



# A QUIET REVOLUTION

## Trustees Annual Report

1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 - 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025



PROMOTING SMALL ACTS OF HUMAN KINDNESS SINCE 2016

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# A NOTE FROM OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Behind every number in this report lies a human story.

This year included weddings filled with children's voices, handfastings and quach ceremonies that bound families together, and funerals where dignity was restored in circumstances marked by hardship.

One funeral in particular reminds us why our charitable purpose matters.

Conducted in July, it took place in the shadow of generational poverty, addiction, fractured relationships and unresolved grief. The family had considered having no ceremony at all due to financial strain and a history of loss unsupported and unspoken.

Through the use of charity funds, the service was offered at no charge. Stories were gently gathered. Shame was met with compassion. Struggle was acknowledged without judgement. At the graveside, tentative bridges were formed - including an estranged son who found space to stand, to listen, and to grieve.

The family's handwritten thanks spoke of kindness that would not be forgotten.

The impact we can have on the lives of others is our true metric.



*Jude Williams, James Oakley, Yva Mckerlich*

Steering Group / Celebrants

*Image: Jude/James/Yva - The Steering Group Management Committee*

# THE CHAIR'S REPORT

It is a pleasure to introduce this year's Annual Report and to reflect on another year for our charity.

Across the year our celebrants conducted weddings and funerals that reflected the full range of human experience - joy, grief, commitment, loss, renewal, and hope. Each ceremony brought people together and created space for dignity, meaning, and shared understanding. The stories gathered through these ceremonies demonstrate the depth of our impact in ways that numbers alone never could. Whether supporting families facing hardship, helping communities celebrate lives well lived, or marking new beginnings, our work continues to strengthen connections where it is most needed.

We are here to celebrate our purpose and the way we work - the impact we can have on one another's lives. This year we saw clear evidence of that shared purpose.



IMAGE: TRAINING ROOM VALUES EXERCISE

This year our tree planting included the establishment of our own dedicated grove, creating the foundation for what we hope will be a long and meaningful partnership supporting woodland restoration and the renewal of Scotland's native forests. These trees represent not only environmental stewardship but also living memorials and celebrations of the lives and relationships we honour through our ceremonies.

We also continued to support individuals through mentoring and mutual support within the organisation. Even in quieter areas of activity, the commitment to one another's growth and wellbeing remains an important part of who we are.

Looking ahead, we aim to grow our ambition by planting more trees and sowing more seeds for the future. We want to grow our network, building relationships and collaborations with others who share our values, so that our work and our environment become more sustainable. And we want to grow ourselves, through continual learning, feedback, and improvement, ensuring that we remain compassionate, reflective, and effective in all that we do.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our celebrants and supporters. Together we continue to demonstrate that kindness, connection, and resilience are not simply ideals - they are living practices that shape real lives.

Thank you for being part of this shared work and shared story.

## Declaration

It gives me great pleasure to sign on behalf of the charity trustees.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Overend". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "David" and last name "Overend" clearly distinguishable.

David Overend, Chair

# ABOUT US

A Quiet Revolution was launched in 2016.

Since then, our charity has worked across Scotland and beyond to support individuals, couples and families with rites of passage.

This year our numbers grew and our celebrants delivered around 68 ceremonies.

With an average of 100 guests per ceremony, we might have reached 6,800 people this year.

We know we can achieve more, and reach a bigger audience when we work together.

# OUR PURPOSE

We are A Quiet Revolution a Humanist charity, registered in Scotland SC046655. As specified in our constitution, our purpose is twofold;

## 1) the advancement of the philosophical belief and the promotion of the values of Humanism

We understand Humanism as an ethical life stance and our constitution describes it using these seven key points;

- Think for ourselves about what is right and wrong, based on reason, fairness and respect for others
- Recognise the dignity of individuals
- Respect and promote freedom, democracy and human rights
- Work together for the common good
- Celebrate human achievement, progress and potential
- Find meaning, beauty, and joy in the one life we have, without the need for an afterlife
- Use empathy and compassion to make the world a better place for everyone.

## 2) the relief of those in need

...by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage by:

- Supporting the community through key life stages and promoting positive attitudes, encouraging open conversations and carrying out legal ceremonies and rites of passage around major life events from birth to death;
- Supporting women, people who identify as LGBT, BME or disabled and other minority groups to have positive experiences of life;
- Promoting positive images of ageing and encouraging active participation in life at all ages and stages, encouraging dialogue and support to address loss, grief and social isolation; and
- Providing access to creative engagement activities and retreats, health and wellbeing workshops, support events and life coaching in order to expand individuals' horizons, skills, and sense of self and provide new experiences that enhance confidence and wellbeing.

# ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE

## Annual Summary

2024-25 was A Quiet Revolution's eighth year of activity.

The charity continued to promote Humanism, deliver Humanist ceremonies and rites of passage and generate funds from donations to support those in need.

This year featured our second tree and wildflower planting. We hoped to plant a tree for every ceremony we conducted, and reached our goal as we planted 1 tree for every ceremony we conducted.

During the year, we continued our activity conducting ceremonies to mark important life events for everyone.

Featured celebrant stories in this report include our marriage training, wedding and funeral ceremonies and a new tree planting relationship with Trees for Life.

# TREES FOR LIFE

## A New Grove

This year, we took a two-pronged approach to environmental enrichment with tree planting and seed bombing.

Seed bombs were distributed through our trustees and celebrant network to bring pockets of colourful and anarchic life to the world to enrich our natural environment.

Our tree planting included a plum tree being planted locally by one of our celebrants in Bishopbriggs, with further tree planting in the Scottish Highlands, with trees being planted in a new A Quiet Revolution grove with Trees for Life. This is very likely the start of a long and meaningful relationship with Trees for Life.

If you want to check on our tree planting progress at any time you can visit our virtual grove online at [treesforlife.org.uk/groves/554870/](https://treesforlife.org.uk/groves/554870/)

These trees will help to restore the wild Caledonian forest, a rich habitat of native trees and wildlife, to the Scottish Highlands. The Trees for Life approach to woodland creation encourages natural processes and ensures that the right trees are in the right place.

Native species (Scots pine, willow, birch, rowan, hazel, alder, holly, aspen and bird cherry) are being grown from local seed, planted with care, and supported through natural regeneration.

Trees are taking root at sites like the Dundreggan Estate near Loch Ness, as well as other locations. Dundreggan has 10,000 acres of wild land and is home to ancient Caledonian pinewoods, wetlands and wildflower meadows which now provide habitats for more than 4,000 species, including red squirrel, black grouse and capercaillie.

Planting trees is a very meaningful act for us and not just a symbolic gesture. It is an outward sign of an inward conviction,

that restoration is possible, that patient work matters, and that what we nurture today will outlast us.

We do not plant trees today simply for our benefit, but so that future generations can shelter in their shade.



IMAGE: MATURE TREES AT A WEDDING VENUE

# CELEBRANT TRAINING

## Wedding Training

Over a week in February, we supported 8 people to learn about marriage rituals and hone their skills in co-creating ceremonies. At the end of the week celebrants were invited to deliver scripts they had created to the group.

Tears flowed. The training really brought home the emotional impact of the work we do putting couples and their stories at the hearts of their ceremonies.

All those who met our quality standard from this training were invited to interview to see if they would be able to join our celebrant network and we were delighted when many of them were able to do so.



*Image: Barbara Chalmers & Class of 2025, The Whisky Bond Board Room, Celebrant Training February 2025*

It was an emotional goodbye as our founder and guru Barbara Chalmers stepped back from being our lead trainer after 8 years at the helm.

Barbara may have taken a step back, but her ethos, presence and vision will still guide us - and she will still be present at Celebrant meet-ups, as she maintains her standing as a celebrant in the organisation.

## A Note from Barbara

*"14 February - Valentine's Day - was appropriately marked at the Whisky Bond with Wedding Training and heart-shaped chocolates as we put another batch of hopefuls through their paces to become Wedding Celebrants.*

*I'm still in the process of letting go with the charity. Last year I handed over the reins for the charity's development and management to the able team of James, Jude and Yva.*

*This year, I decided this would be my last round of training. I gifted my funeral and wedding training resources to the charity for the team to adopt/adapt/ignore going forward. All 4 of us played active roles over the course of the training... an easy transition, passing the baton into capable hands."*

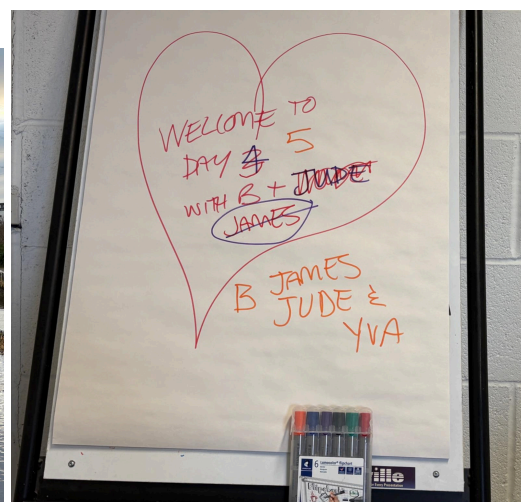


Image: Barbara Chalmers: The Whisky Bond where training took place and an amended day 5 flipchart reflecting the new make-up of the training team.

## Celebrant Development Focus

In order to maximise our inclusion this year we included a new category of affiliated celebrant, as a 'development / developing' role - to allow us to work with promising new celebrants to reach their full potential.

As a result of this new role and following the training week, the management committee supported by trustees were able to make offers to support all the attendees at the February 2025 and hopefully this will be the start of lots of long and meaningful relationships and will ultimately have a positive impact on the world.



IMAGE: BARBARA CHALMERS, FEBRUARY 2025, IN THE TRAINING ROOM

## Quality and Targets

In terms of how many ceremonies celebrants are expected to do there are no numerical 'targets' to meet. The only target we have is for quality. We believe it is important to focus on quality and creating an authentic ceremony that is personal, meaningful and comes from a genuine place of understanding people.

## Impact and Vision

Every ceremony has a major impact. And many ceremonies will impact hundreds of individuals, couples and family members, with an average of 100 guests at each ceremony, we are reaching thousands of people every single year.

We are a small charity, but we have a big vision.

## Learning and Giving back

All our celebrants make a monthly payment to support the administration of the charity and the celebrant network so that 100% of donations can go directly to further our aims.

We are always looking at how we work and how we can improve.

We have evaluation forms for those we support and a self-reflection process for celebrants to ensure we can constantly learn from our experiences and improve what we do.

# LOOKING FORWARD

## Growing Our Ambition

We want not only to make our environment more sustainable, but also our network, by connecting and collaborating with those who share our values and beliefs.

Before we look ahead, however, we must first look back. Growth begins with recognition. By reflecting on what we have achieved this year - the partnerships formed, the trees planted, the ideas sparked into action - we honour the effort and intention that brought us here.

Understanding our progress gives direction to our ambition; it shows us what works, what matters most, and where our potential lies. Looking back is not about dwelling in the past, but about grounding ourselves in it, so that the future we build is informed, purposeful, and even more impactful.

Our plan for the future;

Environmental growth – planting more trees & seeds of hope.

Growing our network – strengthening collaborations with those who share our values and beliefs.

Growing ourselves – through continual feedback, reflection, and a deep commitment to learning and improvement.

Resilience is not accidental; it is grown slowly, like roots deepening beneath the surface.

Connection does not happen by chance; it is planted, tended, and nurtured until it flourishes.

Kindness is not weakness; it is the sunlight that strengthens every living thing it touches.

# CELEBRANT ACTIVITY

## Celebrant Network Update

Our celebrant network is the life blood of our organisation, and a vital support mechanism in the community.

They share expertise and experience to establish best practice and deliver excellence.

This year we increased the number of celebrants in our network.

We believe everyone deserves a dignified ceremony.

We are so proud of the work of our celebrants.

Here is a summary of some of their activities, some of their stories and some of the ceremonies they have delivered this year.

# SUPPORTED CEREMONY

The charity supports those most in need with a free ceremony, here is one story of a charity supported ceremony from this year.

Report to the board for service conducted July 2024 by Yva McKerlich for the late deceased [name redacted].

"I was approached by a Funeral Director who I work with often to say that they had a challenging service being conducted in circumstances of poverty. The family were considering not having a celebrant or ceremony because they were struggling with costs faced and with a historical poverty of celebration of loss. The funeral director was supporting them to apply for government subsidies and after consulting with the steering group, with the support of the charity I was able to offer to conduct the service at no charge to the clients.

The background to their need comes from compounding challenges, not just the financial poverty of the whole extended family network, but a poverty of effective support for previous losses and addiction issues with drugs and alcohol across the whole family network.

My client was the mother of the deceased who was open about her own struggles with alcoholism and the impact that those had on the childhood and adult years of her daughter.

The client was very ashamed of her personal circumstances and although very grateful for my help, she didn't want to meet me face to face before the service, nor did any of the other people who were prepared to share stories of the deceased with me. The client was ashamed of where she lived, but perhaps more so of having very little to share with me that was positive. The

client eventually admitted that she thought the deceased had some learning difficulties that had gone unsupported which had made her vulnerable to childhood bullying and being led astray by anyone who showed her friendship. The deceased had spent time in young offender institutions and had been to prison as an adult too. The client admitted that the deceased could be violent even to those she loved and had burned bridges with anyone who could have helped her.

More significantly though, the deceased had suffered infant loss – she had found some stability and had children close in age, but her youngest died before reaching their first birthday and this fractured the deceased hold on life and sent her into spiralling depression. The deceased lost custody of her two older sons and never resumed a maternal relationship with them despite this loss being almost 20 years in the past.

The loss also put a huge financial strain on the deceased – although infant funerals are conducted free of charge in Scotland, that only applies to cremation and a marker headstone or burial and a marker headstone in the baby section of the cemetery meaning that the deceased would be unable to be buried alongside her son when her own time came. They couldn't cope with this idea and bought an adult lair, at considerable expense, so that she could be buried with her son. This cost was borrowed on challenging terms and was part of a pattern of debt that the deceased would never overcome.

As a celebrant, even one of very considerable experience, this ceremony presented huge challenges – it was very difficult to gather any stories about the deceased, particularly any which could be presented positively, when none of the key people were able to meet me. I had telephone calls with her mum, with her partner and on the day of the service her sister handed me some words at the graveside to be read out on her behalf. Her family gave the impression of having been often judged and of labouring under the twin hardships of poverty and addiction across the three generations that were involved in the ceremony.

Still, some stories were gathered, re-framed and presented. We treated the life of the deceased with dignity and with compassion and used music and flowers to allow everyone to participate. The graveside service was heartfelt and the depth of her struggle was acknowledged. Bridges were tentatively being built – one of her estranged sons came to the ceremony and being mentioned by name and perhaps being given an insight into her struggles had an impact because he spoke to other family members and even spent some time alone speaking to the grave after the ceremony.

Our involvement as a charitable group was very much appreciated – the client gave me chocolates and a card which read: thank you for doing this funeral. Here is a wee thank you as it was very much appreciated. You and your organisation's act of kindness will never be forgotten on behalf of our family. xx"

*Some names and minor details were changed in this report to preserve the anonymity and dignity of the deceased and their family.*

# CELEBRANT STORIES

## An Introduction

In our work we often speak about *holding space*. This annual report is one such space: a place to gather our stories and reflect on what we have created together. Our successes are not measured primarily in numbers, but in the trees we have planted, the hands we have held, and the stories we have shared in ceremonies where kindness can ripple outward.

In many ways, our work is a quiet revolution of kindness.

During the year we reflected on a deeper question: *What is the purpose of life?* For us, meaning is something we create together — through kindness, connection and shared experience. We aim to live well, help others flourish, and leave the world a little better than we found it.

We also continue to ask how we want to work. The answer remains constant: with kindness and respect, and by recognising the small victories that show we are on the right path. The stories shared throughout the year — of generosity, growth, friendship and renewal — remind us that our work unfolds through the changing seasons and through the lives we touch.

So what is our metric at the end of the year?

Our stories are our true metric — the proof that connection, compassion and resilience sustain us.

We gather each year to celebrate our shared purpose and the impact we have on one another's lives. Remembering the stories of Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer, we are reminded

that together we are more than the sum of our stories, and more than the sum of these seasons.



IMAGE: SEPTEMBER 2025, IN HIS ROLE AS MENTOR, JAMES OAKLEY SPOTTED AN INCLUSIVE HUMANIST MESSAGE AT DAVID SIMPSON'S FIRST WEDDING CEREMONY

# BARBARA CHALMERS

## A year in pictures

I conducted the usual delightful mix of weddings. Kibble Palace glasshouse on a boiling day in July.

A Scottish-Portuguese joining that delighted visitors to Scotland and tested my language skills.

My first encounter with a baby-nanny who took control during the ceremony for the young parents. Gorgeous venues: the historic Neidpath Castle in Peebles and the arty Dovecote Studio in Edinburgh!

Nia & Matt at Kibble Palace: a sweltering day for a hothouse wedding!



Grant & Nathalia: offering a Portuguese welcome to celebrate a love match stretching from Paisley to Petropolis, Brazil.



A sudden death for a big personality with a packed house at the crematorium; a lively memorial at Tynecastle football stadium and a quiet funeral for an elderly man spanned a classic spectrum of needs for saying goodbye. Sometimes, the funeral is just too soon and a memorial months later gives family another chance at honouring their dead. Sometimes, a life is cut short too soon and invites an outpouring of collective grief.

Sometimes, death is expected, almost welcome and the goodbye can be sweeter and less painful. We're there for every need.

Funeral memorial at Tynecastle Park, Hibs football club's sacred ground honouring Heather and treasured childhood memories of Saturdays out with her dad



*Images: Barbara Chalmers*

# JAMES OAKLEY

## Annual Summary: Ceremonies & Mentoring

During this reporting period, 8 wedding ceremonies were conducted across a range of venues in central Scotland.

My ceremonies reflected a wide variety of couples and styles, but they had some things in common - they were all very personal - tailored to the couples style, story and preferences, all very inclusive and celebratory and all deeply rooted in the people, the stories and the journey of the couple.

This year it was a real pleasure to find myself in so many different types of spaces, Community venues like Kirkintilloch Miners & Social Club, grand spaces like The National Piping Centre and Carlowrie Castle, imposing historical spaces like the former church Coats in Paisley, outdoor spaces like Mugdock Country Park as well as traditional wedding venues, like The Busby Hotel in Clarkston where I have conducted many wonderful marriage ceremonies over the years.

The impact of my ceremonies can clearly be seen in the feedback from my couples;

*John , married on 31/05/2025 "What can I say? In the lead-up to wedding day, James was able to keep us both informed and prepared about what was required from us before the ceremony with regards to the administrative side of things and delivered to us, in plenty of time, a preview of his 'script' giving us the opportunity to make minor changes and additions, of which there was little!*

*He had meticulously included every stage of the ceremony, from start to finish - including readings and music - and this was calming and reassuring!*

*On the wedding day itself, James (also in the kilt!) met with us beforehand and took us through the motions before delivering a*

*warm, meaningful, funny and touching ceremony that was loved and commented upon by all of our guests.*

*Throughout the entire process James was approachable and professional and we greatly appreciated his masterful approach and knowledge.*

*Our wedding day went without a hitch and that is largely, in part, thanks to James; choosing him to officiate at such a special day."*

*From Stephen , married on 11/10/2024 "We were absolutely thrilled with James for our wedding last October. From the very first meeting, he brought a perfect blend of warmth, professionalism, and genuine care that instantly put us at ease. He took the time to truly understand our story and what mattered most to us, and it showed beautifully in the ceremony he crafted.*

*On the day itself, he struck the ideal balance between heartfelt and light hearted, creating an atmosphere that felt deeply personal and incredibly special. Several of our guests commented on how authentic and memorable the ceremony was."*

*This year's experience reminds me that meaningful ceremonies do not depend on the scale or prestige of the venue, but on the quality of preparation and the relationships built with couples to understand how to give real presence to their story.*

*I look forward to working with more couples in the year ahead and continuing my ongoing reflective practice, also coming to terms with the fact that after a decade of practice, my future growth is more about refinement, creativity and mentorship - sharing experience with newer celebrants while continuing to reflect and evolve personally.*

# JUDE WILLIAMS

## *What is 'A Quiet Revolution'?*

### 1. A queer invitation.

Honouring every creed, ethnicity and gender is fundamental to A Quiet Revolution = my working practice. In a moment in the world when the rights of queer folks - the world over - are being questioned, erased and the hate amplified - I wish and want to celebrate love in its multifarious textures.

It's my job as a cis-white woman to do my homework in the areas that are 'not my wheel house'. I adjusted my intake forms a while back - to never assume gender - eg any bride and groom chat - but to invite folks to self identify their chosen gender and make no assumptions about anyone in the wedding party - ie the best man - but best people.

The choreography of many weddings speaks to old models of embedded patriarchy - ie the familiar choice of the father 'giving the bride away' to the groom - and only the men getting a voice in the speeches.

Don't get me wrong - if a couple wants to emulate familiar filmic poetry ie Steve Martin in 'Father of the Bride' then by all means - have at it. And I've had so many welcome lightbulbs go off when I suggest that both parents could walk you in - both parties can have an entrance - you could even walk in together!! [shock horror!]

The deeper invitation with queer weddings is to examine the gendered assumptions in all weddings. And that's an invitation I will, always, whole-heartedly accept!

### 2. Home from Home / Join the Dots / people, place and possibility

As a 15 year resident in Garnethill, Glasgow - I live amidst a curious melting pot of creativity, cultural diversity and an area steeped in activism. I've been living with courage, community, creativity and connection as my compass for a while. As someone deeply inspired and fired by the brilliant work of Adrienne Marie Brown - author of Emergent Strategy - which outlines a framework for creating social change by adapting to, rather than fighting, constant change, utilising principles from nature (biomimicry) to build resilient, interconnected communities.

In the summer of 2024 - in response to the racist attacks in the UK - I co-founded Home from Home - a free community event in Garnethill, Glasgow; part ceilidh, part potluck, with the key endeavour to *strengthen joyful circles of connection in our community*.

We need each other - and to flip Maslow's hierarchy of needs on its head once in a while - meeting our neighbours in joy and transcendence. It's growing - and from it Join the Dots has emerged - a 2 year project with 3 other Garnetbank artist-mothers to join the dots - between people, place and possibility.

And it's for sure a love letter to my dad - a man who sought and brought connection to his every breath and in the fibre of his being. I remember a conversation we had on a car journey when I was madly frustrated with the inequalities of the world and he said - you have to trust - trust what? That there are good people, doing good things in a good way the world over - we just need to join the dots.

# YVA McKERLICH

## Weddings Summary

Weddings came to me this year as recommendations from friends, the network and former funeral clients - this gave all these occasions an additional level of meaning for me, that I was not picked at random, but known and trusted and a deeper part of their lives and a part of how they mark their life milestones.

Joanna and Gordon had been a couple for 15 years with 2 children, both of whom had their spoken roles to play in the service. It was a very child heavy gathering - which was wonderful and it was exactly as the couple wanted it - a real family occasion.

Rebecca and Nathan came to me as I have conducted 3 funerals for Rebecca's close family – both of her grandparents and one 'auntie' who is really a close cousin of her mum, but always called auntie.

The wedding was held in the hotel in St Andrews which was special to her grandparents and felt very significant since there were only a dozen guests all of whom were close family. And two dog ring bearers! This is Rebecca's feedback on my services;

*Myself and my family have worked with Yva now on 4 occasions -both weddings and funerals. Each service she has done for us has been beyond exceptional. She takes great time getting to know those she's celebrating and makes each service personal to them. Yva will always hold a very special place in my heart and I am forever grateful and thankful for not only her amazing services but guidance and support during both the most difficult and happiest times in my life. - Rebecca Liddell*

Vicki and Kieron came to me as Vicki was a former funeral client - I conducted her Mum's service and we built in mention of both of her deceased parents while crafting the service and lit a candle for them as the ceremony began. This was the wedding with the most ritual / ceremonial elements that I have written – we had the candle for remembrance, we had poetic tributes from both bride and groom's children from previous relationships, we had family involved in the handfasting and other family involved in the quach ceremony. It was a truly happy day. This is Vicki's feedback on my services;

"I met Yva back in 2020 when I asked her to conduct my Mum's funeral... From the first meeting we knew that she was the right fit for us. The ceremony was exactly what we wanted - full of love, memories, and laughter. Yva knows the balance to strike in this situation and she managed it beautifully.

When 5 years later I was getting married, there was nobody else that I would have chosen to conduct our wedding ceremony. The ceremony was perfect from start to finish. Yva really captured the essence of us as individuals and as a couple, and it shone through the full ceremony.

Many people commented how much they enjoyed the day - saying that they found it to be so relaxed, full of love and just so 'us'...Yva will be the person we go to for all celebrations going forward - she's part of our story."

## Funeral Summary

Yva conducted a Supported Ceremony this year and there are details on page 16 of this year's annual report.

# JANIS MARSHALL REILLY

## Learning, Giving and Growing

This year I have been thinking a lot about my own impact on the world and how I can make the world a better place. I attended Climate Literacy Training through Argyll Countryside Trust in 2025. With the environment in mind I hope we will be able to get an electric car soon - though I do love to walk for short journeys whenever possible.

At home we continue to cultivate the fruit trees in the garden with 4 apple trees, a pear tree and two plum trees - and grow herbs such as rosemary and bay. I plan to add more bushes and trees to the garden this year and wildflowers also. Home growing is the closest to net zero we can ever be and I also think it does taste better too!

In terms of being a Celebrant, there are always points of learning. This year, one particularly poignant moment was to creatively adapt one wedding ceremony to make sure that a bride and groom could make their declarations and vows in front of the bride's terminally ill mother.

The Bride and Groom had organised the wedding for their back garden so that Mum could be there, but she was too ill to even come down the stairs from her flat on the day. She was too weak to speak - but she was awake and held her own partner's hand - definitely aware that she was seeing her daughter marry. Such moments are a lot of responsibility and very touching / even upsetting - and though nervous about the idea of doing this, in the moment, it felt calm and just 'right'.

I think this illustrates just how important it is to have an approach that puts empathy for others and couples beliefs first - and it was a real privilege to be able to make this happen.

This year I delivered 5 wedding ceremonies, all so different and wonderful. here are impact statements from two of these ceremonies that help to illustrate the importance our caring and kind approach, one of which may have been the first wedding ever on Inverary Pier;

*“Janis did an amazing job as our wedding celebrant in May 2025. When we first met up with her to discuss our wedding we knew right away we'd be in good hands. On our big day we had an outdoor ceremony on Inveraray Pier at Loch Fyne. Combining professionalism with wit and humour, Janis braved the elements and conducted a wonderful ceremony which we all enjoyed.”*



IMAGE: JANIS MARSHALL REILLY WEDDING FLOWERS AT INVERARY PIER

*“Janis was an absolute joy to work with and honestly, I believe she was one of the key elements that made our wedding day so special and successful.*

*Our wedding happened under bittersweet circumstances – we were simultaneously taking care of a terminally ill loved one – and Janis handled the process with exemplary care, compassion and sensitivity. We felt truly taken care of and safe.*

*On the day itself, that compassionate care was amplified when we most needed it. She was not only a consummate professional, who clearly loves and knows her job, but hilarious and warm. The people loved her! And so did we. We couldn't be more grateful.”*

# CORA BISSETT

## A view from the Training room

"I did the wedding celebrant training with AQR last year and found it incredibly invigorating, well thought out and I think it has equipped me well for this new venture in my life.

I have learned just how much people appreciate you listening to their story, and shaping it for them. I record and take notes during the meeting ( with their consent) and so have a great level of detail. People always seem amazed at how 'well' you know them! But it is really about being attentive.

I think the training really helped us to understand ritual, and the power of ritual, and how to offer lots of options to people. Many couples just don't know where to start and so they say they feel very comforted by someone giving them options but also allowing them freedom and their own ideas once they get a sense of what they want.



In my early ceremonies guests have told me they loved the pace and tone with which I spoke. They loved the warmth and really truly felt my affection and respect for the couple. It didn't feel in any way generic. I think the training really helped us to cultivate that.

My understanding of Humanism and Humanist issues has deepened and I have started to listen to lots more humanist podcasts, and started a Humanist discussion course to delve deeper into how humanists approach some of the biggest moral questions in life."

# GOVERNANCE

Our charity is governed by a Constitution.

This is available on our website.

## Trustees

Our Trustees all share A Quiet Revolution's Humanist approach to the promotion of equality and diversity. We aim to provide empathetic, compassionate support to people who wish to shape and create their own rites of passage and life experiences.

We are grateful to our trustees for their support as they volunteer their time and insights with philosophical discussion, guidance and governance.

We ended the year as we started with five trusty trustees still in place;

### David Overend, Chair



David is a lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Edinburgh, where he is director of the MA in Interdisciplinary Studies with Edinburgh Futures Institute. He has a background in theatre directing and research and has published several books on contemporary performance.

David has previous experience serving on boards and committees in the arts and education sectors.

David moved to Glasgow as an undergraduate student in 2000 and has lived here ever since, recently moving to Lenzie. He has a longstanding interest and affinity with humanist philosophy and was married in a humanist ceremony in 2015.

## Rikki McKerlich, Treasurer



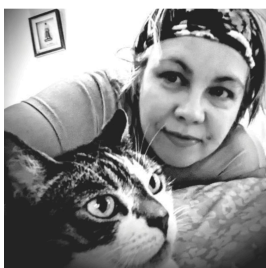
Rikki is a dedicated and experienced champion for children's welfare. He's spent the past 17 years working both on the frontlines as a social worker and in leadership as a manager, always striving to empower individuals and families.

Rikki has deep expertise in supporting vulnerable young people, honed through his years in the field and also working as a qualified Practice Educator. Outside of work, Rikki enjoys a diverse range of pursuits, including fitness, meditation, reading, and even beekeeping! He's also a proud cat dad to two adorable ragdolls. Rikki is also an enthusiastic (albeit not always successful) gardener.



## Murdoch Rodgers, Secretary

Murdie joined the charity in December 2021. A retired television producer and journalist, during his career in television, Murdie worked for the BBC on award-winning films (BAFTA, Royal Television Society, Foreign Press Assoc, British Journalism Awards) including investigations into the care industry and historical child abuse. He believes he was fortunate to have worked with some great people who shared his passion for using the medium to expose injustice and the conceit of the powerful. He's a former Children's Panel Member and remains committed to the principle that everyone should enjoy the right to be treated with dignity and respect in life and death.

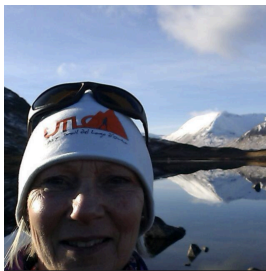


## Brenda Bradley, Trustee

Brenda has lots of empathy, she is a qualified CBT therapist and loves to help people.

In the past Brenda has used two of our celebrants to mark life events, for her wedding and for the funeral of her mother. She has always found the approach of a celebrant and the way we celebrate people as something that can be vital to create a meaningful and personal ceremony. This approach sits close to her heart.

### Fiona Maxwell, Trustee



Fiona has experience in a variety of fields including healthcare, adult education and the voluntary sector. For the last six years she has worked in the third sector as the Scottish representative for a charity which supports family health and wellbeing, connectedness and bonding through shared reading.

Fiona is an outdoors enthusiast and is interested in how being in nature can support good mental and physical well being.

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

## Annual summary

### 2024-2025

*Charity accounts are independently audited and filed with OSCR, the charities regulator. 100% of all our donations go directly towards our charitable objectives, the running costs of the charity are paid for by regular contributions from our Celebrants.*

Total receipts: £17,677

Total payments: £15,167

Balance at year end: £3,333

Surplus/Deficit: £2,510

At the end of the reporting year, our balance is at £3,333, which is in excess of our reserves policy.

We use 100% of our donations for our charitable purposes.

Donation income and Expenditure in 24/25

This year we had donations of £1717.

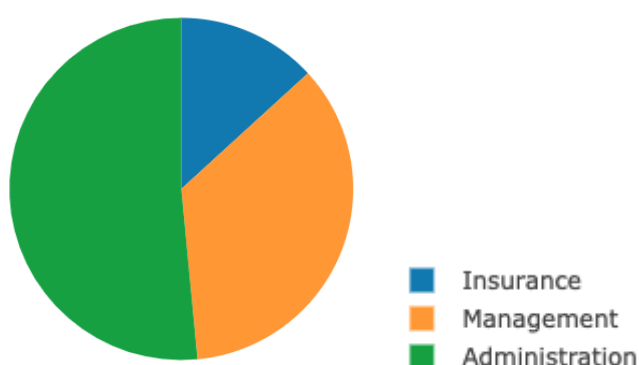
That means we are committed to spending £1,717 on our charitable goals;

- Tree planting, with at least one tree for every ceremony we deliver
- Environmental enrichment, seeds, flowers and little acts of kindness
- Ceremonies for those most in need

Celebrant Contributions fund the running of the charity and our affiliated network of celebrants Humanist Celebrant Scotland

Here is a chart to give an indication of how that money is spent.

Operating costs breakdown; this year £6,200 was paid by celebrants to support the charity and the celebrant network, here is a visual guide as to how that money was spent;



## Reserves Policy

- A Quiet Revolution receives funds from celebrant contributions, celebrant training, donations from the public and donations from those who request Humanist Ceremonies from our celebrants as well as applicable project grants and funding.
- The overall financial position of the charity is strong.
- As there are very few regular outgoings for this financial year the level of reserves is set at £100 to maximise our potential charitable contribution.
- This reserves policy is subject to annual review. It is not a static figure, it is actively monitored and reviewed annually.

# Donated Services & Facilities

All our charity Trustees donate their time to ensure our governance and give guidance on philosophical matters.

Celebrants work from home so there are no regular office costs, (sometimes we hire spaces for workshops, training and meetings.)

Celebrants regularly donate their time and space at monthly meetings to further our thoughts, including three of us who donated our time for a day of tree planting.

Like a lot of small charities we thrive on goodwill and kindness and we are always looking for ways to pay that forward.

# Contact information



A QUIET REVOLUTION

Scottish Charity Number: SCO46655

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