

Area Meeting Trustees February 2017

Trustees dealt with a range of issues at our February Meeting. We received an updated Policy document on Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk; the result of hard and sustained work by the Safeguarding Coordinators, Chris Holman and Madeleine Kay. Madeleine has come to the end of her term and AM Nominations are looking for a new Coordinator to join Chris, so if you are interested in this vital area, think about whether you could serve.

We considered the report that the Working Party on Property and Finance presented to AM in January, and endorsed the continued working of the group to form their proposals on the management of our “estate” into more concrete form. Trustees have been notified by the Trustees of Young People’s Fellowship (YPF) that the YPF charity intends to dissolve in the coming months. YPF currently owns the former Quaker Adult School property in York; the property will transfer to York Area Quaker Meeting on the dissolution of YPF. YAQM Trustees have established a committee to oversee the transfer and to make arrangements for taking over management of the property. We also recorded the successful sale of the Castlegate property, which has helped Friargate to continue repaying loans incurred in the refurbishment of the building.

The round of Quinquennials continues, with Harrogate and New Earswick due this year. These surveys are a vital part of maintaining our properties, and enable us to plan for future financial needs.

Burial Grounds are also part of our “estate”, and Trustees are encouraged by moves to make their management better coordinated, as evidenced by the formation of the York Quaker Burials Committee. There is a great deal of knowledge and experience in managing the burial grounds and their use that currently resides in the heads of a few Quakers, and it is hoped that this knowledge might be collated into a form that can be used in the future by all who might need it. Trustees also asked the Working Party on Property and Finance to include the financial arrangements for burial grounds in their considerations.

As usual, there were financial matters to consider. Our 2016 balance is healthy, while an increase in the Area Meeting quota to £39 is set to cater for the new Bursary Fund. The Bursary Fund is now in full operation, and applications to use it should proceed through local Overseers’ Convenors, to the group set up to consider them, currently AM Treasurer, Assistant AM Clerk (Training) and AM Convenor of Overseers. The first few applications are beginning to trickle in so we hope the fund, now dedicated, will be useful.

Alison Clarke co-clerk of York Area Meeting Trustees