



Quakers & Business Group Annual Report

CHARITY NUMBER 1157008

YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

TRUSTEES

Lesley Bacon
Wendrie Heywood (Co-Clerk)
Stuart Hill
David Olver
Jane-Eve Straughton (Co-clerk)

TREASURER

Lesley Bacon

ELDERS

Martin Lloyd
David Olver

REGISTERED ADDRESS

Unit 12272, PO Box 7169, Poole, BH15 9EL

BANKERS

Triodos Bank, Deanery Road,
BRISTOL, BS1 5AS

Quakers and Business (Q&B) is a membership organisation, open to anyone with an interest in ethical business management, which aims to be a meeting place for those whose experience is that integrity in business and the workplace matters.

Our meetings and core principles are organised in accord with the Quaker Business Method, which seeks to include and value the input of all members of a meeting. In finding members to be Trustees, serve on Management Committee members and convene the Working Groups which oversee our projects, we pursue the Quaker tradition of seeking to discern the appropriate roles for the organisation, and encourage all members to take their part in upholding its principles and practices. We seek the 'Light' in everyone, and attempt to treat each member equally. We stress plain language and try to avoid Quaker jargon wherever possible.

Public Benefit as a CIO we are very aware of the need to use the monies and other resources entrusted to us by our membership with care. Trustees ensure that while making decisions and plans they have regard to the public benefit in general, and minimise any risks. Social media is an important part of our reach, with 363 on our mailing lists, 535 on our LinkedIn group, and about 2,200 Twitter followers.

In making some new nominations in the course of 2020, Q&B actively searched outside the existing Membership for potential candidates. This process brought fresh ideas and new connections, it is one which we plan to continue to use in future.

As a membership organisation Q&B attempts to respond to concerns brought up by members, and encourages interactions at a local level, Linked-In and Facebook groups as well as forwarding news and items of interest to the group as a whole.

Connections

– blurb needed, summary of topics/themes over 2020.

Membership as of the end of 2020 was 178 corporate and individual members.

The small membership contact team, comprising the Membership Secretary and two others, has continued to hold regular review sessions over the year in which they allocate tasks to welcome new members, correspond as appropriate with leaving and lapsing members, and respond to individual member requests.

The Clerks work together with the Trustees to ensure that legal obligations are followed, and the organisation keeps moving towards its stated charitable goals. A key focus, this year has been our continued work to streamline processes and procedures while still maintaining a personal touch.

Our Communications Working Group acts as Q&B's voice. A new Communications Co-ordinator was appointed, Suzanne Watts, who has been active with social media as well as being part of the Connections group mentioned above. The group primarily encourages its members to talk to each other – whether in whole-group gatherings in person, in smaller groups and in face to face or online settings – to share experiences and learn from one another. And, of course, to then talk to others, both in and outside the Quaker community, about the group's work. It also uses both traditional and modern communications techniques, including printed posters, leaflets, and our book on everyday business ethics (see below).

Q&B has a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, as well as an extensive custom-designed website. We advertise regularly in the Friend to ensure we continue to reach new people within the Society.

Personal reflections on each of our Management Committee meetings are circulated and are available on the website.

Publications A monthly newsletter was developed and circulated to both members, and those on the news only list, from June 2020.

During 2020 the downloads of the Good Business Guide from our website were:

English 497, Spanish 321, Portuguese 345, Russian 354, Chinese 170, Total: 1687

The pdf is available to download free of charge from the Quakers & Business website and can be purchased in hard copy from the Quaker Bookshop at Friends House, London and online.

We hope that the audio version of Good Business Guide (being developed) will encourage interest from a wider audience.

The Academic Research Working Group (ARWG) continues to support research and projects. This year, ARWG members contributed to a Quaker Studies Research Association (QSRA) conference at Woodbrooke in June, guest-edited the December issue of the Quaker Studies Journal, and co-edited *Quakers, Business and Corporate Responsibility*, published by Springer International Publishing, to which various Q&B members also contributed chapters.

Q&B continued to support its Quaker Business History Research Project this year, funding PhD students Andy Fincham and Nicola Sleafwood. Andy and Nicola study under the academic supervision of Professor Ben Pink Dandelion, at Woodbrooke's Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies, within Birmingham University. The research aims to clarify and explain historical Quaker success in commerce, and offer reasons why this is no longer the case. This may be of benefit to those seeking to promote ethical business.

The Project has had numerous funders and we are grateful to them and the small fundraising team.

The Quaker Bank Working Group (QBWG) has been running a working group for the past six years to consider how a more ethical alternative to the major High Street banks may be built on Quaker Business principles in the 21st Century, drawing inspiration from the significant contribution made in the past by Quakers to the British banking sector. The QBWG has recommended that the simplest and the most economical way we can start to help 'mend the world' today is by setting up a Quaker Credit Union. This discernment process is ongoing.

The Annual Gathering (and 2020 AGM) was, due to Coronavirus 19, the first in its history to take place online. Eighteen of us really did gather, in the Quaker sense of the word, across the ether. We started with a session designed to look back at work and initiatives that Quakers & Business has supported in the past year – including a partnership with Quaker Social Action (QSA), the ongoing academic projects, ways to improve the governance and membership involvement in Q&B.

Q&B obviously has a central concern about how business is conducted and the quality of decision-making processes - or what Quakers would call discernment – so this naturally generated a debate which engaged deeply-held views about organisational structures, models of accountability, and following Quaker principles. Those present who have been involved with Q&B since its inception in 1998 brought useful insights into just how the organisation had taken its current shape.

We finished with a series of talks which sowed seeds for a number of ideas for future projects which are now in development.

The Annual Quaker Business Conference 2020 the theme was Making Values Visible and was originally planned as a two-day, two site conference but instead like many other events in 2020 was held using Zoom.

Over the two days over 80 people gathered, with some attending only one day and others both. The points for reflection we identified as we planned the conference were:

- New Opportunities for developing wealth potential - post Covid-19
- Business as social transformation
- The rise of the shareholder as a responsible actor in business
- Silence speaks louder than words

This was explored by our ten speakers first in their morning presentations with longer more in depth conversations during the afternoon workshops.

Accounts

Our membership and accounts closed the year with £7632 in unrestricted funds and £3571 in restricted funds. The restricted funds were made up of £958 for the 20th century history project (one PhD student), £113 for translation work, and £2500 for the Restoring Relations project (this project is supported by Q and B but has been unable to make much progress in 2020 due to COVID 19 restrictions).

The reserves policy has been maintained at 6 months' payment from unrestricted funds, but this may need to be reviewed after the pandemic once it is clearer what our future ways of working will be.

Jane-Eve Straughton and Wendrie Heywood

Co-Clerks – Quakers and Business Group

Quakers and Business Group
Registered Charity 1157008
Statement of Financial Activities
Year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	2020			2019
		Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Total
Income					
Donations	1	2,000	81	2081	4,301
Subscriptions			4,300	4,300	3,783
Other trading activities			43	43	746
Interest		15	4	19	75
Gift Aid			459	459	875
					14
Total Income		2,015	4,887	6,902	9,794
Expenditure					
Management and raising funds	3		1,878	1,878	1,557
Charitable activities	4	3,735	697	4,432	17,674
Total Expenditure		3,735	2,575	6,310	19,231
Surplus/Deficit (-)		-1,720	2,312	592	-9,437

Interest rates reduced nationally

Historical error adjusted in July 2019

Brought Forward 1 January	5,299	5,313	10,612	20,063	
Carried forward 31 December	5,6	3571	7632	<u>£11,203</u>	<u>£10,612</u> £14 historical error adjusted in July

Notes to the accounts

Note 1 Accounting policies

Donations mainly for PhD students, one of whom has completed their work
These accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis.
Quakers and Business Group is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
The reserves policy is to maintain 50% of the previous year's unrestricted expenditure

Note 2 - Restricted donations received

Quaker 20C history project 2,000

Note 3 - Management and raising funds

The remuneration of the Trustees was £Nil (2019 £Nil)

The distinction between management and charitable work has been harder this year as most of our charitable work has moved on line. This means that the chief expense has been IT and software, which previously counted as management expenses. Travel and room hire have essentially vanished

Note 4 - Charitable expenditure

Quaker 20C history project 3,150
Ethics guide translation and printing 585
Advertising and conference bursaries 637
ECCR(Ecumenical Council for corporate responsibility) 60
4,432

note - conference and AGM gathering held on line due to the COVID pandemic

	2020	2019
Note 5 - Closing bank balances		
Triodos current account	7,913.00	5,695.00
Triodos deposit account	2749	4,810.00
Paypal	542	107
Total	<u>£11,204</u>	<u>£10,612</u>

Note 6 - Funds carried forward

Expenses totalling £3,795 from the December 2018 conference were paid in January 2019.

Note 7 - Public benefit

This is covered in the annual report.

Examples are-

Supporting 1 PhD student in research to assess the benefits of Quaker principles and practice in modern day business

Producing and translating the Good Business- Ethics at Work Guide,

Note 7 subscriptions

Subscriptions were an income of £4430 minus refunds of £647 relating to late cancellations and cancellations from the previous year