

## **Quakers in Yorkshire**

### **Report of Trustees to QiY July 2024**

2023 was a year when the level of activity in Quakers in Yorkshire returned similar to pre-pandemic levels in 2019. It has taken three years for this to happen and it was often a hard time for all those taking part in activities. The quarterly meetings were partly held blended to enable those not able to travel to take part. But technological limitations sometimes led to poor experiences. The Arrangements Committee worked on ways of trying to make the experience of remote participation work for everyone. Most of the activities and support roles were achieved through the dedication of many volunteers who were on committees, planning groups or volunteering roles. Trustees are deeply grateful for their commitment. Thanks go to them all and the members of the Nominations Committee who search for Friends willing to serve.

The youth activities had a successful year, ably helped by our Youth Development Worker. Junior Holidays held two weekends in June and September at Nell Bank, Ilkley, and at Barmoor in the North Yorks Moors. The Link Group was successfully restarted after a long dormant period. The Yorkshire Friends Holiday School celebrated its 90th event with special celebrations attached to the week-long event at Bootham School in August. Over 60 past participants came for one day and this has led to a complementary booklet of quotes highlighting the lasting ways in which Holiday School influenced people.

Easter Settlement held its annual event at the traditional venue of Cober Hill, near Scarborough over the Easter 2023 weekend. Concern about the costs led to a decision to simplify the event in the future and a new group is looking at the possibility of a Yorkshire Quaker Camp with simple all-age accommodation. This group is partly facilitated by the Yorkshire Local Development Worker and is one of the ways he is helping to reinvigorate Yorkshire Quakerism.

After three years of Covid-19 pandemic lock-downs and their consequences, the finances of Quakers in Yorkshire returned to more historic levels, with income of £73,860 and expenditure of £73,763. The majority of the income came from fees charged to participants of residential activities with smaller amounts from donations (13%) and investments (24%). The challenge for the organisers of the residential events is to cover costs whilst enabling a wide range of young and older people to attend. Trustees are very appreciative of the successful efforts in 2023 to achieve this balance. The donation income is mainly made up of the core contributions, or subscriptions, from the seven area meetings who form Quakers in Yorkshire.

The investment income comes from the inherited funds given in the past. These are mostly restricted and the income can only be used for the defined purposes. The level in income from these funds in 2023 increased by 18% over the previous year but it still is only 2% of the capital value of the funds. Most of the capital cannot be spent as it was endowed for ever. The investments are managed by Rathbone Investment Managers Ltd who carry out all the day-to-day operations - using investment criteria agreed with Trustees. Our ethical investment policy strictly defines the companies in which investments are held.

Trustees have three recommendations which we hope will be endorsed:

The Linton Taylor Fund has been held by Quakers in Yorkshire since the beginning of Glenthorne Quaker Centre to support the charitable side of their activities. We now recommend that the remainder of the Linton Taylor Fund is transferred to Glenthorne Quaker Centre for the purpose of improving sustainability and subsidising courses for young people.

The Under 9s Coordinating Group has done a good job in coordinating the youth activities of Quakers in Yorkshire. We propose to enhance its remit to include advice of compliance, or safeguarding, issues. Also to change its name to Under 19s Committee. We have worked with the Group on these changes.

The Yorkshire Link Group has now reached a state where it can be mostly self-functioning. To date it has operated under the auspices of Britain Yearly Meeting. In agreement with BYM we now propose to transfer the responsibility for the oversight of the Link Group from to Quakers in Yorkshire.