



ROOKHOW
Quaker Meeting House and Bunkbarn

ROOKHOW RETREAT AWAY FUND

Initially set up in 2021 with a grant from the Quaker Mental Health Fund UK, Rookhow's Retreat Away Fund now runs with support from local and Area Quaker Meetings, individuals and with 5% of our bookings income being put into the fund. In 2025 Rookhow contributed £3,240. Over the past 5 years we have established partnerships with

many charitable organisations in Cumbria, Lancashire and beyond and have supported 2,000 individuals from 90 + groups.

2025 groups

In 2025, 600 people from 25 groups were enabled to stay at Rookhow. £23,000 was allocated in 2025 for subsidised stays both mid-week and at weekends.

Retreat Away funded groups staying in 2025:

- Drop Zone Youth Projects x 2 (extended education provision- Barrow)
- Worldies x 2 (women dealing with trauma, addictions and abuse)
- Wise Up (creative activities & confidence building for young people)
- Good Things Collective (Morecambe creative co-op)
- Silloth Scouts
- Springfield Domestic Abuse Support (retreat for staff & volunteers)
- Morecambe Bay Academy (targeted work- complex young people)
- Morecambe Foyer (independent living for homeless young people)
- Calderwood House (tackling poverty and homelessness- W. Cumbria)
- Colne Youth Action Group
- Jobs, Friends & Houses (support for people with addictions)
- Autus Cumbria (support for young autistic adults)
- Muslim Women's Council
- Grange Food Share (holiday for families on low incomes)
- Marsh Community Centre (youth group, Lancaster)
- Women's Community Matters
- Transpiration Wellbeing (support for young trans adults)
- Queer Cumbria



- Mycelium Thinking x 2 (creative community climate activists)
- Project 6 (staff and volunteers- substance misuse in Yorkshire)
- The Well Communities (support for people dealing with addictions)
- Mind in Furness (days in the woods to improve mental wellbeing)

BENEFITS & IMPACT

Many of the participants spoke of the deep peace they felt at Rookhow, how they slept better and enjoyed time away from technology. Spending quality time with each other around the campfire, cooking together and focusing on their wellness had significant benefits to their mental health.



“Absolutely gorgeous location, the safest I've felt in my entire life.”

“We had such a lovely time together. We found that it was an excellent way to disconnect from technology, to really be together and talk.”

“I felt a lot happier in myself and I now feel like I'm not so alone anymore. It felt like the safest space I've been in before, I didn't feel like I had to look over my shoulder or hide a part of myself; I could just be me.”

2026

Interest in the scheme is growing. In 2024 we funded 14 groups and in 2025 this had increased to 25 groups.

We have already allocated funding for 20 more Retreat Away groups to stay at Rookhow in 2026, including a refugee group, a college supporting young people with disabilities and Muslim Youth Alliance.

The next deadline is April 2026 and we plan to have a further round in October. We hope to allocate around £15,000-£25,000 to a further 20-30 groups in 2026.



FUNDING

We are very grateful for the continued support of the 3 Area Meetings and local Quakers to the fund as well as other Meetings from across the UK. Rookhow has become an important point of outreach for Quakers and a real asset and source of support for some of the most disadvantaged members of our communities.

We will continue to put in at least 5% of our bookings income into this fund as well as putting funds, staffing and energy into running the scheme, improving the site and helping the charity to be sustainable for the future.

In Friendship, Sue Nicholls, Development Manager (on behalf of the Trustees of Rookhow CIO)

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