

Quakers in Yorkshire

Quarterly Meeting held at

New Earswick FMH

on Saturday 20th July 2024

Representatives

A total of over 60 Friends attended in person and a further 3 online.

1. Reading

In our opening worship we have heard read 29.19 from Quaker faith & practice, William Dewsbury 1675.

2. Testimony

We have heard a testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Michael Bliss more recently of Pickering Local Meeting and Pickering and Hull AM, Wakefield LM and Pontefract AM, and Auckland LM on two occasions. We thank the Friends concerned for preparing this testimony and add our endorsement.

3. Welcome

Our clerks have welcomed us to this, our third meeting of 2024, and introduced our agenda. The theme today is a celebration of the 400th Anniversary of George Fox and during the day there will be talks about his early time in Yorkshire together with an exhibition of Quakerism through to the present day. In addition, we will be able to hear the views of young people about their hopes for Quakerism in the future and the day will close with a longer than usual period of quiet reflection.

Rosie Roberts warmly welcomed us to New Earswick LM and dealt with the housekeeping matters for today.

We appoint Liz Scurfield and Eleanor Tew to act as Elders for this meeting.

4. Reports

A) QiY Trustees

David Olver, Clerk to QiY trustees has spoken to the full QiY trustees report for 2023 which has been placed on the QiY website. His report today will also be found on the website.

There are three recommendations in the report that we need to address at this meeting, namely:

We endorse the recommendation to transfer the remainder of the Linton Taylor Fund (approximately £40000) to Glenthorne Quaker Centre for the purpose of improving sustainability and subsidising courses for young people;

In strengthening the oversight of compliance issues, we endorse the recommendation of QiY Trustees to enhance the remit of the Under 19s Coordinating Group and change its name to Under 19s Committee.

The Yorkshire Link Group for teenagers has now reached a state where it can be mostly self-functioning. We endorse the recommendation to transfer the responsibility for the oversight of the Link Group from Britain Yearly Meeting to Quakers in Yorkshire.

This meeting accepts these recommendations

B) Breckenbrough School

Ruth McTighe, Clerk of Governors, has reported to us on the life of Breckenbrough during the past year. Ruth has told us of her sense of purpose in her service, the impact of so many in the school and some of the challenges reflected in highs and lows during the year. Inspections are a constant but new styles of working have had a positive impact on staff and students.

Ofsted are now very much in support of recent changes. Boarding numbers have dropped but there are now 70 students with a long waiting list. There are now more evening activities for everyone.

There is an open invitation to visit the school for all Friends: contact the school to make an appointment.

Her report will be on the QiY website.

Ruth has also updated us on the progress towards the appointment of her successor as Clerk, her appointment ending on July 19th. She will be succeeded for two terms by John Margham and until a longer-term successor can be appointed. Ruth has also reminded us of the need for more Quaker governors to serve as three are leaving this year.

We thank Ruth for her report and for her service to Breckenbrough School.

C) Glenthorne

We have received and heard the most recent report from the Glenthorne trustees for 2023. Their full report is available to read on the QiY website.

5. Racial Justice Group

We have received a report from Ruth McTighe on behalf of the Racial Justice group. This time she has told us of the BYM Reparations Working Group and its Statement of Intent. Representatives of the Central committees and members of the Black, Brown and People of Colour Friends' Fellowship form this working group, to give some direction to the need of Quakers to make reparations to those who have suffered from slavery in the past.

They are now seeking members from the wider community of British Quakers.

Ruth asks that interested Friends make direct contact with the working group. Their website is: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/communities/news/progress-on-reparations>

6. 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

There are no requests this time.

c. Appointments

(i) Area Meeting nominations committees bring us the following nominations for service, from 01.01.2025 to 31.12.2027:

Gillian Darton of New Earswick Meeting and York AM to serve on the QiY Outreach Projects Committee (1st term).

Ken R. Smith of Keighley Meeting to continue his period of service on the QiY Outreach Projects Committee.

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

(ii) For the Schools

There are no nominations this time.

We thank these Friends for accepting nomination for service.

7. Notices

Catherine Margham had leaflets on 'Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network' which includes the comment 'What can we do?', for distribution today. If you require more, please contact Catherine or go to info@quarn.org.uk

James McCarthy has told us of two new leaflets from the Kindlers.

Lauren Phillipson has told us of the reprinted book on early Quakers in Yorkshire which is now available.

In the garden of Settle meeting house there is a feature that celebrates Margaret Fell and George Fox, in the form of flowerpot figures (made out of flowerpots) as part of the Settle Flowerpot festival that ends at the beginning of September. Please go and visit.

8. Afternoon Session

The afternoon session was focused on the celebrations for 'GF400'. We heard David Olver tell us of the importance of the time that George Fox spent in Yorkshire in 1651-52 before arriving in 1652 at Swarthmoor Hall, where another celebration is taking place today. David Heslop has arranged for prints of Quaker Tapestry panels to be on display in the Folk Hall, and we have heard of testimony from Friends, of all ages, about their hopes for the future of Quakerism. We thank Bootham students for their art work depicting powerful Quaker women.

Tea and cake, courtesy of York AM, was on offer throughout the afternoon. The day concluded with a period of silence before the meeting closed at 4:00 pm.

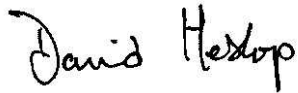
9. Thanks to New Earswick Friends and others

The concept for our meeting today has meant quite a bit of organising to produce such a wonderful day of celebration. The support and effort by Friends from New Earswick and York AM has been key to the day for the organisation of the exhibition and the making of cakes. We thank Rosa Fishwick for the delicious and welcome lunch and the volunteers who looked after us so well but most of all we record our thanks to Rosie Roberts for her efforts and worry on our behalf to make this such a day to remember.

We were grateful that even in his unfortunate absence through illness, Jo Baynham, the Youth Development Worker for Yorkshire, had been able to both organise and to provide appropriate guidance to a team of volunteers, who were to work with children.

10. Concluding Minute

There being no further business to be taken today, we conclude. We intend to meet again in person at The Mount School, York on Saturday 19th October 2024, should nothing occur to prevent.



David Bunney & David Heslop

Co-Clerk Assistant Clerk

Quakers in Yorkshire