

Report on Quaker Life Representative Council: Woodbrooke 12-14 October 2018

*All are welcome here: transforming our Quaker Communities with younger friends*

### **Using the All Are Welcome Here (resource pack)**

This was quite a challenging weekend altogether and as usual – learning came not only in programmed sessions but between talking to Friends from other meetings and finding out what they do. The organisers had invited The CYP (the Children and Young peoples team), two very articulate young Friends of 15 and 18, new organisers of the Young Adults Programme (under 35's) and relevant Friends House Folk like Alistair Fuller, Gill Sewell etc. as well as Helen Chambers who is heading up a team promoting all age worship. We also had three babies – so it truly was an all-age programme.

What did I learn that might be useful to our meetings:

- There is an abundance of help available that we probably don't utilise enough (e.g The Journeys in the Spirit monthly ideas for CYP work, Young Quaker website for teenagers, Friends House staff etc.)
  - We really need to look across our Area to see if we can stagger our times of MfW more – Sunday morning 10:30-11:30 may really not “speak” to teenagers or Young Adults starting their careers and not living near “their” home meetings. I do know that Westminster Meeting's Thursday evening attracts a large crowd of 20's and 30 year olds. Perhaps nationally we need a category of membership for Friends who are transient and don't readily attach to an “Area” at that time of life.
  - Podcasts and Facebook as well are helpful and we need to know more about and use such sources. Our AM website needs to engage with this age group and set up a Meet-up Group or whatever the newest phase is in the electronic world. <http://www.yqspace.org.uk/yqspace-you>
  - <http://yfgm.quaker.org.uk>
  - Young Adult Quakers : [youngadults@quaker.org.uk](mailto:youngadults@quaker.org.uk)
  - Junior and Senior Conference
- And of course QiY hold numerous events for Young People as well as Easter Settlement which is truly All-Age. 'Yorkshire Friends Holiday School' seems way ahead too in catering for this age group (so well done us!)
- Other University towns have more links with their Meeting Houses – could we establish more links with either the University and our meetings?
  - I notice that Leeds has a Link Group (as of course do the London AMs) Should we do so too? That's for older teenagers.
  - If you haven't seen a copy do download the Young Quakers Calendar from the web-site and visit [www.yqspace.org.uk](http://www.yqspace.org.uk)

There was of course much much more : apparently there will be a precis of it on the Web-site and some of the sessions were filmed so you can see what the young people/ young adults shared with us.

Another suggestion we could also implement (and say thanks to Graham Ralph) is that quite a number of Meetings have “the brown book” on the table as that is a more accessible “read” for newcomers than “the Red Book”- *Living*

*Our Beliefs* And the CYP team say they will send any out for free  
[http://www.yospace.org.uk/system/files/content//Living\\_our\\_beliefs\\_2nd.pdf](http://www.yospace.org.uk/system/files/content//Living_our_beliefs_2nd.pdf)

Finally (or maybe firstly) : Are our Meetings truly welcome to all? Do we (perhaps subconsciously) suggest that some are more welcome than others? The youngsters reminded us that they enjoy people taking an interest in them but prefer not being asked just about school. When they are teens they can converse on varying topics, interests or passions.

This was my last Rep Council and I want to thank York AM for sending me. It was a very interesting and lively event.

2019 Rep Council Dates:- 26-28 April at Woodbrooke & 11-13 October at Woodbrooke

Edith Jayne