

British Friends of Quaker Council for European Affairs
Registered charity 293776

Registered Address: C/O Finance and Property, Religious Society of Friends, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024

1. Purpose, Objectives and Activities

British Friends of Quaker Council for European Affairs (BFoQCEA) is a Quaker charity whose main purpose is to promote Quaker values at the European level. These values are based on Quaker testimonies to peace, integrity, simplicity, equality and good stewardship of the planet (sustainability). The Charity is also referred to as the British Committee of Quaker Council for European Affairs in our Governing Document.

The purpose of BFoQCEA is achieved primarily by supporting the work of Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA), an international non-profit association, registered as a charity under Belgian law, and based in Brussels, Belgium, and by promoting the work of QCEA within Britain Yearly Meeting, the national Quaker Church in Britain. Detailed information about the work of QCEA can be found here: <https://www.qcea.org>.

BFoQCEA raises sterling funds largely through donations from individuals, Quaker Meetings and Charitable Trusts; acts as agent in the collection of some direct grants to QCEA such as that made by Britain Yearly Meeting; acts as agent in the collection of some membership and service fees charged by QCEA, and makes sterling payments on behalf of QCEA such as the rent for Quaker House Brussels where QCEA is based.

BFoQCEA participates in the governance of QCEA by appointing a member of its Council, as do Britain Yearly Meeting and each of the Quaker Yearly Meetings in Europe. QCEA relies for funding entirely on the Yearly Meetings, local and regional Quaker Meetings, individual Friends and Quaker and other Charitable Trusts. BFoQCEA promotes the work of QCEA so that British Friends and other interested people are aware of the importance of speaking truth to power at the European level.

In 2024, QCEA continued its work on three major strands: Climate Justice and Peace, Migration and Peace, and Dialogues for Transformation, following a strategy approved in March 2023 . Much of the work over the past year has focused on the theme of Migration and Peace. An online course, 'Migration and Peace in Europe', was held over 4 sessions, from 11 June – 2 July 2024, when QCEA worked in partnership with Woodbrooke and the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network. QCEA staff member Saskia Basa started work on a comprehensive handbook on Migration and Peace. A website, 'Choose Respect' (countering hate speech), was re-launched in the run-up to the European elections. An online Special Interest Session was held during Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM), the annual gathering of Quakers in Britain, on Friday 5 July on "The work of Quaker bodies on migration and peace". This event was particularly well attended, with around 30 participants, and speakers from Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN) and QCEA.

Work on the other main strand, Climate Justice and Peace, built on the success of the 2023 publication of the report 'Storytelling from the Frontlines', with several workshops and other events, including a series of closed-door sessions on 'Climate Change and Peace' at Quaker House Brussels, and an online special interest meeting at BYM (annual gathering) of Quakers in Britain on 'Climate Justice' on 9 July. The September 2024 issue of QCEA's regular newsletter 'Around Europe', was also devoted to this topic.

Continuing its work on 'Dialogues of Transformation', Quaker House Brussels hosted a number of events, including two seminars for young professionals in foreign policy, on the theme of women in peace-building, and an in-person training session entitled "Listening is a superpower", led by QCEA director Tracey Martin, aimed at MEPs and their staff. Toward the end of the year, conscientious objection re-emerged as an important focus in QCEA's work, partly in reaction to the growing number of CO's from Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Quaker House Brussels welcomed Olga Karach, a peaceworker from Belarus, for a meeting on conscientious objection; Olga also joined Tracey Martin in a meeting of Church and Peace on this issue. QCEA completed its programme of work to become an anti-racist and anti-oppressive behaviour organisation. There were some staff changes in the course of 2024: Saskia Basa, Migration and Peace Coordinator, and Dovile Bogusyte, Communications Officer, both left for new posts in the autumn of 2024. Celina Bebenek was named the new Communications and Advocacy Officer, while Dr Majbritt Lyck-Bowen was engaged on a temporary contract to complete work on the migration and peace handbook.

BFof QCEA participated in the Yearly Meeting (annual gathering) of Quakers in in July 2024, informing participants about QCEA's recent work. BFofQCEA helped with the distribution of 'Around Europe', the newsletter of QCEA, now published twice a year following the commencement of QCEA's new online newsletter (QCEA Digest) in early 2024. In October, one of our supporters carried out a bicycle ride from London to The Hague (Netherlands) to raise awareness of QCEA and to raise funds for the organisation. Towards the end of 2024, a new appeal letter giving a summary of QCEA's work was written for circulation to all Area Quaker Meetings in Britain Yearly Meeting,

Since July 2022, British Friends of QCEA has been a 'Quaker Recognised Body' within Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.

Governance

The Trustees of the charity met seven times during 2024 via Zoom and Teams video-conferencing. In addition, an Annual General Meeting of the Charity was held on Thursday 13 June on Zoom. At the AGM, Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick was re-appointed as clerk (chair). Martin Ford was re-appointed as treasurer and Elspeth Wollen as note-taker (secretary). Martin Hughes was re-appointed as assistant clerk (assistant chair) and as the Charity Commission Contact.

As at 31st December 2024, the trustees were:

Keith Archer

William Becher

John Crosfield

Martin Ford

Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick

Martin Hughes

Sue Myers

Richard Seebohm (appointed at the 2024 AGM to serve for one year)

Marcie Winstanley

Elspeth Wollen

A copy of our Governing Document and annual financial returns can be found on the Charities Commission website here:

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/cy/charity-search/-/charity-details/293776>.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024

Financial Summary

The Income of the charity during 2024 was £83,795. This compares with £64,650 in 2023 (including income received on behalf of FWCC). Donations from Quaker Meetings were £13,906 (including part of Ireland Yearly Meeting), donations from individuals £11,149 and donations from Quaker and other grant-making Trusts £56,140. A total of £680 was received on behalf of QCEA acting as agent for membership and publication payments and a total of £9,067 in disbursements was made on behalf of QCEA for rent payments to Britain Yearly Meeting for the use of Quaker House in Brussels.

We were able to make donations to QCEA of £45,460 in 2024 as compared with £54,000 in 2023.

Donation s to QCEA	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Sterling	45,460	54,000	50,000	182,798	63,000	83,000	88,000

At the end of the year, our General Fund reserve was £36,968, the DW Saunders Fund was £17,542 and the Ramallah bursary fund £1,103.

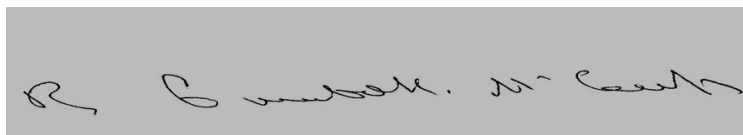
These funds were held as £46,126 cash in the charity's two CAF Bank Accounts and as a fixed asset bond.

Looking ahead to 2025

During 2025 we will continue our core work of supporting, promoting and fund-raising for the work of QCEA with Quakers and Quaker Meetings throughout Britain.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. British Friends of QCEA supports work that benefits the public in Britain as a part of Europe's sphere of influence and elsewhere in the world by promoting the values of peace and human rights embodied in the Quaker testimonies to peace, simplicity, integrity and equality.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature appears to read 'Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick'.

Signed

Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick, Clerk, 3.06.2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of the British Committee of the Quaker Council for European Affairs

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees of the British Committee of the Quaker Council for European Affairs 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 British Committee of the Quaker Council for European Affairs 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 material 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 British Committee of the Quaker Council for European Affairs as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

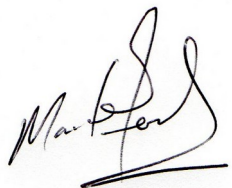


David Olver, 10 Daleside Road, Riddlesden, Keighley, BD20 5ES

25 February 2025

Note 1 Accounting Policies					
A) Basis of accounting:					
The accounts have been prepared:					
1) on a cash basis					
2) Under the historic cost convention, but with investments shown at market value					
B) Foreign currencies					
Transactions denominated in foreign currencies are converted into sterling at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of the transaction.					

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Ford', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Martin Ford, Treasurer, 14 May 2025