

Quakers in Yorkshire

Trustees

Minutes for meeting held at Carlton Hill on Saturday 21 June 2025

Present: David Bunney, Pat Gerwat, David Heslop, Roy Love, Ruth McTighe, David Olver, Digby Swift

Prevented: Christine Abbott, Dawn Beck

Quaker Faith & Practice 2.86 has been read in our opening worship.

QYT-2025-06-01. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2025 have been circulated electronically and received today.

QYT-2025-06-02. Clerk's Report

We receive paper QYT-2025-06-02 with the Clerk's report. This covers the following items: New Trustee from Craven & Keighley AM, April quarterly meeting, Yearly Meeting, Easter Settlement, Ravensworth Lodge, Financial Administrator, preparation of Annual Report and Accounts, Tabular Statement.

Ravensworth Lodge

We hear that Ravensworth Lodge has now been sold and the staff transferred to the new owner. We recognise that this has been a stressful time for the management committee and we will continue to uphold them.

QYT-2025-06-03. Merging QiY into Yorkshire Quakers

We receive paper QYT-2025-06-03 which outlines the current position and lists issues which need to be decided for the merger of QiY into the new single charity Yorkshire Quakers.

We have considered the following issues:

Merger of all QiY

We recommend that all the activities of QiY should be incorporated into the new charity. We note that this is different from the area meetings as they will continue to exist and meet regularly to oversee the worship and witness in their area. In our case the charitable part and the activities part have worked side by side and simplification implies merging all of QiY into Yorkshire Quakers.

Yorkshire Quakers General Meeting

The new CIO will have regular General Meetings and an AGM. We recommend that these general meetings are embedded within the regular QiY quarterly meetings.

Clerks of General Meetings

We recommend that the QiY clerks should become the General Meeting clerks.

Constitution

The new constitution, or governing document, will need agreeing by us before submission to the Charity Commission. This can be done at our September meeting.

Order of merging

We agree that QiY should be the first charity to merge. This is partly because we already have the Yorkshire-wide structure, and partly because we have no property. Experience elsewhere indicates that it is transferring property which takes time and effort.

QiY Trustees

We suggest that the current QiY Trustees should continue in post until the Charity Commission has agreed transfer of all QiY assets to Yorkshire Quakers.

QiY investments

These consist of three endowed funds (General Meeting Charity, Buildings Fund, Rawdon Friends School Fund) and one restricted fund (Forrest Meeting House Fund). We understand that we will need to find all the historic documentation on these funds to be able to complete the due diligence procedure before merger and then obtain Charity Commission approval to transfer the endowment funds.

Youth activities and the Under 19s Committee

These can transfer directly to Yorkshire Quakers so that the youth activities and Youth Development Worker can continue un-interrupted. Funding to BYM for the Youth Development Worker will eventually come from the Trustees of Yorkshire Quakers but this will take time as the process of merging completes.

All-age activities (Easter Settlement, Yorkshire Quaker Camp)

These can transfer directly.

QiY accounts and finances

The accounts can transfer to Yorkshire Quakers at the appropriate time. The book-keeping can then be done with the on-line system adopted by Yorkshire Quakers. The role of QiY Treasurer will then not be needed.

Safeguarding

This is an area where co-operation is already starting to happen and merger can take place when all the AM safeguarding coordinators are on-board. There should be one Safeguarding Policy and one set of Procedures with hopefully professional support as needed.

Appointments and nominations

Current QiY appointments can transfer to Yorkshire Quakers and the QiY Nominations Committee could form the basis of the Yorkshire Quakers Nominations Committee.

York Schools

QiY is the responsible body for Bootham School and The Mount School. The logic is that Yorkshire Quakers takes over this responsibility as the successor to QiY. This will need agreeing by Yorkshire Quakers.

QYT-2025-06-04. Youth Activities (paper QYT-2025-06-04)

We are pleased to receive an encouraging report on Youth Events and Activities in Yorkshire, prepared by Jo Baynham. He reports that youth engagement continues to grow in Yorkshire with all QiY youth, children and families events booked and growing. Events are run on a break-even basis except for Holiday School and the Yorkshire Quaker Camp where we have agreed to subsidise them so that they appeal to the widest possible audience.

The success of the youth activities raises the need for equipment and storage and this has been considered by the Under 19s Committee.

We agree

- To pay the cost of storing essential equipment (probably using 'selfstore' which would be about £500 p/a).
- To the obtaining of estimates for the cost of purchasing a QiY tent.
- To fund an Away Weekend for Link Group volunteers at an estimate cost of between £300 and £500.

We have heard a report on the recent meeting of the Yorkshire Youth Work Regional Support Group. This was very encouraging. Many young people are engaging with the events and some events are able to be largely self-running.

QYT-2025-06-05. Yorkshire Quaker Camp (paper QYT-2025-06-05)

We receive a short report on progress with organising the first Yorkshire Quaker Camp to be held 8 to 10 August 2025 at Fell Edge Farm, Addingham, Ilkley. We are pleased to hear that extensive planning is going into making the Camp a success for the all-age campers. It is fully booked with 90 participants. More participants have paid the higher 'supporter' rate than expected so the QiY budgeted subsidy may be a bit lower than anticipated.

QYT-2025-06-06. Annual Report and Accounts for 2024

We receive the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024 (paper QYT-2025-06-06). These have been prepared and examined by Crozier Jones. This is the first time that Crozier Jones have prepared the accounts. The process has gone very smoothly and has relieved the Treasurer of a considerable burden.

There are a number of amendments needed to the text of the Annual Report and Accounts.

We approve the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024. They will be filed with the Charity Commission after they have been adopted by the July Quarterly Meeting.

We thank Crozier Jones for their work and agree to re-appoint them to prepare and examine the accounts for the year ending 31 December 2025. We also thank Roy Love for his work compiling the data for the preparation of the accounts.

QYT-2025-06-07. Financial matters (paper QYT-2025-02-07)

(a) Financial summary

We note that the financial summary prepared by Roy Love for the year to date shows a satisfactory position with more income than expenditure (excluding the grants given to the three Yorkshire Quaker schools from Rawdon Friends School Fund income in 2024).

(b) Grant applications

1. Application from Skipton LM (Craven & Keighley AM)

An application has been received requesting support for the installation of a draught lobby in the Resident Friends cottage at Skipton Meeting House so as to reduce heating costs.

We agree to offer an award of £3,000 to be paid from the Building Charity.

2. Application from Craven & Keighley AM on behalf of Airton LM.

An application has been received requesting a grant to alleviate the problem of damp occurring in the Resident Friends accommodation attached to Airton meeting house.

We agree to an award of £ 1,255.40, which is one third of the quoted cost, from the Buildings Fund.

3. Grant to High Flatts meeting.

In September 2024 we approved a grant of £4,000 to High Flatts meeting to provide disabled toilet facilities. The grant was to be paid when the contract for the work was approved. This grant has not yet been made because the meeting has decided to do the work using ad-hoc contractors so as to reduce the overall cost. We now hear that work had commenced and the project costs is estimated to be £12,000. We confirm our award of £4,000 from the Forrests Meeting Houses Fund.

4. Application for support for disabled Young Quaker at the Yorkshire Friends Holiday School.

An application has been tabled for a grant to enable a wheelchair-using Young Quaker to attend this year's Yorkshire Friends Holiday School by providing a care bed package. We have supported this Friend in the last two years and are pleased to be able to provide the £270 requested this year. This will be paid from the General Meeting Charity.

QYT-2025-06-08. York Schools

We receive a set of papers dealing with the joint request from Bootham and The Mount Schools for a revision to the formal relationship between them and QiY. This includes an introductory paper by David Olver with background information. (papers QYT-2025-06-08).

We have discussed the proposals:

1. Changes to the 1983 contract with Friends Trusts Limited as Custodian Trustee which bring it in to line with later documents. We approve this proposal.
2. Changes to the Deed of Direction to re-phrase the revocation clause and give the governors full authority to manage their assets. This is substantial change but in practice it is extremely unlikely that QiY would ever want to revoke the authority to the schools. If a legal dispute arose then it would anyway be for the courts to determine the relationship. We are minded to agree with this proposal but are uncertain if we, as QiY Trustees, have the authority to agree – given that the Deed of Direction was made by the Quarterly Meeting.
3. Changes to the dissolution clauses to make the formal documents in line with the Yorkshire General Meeting minute made in 2000. This codifies existing minutes so we confirm our agreement.
4. Changes to who appoints the governors. Since the start of the schools, QiY (and its predecessors) have appointed the governors. Clause 6 of the draft revised Memorandum of Understanding says that "Governors are appointed and released by the Schools...". This is a bigger change for QiY than the other changes. This change is not one that QiY trustees have any authority to agree and would require a minute from a QiY quarterly meeting, after appropriate consultation.

We ask David Bunney and Digby Swift to meet with representatives of the governors and consider the proposals. This includes wording in the Memorandum of Understanding specifying the limits of responsibility of QiY. It must be clearer that the Schools are legally responsible for all their activities.

QYT-2025-06-09. Safeguarding

We record that QiY appointed Alex Parker (Sheffield Central) as QiY Safeguarding Coordinator at the April quarterly meeting. Ruth McTighe continues as our lead trustee on safeguarding.

Ruth has spoken to the 2025 annual report on safeguarding which we have received (noting that the response under item 14 should be No). The report is based on the template used by LMs reporting to AMs and includes recommendations from the YFHS safeguarding review 2024 and an extract from the MoU for the Youth Development Worker.

We approve the 2025 annual report and thank Ruth for preparing it.

We ask the QiY Clerks to ensure that if a safeguarding issue is raised at a quarterly meeting, it is clear who is responsible.

We ask the Yorkshire Youth Work Regional Support Group to re-look at the Memorandum of Understanding with BYM to clarify the responsibilities of BYM and QiY.

Ruth also reports that she has re-written the QiY Safeguarding Policy and Toolkit. This will now be reviewed by the Under 19s Committee and will come to us for approval at a future meeting.

QYT-2025-06-10. Review of policies

We receive and approve an updated version of the QiY Investment Policy (paper QYT-2025-06-09).

This leaves policies to review - the Financial Procedures (which needs radically re-writing) and the Policy and Guidelines for Supporting Gender Diverse Young People (which is on hold pending decisions following the Supreme Court ruling).

QYT-2025-06-11. Date of next meeting

Saturday 20 September 2025, 10.30 to 13.00, Carlton Hill, Leeds.

David Olver

21 June 2025