

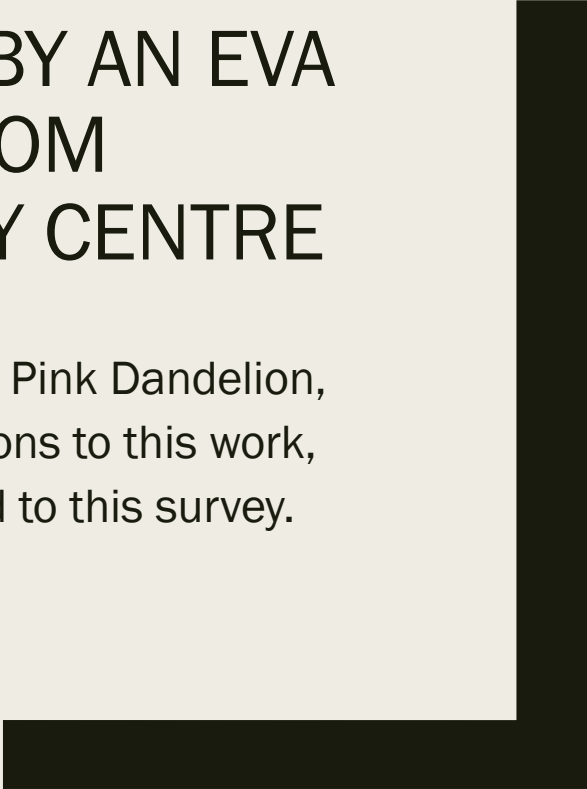


ANTI-RACISM WORK AMONG
FRIENDS IN BYM
2022
Kate McNally



THIS WORK WAS SUPPORTED BY AN EVA
KOCH SCHOLARSHIP FROM
WOODBROOKE QUAKER STUDY CENTRE

With special thanks to my tutor Rhiannon Grant, Ben Pink Dandelion,
and the 2023 Eva Koch Scholars for their contributions to this work,
as well as the Friends who took the time to respond to this survey.



BYM Commitment to this work

- *Minute 38 in 2017* calls for us to examine our own diversity.
 - *We have heard the call to examine our own diversity, particularly in our committee and organisational structure, locally and nationally. Diversity has several key dimensions and more may emerge in the future. We ask Meeting for Sufferings to look at how we can remove barriers and actively seek wider participation in the full life of our meetings, paying particular attention to race*
- *In December 2020*, Meeting for Sufferings minuted
 - *Our testimonies to equality and truth demand that we engage in a drive towards real change, turning our declared intentions into reality. We are called to commit to becoming an actively anti-racist church.*

BYM Commitment to this work

- *Minute 17 from 2021* calls for BYM to become an anti-racist faith community.
 - *Tackling systemic racism is a spiritual imperative. (BYM Epistle 2020) ... We declare our commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist faith community. We are still wrestling with what this means for us. We have work to do and will return to this.*
- *Minute 27 from 2022* calls for Friends to consider how Friends in Britain might make reparations for the slave trade.
 - *We have heard that love and justice also require us to consider deeply how the Society of Friends in Britain might make financial and other reparation for our part in the wrongs of the transatlantic slave trade.*

Friends were asked to complete a Survey during October and November 2022

100 replies out of approximately 490 AM and LMs

```
graph TD; A[100 replies out of approximately 490 AM and LMs] --> B[43 Local Meetings (with two replying twice)]; B --> C[15 Area Meetings (with one replying twice and one three times)]; C --> D[10 Individuals]; D --> E[27 respondents skipped those questions];
```

43 Local Meetings (with two replying twice)

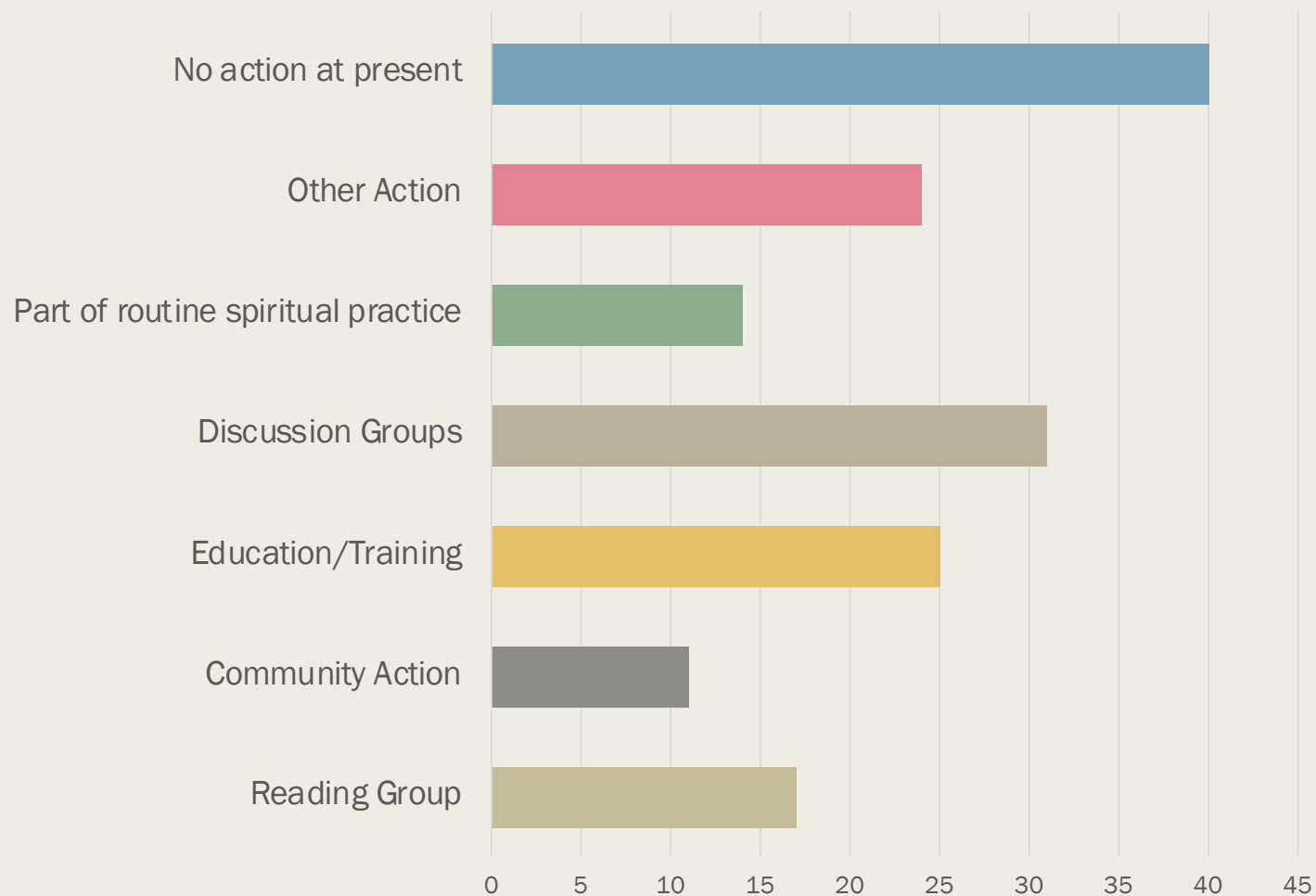
15 Area Meetings (with one replying twice and one three times)

10 Individuals

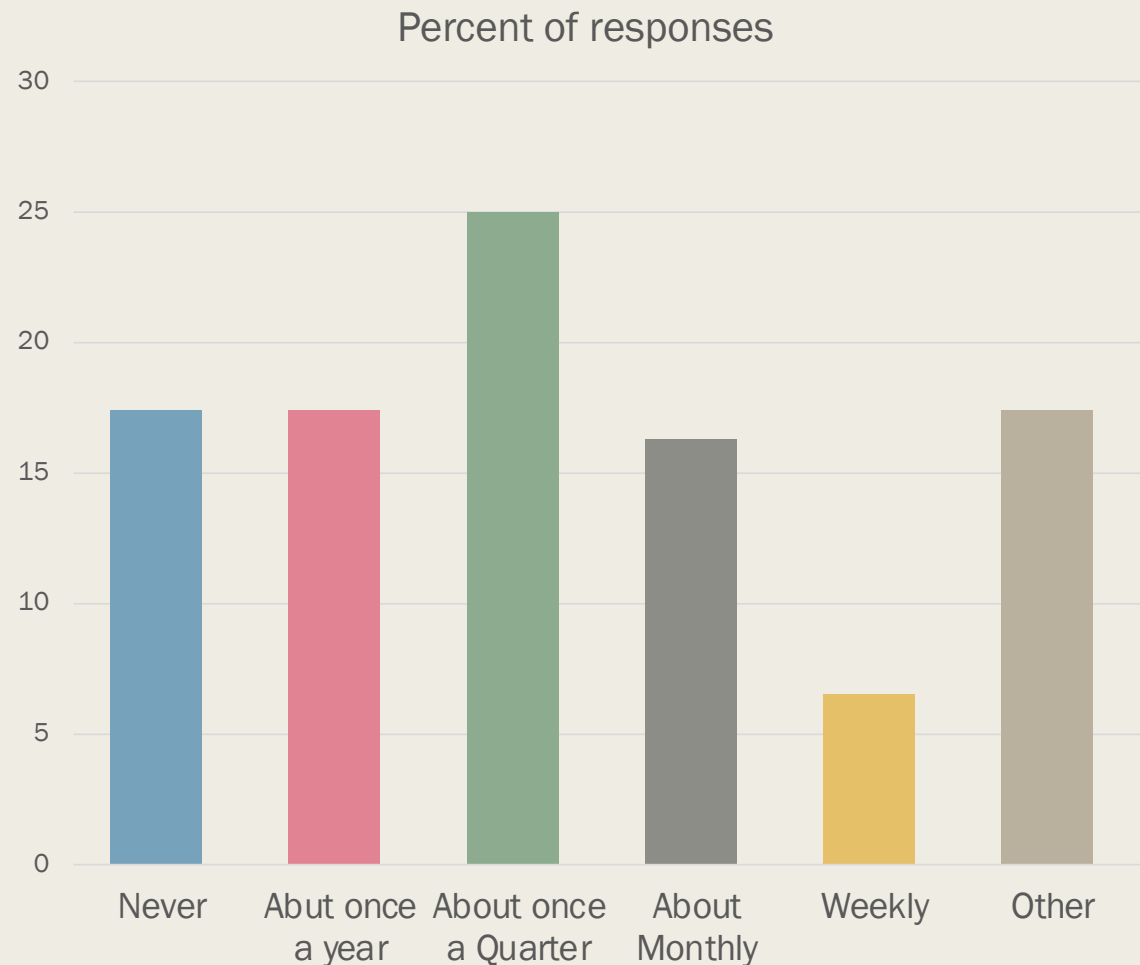
27 respondents skipped those questions

How is your group responding to these minutes?

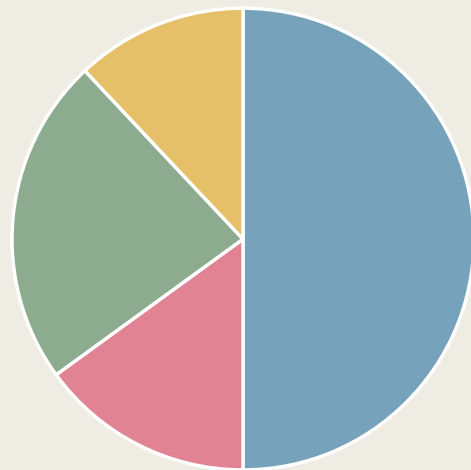
Tick all that apply



How often is the issue of racial justice brought up in your meeting or group?



Have any changes occurred in AM/LM/group because of this work?



■ No (50)

■ Took Action (23)

■ Raised Awareness (15)

■ No Answer (12)

■ Actions taken:

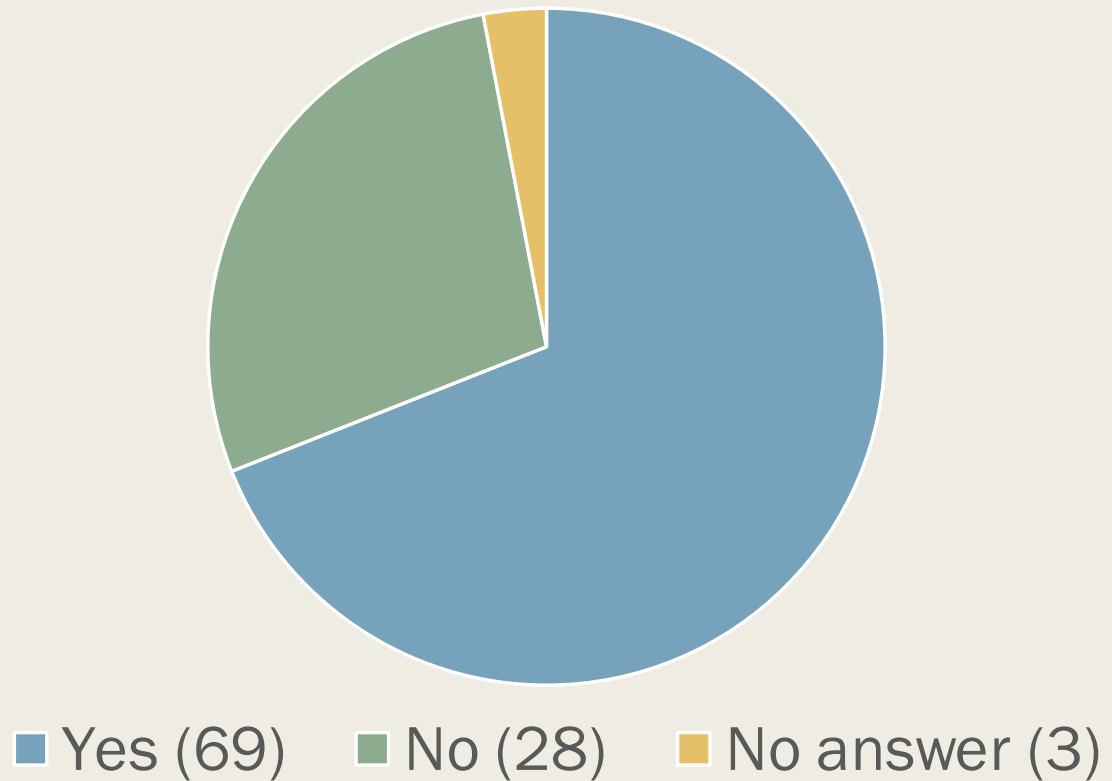
- *Formed working group*
- *Followed training*
- *Changed the name of overseers*
- *Discussed slavery and reparations*
- *Supported outside organisations*

Have any changes occurred in AM/LM/group because of this work?

- *“We have participated in AM work but are too small at present and meeting infrequently”*
- *“We have become better at having uncomfortable conversations”*
- *“Very few of us are aware of the minutes in question”*
- *“Some of us are particularly concerned to link to other faiths”*
- *“Changes in awareness rather than changes in action”*
- *“One ”weighty Friend” believes that white privilege is a myth, so there is no discussion of it here”*
- *“Racial justice is pretty far down on our list of priorities”*
- *“How often issues of diversity and inclusion are raised depends largely on who is in the discussion”*
- *“Visitors of all ethnic backgrounds are welcomed”*
- *“We use racially diverse images on our social media postings”*

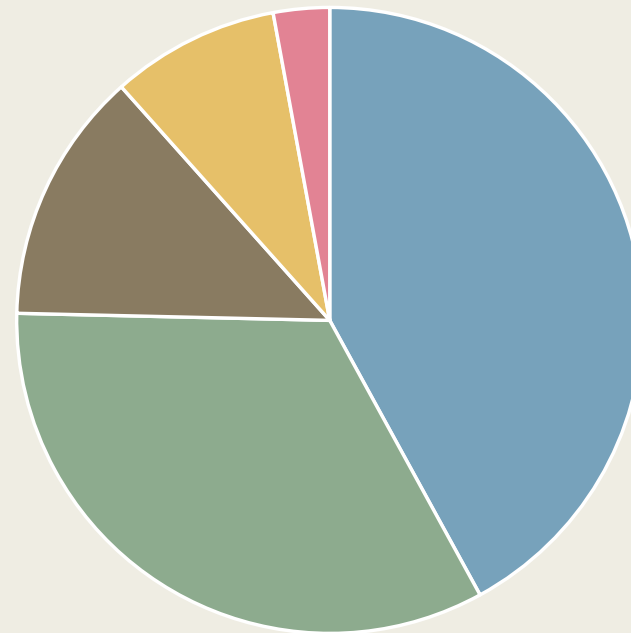
BYM has resources to support meetings in this work: the Diversity and Inclusion coordinator, the bookshop, the website

Are you aware of these BYM resources?



BYM has resources to support meetings in this work: the Diversity and Inclusion coordinator, the bookshop, the website

Have you used these resources?



■ Yes (29)

■ No (23)

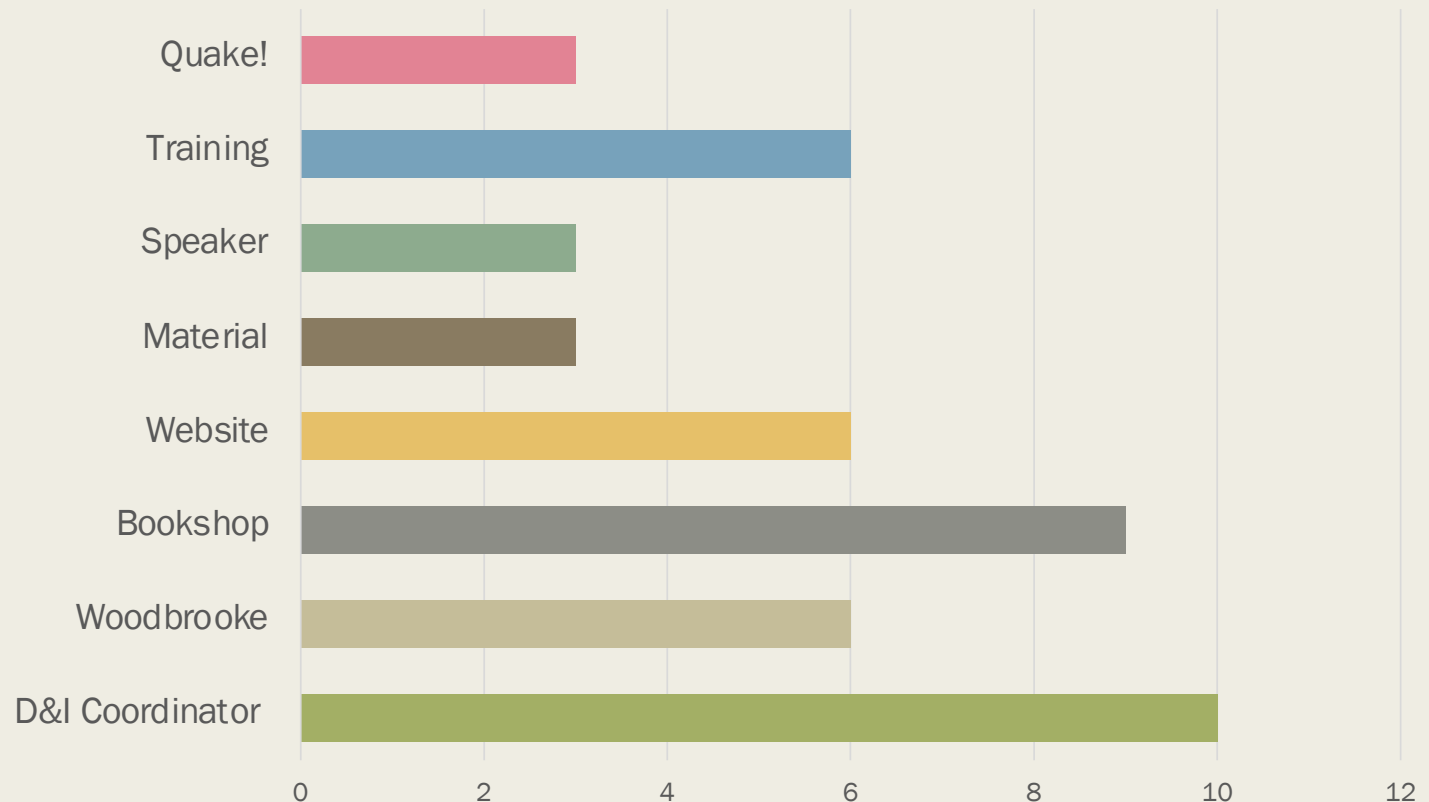
■ Not Yet (9)

■ As Individual (6)

■ Developed Own (2)

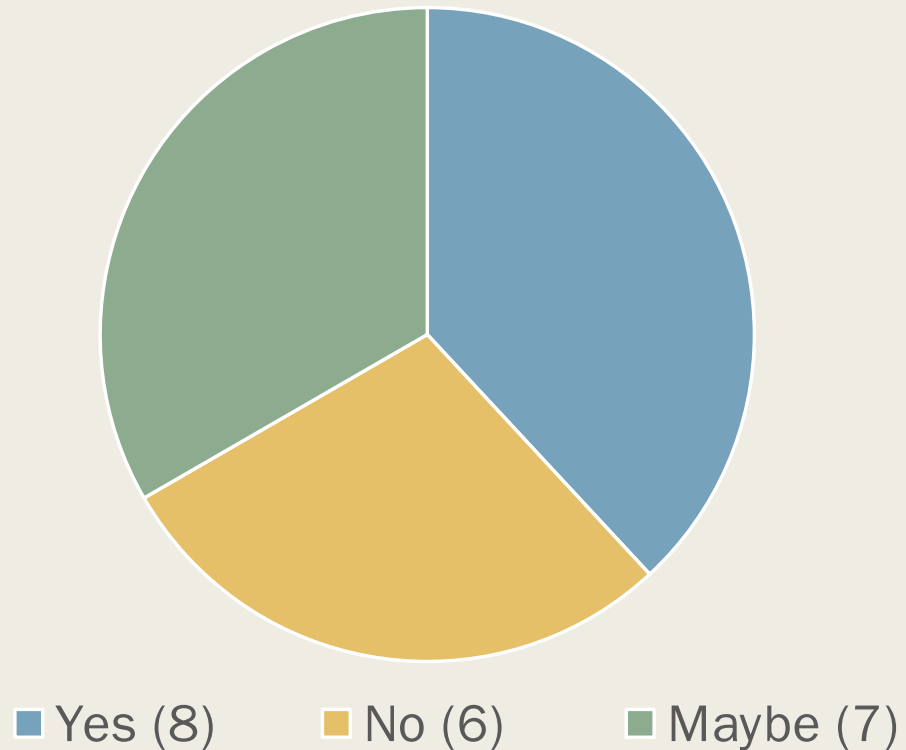
BYM has resources to support meetings in this work: the Diversity and Inclusion coordinator, the bookshop, the website

*How
have you
used
them?*

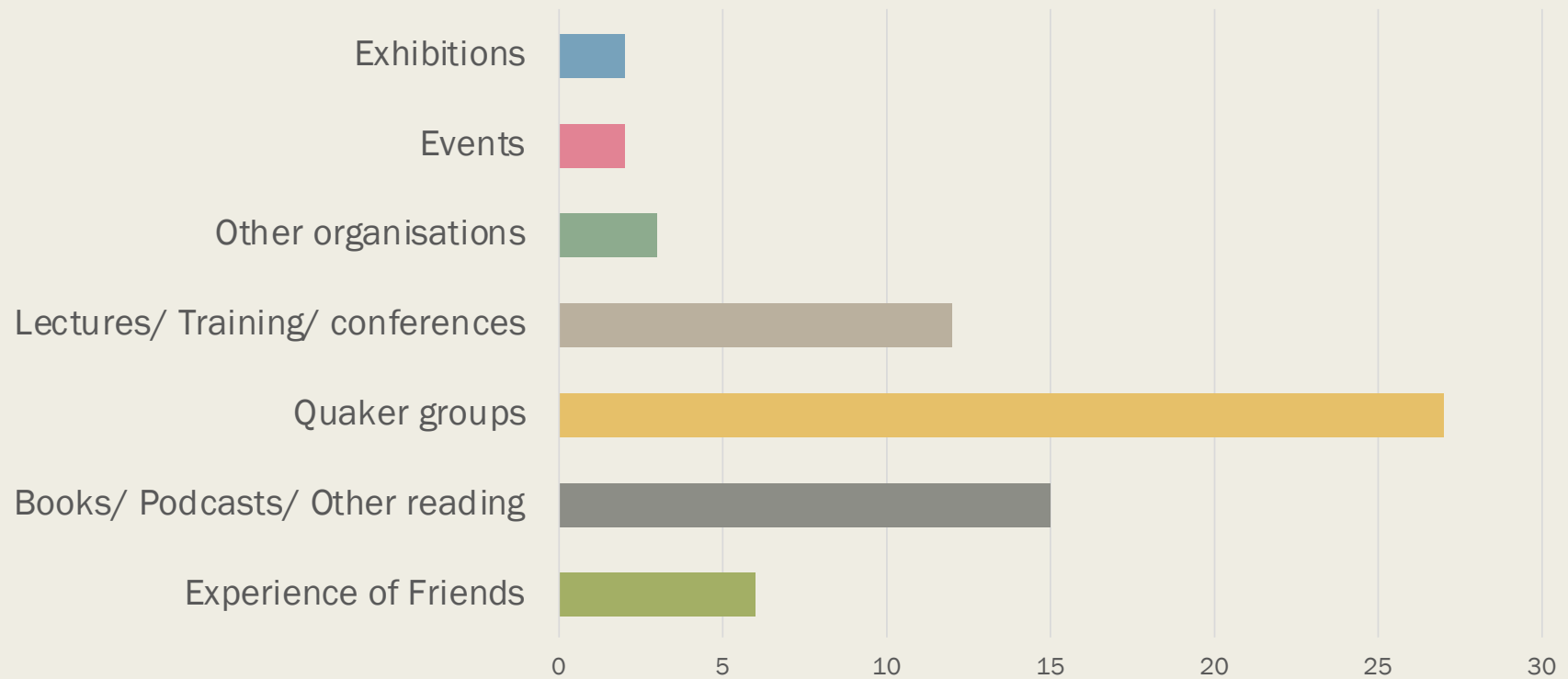


BYM has resources to support meetings in this work: the Diversity and Inclusion coordinator, the bookshop, the website

Do you plan to use them?



What other resources have you used?



What other resources have you used?

■ Books, etc:

- *Me and white supremacy*
- *Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race*
- *White fragility*
- *Black and British*
- *Tribalism*
- *Fit for freedom, not for Friendship*
- *History of the world in 7 cheap things*
- *The Friend/Guardian*

■ Podcasts:

- *Code Switch*
- *Quaker take on Reparations*

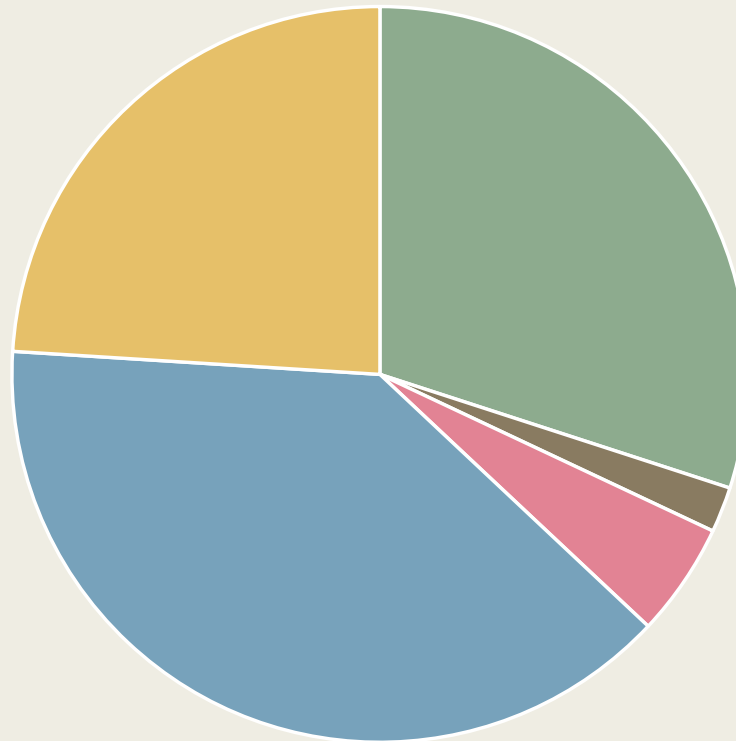
■ Workshops/ Courses:

- *CBTI workshops*
- *Leeds citizens anti-racism course*
- *Race and me course*
- *Unconscious bias training*
- *London Quakers workshops*

■ Organisations:

- *QAIG, QPSW, Quaker Life*
- *CTBI*
- *Stopwatch*
- *Green Street Reparations Committee (YouTube)*

Are there any resources that you would like to have?



■ No ■ Not Sure ■ Enough resources exist already ■ Yes ■ No Answer

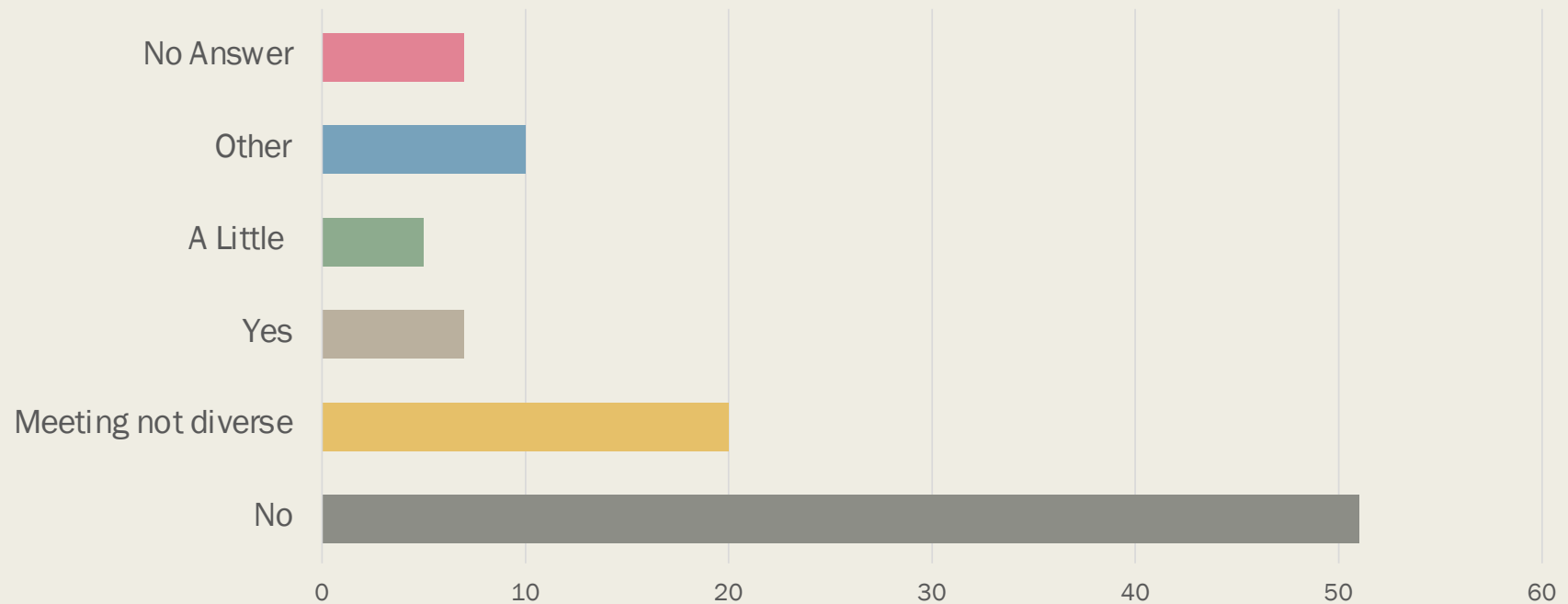
Are there any resources that you would like to have?

- *“What resource could move us from the symbolic to the actual?”*
- *“Something visual - short film. Ten steps that each meeting needs to take”*
- *“Information, stories, guidance about tackling racism in the meeting”*
- *“There is a vast range of resources already available”*
- *“Case studies”*
- *“Practical guide/suggestions for restitution including financial donations”*
- *“How are other meetings handling reparations”*
- *“Someone who can come and explain the issues to us in person”*
- *“Some basic level 'what to do' or 'Top Tips' “*
- *“What does anti-racism look like in white majority (95%) communities?”*
- *“Something simple drawing on people's lived experience”*
- *“Videos and a reading list”*

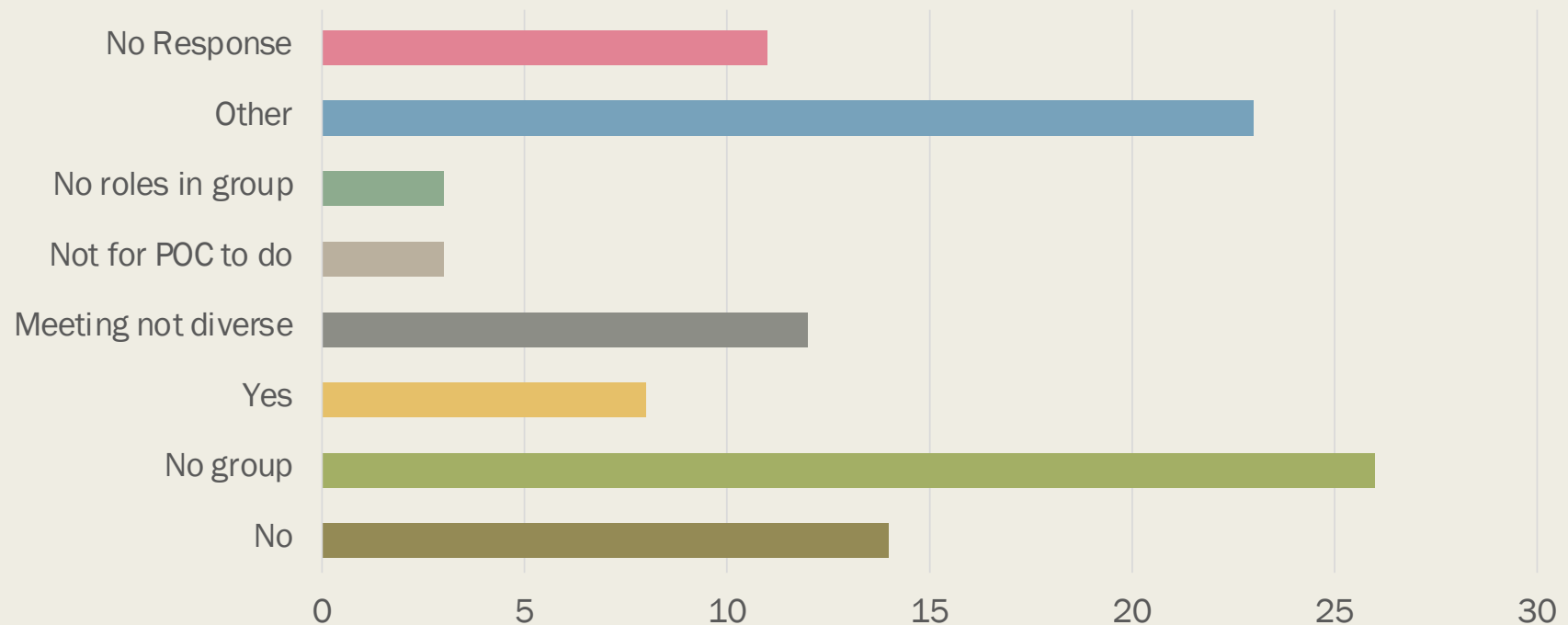
Are there any resources that you would like to have?

- *“Woodbrooke courses on equality and diversity”*
- *“Outside input important to avoid tension in meeting”*
- *“Something to help us become more conscious of our privilege”*
- *“Scholarships”*
- *“Fewer racists? Is that too much to ask?”*
- *“That would have to be a LM decision”*
- *“Information on on intersections between race and climate, race and class in BYM”*
- *“Speakers who could share their experiences of racism amongst Friends”*
- *“Information about initiatives to improve the diversity of our groups and Meetings”*
- *“Posters for our window”*
- *“D&I Coordinator to lead session within our Meeting”*

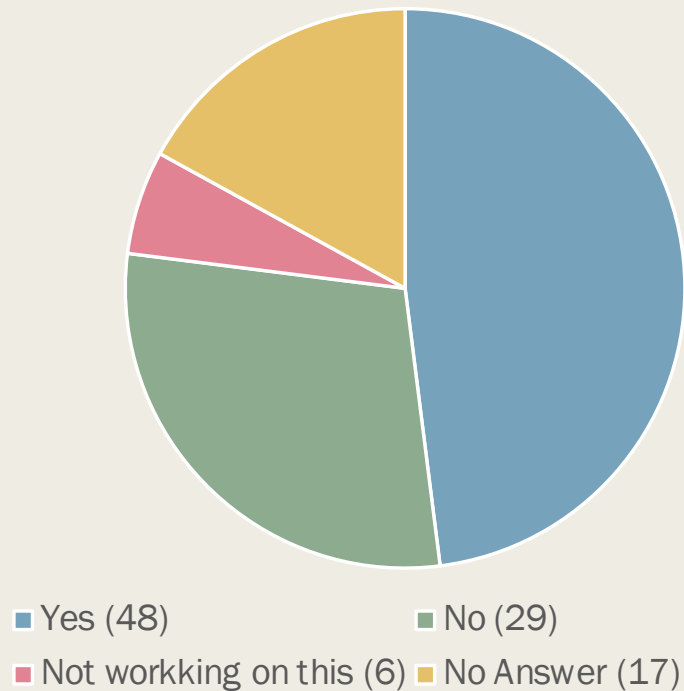
Thinking about people who hold roles in your meeting or group, is that group racially and ethnically diverse?



Thinking about people who are involved in your meeting's or group's anti-racism work, is that group racially and ethnically diverse?



Does your anti-racism work involve other Quaker groups: Quaker Recognized Bodies, AMs, other LMs, other groups? If so, who?



■ Who? (continued on next slide)

- AM or nearby AM/LM
- QAIG (Quaker Africa Interest Group)
- Interfaith groups
- Woodbrooke/Swarthmore lecture
- Quakers in Yorkshire
- Diversity & Inclusion officer
- Manchester & Warrington
- Quaker Congo Partnership

Does your anti-racism work involve other Quaker groups: Quaker Recognized Bodies, AMs, other LMs, other groups? If so, who?

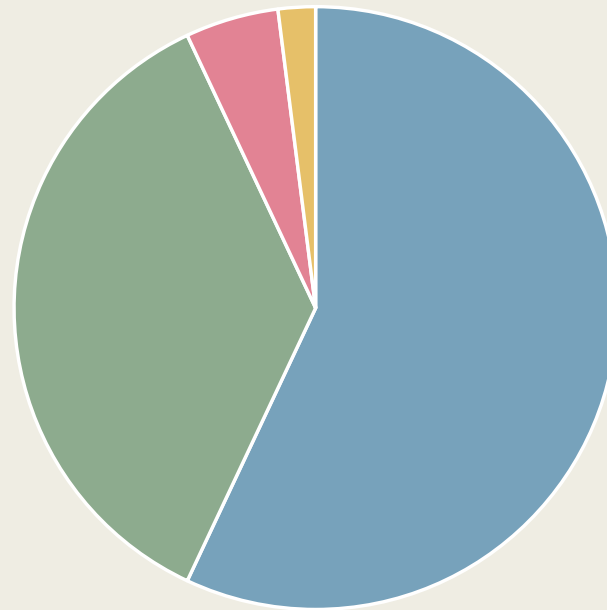
■ Who?

- Northern Friends Peace Board
- London Quakers
- City of Sanctuary
- AM BLM group
- Quaker Roots of Resistance
- Quaker Life
- Meeting for Sufferings

■ Who?

- BYM
- Carlton Hill Racial Justice Group
- Quaker South Asia Interest Group
- Faith Network for Manchester
- Leeds Citizens
- Restoring Relations
- Alliance for Cohesion and Racial Equality

Has your group thought about reparations?



■ No (57) ■ Yes (36) ■ Exploring (5) ■ Not yet (2)

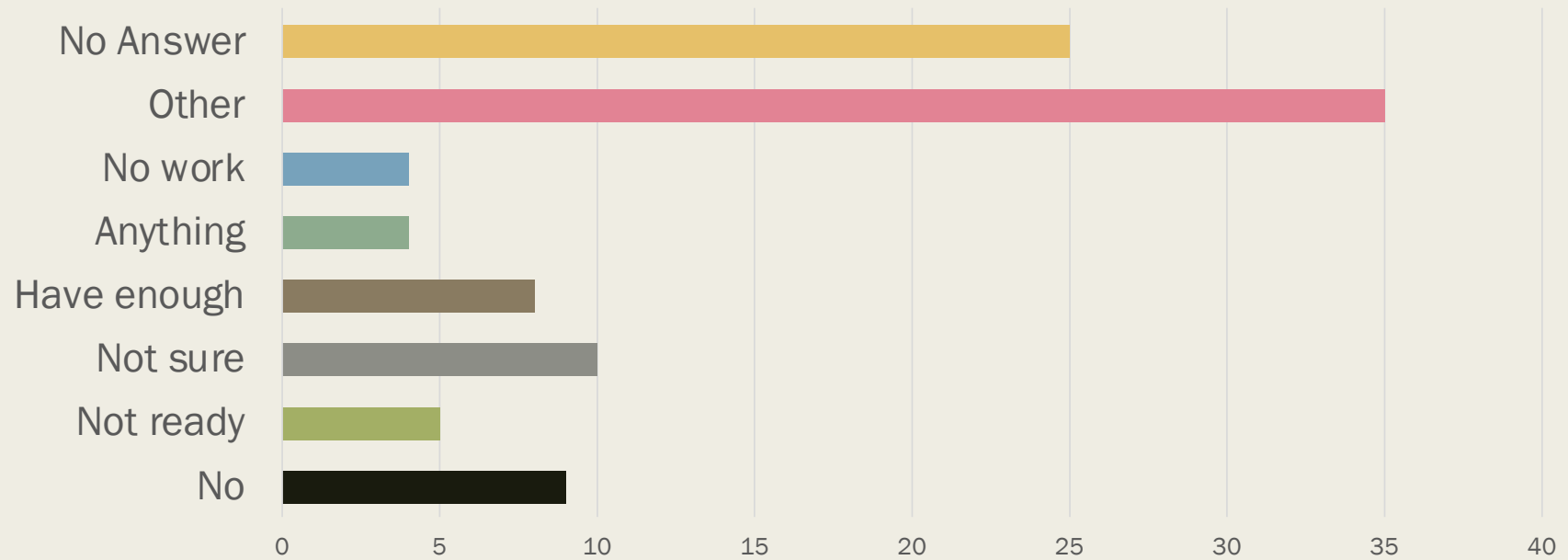
Is there anything you'd like to say about your meeting's exploration of this idea? (Reparations)

- *"Trustees have begun to consider this"*
- *"At present we want to focus on practical work on the ground – small steps toward reparations"*
- *"To be brought up at our next MfB"*
- *"Invited Black theologian to speak at an all staff meeting"*
- *"This feels very far off. Doing some basic anti-racism work needs to be a first step"*
- *"Didn't get very far, particularly as one Friend thinks the whole issue is 'a con' "*
- *"Too early in our journey"*
- *"We need more understanding of the issues"*
- *"Only starting but are open to the idea"*
- *"Discussion and minute sent to Area Meeting"*
- *"Much unity on the responsibility but still caution about the scale and unease about how it can be made to work"*
- *"The general attitude to the epistle in discussion groups seems to be 'what do we agree with/what don't we agree with' "*
- *"We do not to know what to do"*
- *"QAIG's Statement on Redressing Inequalities has been favourably supported"*

Is there anything you'd like to say about your meeting's exploration of this idea? (Reparations)

- *"Talked about it but no one wants to take it to the next level as no one knows what can be done"*
- *"We do not agree with this. It should not be about money but about changing how you are and improving in the future"*
- *"I've tried to bring it up to no avail"*
- *"There is a desire to focus on practical help overseas and building relationships in our local communities"*
- *"We welcome the challenge of a proposal that initially many think of as absurd or impossible to implement justly"*
- *"I've tried to bring it up to no avail"*
- *"We are a small elderly LM"*
- *"The process has to be owned both by ourselves and the recipients, it's not merely a question of doling money out"*
- *"What reparations have already been made?"*
- *"Shouldn't we focus on climate justice?"*
- *"Some do not see it as a high priority unless our own behaviour becomes less racist"*
- *"We found it very difficult and emotionally challenging to consider the interweaving of history with current dilemmas. Where do you start? What can we do to make "now" better?"*

What further support (if any) do you think would be helpful to your meeting or group in developing your anti-racism work?



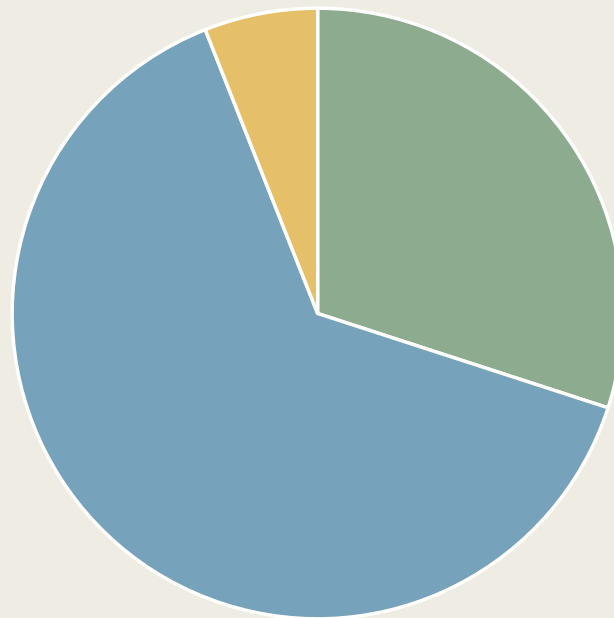
What further support (if any) do you think would be helpful to your meeting or group in developing your anti-racism work?

- *“Ideas on what to do as a relatively small and overwhelmingly white meeting”*
- *“Facilitation of an AM workshop looking exclusively at anti-racism (not linked to climate justice)”*
- *“Anything specifically relevant to Wales and Welsh policy”*
- *“Increasing awareness of our own unconscious racism”*
- *“We need to plant the seeds of our own way forward and then ask for support”*
- *“Experienced facilitators to lead workshops”*
- *“We do not have the capacity to engage in this work”*
- *“We have been struggling with simplification this year so anti racism has not been a priority”*
- *“Contact for the Black and Brown Friends group”*
- *“Networking with other AMs/LMs”*
- *“Pushing too hard on this will alienate some of our older members who are really struggling”*
- *“We are not yet united over becoming actively anti-racist”*

What further support (if any) do you think would be helpful to your meeting or group in developing your anti-racism work?

- *“We have enough support”*
- *“Deciding on the future of our Meeting House, which takes much of our time and energy”*
- *“How will we know if we're doing well, as a community?”*
- *“Support from development workers”*
- *“It would be helpful to hear about what other LMs/AMs are doing”*
- *“It would be good to have a network for sharing experiences and support”*
- *“Someone from outside the Meeting being available to lead sessions. A pool of people could be developed to assist in this, led by EDI Officer at Friends' House”*
- *“The hardest part of inclusion and diversity work with Quakers is we all like to think we are ‘nice’ or ‘good’ people - which makes it difficult get people to reflect on their actions”*
- *“Visiting speakers, workshop presenters”*
- *“BYM to introduce ethnicity into the annual survey of membership”*

Would you be interested in joining a working group or network across BYM?



■ Yes (30)

■ No (64)

■ No answer (6)



Some learnings from the survey

- Friends are not in unity about doing this work: only 75% of respondents are actively working on this and only 38% have seen changes in LM/AM
- Most of respondents are aware of support available from BYM and approximately 1 in 3 have used them
- Meetings are not racially diverse and there are differences in resources, energy, age, size of meeting
- Other priorities for scarce resources include: climate, migration, meeting house
- We found common stages in the "journey", with different resource needs at different stages

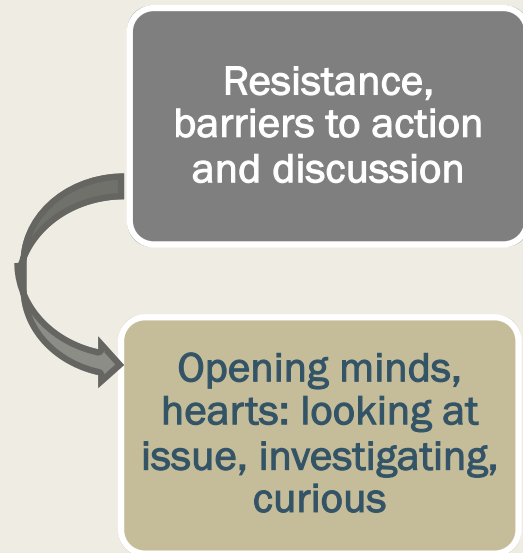
Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey

Resistance,
barriers to action
and discussion

At the start of this journey, we are resistant to the idea that we might be racist, or that racism is systemic. We do not see colour and we might sometimes see “reverse racism”. We resist taking personal action and we may create barriers to action by our LM/AM

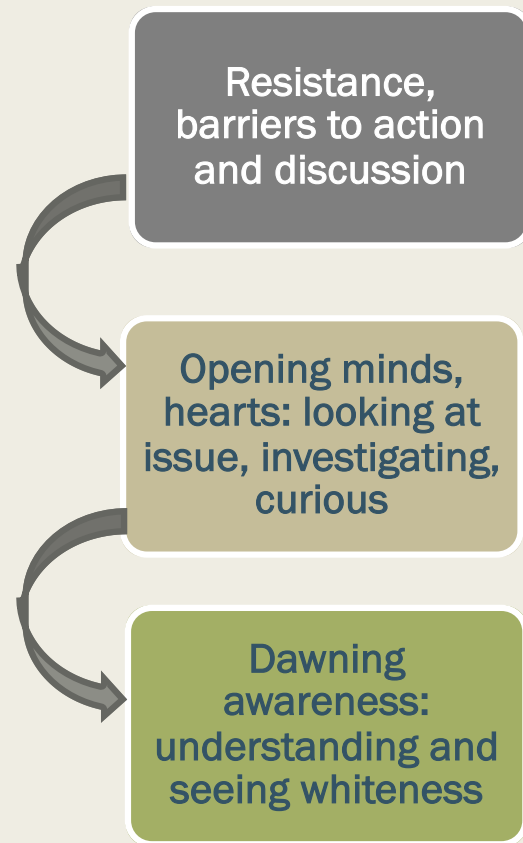
It should be noted that after the first few, these steps are not a ladder to be taken in order, and we may move among and between them in a dance of dawning awareness. We may move back and forth as we add to our understanding.

Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



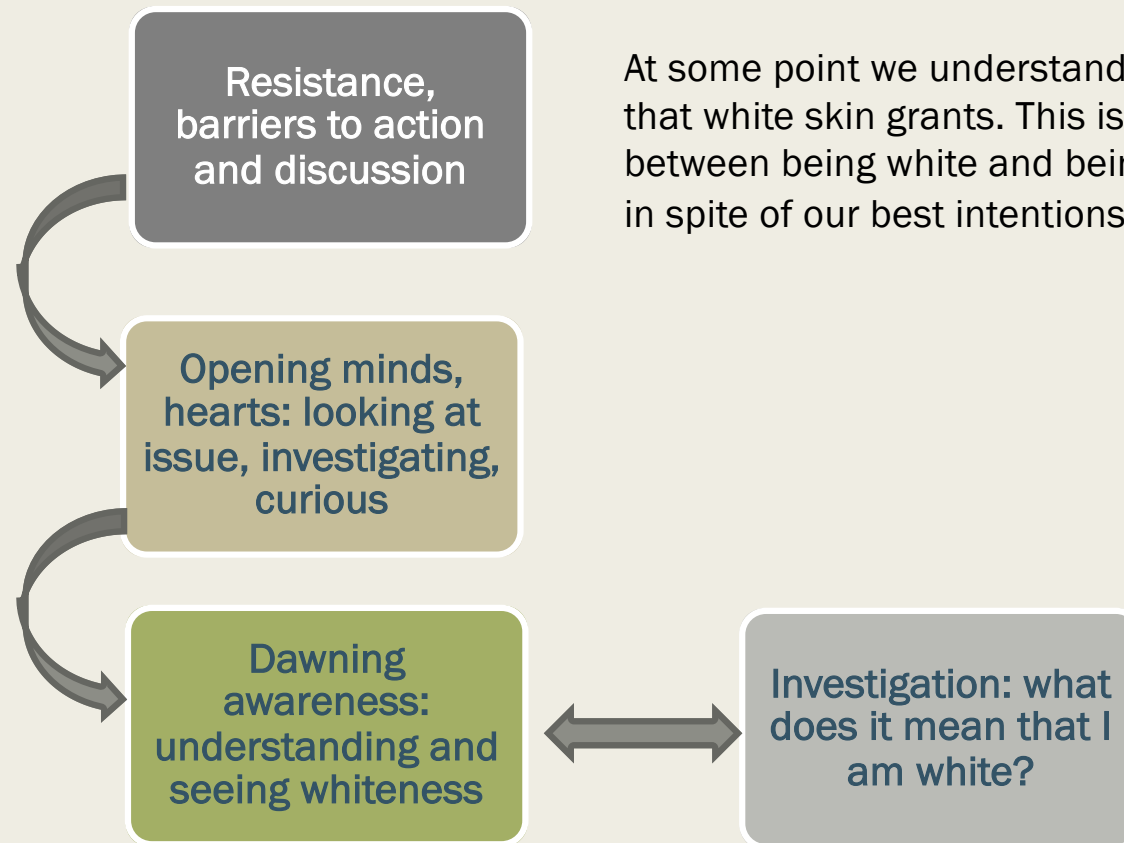
The first step beyond resistance is to find our hearts open to the idea. This may happen because of any number of personal experiences or realizations. Here we begin to see and investigate racism in our surroundings. We might begin to be aware of microaggressions.

Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



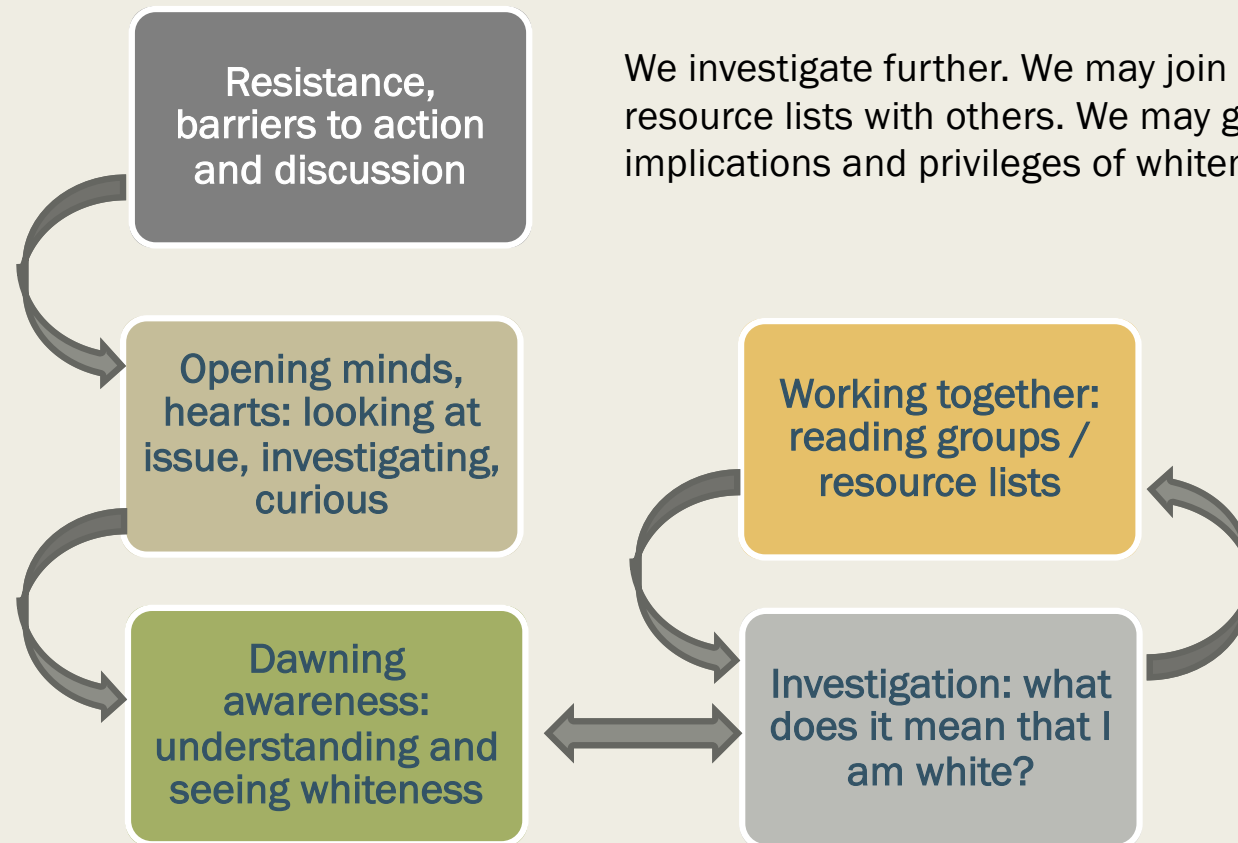
From there we begin to see the ubiquity of whiteness and the assumption that “white” is “normal”. The implications of this become apparent, including the fact that “different” is not “equal”. We begin to see the problem with the assumption of whiteness. Here we begin to think about and/or work for racial equality.

Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



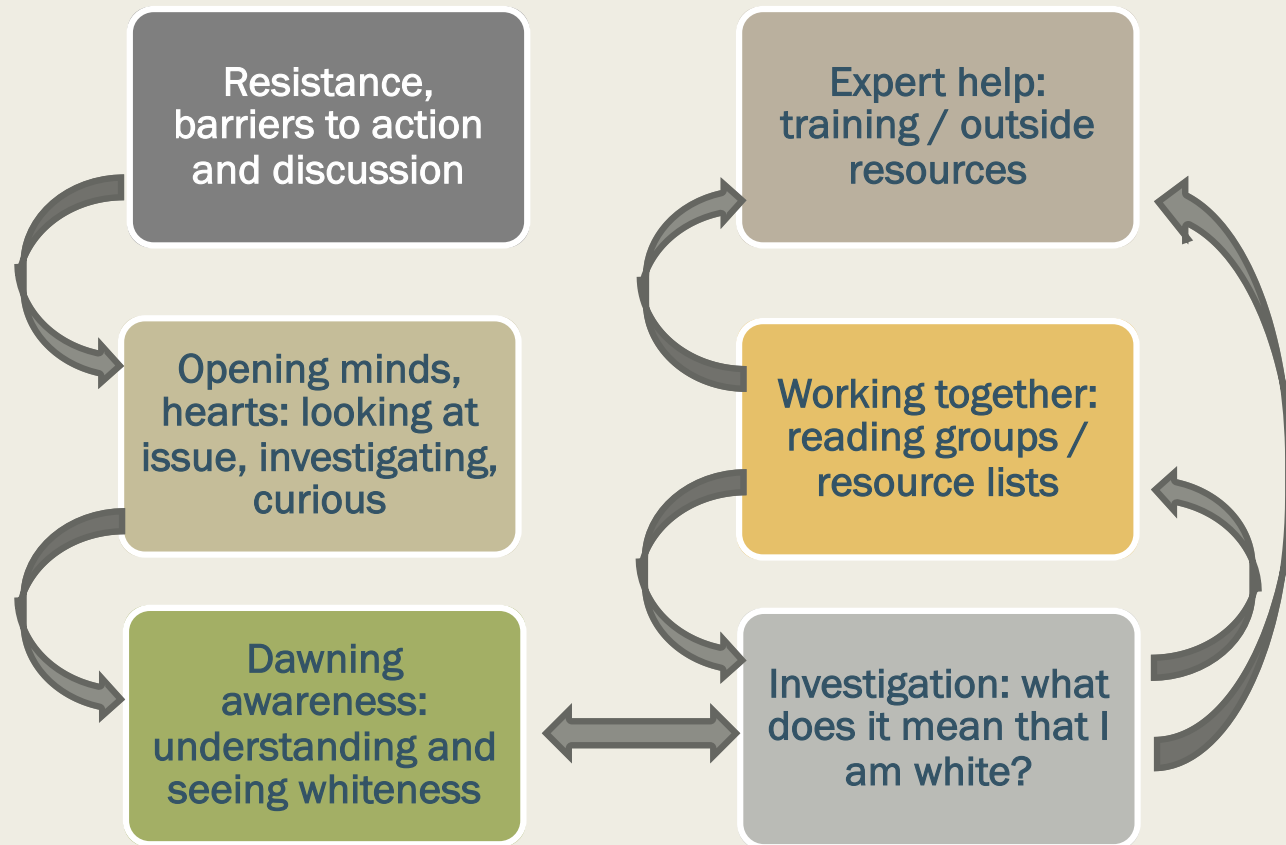
At some point we understand that we are white, with the privilege that white skin grants. This is where we begin to understand the link between being white and being racist. We accept the possibility that in spite of our best intentions we may be racist.

Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



We investigate further. We may join reading groups or share resource lists with others. We may go back to investigating the implications and privileges of whiteness.

Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey

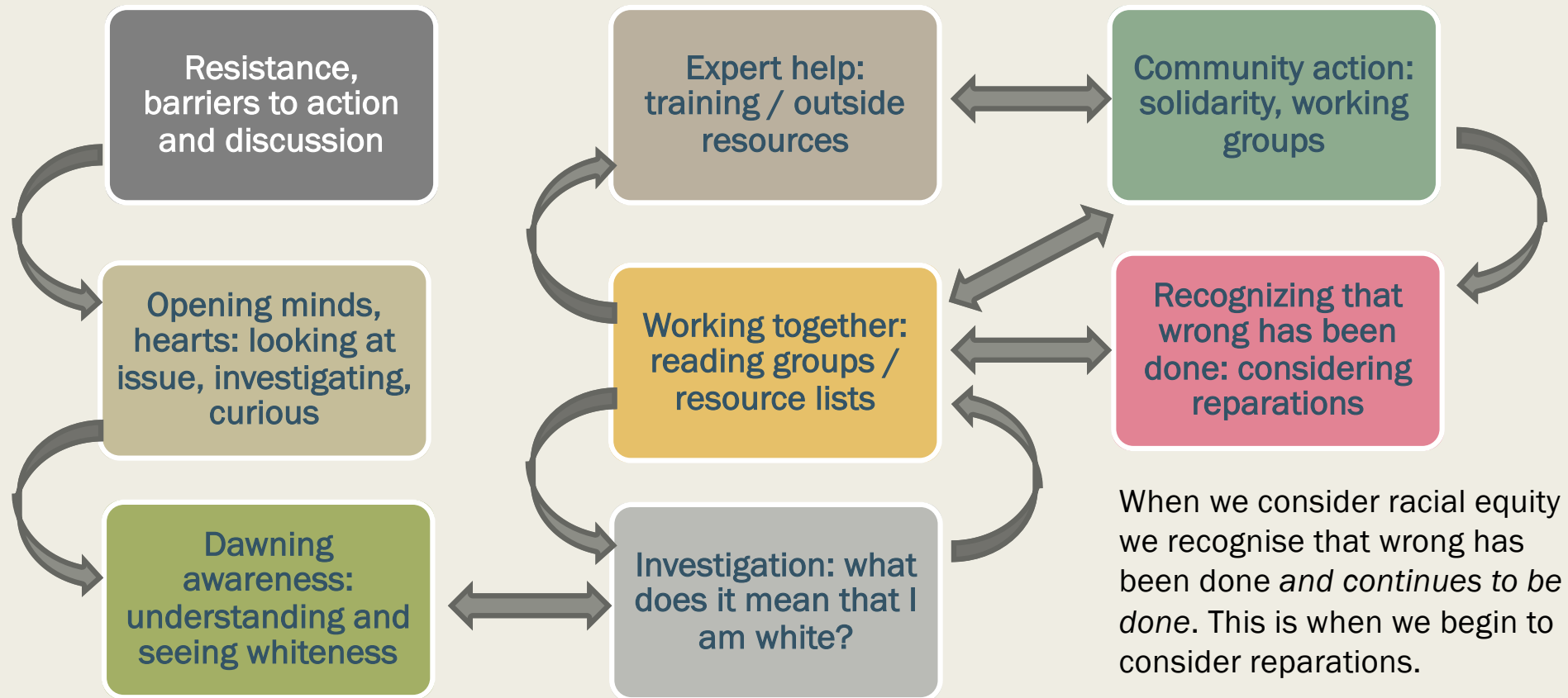


We may turn to expert help, finding training courses and asking questions of experts. We may also begin to look more to non-white experts to help us where before this we may have mostly turned to white people for information.

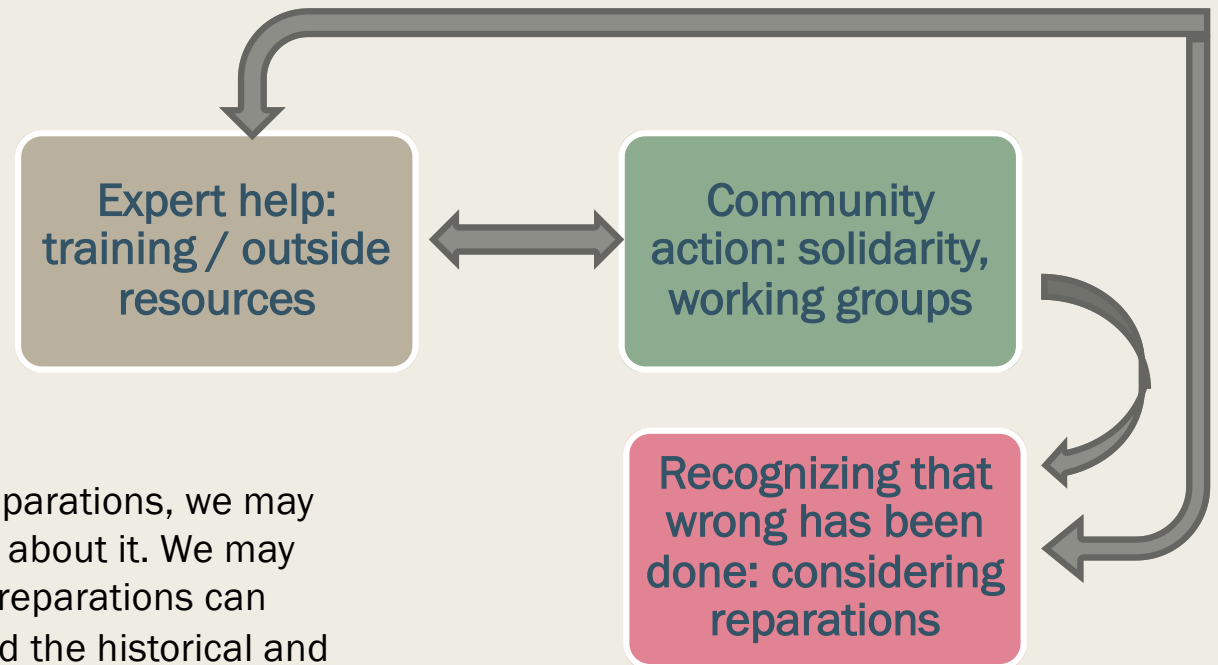
Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



When we begin to think about reparations, we may go to experts for help in thinking about it. We may investigate the many forms that reparations can take. We may want to understand the historical and contemporary ways that racism impacts non-white people today. There are many ways that we can look at the question of reparations, including what US Friend Hal Weaver calls “retrospective justice”.

Only then are we ready to move to the next stage...

Stages / steps Friends have taken in their journey



Reparations:

Barriers to action

- Idea too new
- Friends at different places on journey
- Friends who actively put up barriers to action
- “Too small, too old, too white”
- Other priorities: climate, migration, meeting house
- Resistance to having difficult conversations
- Fear of losing something
- No clear definition of reparations or common understanding of what it means

Reparations

A proposed definition:

Not restitution

Can't pay back to those whose lives and labour were stolen



Repairing a broken system that steals the lives and labour of their descendants

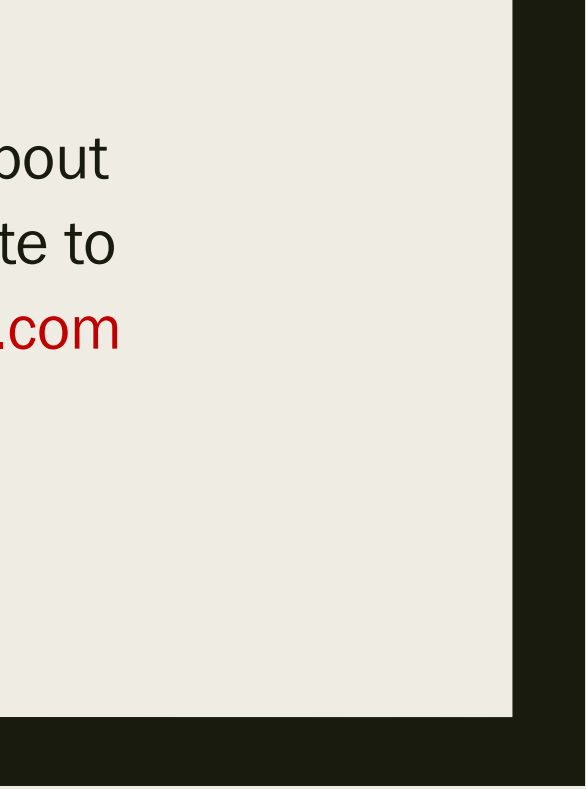
How to repair broken structures: Use your agency, your time, your money

- Goal: to heal relationships, fix a broken system
 - *Do this work alongside non-white people*
 - *Awareness: acceptance of our privilege*
 - *Would you change places?*
- Acknowledgement of wrongs done
- Visibility: If you can't SEE it, you can't BE it.
 - *Make non-white people visible. If not there, put them there: center them, amplify their voices*
- Education: equity vs. equality
 - *Funding for schools, equal access to education*
- Prison / legal system
 - *Address inequalities*
- Access to Housing
 - *Build familial wealth*
- Political Action
 - *Activism / Advocacy : Changing political structures*
- Restitution
 - *Recompense descendants as much as enslavers*
 - *Loss and damage – focus on Africa*

Next steps

- Circulate resource lists
 - Put Friends together who are willing / support isolated Friends
 - *Development of an interactive tool for locating others working on anti-racism (faithinaction@quaker.org.uk)*
 - Involve Diversity and Inclusion officer
 - Identify/train facilitators
 - Develop anti-racism podcasts
- Possible outcomes
 - *12 Quakers and racism*
 - *Anti-racism Conference*
 - *Develop courses / resource lists aimed at different stages of journey*
 - *Form Network / interest group*
 - *Self care training / different groups for POC and white people*
 - *Support for those doing work*

What outcomes would you like to see?



For more information or to find out about possible followup actions you can write to Kate McNally at antiracism83@gmail.com