

Report from Glenthorne for Quakers in Yorkshire 2026

Summary: Glenthorne achieved strong occupancy and continued demand for holidays and courses, with occupancy rising to 76% and a surplus of £55,505 generated during the year. The organisation sustained its commitment to staff support, Quaker values, spiritual learning, sustainability, bursary provision and outreach through the Welcome Project. Key developments included the continuing partnership with Woodbrooke, successful Quaker Recognised Body status, planning for major building works, and preparation for future programmes with a stronger spiritual focus.

Significant Activities and Achievements Against Objectives

Key points:

- Occupancy reached 76%, an increase of 5% on the previous year.
- A surplus of £55,505 was generated despite inflationary pressures.
- Demand for holidays and courses remained high, supported by returning guests and staff commitment.
- The partnership with Woodbrooke continued, with four courses planned for 2026 and more expected in 2027.
- The Welcome Project supported six groups and has now helped 1,060 people from 71 countries since 2008.
- Work continued on bursaries, support for under-35s, Quaker recognition, planned maintenance, and environmental improvements.

The Trustees are pleased to report strong room occupancy and continued high demand for courses. This demand places considerable pressure on recruitment and staff retention, but Glenthorne remains a popular place to work and is managed in a way that encourages staff loyalty. We continue to set remuneration above minimum wage requirements and at levels competitive within the local economy. Staff accommodation remains crucial to maintaining staffing levels. The year began with a high number of bookings, and overall occupancy reached 76%, an increase of 5% on the previous year.

During the year, we generated a surplus of £55,505. This was a small reduction on the previous year and reflected continuing inflationary pressures locally and nationally. We remain grateful to everyone involved in attracting people to courses and stays, and in maintaining high occupancy, including a significant number of returning guests.

We have continued to work closely with Woodbrooke Resources and Learning, an international Quaker learning and research organisation based in Britain. Woodbrooke provides opportunities for learning, connection and worship rooted in the Quaker tradition and open to all. Since 2023, Woodbrooke courses have become an established part of Glenthorne's public programme. We are offering four Woodbrooke courses in 2026 and plan to offer more in 2027. We have also continued to strengthen our focus on spirituality, adaptation to climate change, and enabling younger people to enjoy Glenthorne's facilities and spiritual atmosphere.

The Welcome Project continues to thrive. A full report is available from Glenthorne. In 2025, six groups of asylum seekers and refugees visited from across the north of England. Sixty-six individuals came from many different countries. Since the project began in 2008, 1,060 men, women and children from 71 countries have benefited from a respite break at Glenthorne. We were delighted to work with the Universities of Cumbria and Geneva and the Wordsworth Trust for one of the weekends.

Several individuals benefited from bursary support during the year, and we continue to offer a £100 reduction to help people under 35 attend selected courses. Fully subsidised places are also available on specific courses for under-35s.

At the end of the year, the Friend in Residence announced his retirement after twelve years in post. The Trustees have since redefined the role and made an appointment in March 2026. The new Friend in Residence has settled well and will continue many existing links, including with Swarthmoor Area Meeting and attendance at national conferences and meetings within Britain Yearly Meeting.

During the year, our application for Quaker Recognised Body status was approved. This affirms our commitment to Quaker business methods and our support for the testimonies. The new Friend in Residence will be a key link for this recognition.

A major focus during the year was the continued implementation of the Quinquennial Survey recommendations. We maintain the buildings as issues arise, while developing a planned maintenance programme guided by the twin aims of improving building condition and reducing our carbon footprint and environmental impact. The garden continues to be well maintained and is valued by guests as a place for peace and quiet reflection. At year end, we were awaiting a final start date for the complete reroofing of the main building, to be followed by an extensive programme of external decoration.

We conclude with grateful thanks to all the staff for their exceptional service throughout the year and the continued service and support given by Friends as trustees and in other roles.

William Taylor

Chair of Trustees, Glenthorne

July 2026