the coming months: 'Can you think of something regarding racial justice – (an article, book, video, podcast, programme etc) – that has recently challenged or inspired you? What did you learn from it?'

Ruth will be contacting area meetings prior to each QiY gathering for an update. The table will be placed on the QiY website. We are grateful to the group for taking this matter forward and reporting to us.

QiY 21/04/08 Testimony: Michael Yates

We have heard read a testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Michael Yates of Settle Meeting as accepted by Craven and Keighley Area Meeting on 13 March 2021. We endorse the testimony and thank the Friends involved in its preparation.

QiY 21/04/09 Appointments and releases

a. Release

Meg Forrest (York AM) has requested to be released from service as a QiY Trustee. We agree to this and release her from this service with immediate effect. We ask York Area Meeting to nominate a new trustee as soon as they are able to.

b. Report from QiY Nominations Committee

QiY Nominations committee brings forward nominations as follows:

For service on the U19s Coordinating Committee from now until 31/12/2023

Mark Lallemand (Sheffield Central for a first term)

Andy Beck (Carlton Hill, for a first term)

These nominations being acceptable, the Friends named are appointed accordingly.

c. Nominations from Area Meetings

We receive nominations for service from Area Meetings as follows:

For service on the Outreach Projects Committee from now until 31/12/2023

Judith Hardaker (at present a member of Brighouse West Yorkshire AM) for a first term on the nomination of Leeds Area Quaker Meeting.

This nomination being acceptable, the Friend named is appointed accordingly.

d. Nominations Required

The Outreach Projects Committee is currently without a clerk. We ask our Nominations committee to bring a nomination for a clerk to a future meeting.

QiY 21/04/10 Sheffield Pen and Pencil Society

Faith Rodger of Sheffield Central has given us an account of the archive of the Quaker Pen and Pencil Society. In 2016 Sheffield Friends were informed of the volumes of pictures and writings held by the Sheffield City Archives, and the meeting's history group was determined to find out more about the collection. There are 40 bound volumes, one for each year the Pen and Pencil Society was in existence, containing poems, photos, paintings, drawings and writings, written and illustrated by a group of Sheffield Quakers over 40 years around the turn of the 19/20th century.

By the time it ended there were 82 members of the society. In the 1870 volume there are portrait photographs of each member. Moral and topical matters formed the topics for some of the essays but the poems could be serious or light-hearted and the illustrations included landscapes, flowers and portraits. By the end of the century the number of contributions had begun to decline and in 1907 it was decided to bring the society to an end. Sheffield Friends History Group have been to Sheffield Archives to catalogue the material. Another group may have existed in Plymouth, but efforts to restart the Sheffield group proved unsuccessful.

We thank Faith for sharing this fascinating piece of Sheffield Quaker history with us.

QiY 21/04/11 Final report from GRASP

David Olver as convenor of the Group to Reinvigorate and Simplify Structures and Processes (GRASP) has introduced their final report and shared with us a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which has been placed on the QiY website.

In small groups we have consider the following questions:

1. What progress has been made towards reinvigoration since Paul Parker spoke to QiY at Doncaster in April 2019?
2. Should Yorkshire AMs actively work towards merging charitable functions across area meetings and might QIY/GRASP's support be usefully available to any AMs interested?
3. What small changes can I/we make over the next year that will make a difference?

We ask our clerks to bring together any notes of the small group discussions and attach them to our minutes.

We thank the members of GRASP for their work over the last two years in bringing proposals to simplify and streamline our processes and procedures to allow us to build a lively, active all-age community of Quakers in Yorkshire.

QiY 21/04/12 Sheffield Quaker Tapestry Panel

Margaret Lawson has introduced for us the story of how Sheffield Friends came to create their own tapestry panel, involving many members of the meeting, including the children, in the project. Inspired by the extraordinary resource of the Kendal-based Tapestry, on which Margaret serves as a Trustee, she has shown how Friends at Sheffield Central became involved in creating their own panel.

Margaret has presented an illustrated slide show showing the progress of the project from design through to completion. At times as many as four people would be sewing at once on different parts of the panel. To involve more Friends in the meeting Margaret brought the work for Friends to work on after meeting, as well as to Yearly Meeting Gathering at Warwick and to the Tapestry Museum at Kendal. The Panel was completed and hung three years after the initial idea. The panel features the different Sheffield Central meeting houses, and notable Sheffield Friends: the historical Friend Benjamin Huntsman was in part responsible for the development of the Sheffield steel industry, Tom Tomlinson became the first warden of the Peak

District National Park, and David Brayshaw was a solicitor who helped conscientious objectors and who became the first administrator of the Crucible Theatre, working with Colin George then the artistic director. Hannah Kilham a former Methodist who became a Friend, helped educate the children of the poor. Sarah her step-daughter started a school for orphan girls in St Petersburg.

We thank Margaret for sharing the story of the Sheffield Quaker Tapestry panel with us today.

QiY 21/04/13 Closing minute

Our business being completed we close, intending to meet again online on 17 July should nothing occur to prevent.



Gavin Burnell

Arthur Pritchard

Addenda Re: QiY 21/04/11

The following items have been forwarded to the clerks. Any further responses will be incorporated in the July Newsletter.

QiY Break out discussions Room 2 17 April 2021

1. What progress has been made towards reinvigoration since Paul Parker spoke to QiY at Doncaster in April 2019?

We shared various examples of local/area action and actions stimulated by QiY April 2019:

- § A successful movement towards clerking teams
- § local merging of eldership/oversight [spiritual and pastoral care] roles
- § ideas for sharing roles requiring particular expertise, both within and across AMs: treasurership, data protection, safeguarding were instanced

General comments:

- § Thinking of particular roles, it was suggested that the numbers needed per AM would be drastically reduced by having only one appointment to that role in each AM (ie no deputy), but ensuring much greater connectivity across the AMs eg direct contact between the seven Noms convenors, Premises ditto, and so on. This would increase the level of support available to each role holder, while reducing the number of actual roles required.

- § In general, we need to be communicating much more across AMs
- § We need to try actual experiments on the ground, not just throw out ideas, then we'll find out what's practicable.

2. Should Yorkshire AMs actively work towards merging charitable functions across area meetings and might QIY/GRASP's support be usefully available to any AMs interested?

There was general agreement on the great difficulty of filling AM trustee roles. This led on to the observation that Quakers love control to be in the hands of Friends who are known locally, with the speaker going on to argue that as Yorkshire Friends *do* know one another, so we should use that structure ie we should move to having one set of trustees across QIY.

Basically the comments in response to this question were very positive.

3. What small change can I/we make over the next year that will make a difference?
We did not get on to this question.

Notes made by Barbara Windle

On merging charities: although fewer trustees might be needed, the perceived difficulties and responsibilities might be greater, so the problem of finding trustees would not be fully solved. Merging charities might result in having to travel further to meetings.

Personal connections are key - connectivity between role holders across QiY would be helpful - regular meetings, mutual support, possibilities of merging posts, or not having deputies.

Useful suggestion of using the new LDW to initiate connections , though I also suggested that GRASP members could be used for this.

A useful session, which I hope leads to concrete action.

Notes made by Alison Clarke