

LEICESTER AREA QUAKER MEETING

Annual Report of Trustees 2023

Agreed at Trustees Meeting:	7 th October 2024	Minute: 24.28
Adopted by Area Meeting:	15 th October 2024	Minute: 24.63

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Leicester Area Quaker Meeting

Annual Report 2023

1. Objectives and Activities

Leicester Area Meeting is a charity established for the advancement of religion and other charitable purposes according to the principles and practices of British Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. It was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in November 2020, registration number 1192277. Formerly, as a religious charity, it had been exempted from registration.

The object of the charity, stated in clause 3 of the adopted governing documents, is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the religious Society of Friends in the area of Leicester and beyond.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Leicester Area meeting has four Local Quaker Meetings in Leicester, Loughborough, Oakham and Rugby. Loughborough does not own a Meeting house and currently rents a room in a civic building in the town. Leicester, Oakham and Rugby Local Meetings own their own Meeting Houses.

Area Meeting adopted the following Governance documents and appointed the first Trustees on the 19th October 2008.

- *The Governance document*: is based upon the model prepared by the Quaker Stewardship committee.
- *Terms of Reference for Trustees*: the document was revised and updated by Trustees and adopted by Area Meeting on 12th July 2020.
- *Memorandum of Understanding*: this document describes the relationship between Area Meeting, the Trustees and the local Meetings and defines 'who does what'. The document was revised by Trustees and the new version adopted by Area Meeting on 12th July 2020.

Trustees and officers are appointed by Leicester Area Meeting. The Area Nominations Committee nominates three members of Area meeting for consideration as Trustees. Ideally each of the four Local Meetings nominates one of their members to Area Meeting for consideration as Trustees. The Clerk or Co-clerks of Trustees is nominated from among the trustees for consideration and appointment by Area Meeting. Ordinarily the clerk of Trustees appointment is for a three year term and may be renewed for a second three year term.

3. Trustees' Business

The Trustees met four times in 2023 and minutes were kept. Discussions have included regular verbal reports on each Local Meeting, property maintenance and repairs, administration of Area Meeting finances and safeguarding.

A review was undertaken of the policy documents required to meet Charity Commission requirements. A *Business Risk Assessment Management* policy was required to allow our Annual Report to the Charity Commission website. A final v1 was approved by Trustees and adopted by Area Meeting in

November 2022. Friends were then given the opportunity to comment further on the policy and Trustees asked to make amendments for further consideration of v2 early in 2023. The final version was adopted by the Area meeting on 24 September 2023, Area Meeting minute 23.73.

Trustees agreed to monitor all policy documents on rotation.

Safeguarding

Reports on safeguarding were heard at each Trustees meeting. The safeguarding co-ordinator has devolved a list of roles within meetings where volunteers need awareness of safeguarding issues. She attended a training session with 31.8 and continues to develop training and DBS checks within the local meetings. Her request for a deputy safeguarding co-ordinator was fulfilled.

Finances and investments

During 2023 we monitored our Area Meeting budget at each Trustees meeting. The budget for training and conferences has not been fully spent in recent years due the pandemic and the move to online training. However, in 2023 we organised a residential weekend at the Woodbrooke study centre and the nominal surplus this had generated was spent on providing some bursaries, so that no-one was prevented from attending on the grounds of cost.

The value of investments with Rathbone Greenbank and the savings in the Hinckley and Rugby Building Society short term deposit account were monitored at each meeting. The volatility of the current markets resulted in a fall in overall value.

The benefits of all LM's using the online accounting package, Quick Books, continue to be appreciated. The 2023 accounts which will be submitted to the Charity Commission were examined externally by Community Accounting Plus.

Meeting Houses and Stewardship

Our Meeting houses have been open throughout the year and several Meetings for Worship held as a blended meeting. Lettings income has continued to improve during 2023, compared with 2022. Quinquennial reviews are up to date. Leicester Meeting holds regular meetings of the Premises Committee and has funds set aside for maintenance and repair.

4. Spiritual Life of Leicester Area Quaker Meeting in 2023

Leicester Area Quaker Meeting held six Meetings for Worship for Business in 2023 and the average attendance was around 21 Friends and Attenders. Our meetings were held in turn at the meeting houses (and in the case of Loughborough, the usual meeting room) of all the local meetings. Friends were encouraged to attend Meeting for Worship in the morning and stay for lunch to socialize with local Friends before the Area Meeting in the afternoon, and many did this, thus helping maintain social contacts across the Area Meeting. Minutes were written in the meeting after the manner of the Society of Friends, and they are filed, with the supporting documents for each meeting, in the Area Meeting minute book. Annual reports were written by the local meetings, with the clerks for all four of the local meetings, Oakham, Leicester, Rugby and Loughborough, detailing the activities and progress

of each meeting during the year and approved at Area Meeting. These reports can be seen by applying to the Area Meeting clerk.

Our meetings have dealt with applications for membership (we accepted 6 Friends into membership of the Society in 2023), transfers of membership and the recording of deaths, and nominations to the many Area Meeting roles. We have discussed and, where appropriate, accepted Trustees' recommendations for the management of our bank accounts and finances, read new and revised policies from Trustees and looked closely at the Annual Report and Accounts 2022, which was accepted at a properly convened AGM, held at the end of one Area Meeting for Worship for Business. Area Meeting remains the primary executive body of our charity

We have received regular reports from our representatives on Meeting for Sufferings and on Quaker Life Representative Council and we have supported Friends to attend a variety of other conferences and meetings and training courses which will help them to fulfil the various roles in the Area Meeting. Unfortunately, in September 2023 Woodbrooke Quaker College ceased to operate out of the building in Birmingham, but they are still offering online courses.

Where possible our Area Meetings have been held as blended meetings and many Friends have taken advantage of the opportunity to attend the meetings online. Most local meetings now have the technology in place and blended Area Meetings have become the norm. Although the majority of Friends prefer to meet in person, the online option serves some Friends who are unable to travel or those pressed for time.

In the course of the year we: gave feedback to the Book of Discipline Revision Committee on the draft text of the revised chapters on Nominations and Marriage; increased our financial contribution to Churches Together in Leicestershire; planned an Area Meeting wide away weekend to Woodbrooke before the closure of the building; written to our Prime Minister to object that the language being used by the Government to justify recent Immigration legislation is abhorrent and denies the fundamental human rights of migrants; heard reports from several Friends who attended Yearly Meeting in London; followed up at both local and Area level, the discussion on the topic of truth and integrity in public life, which was begun at that Yearly Meeting; discussed the implications of the proposal to replace Meeting for Sufferings with a "Continuing Yearly Meeting" which came out of that Yearly Meeting, and agreed to substantially increase our contributions to the Leicester Red Cross and Town of Sanctuary.

There were two high points of the year. The first was the joyful occasion of the wedding of Xanthe Wells and Meg Davis, both of Oakham Local Meeting, in Oakham Friends Meeting House on Saturday 15th April 2023. This filled the meeting house to the brim and those who attended found it a really uplifting occasion.

The second was our away weekend at Woodbrooke Quaker College in September. The Area Meeting held a successful away weekend at Woodbrooke on 1st – 3rd September. Some Friends came for the whole weekend, some for one night and some for a day only. There was an impressive and varied programme of events on offer with many opportunities to get to know one another better. At the maximum there were over 50 Friends gathered. This was a wonderful success and a joyful gathering, though tinged with sadness that Woodbrooke would shortly be closing. The success of the weekend was very much due to the offering of bursaries, both full and partial, and in fact the whole event cost the Area Meeting approximately £2800, a small amount indeed for such a valuable event.

Sustainability

During 2023 we had sustainability as a standing item on all Area Meeting agendas, and reports from local meetings on their work in this field were received regularly. Local activities included: giving a

speech to 200 demonstrators on the need for loss and damage reparations at the time of COP 27; producing a newsletter to help promote The Big One, the Extinction Rebellion protest in London in April and some Friends also joined that event; holding a stall outside the Meeting House to coincide with a Summer Fair; maintaining a presence in local environmentalism with other Christian environmental groups, running a Green Christians stall and managing a talk on Food Waste and local recycling. Premises committees have worked hard creating plans to make our meeting houses more sustainable and one local meeting is actively pursuing a bronze award in the Rocha UK Eco-Church project and hosted a meeting of Rugby Green Christians.

All our work has been documented with six editions of Our Quaker Voices, which serves as a newsletter to all Friends and Attenders, ably edited by Carol Rowntree-Jones.

Main achievements

2023 was the year which demonstrated that Leicester Area Meeting has made a full recovery from the impact of the Covid pandemic. We have provided a continuous presence of Meetings for Worship of all sorts for our own members and for the wider public, and we have actively witnessed to our testimonies to peace, justice, equality, simplicity and the earth. The new, online aspect to our meetings is problematic for some Friends and welcome for others, and debate and discussion has continued as to what form this should take and whether it is a welcome development. As always, we go forward in a spirit of exploration and compassion for the needs of all our community.

Membership of the Area Meeting

At the end of the year the total membership was 205. We had 6 new members in 2023 and 1 transfer in, while in the year 6 Friends died and 1 transferred out. We had 102 attenders and 10 children, one in membership.

5. General Information

Full name: Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

Organisation type: Charitable incorporated organisation

Registered charity number: 1192277

Principal address: Quaker Meeting House, 16 Queen's Road, Leicester. LE2 1WP

Trustees:

Arreggar, Bridget – AM representative	Ludlow Hilary – Clerk to Trustees, Oakham representative
Dnes, Jennifer - AM Treasurer	Matthews, Nicholas – Rugby representative
Deane, James – Leicester representative	Walker, David – Loughborough representative
Fishenden, Anne – AM representative	

Officers of the Area meeting:

Julian Rees Clerk; Jenny Dnes Treasurer; Beth Gaylard – Safe guarding Co-ordinator

Bankers: Lloyds Bank, Co-op Bank, Santander Bank, NatWest Bank

Building Society: Hinckley and Rugby Building Society

Investment portfolio: Rathbone Greenbank

Custodian Trustee: Friends Trust Limited, Friends House, 173, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

Signed: 

Date: 10/10/2024

Hilary R Ludlow Clerk to Trustees

6. Financial Report

The summary accounts for 2023 can be found in Appendix A of this report. They have been independently prepared and examined by Community Accounting Plus. A supplementary breakdown by local meeting can be found in Appendix B.

Overview

The finances of Leicester Area Meeting remain strong with cash funds of £290,476 which includes the funds held in our building society accounts. This is £31,707 less than at the end of 2022, due mainly to our investments in improvements to Rugby and Leicester meeting houses. The value of our investments rose by £8,013 from £184,550 to £192,563.

When the cash funds and the value of the investments are combined, the total assets at the end of 2023 were £483,039, a fall of £23,734 compared with the end of 2022.

Income

The total income for 2023 was £109,086, compared with £93,306 in 2022. Key points to note are as follows.

Contributions

The total contributions have risen to £39,116, an increase of over £10,000 compared with 2022. However, due to a timing issue at the end of 2022, the 2022 accounts excluded £6,752 of contributions from members of Leicester meeting during 2022 which are now included in 2023. Once this is taken into account, contributions between 2022 and 2023 increased by about £3,000.

Gift Aid receipts

During 2023 we claimed gift aid on behalf of the whole of Leicester Area Quaker Meeting for 2021 and 2022. This was divided between each local meeting in proportion to the contributions received. The total of £12,457 from HMRC for both years was divided up as follows:

	2021	2022	Total
Leicester	£3,591	£3,285	£6,876
Loughborough	£1,297	£1,083	£2,380
Oakham	£414	£544	£958
Rugby	£1,066	£1,178	£2,243
TOTALS	£6,368	£6,089	£12,457

Grants and legacies

A legacy of £3,000 was received from the estate of Elaine Hunt, a member at Leicester Meeting.

Lettings income (hirings)

The lettings income continued to recover from the pandemic during 2023, rising from £33,650 during 2022 to £39,596.

Expenditure

The total expenditure for 2023 was £140,793, compared with £76,991 in 2022. Key points to note are as follows.

Meeting Houses

During 2023 both Leicester local meeting and Rugby local meeting invested in improvements to their meeting houses. At Rugby, the heating system was upgraded and additional insulation was added. Both these improvements will help to reduce the carbon footprint of the meeting house. At Leicester, most of the downstairs floors were refurbished or replaced as part of ongoing improvements and maintenance.

Conferences and training

In September 2023, the Area Meeting held a residential weekend at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham which was attended by a total of 50 Friends and attenders from our four local meetings. The cost of £10,346 was mainly offset by contributions of £7,484 from the participants¹. In order to ensure that no-one was prevented from attending on the grounds of cost, a total of £2,150 was given to 12 of the participants as full or partial bursaries.

Insurance

The total annual insurance premium was £5,372, which was paid by Area Meeting funds. Each local meeting transferred funds from their local meeting accounts to cover this cost.

	£
Leicester	£3,355
Loughborough	£110
Oakham	£1,017
Rugby	£890
TOTAL	£5,372

Donations

Total donations were £22,351. These were mainly contributions to Quaker bodies, including Britain Yearly Meeting. Area Meeting continued to give £1,800 a year to support local asylum seekers. This was divided equally between Leicester City of Sanctuary and the Leicester branch of the Red Cross. A report from the Sanctuary Committee can be found in Appendix C of this report. This committee monitors how these donations are spent on behalf of Area Meeting.

¹ The contributions from participants to the costs of the Woodbrooke weekend is included in the accounts under 'Other income'.

Children's Bursary Fund and Care Fund

There were no payments made from the Children's Bursary Fund this year, but we made one payment from the Care Fund of £500. The Children's Bursary Fund nominally stands at £1,802 and the Care Fund at £28,966. However, as these monies are not kept in separate bank accounts they are not recorded as separate funds in our accounts.

Investments

The value of the Area Meeting's investments with Rathbone Greenbank had been rising steadily until the Russian invasion of Ukraine early in 2022 which had a major impact on global stability and the costs of energy. The stock market became volatile and the value of our investments fell sharply, particularly in the early months of 2022.

The volatility continued through 2023, although there was a gradual recovery during the year. At the end of 2022, our investments were valued at £178,661 and by the end of 2023 they were valued at £186,133, an increase of £7,472. Dividends continued to be paid and we received a total of £3,560 of income from this source.

These investments were made with a view to maintaining the value of the Area Meeting's assets in the long run and in supporting initiatives that encourage sustainable sources of energy. Trustees therefore decided to keep the existing portfolio, rather than make any short-term changes. They continue to monitor the situation regularly.

Signed: 

Date: 10/10/2024

Jennifer Dnes Area Meeting Treasurer

APPENDIX A: Accounts for Year Ending December 31 2023

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Britain

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Britain (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed  Date 14/10/2024

John O'Brien MSc, FCCA, FCIE

Employee of Community Accounting Plus

**Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends In Britain
(Quakers)
Receipts and payments account
for the year to 31 December 2023**

2022			2023
Total		Unrestricted	Total
funds		Funds	Funds
£		£	£
	Receipts		
735	Bank interest	2611	2611
28148	Contributions & collections	39116	39116
2893	Dividends	3692	3692
-	Gift aid receipts	12457	12457
3667	Grants & legacies	3000	3000
33650	Hirings	39596	39596
87	Publications	38	38
24126	Insurance claim	-	-
-	Other income (Woodbrooke etc)	8576	8576
93306	Total receipts	109086	109086
	Payments		
20318	Wages, NI & pension	21549	21549
72	Bank charges	145	145
963	Conferences, training, BYM	11216	11216
603	Library & literature	806	806
81	Office holders expenses	70	70
180	Overseers and out reach	335	335
153	Printing ,marketing & office costs	51	51
15179	Donations given	22351	22351
4908	Legal & professional	6489	6489
6587	Furniture & equipment	5756	5756
1172	Gardening	1570	1570
5068	Insurance	5372	5372
1351	IT & website	1233	1233
6152	Major works & repairs	23914	23914
2900	Materials & supplies	3741	3741
4850	Other support costs	5228	5228
-	Repairs & Maintenance	17776	17776
989	Room hire	1743	1743
5453	Utilities	11400	11400
12	Sundry	48	48
76991	Total payments	140793	140793
16315	Net receipts/(payments)	(31707)	(31707)
305868	Cash funds at start of this period	322183	322183
322183	Cash funds at end of this period	290476	290476

**Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends In Britain
(Quakers)
Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 December 2023**

2022		2023
	Cash assets	£
322183	Bank accounts	290476
<u>322183</u>		<u>290476</u>
	Other monetary assets	
178661	Investments :Area Rathbone Greenbank (Area General)	186133
5889	Investments: CCLA (Area general)	6430
<u>184550</u>		<u>192563</u>
	Debtors	
-	Employment Allowance receivable	634
<u>-</u>		<u>634</u>
	Assets retained for the charity's own use	
	General equipment.	
	Liabilities	
(804)	Creditors	3 (1184)
<u>(804)</u>		<u>(1184)</u>
	In addition the charity holds functional property comprising three meeting houses with insured values as follows:	
2739174	Meeting House Leicester	2958743
704464	Meeting House Rugby	760822
919393	Meeting House Oakham	922945
<u>4363031</u>		<u>4642510</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed 
Jennifer Dnes, Trustee

Dated 10/10/24

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Britain

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Area analysis

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	(Payments) £	Transfers £	Closing balance £
Areas					
Area General	60297	28151	(20209)	(6513)	61726
Leicester LM	104004	57508	(72630)	3020	91902
Loughborough LM	58324	4090	(2953)	2184	61645
Oakham LM	5600	4957	(2014)	(86)	8457
Rugby LM	93958	13828	(42641)	1353	66498
Acting as Agent	-	552	(346)	42	248
	322183	109086	(140793)	-	290476

The transfers reflect internal recharges for central costs like insurance, distribution of gift aid collected at Area Meeting, and bring the fund balances into line with the locally held back balances at year end.

3. Creditors

	£
Independent Examination	(936)
Acting as Agent payments	(248)
	(1184)

4. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this period.

5. Related party transactions

During this period there were no related party transactions.

6. Glossary of terms

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

APPENDIX B: Accounts Year End December 31 2023 by Meeting

Leicester Area Quaker Meeting Receipts and Payments account by Meeting for the year to 31 December 2023

	Area	Leicester	Lough borough	Oakham	Rugby	Total	Total 2022
Receipts							
Bank Interest	1550		84		977	2611	735
Contributions and collections	100	24046	4558	3938	6474	39115	28148
Dividends	3560	133				3693	2893
Gift Aid Receipts	12457					12457	0
Grants and Legacies	3000					3000	3667
Hirings		32341		879	6376	39596	33650
Other income	7484	969		121	1	8576	24127
Sales		18		20		38	87
Total receipts	28151	57507	4642	4958	13828	109086	93306
Payments							
Wages, NI and pension		21549				21549	20318
Bank charges		145				145	72
Conferences, training, BYM	11036	180				11216	963
Library and literature		476	196		134	806	603
Office holders' expenses		70				70	81
Overseers and outreach		65			270	335	180
Printing, adverts, photocopying, media						0	153
Donations given	2600	9854	871	150	8877	22352	15179
Legal and professional	1165	3176			2198	6539	4908
Furniture & equipment		5381			375	5756	6587
Insurance	5372					5372	5068
IT and website costs	36	582	284	241	90	1233	1351
Major works		2962			20952	23914	6152
Materials & supplies		3088	205		448	3741	2900
Other support costs (cleaning)		1982		519	2727	5228	4850
Repairs & maintenance		14569		69	3138	17776	
Room hire			1743			1743	990
Utilities		7883		1034	2483	11400	5453
Sundry		48				48	12
Gardens		620			950	1570	1172
Total payments	20208	72630	3299	2014	42641	140793	76990
Transfers	(6513)	3020	2226	(86)	1353	0	
Net in/out	1430	(12103)	3568	2858	(27461)	(31707)	16316
Opening balance at bank	60297	104004	58325	5598	93959	322183	305868
Closing balance	61727	91901	61894	8456	66498	290476	322183
Closing balance held in bank accounts as:							
	18259	91740	54572	8456	15987	189015	245423
	43468	161	7321		30277	81227	76760
					20235	20235	
	61727	91902	61893	8456	66498	290476	322183

APPENDIX C: Annual Report from Leicester Local Quaker Meeting Sanctuary Meeting Committee - June 2023

Background

Leicester Area Meeting supports asylum seekers and refugees in Leicester by donating £1800 a year, divided equally between Leicester City of Sanctuary (LCoS) and the Leicester branch of the Red Cross Refugee Support Service.

Leicester Local Meeting became a Sanctuary Meeting in November 2018 and is committed to easing the situation of local asylum seekers. This report is an update from the Sanctuary Meeting Committee for the benefit of Leicester Local Meeting, trustees, and Area Meeting on

- the activities of the Meeting in supporting asylum seekers in Leicester
- the work of LCoS and the Red Cross locally between July 2022 and June 2023.

Sanctuary Committee activities 2022-23

The committee met 3 times between July 2022 and June 2023

An appeal after meeting for worship, given by Mick Walker from LCoS took place in November inviting Friends to donate to the Big Give fundraising campaign for LCoS. The appeal highlighted the very difficult circumstances of asylum seekers living in hotels with little contact with family and friends, extremely limited funds, and fears of violence from right wing extremists.

At our September meeting the committee discussed the links between migration and climate change and invited Sarah Shaw, our East Midlands development worker to join us. Sarah invited us to an East Midlands Climate Justice group meeting to give a talk about the subject as well as telling the group about the work of Leicester City of Sanctuary.

Involvement in supporting asylum seekers

Sheila Mosley chairs the Multi Agency Forum which brings together statutory and voluntary agencies that are involved with staff and asylum seekers at Kennedy House in South Wigston on behalf of Leicester Meeting. She is also chair of the charity After 18, which works with young unaccompanied asylum seekers.

Fundraising for LCoS and The Red Cross

During December Leicester Meeting donated £100 to LCoS for the Big Give and a further £100 to the Red Cross.

Money is being collected from tea and coffee payments after meeting for worship and will be paid in equal proportions to LCoS and the Red Cross.

Financial support from Leicester Area Meeting

a) Leicester City of Sanctuary

The funds given to LCoS contribute to general expenditure. They are mostly used for the emergency fund which provided modest individual grants to asylum seekers who have financial need

City of Sanctuary have experienced many more calls on their support. Most new arrivals are single young men, and most are being housed in hotels. Inadequate and inappropriate diet is a serious concern, as is isolation.

On a positive note, the organization has recruited more staff and several new volunteers have offered their help, including those with language skills. Football training and sewing classes are running well and members are receiving help with their asylum claims via NEST (new evidence support team).

English classes are provided every week, some in conjunction with Leicester University.

LCoS works in collaboration with the Red Cross.

b) Red Cross Refugee Support Service

Red Cross uses our Quaker donations to provide critical hardship support and to enable service users to actively engage with casework, as well as to help with transport for compulsory Home Office hearings and reporting.

The service has seen a rise in numbers of destitute asylum seekers and migrants with no recourse to public funds seeking help and advice, particularly since the cost-of-living crisis. Home Office policy to clear the backlog in the asylum system has meant that many of those receiving refugee status will fall into homelessness after leaving their designated NASS accommodation. The Red Cross has been providing sleeping bags and help to access suitable shelters.

Since Covid restrictions have lifted East Midlands Reporting Centre is again requesting people to report frequently to the Centre in Loughborough, without providing them with fares to get there. The Red Cross fills in the gap by paying bus fares for those that need it.

The Red Cross repeats its request that flexibility is granted to use Quaker's funding according to the discretion of staff to support destitute asylum seekers and refugees. Area Meeting has already agreed to this, and we ask our AM clerk to assure Eric Nkundumubano, the operations manager, that this arrangement can continue.

Conclusion

We hope this report shows that the funds provided by Area Meeting continue to support the work of City of Sanctuary and the Red Cross effectively and request that Area Meeting continues to contribute at least £75 a month (£900 a year) to both LCoS and to the Red Cross (£1,800 in total).

Leicester LM Sanctuary Meeting Committee

Jenny Dnes; Anne Fishenden; Sheila Mosley; Angela Walker.