

DISCOVERING QUAKERS
TRUSTEES' REPORT AND UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

DISCOVERING QUAKERS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	F M Lunnon G Gill A Heslop
Charity number	1206818
Principal address	22 Matfen Court Sedgefield Stockton on Tees TS21 2JB
Independent Examiner	C Scudder 90 Fennel Grove South Shields Tyne and Wear NE34 8TN
Bankers	CAF Bank

DISCOVERING QUAKEERS

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DISCOVERING QUAKERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The trustees present their report and accounts for the period ended 31 December 2024.

Structure, governance and management

The charity was established under its constitution on 1 February 2024 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on that date.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the accounts were:

F M Lunnon
G Gill
A Heslop

The appointment of trustees is set out in the Constitution.

The recruitment of new trustees is periodically undertaken by the Board, which follows an open and fair recruitment process taking due account of both the skills and needs of the charity and the desire for its membership to reflect the diversity of the local population.

The Charity and its property are managed and administered by a board of trustees, which can have between three and fifteen members.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are *"the advancement of the Quaker faith and principles for the public benefit, in particular but not exclusively by raising awareness and access to Quaker, literature, events and meetings through a website, podcasts and other means of digital communication"*.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

DISCOVERING QUAKERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Achievements and performance

Outreach to the public

Social Media & Website

Social media remains our main way of attracting new subscribers to our email newsletter. During 2024 our social media adverts were seen by 220,000 people of whom 2,834 went on to subscribe to our newsletter.

Creating a new TikTok channel has enabled us to reach a new audience and we have acquired 85 followers in the first 2 months of running this page. We have also grown our social media strategy for informative organic content on Facebook (1,017 followers, up from 558 followers at the start of 2024) and Instagram (1,254 followers, up from 630 at the start of the year).

Producing content for our website and social media channels is an on-going activity. This year we expanded our content to include audio and video. We also trialled a new way of producing content that we are calling 'exploring Quaker experiences' where we invite Friends to an online session to share their experience of a Quaker topic. We record the session and afterwards use it to produce written or audio content.

We have also worked on additional content to answer enquirers' basic questions. In December, we released our first leaflet/poster explaining what happens at a Quaker meeting - it can be attached to emails or printed and is available for all Meetings to use.

At the start of 2024, we moved the hosting of our main website from Quaker Meetings Network (QMN) to Squarespace. When we started with QMN in 2023, we were aware that its focus is to provide websites for Area and Local Meetings, and given our success we would want to move to a more 'mainstream' website provider. We continue to use the QMN platform to deliver our new website for Meetings and for storing our internal documents on the QMN intranet.

The number of visitors to our main website remains stable with between 14k and 17k unique visitors each month.

Email Newsletter

Our email newsletter, which we publish every two weeks, remains our main way to communicate with enquirers. The number of people on our newsletter list stands at over 6,900 at the end of 2024, an increase of over 3,400 during the year.

Engagement with our newsletter remains high with 38% of recipients opening the newsletter and clicks varying between 6% and 14%.

Enquirers Service (DQconnect)

The most significant step we have taken this year in our outreach to the public is launching our enquirers service, DQconnect. When people sign up to our email newsletters they are offered an opportunity to be introduced to their Local Meeting. An introductory email is then sent to the enquirer and to the Local Meeting and the Meeting continues the conversation from there.

The service was launched in July and has proved to be even more popular than we expected. 25% of people who sign up for the newsletter also ask to be introduced to a Local Meeting – that's around 20 every week. Of

the people who sign up for our emails, around 25% are put in touch with a Local Meeting. At the end of 2024, 280 Meetings are signed up to this service.

Since launching the service we have made two significant changes following feedback from Local Meetings. The first was to stop sending the email to the enquirer on behalf of the Meeting. Once an enquirer has asked to be introduced to a Local Meeting, the Meeting now takes over the responsibility to make contact with the enquirer. The second change was in response to the experience that although enquirers wish to be introduced to their Local Meeting they are not necessarily ready to try a meeting for worship in person. We now ask the enquirer if they require further information or wish to be introduced. This has resulted in a reduced number of requests being sent to Local Meetings, but hopefully the enquirers will be closer to the point of trying a meeting for worship.

Online Live Events

For members of the general public, we ran a weekly Quaker Lives online event (every Tuesday evening including Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve). Each session provides a brief overview about Quakers, a guest speaker talks about how they became a Quaker and why they remain a Quaker, there's a short meeting for worship and an opportunity to ask questions. During 2024 number have doubled and each session has around 16 attendees.

Publishing

This year Discovering Quakers published the new revised 3rd edition of Geoffrey Durham's book *Being a Quaker*. Copies of the book can be found at most Meetings, and it sits beside copies of *Faith & Practice* and *Advices & Queries* in the bookshop at Friends House. Enquirers and newcomers value its breadth and simplicity.

The marketing rights to publish the book were transferred to Discovering Quakers as part of the transfer of assets from Quaker Quest Network when it was laid down. We are grateful to the Yew Tree Fund which provided a grant to cover the publishing costs.

Being a Quaker is available to purchase in paperback through the Quaker Bookshop and as an ebook from Amazon, Kobo, Barnes & Noble and Apple Books.

Inreach to Meetings

New website for Meetings

In the middle of the year we created a new website focused on Quaker Meetings to share how we can help with outreach activities for the benefit of all Meetings in Britain. The website is at <https://meetings.discoveringquakers.org.uk/> or by clicking the blue button that says 'For Quakers' in the top right corner of the main Discovering Quaker website.

The website contains information about our activities and a blog to help Meetings and individual Quakers keep up to date with our work. There's also a calendar of events including our Local Outreach forum.

Local Outreach forum

Each month we ran a Local Outreach forum which gives Friends an opportunity to hear about our work, ask questions and provide feedback on behalf of Meetings. The forum was very useful in the lead up to the launch of the new enquirers service (DQconnect) and the feedback we received helped us to refine how service works.

Newsletter for Meetings

Our Local Outreach forums are well attended, with sometimes around 40 people present, but we realise that not everyone can attend Zoom sessions during the daytime. To help with our communication to Meetings we started publishing a newsletter for Meetings. We published our first newsletter in December 2024. The newsletters are in pdf format so they can be easily shared and, if required, printed. The newsletters are sent to those on our DQ Community mailing list with back copies available on the Meetings website.

Organisation

Becoming a charity and Quaker Recognised Body

In terms of organisation, 2024 has been a significant year as we established Discovering Quakers as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). The short form of our charitable object is “the advancement of the Quaker faith and principles for the public benefit, in particular but not exclusively by raising awareness and access to Quaker literature, events and meetings....”

Earlier in the year Discovering Quakers applied to become a Quaker Recognised Body (QRB) and was awarded the status in October 2024.

Discovering Quakers Membership

As part of becoming a CIO, we discerned that Discovering Quakers would be a membership organisation and that membership would be open to anyone who supported our charitable purpose. We decided to make the membership application straightforward - it requires filling in a simple online form. People can join as an individual or on behalf of their Meeting.

Financial

2024 has been a year of transition from being funded by the BYM Adventurous Outreach Fund to being funded largely by donations from Quaker Meetings and individual Friends. The funding from BYM was known to be time limited to around the middle of 2024 when the Adventurous Outreach Fund was expected to close, having awarded the funds available supporting a number of Quaker outreach initiatives.

Our main sources of income in 2024 were the BYM Adventurous Outreach Fund (£14k), the transfer of assets of Quaker Quest Network and Quaker Quest Euston (£15.5k), a generous donation from an individual Friend (£10k) and donations from Meetings and individuals (£9k since the start of July).

Our approach to delivering one-off projects is to seek funding from Quaker trusts and funds. This year we were grateful to receive a grant from the Yew Tree Fund to pay for publishing the revised 3rd edition of Geoffrey Durham's book *Being a Quaker: a guide for newcomers*.

During 2024, two new members joined the Discovering Quakers team on a freelance basis to provide regular communication support and deliver content for our social media channels and website. We were able to do this within our existing budget as our digital marketing specialist, reduced his number of days.

At the end of 2024, our bank balance stands at around £23k. While this is a relatively healthy figure, we are mindful that if donations from Meetings and individuals remain at the current level of £18k per year, we will need to seek additional funding from other places to cover our base running costs of £32k per year. Ideally, we would like to increase our social media advertising spend as we believe this is the single most effective way to increase the number of enquirers engaging with our outreach activities, learning about Quakers and trying a Quaker Meeting.

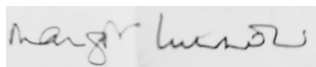
Looking forward to 2025, we have identified a number of things we believe are essential to our ongoing success. In particular, we would like to upgrade the enquirers service (DQconnect), produce more outreach assets, such as posters and leaflets for Meetings, and videos for the Discovering Quakers website and social media channels.

Financial review

The receipts and payments account on page 4 shows a surplus of receipts to payments of £24,659 for the period ended 31 December 2024.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between six and nine months' expenditure. The trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in income, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

On behalf of the board of trustees

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'F M Lunn', is shown within a light gray rectangular box.

Trustee – F M Lunn
Dated 07 MAY 2025

DISCOVERING QUAKERS

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF DISCOVERING QUAKERS

I report on the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 4 to 6.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- (i) examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- (ii) to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- (iii) to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - (i) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - (ii) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Acthave not been met; or
- (b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



C Scudder

90 Fennel Grove
South Shields
Tyne and Wear
NE34 8TN

Date: 07 MAY 2024

DISCOVERING QUAKERS

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Unrestricted Funds General £	Designated £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<u>Receipts</u>				
Inheritance from Quaker Quest and Quaker Quest Network	16,565		16,565	-
Yew Tree Foundation Towards Being A Quaker	4,500		4,500	-
Donations from Individuals	12,227		12,227	-
Donations from Meetings	6,873		6,873	-
Book Sales	700		700	-
Interest Received	15		15	-
Total receipts	<u>40,880</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>40,880</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>Payments</u>				
Contractors	10,947		10,947	-
Purchases of Software etc	139		139	-
Book Production Costs	3,608		3,608	-
Advertising	1,492		1,492	-
Bank Charges	35		35	-
Total payments	<u>16,221</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,221</u>	<u>-</u>
Net receipts (payments)	24,659	-	24,659	-
Funds from last year end	-	-	-	-
Funds this year end	<u>24,659</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>24,659</u>	<u>-</u>

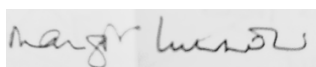
DISCOVERING QUAKERS

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

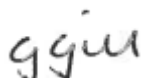
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	
	General	Designated
	£	£
Fixed Assets		
Value of assets	-	-
Cash Funds		
Current account	24,659	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total cash funds	24,659	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Stock		
Value of stock	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Other Monetary Assets		
Debtors	2,625	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Liabilities		
Creditors	2,700	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The accounts were approved by the trustees on the 7 May 2025



Trustee – F M Lunnon



Trustee – G Gill

DISCOVERING QUAKERS

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1. Trustees

None of the trustees (or persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the period.