

Minutes of a meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire

Held as a blended meeting at Leeds Carlton Hill FMH and online on
21st January 2023

Representatives

Brighouse West Yorkshire

Carol Hayward

Central Yorkshire Area Meeting

Ruth McTighe
Arthur Pritchard

Craven & Keighley Area Meeting

David Heslop
David Olver
Alison Tyas

Leeds Area Meeting

Liz Schweiger
Barbara Parry
Pat Gerwat
Veronica O'Meara

Pickering & Hull Area Meeting

Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting

York Area Meeting

Ann Holt
Eleanor Tew New Earswick
Rosie Roberts New Earswick
Graham Torr New Earswick
Will Reed
John Margham harrogate

A total of 66 Friends either registered in advance to attend our meeting or attended in person.

1. Reading

In our opening worship we have heard read paragraph 20.35 from Quaker Faith & Practice.

2. Testimony

We have heard a testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend, Mary Rowntree (23rd July 1921 to 20th October 2021) of Leeds Area Meeting and Gildersome Local Meeting. We thank the Friends concerned for preparing it and add our endorsement.

3. Welcome

Our clerks have welcomed us to this, our first meeting of 2023, introduced our agenda to us, and reminded us of our processes for the conduct of our online meetings for Church Affairs.

It was noted that a co-Clerk appointment is still to be made to succeed Gavin Burnell. We agree that for this meeting to accept the kind offer from David Olver for him to act as co-Clerk today.

We appoint Pat Gerwat and Ruth McTighe to act as Elders for this meeting.

4. Reports of U19s events 2022 and planned events 2023

a. Under 19s Co-ordinating Group,

Andy Beck has prepared a report on behalf of the U19's co-ordinating group.

In 2022 they welcomed Jo Baynham, our regional Youth Development Worker, to the group. Jo has rapidly built up a great network of contacts, and has been an invaluable source of information and expertise to the group.

They are delighted that Jo has been able to restart the Link Group residential meetings for Teenagers.

They were glad to be able to meet in person again at meetings in May and November.

The main focus in 2022 had been on activities at Holiday School, Junior Holidays, and Easter Settlement – all of which have been able to return to their pre-pandemic residential formats. The meeting will hear more from each of these activities in their respective reports.

This year they have focussed on Safeguarding training and hope to have a plan in place shortly, to ensure that all volunteers at the various events have had appropriate training. They agreed to the idea of a unified U19 QiY volunteers day next autumn, that ties up social, safeguarding and communications between events.

We thank Andy for this report and to Liz Schweiger for reading it in our meeting.

b. Junior Holidays 2022

Bronwen Alty has shared a presentation on Junior Holidays 2022 with us, a year that saw restoration of the arrangements pre-pandemic.

There were two residential weekends, 35 young people aged 7-16 at Nell Bank in June to allow those who missed out during the pandemic to attend. 20 aged 7-12 were at Barmoor in September.

Nell Bank has great facilities and a good setting for young people to have an adventure weekend. This year saw the highest attendance when the theme was 'Supporting Each other' with 7 adults present. Nell Bank staff provided activities whilst there were also epilogues and a talent show.

The costs were £80 for the weekend, siblings at £70, to ensure that the weekend broke even, and this seemed good value for money.

The weekend at Barmoor was for 20 children (£65 each), one teenage volunteer, and 5 adults. The varied activities rely just on those present. We heard from some of the young people on video, who obviously enjoyed the weekend and being with their new friends as well as the quiet times for reflection.

Committee changes are pending in 2023 which has brought some unexpected challenges and some issues regarding 'terms of reference'. These are being worked through with support from Jo Baynham. Events are booked for Nell Bank in June and Barmoor in September 2023.

We thank Bronwen for her report and for her service over a number of years and congratulate the Junior Holidays team on making such a success of their events in 2022.

c. Yorkshire Friends Holiday School

Guy Milner has spoken to a report from Yorkshire Friends Holiday School 2022 at Bootham and shared photographs from the event with us. There were 32 13-18 year olds present together with 15 19-20 year olds who helped run the event – the 89th to be held, with a theme of 'Home'. This was down on the pre-pandemic numbers. The link with Friends in Ireland remains strong. There was a special welcome for newcomers prior to the start of the week before traditional activities welcomed everyone on the first day.

Guy gave an outline of the activities for the week including themed events, some serious and others having odd/dotty/humorous themes to allow people to relax. There was an opportunity to reflect on each day in the epilogue.

The 2023 event will take place at Bootham on 20-27th August 2023 which will see the 90th anniversary celebration.

We thank Guy for his report.

d. Yorkshire Quaker Youth Development Work

We have heard a report from Jo Baynham at the end of his first year as the Quaker Youth Development Worker in Yorkshire. It has been a busy 12 months with many contacts made and initiatives for young people either revived or started. His report will be published on the QiY website and this covers the details of his role and activities.

We thank Jo for his report and for the energy and impact that he has brought to the role. Quakers in Yorkshire look forward to seeing his ideas put into action and reaching more young people.

5. Easter Settlement Report and Plans 2023

Pauline Leonard has spoken to the report from the Easter Settlement Planning group, a copy of which will be placed on the Quakers in Yorkshire website.

Easter Settlement provides an opportunity for Friends to strengthen their spiritual basis. They were pleased to welcome Jo Baynham, and his family, who ran the activities for 5 young people with the theme of 'transformation'.

43 adults were at Cober Hill for the weekend, 28 of whom were first timers. A plea was made for financial support for adults from local meetings and area meetings in the form of bursaries. There were formal talks, guided walks as well as art and craft and other activities throughout the weekend.

The theme for 2023 is 'Dancing with the World' and plans are going well. Details are available online with booking forms.

We thank Pauline for her report.

6. Quaker Outreach Projects Committee

Carol Hayward from Brighouse West Yorkshire has reported that numbers of outreach applications, and of AM representatives on the QiY Outreach Projects Committee, have reduced significantly since the pandemic of 2020.

However, there have been 4 successful requests in 2022: 2 from New Earswick Local Meeting for a Journeyman Theatre production and for help in funding their new Warm Places project; 1 from Bamford Quaker Community to pay for recruitment adverts in the Friend and 1 from Leeds Carlton Hill Local Meeting to purchase white poppies.

We also heard from Rosie Roberts who told us more of the Warm Places project at New Earswick which uses their meeting house every Friday afternoon. The project is working with the wider community with other projects to help connections for those who are in need. The report is published on the QiY website.

The current 3 members of the OPC warmly encourage Friends and meetings to apply for support, via the Activities section of the QiY website or direct to Committee members. Perhaps other Friends might also wish to join as an Area Meeting representative on that committee.

We thank Carol and Rosie for their reports.

7. Racial Justice Group Update

Ruth McTighe and Rosie Roberts have reported to us on the latest developments for the Racial Justice group.

The presentation focused on the 'hostile environment' in government and the particular impact on people of colour and contrasted this with the government's response to Ukrainian refugees. Details of the plight of Josy Sipiwe Jenje-Mudimbu, a Quaker from Zimbabwe who fled to the UK in 2018 and is now a member of Norton-on-Tees Local Meeting in Stockton are posted on the website.

Stockton Friends are supporting Josy, and ask for online signatures to their petition to support claims for asylum. Details can be found at www.gofundme.com and Mary Garrett is the coordinator.

We have also been made aware of Woodbrooke courses as part of the commitment by BYM to become an anti-racist organisation, details of which can be found online.

Rosie Roberts introduced a 'Question for Reflection'.

When did you last speak to a person of a different colour or ethnic group to yourself? What did you both talk about? Did you learn anything about their life and experiences?

If you can talk to someone of a different generation to yourself, ask them the same questions. How are their answers different to yours?

We thank Ruth and Rosie for their reports. They would also welcome new members for the group.

8. Appointments and Releases

a. Thanks

We give thanks for the service of all those Friends whose appointments for Quakers in Yorkshire have been completed since our last meeting.

b. Releases

Lizzie Hussey has asked to be released from service to the U19s Coordinating group as she has moved to Leicestershire. We agree to this release and wish Lizzie well. We ask Nominations to bring a name to our April meeting.

c. Appointments

(i) Our nominations committee has brought us the following nomination for service:

From 1st January 2023 until 31st December 2025:

Roy Love (Friargate) as Quakers in Yorkshire Treasurer for a 1st term.

From 1st January 2023 until 31st December 2026:

Ellie McCarthy (New Earswick) Trustee for Glenthorne Quaker Guest House for a 1st term.

Alan Robinson (Balby Doncaster) Trustee for Glenthorne Quaker Guest House for a 3rd term due to acting as their Bursary Clerk.

These nominations being acceptable, the Friends are appointed accordingly.

(ii) Area Meeting nominations committees brings us the following nomination for service

From 1st January 2023 until 31st December 2025:

Patricia Gerwat (Leeds Area Meeting) as a Quakers in Yorkshire Trustee for a 2nd term.

Digby Swift (Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting) as a Quakers in Yorkshire Trustee for a 2nd term.

These nominations being acceptable, we appoint the Friends named accordingly.

We thank Friends for accepting nomination for service.

d. Nominations Required

Quakers in Yorkshire are still seeking a co-Clerk to serve for 3 years from January 2023. Our Nominations Committee would welcome names brought forward for their consideration.

9. Simplicity in the Society of Friends


For our afternoon session we were joined by Carolyn Hayman, Kate Gulliver and Ellie Harding who are BYM Trustees, for a sharing of experience and the challenges of bringing simplicity to our organisations. We heard about the current progress nationally, together with developments under the GRASP project and also how Scotland is approaching the issues that they are facing. The session was an opportunity to listen to the issues around national initiatives as well as hearing from Friends in Yorkshire about how GRASP has supported small and large meetings to face the future with more confidence than previously.

In the break out session Friends were asked: *What changes could we make that would create more space for worship, witness and discernment?* The notes for the session will be available on the QiY website.

We thank the BYM Trustees for their contribution to an excellent session of discussion and support. We ask that meetings within QiY persevere with their efforts to bring about meaningful and relevant change.

10. Concluding Minute

There being no further business to be taken today, we conclude. We intend to meet again in person and online at Sheffield Central Meeting House on the 22nd April 2023 should nothing occur to prevent.



David Bunney & David Olver

Co-Clerks - this time, Quakers in Yorkshire