

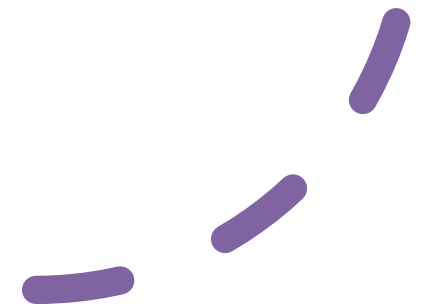
Learning Uncomfortable Lessons.....

Taking forward our witness



Reparations

- Leeds Quaker Racial Justice Group was asked by LAQM in October 2022 to bring forward suggestions for responding to Minute 27 from Yearly Meeting 2023




Minute 27


- Love and justice require us to tell the truth, as best we can, about historical and contemporary injustices. We encourage local and area meetings to begin, or continue, work to understand how Quakers and Quaker structures benefited from the transatlantic slave trade....
-We have heard that love and justice also require us to consider deeply how the Society of Friends in Britain might make financial and other reparation for our part in the wrongs of the transatlantic slave trade.

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So far...

- The Racial Justice group has met several times to consider the issue
 - Two workshops have been held for the Area Meeting
 - Experiences of Local Meetings noted
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- Three short, curved purple lines in the bottom right corner of the slide, arranged in a slightly upward-curving sequence.

Sources of Information

- Material from Philadelphia YM ([Green St Meeting](#))
 - Webinar on this subject by Woodbrooke
 - A Quaker Take: [On Reparations](#) podcast
 - Some local historical information
 - The work of the [Rowntree Foundations](#), and [Olivette Otele's article](#) in 'Cotton Capital' (investigations by *The Guardian*), including some references to Yorkshire history
 - We have also learned from the activities of our local meetings
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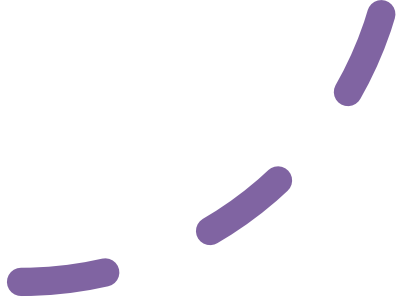
Further Sources of Information

- BYM also offers
 - A guide to [researching connections with slavery and your meeting](#)
 - General [reparations resources](#)



What is reparation?

Remedy is not just financial

- Repairing harm
 - A process, a mechanism of accountability, of owning responsibility
 - Moral and healing dimension
 - Education, opportunity, a new narrative, a sense of identity
 - Doesn't need to be perfect first time
 - Create dialogue
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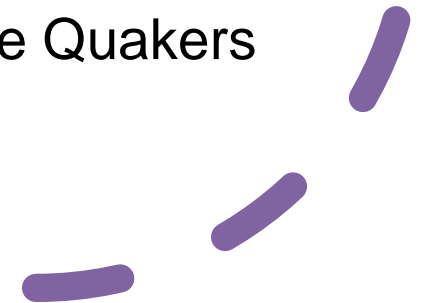
Researching Local History

- Leeds Friends William Armistead, Benjamin Kay and Tom Harvey changed thought about racial justice and campaigned for equality at the abolition of slavery.
- No evidence yet of Leeds Friends directly involved in the slave trade – work in progress



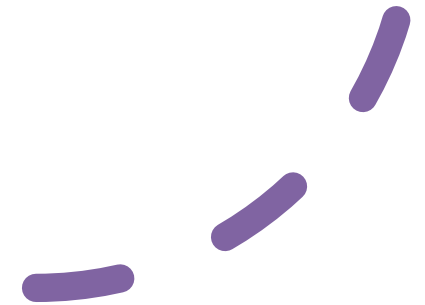
Researching Local History

- However, we all benefited from slave labour and West Indian goods
- Yorkshire Friends were more concerned with the exploitation of workers in the cocoa trade in Africa
- Workers from Indian subcontinent in Yorkshire Textile industries were often unfairly treated and many minority people still are today
- Our predecessors were complicit in the build-up of white privilege, which white Quakers continue to benefit from today



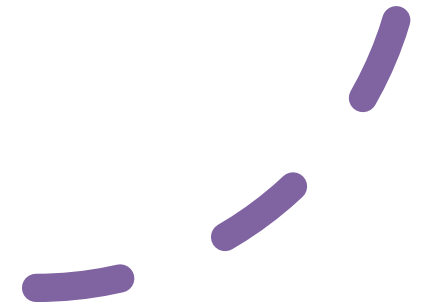
Suggestions for Making Amends

1. Commit to learning more about the history of racism locally nationally, internationally, and look forward to racial justice witness in local and area meeting



Suggestions for Making Amends

2. Commit to listening and understanding on this subject, between each other, interfaith groups, third sector and political groups.



Suggestions for Making Amends

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3. Commit to share within our limits our resources, our premises, our finances, our time and energy, to give space, voice and dignity to people and groups with less privilege.



Suggestions for Making Amends

4. Learn to identify our racial justice witness both historic and present day - to say 'this is part of our racial justice witness'



Examples

- Make donations to support the education of people who have a more difficult path.
- Locate, take an interest in, and support with volunteering or funding, networks supporting minority communities, refugees and asylum seekers.
- Build interfaith contacts and learn about the experience of other faiths in our community.

Examples

- Continue Sanctuary work and name the anti-racism aspects of this. Join in campaigning, write to MPs / national bodies, individually and as Meetings, sending letters of concern
- Look again at the welcome our meetings offer. Are we sometimes smug and self congratulatory? Do we look at our own attitudes and continue to learn? Can we deepen our welcome?
- Listen to minority communities local to us: how might we best actively engage with them?

Financial overview

- Area Meeting re-distributed some of its reserves 2019-2020 to good causes
- Funds and income stretched since Covid
- Regular distribution possible via Small Grants Committee: Small Grants Fund £3k, Friends Action on Poverty £7k, M+R Sanctuary £15k
- Reminder that reparation is not just financial



Next steps

- Hear your thoughts
- Continue our thinking on this subject
- Progress further activity e.g. mosque visit, participation in Concord, speakers on issues for minority communities

