

LEICESTER AREA QUAKER MEETING

Annual Report of Trustees 2022

Final

Agreed at Trustees Meeting 07.09.23 Minute 23.24

Adopted Area Meeting 24.09.23 Minute 23.73

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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 five times in 2022 and minutes were kept. Discussions have included regular verbal reports on each Local Meeting, property maintenance and repairs, a bequest, employment, administration of Area Meeting finances and safeguarding.

A review was undertaken of the policy documents required to meet Charity Commission requirements. A *Conflict of Interest* policy and a *Business Risk Assessment Management* policy were required. The *Conflict of Interest* policy was approved by Trustees at the September meeting and adopted by Area meeting at the November Meeting. A BRAM 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. 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.

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 2022 we monitored our Area Meeting budget at each Trustees meeting. As the response to the pandemic has continued there has been a reluctance to attend events, conferences and training courses. Less of the budgeted amount has been spent than anticipated.

The value of investments with Rathbone Greenbank and savings in the Hinckley and Rugby 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, continues to be appreciated. The 2022 accounts which will be submitted to the Charity Commission were examined externally by CAP Plus.

Meeting Houses and Stewardship

Our Meeting houses have been open throughout the year and several Meetings held as a blended meeting. The impact of the fall in lettings continues to be noticed. Quinquennial reviews were held at Rugby and Oakham Meeting houses. Both reports stated that the properties are being well maintained with a few minor repairs and redecoration required. Both Meetings are undertaking to complete the necessary works. Leicester Meeting holds regular meetings of the property committee and have funds set aside for maintenance and repair. Following a fire inspection, a wooden storage shed at the rear of Drayton House has been replaced by Drayton House with a fire proof scooter store.

4. Spiritual Life of Leicester Area Quaker Meeting in 2022.

Spiritual Life of Leicester Area Quaker Meeting in 2022

Leicester Area Quaker Meeting held six Meetings for Worship for Business in 2022 and the average attendance was around 20 Friends and attenders. 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 meeting 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 5 Friends into membership of the Society in 2022), 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 2021, which was accepted at a properly convened AGM. 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.

At the beginning of 2022 we were holding Area Meetings online due to the Covid 19 pandemic. It was decided to move to having blended meetings and our meeting in Loughborough in May 2022 was the first we had held as a blended meeting. Local meetings went to great lengths to make sure the technology was in place and blended Area Meetings have now become the norm, although many Friends have come back to meeting in person.

In March we sent a donation and a statement of support to the Leicester Ukrainian Association.

We were asked to consider the use of the term "Overseer", which we have done and our local meetings have now stopped using the word and Area Meeting has adopted the alternative "Pastoral Friends".

In August one of our members was married to a non member in a Quaker wedding at Bourneville Meeting House.

In September we set up an Area Meeting Link Group to consider and organize Area Meeting-wide activities of a social nature.

During 2022 Quaker Life appointed an East Midlands Development Worker, and this was Sarah Shaw from Leicester AM. Sarah set up many helpful online groups to create opportunities for Friends from Leicester AM, Notts and Derby AM and Lincolnshire AM to meet and discuss and work together.

Sustainability

During 2022 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: writing to local MPs about COP 26 and loss and damage payments; joining in the campaign by Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire to persuade local authority pension funds to disinvest from fossil fuels, taking direct action on the topic of loss and damage at a protest at Ratcliffe Power Station; creating and displaying a banner on climate justice from the meeting house balcony; All Age Worship vigils by candlelight; an All Age event at the meeting house for the whole of AM; work on the meeting houses, such as planting more trees in the gardens; undertaking a review of the sustainability of the meeting house; improving the Meeting's plastic recycling; joining in the online meetings of the East Midlands Quaker Climate Group, initiated by our Local Development Worker. These reports reflect the work done by the Meetings as a Meeting and when it is considered that even more work is done by individuals and families outside the Meetings, the record is impressive indeed.

Main achievements

2022 was the year in which Leicester Area Meeting made a recovery from the impact of the dreadful years of the Covid pandemic. Meetings returned to meeting in person and Covid precautions in our Meetings were gradually lifted. Income started flowing again as hirers returned to using our meeting houses. 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 world has been changed by the pandemic and the new, online aspect to our meetings is problematic for some Friends and welcome for others, but we are moving on together as best we can.

Membership of the Area Meeting

At the end of 2022 there were 205 members, of whom 1 child, 136 women, and 68 men. There were also 6 members sojourning with us from other Yearly Meetings. And there were 104 attenders, of whom 13 were children, 48 women and 43 men.

5. General Information

The Trustees in 2022 were:

Arreggar, Bridget – AM representative
Dnes, Jenny - AM Treasurer
Deane, James – Leicester representative (Safeguarding Trustee)
Fishenden, Anne – AM representative
Ludlow Hilary – Clerk to Trustees, Oakham representative
Matthew, Nick – Rugby representative
Walker, David – Loughborough representative

Address: Friends Meeting House, Queen's Road, Leicester. LE2 1WP

Officers of the Area meeting: Julian Rees Clerk; Jenny Dnes Treasurer
Beth Gaylard – Safe guarding Co-ordinator
Bankers: Lloyds

Building Society : Hinckley and Rugby

Investment portfolio: Rathbone Greenbank

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

Signed: Hilary R. Ludlow

Date: 2nd October 2023

Hilary R Ludlow Clerk to Trustees

6. Financial Report

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

Overview

The finances of Leicester Area Meeting remained healthy at the end of 2022, with cash funds of £322,183 (an increase of £16,315 compared with the end of 2021). This sum includes the funds held in all our building society accounts. However, 2022 was a difficult year for investments, and the market value of these fell from £222,105 at the end of 2021 to £184,550 at the end of 2022, a fall of £37,555.

When the cash funds and the value of the investments are combined, the total assets at the end of 2022 were £506,773, a fall of £21,200 compared with the end of 2021.

Income

Contributions

The contributions appear to have fallen by over £14,000 between 2021 and 2022. However, two factors need to be taken into account.

- The 2021 accounts run from 10th November 2020 to 31st December 2021 and therefore include nearly months of contributions from 2020, which totalled £9,862.
- Due to a timing issue at the end of 2022, the 2022 accounts exclude £6,752 of contributions from members of Leicester meeting from 2022 (which will be included in 2023).

Once these two issues are factored in, there was an increase of £1,797 in contributions between 2021 and 2022.

Grants and legacies

Loughborough meeting was left a legacy of £37,312 in 2021. This was a one off and there is therefore a substantial difference in the total for this category between 2021 and 2022.

Lettings income (hirings)

Income from lettings recovered well during 2022 as our meeting houses opened up again after the Covid lockdowns.

Insurance claim and grant income

We made a successful insurance claim for loss of income during the Covid lockdowns in 2021 and received a total of £24,126 in early 2022. This was divided between Leicester meeting (£19,831) and Rugby meeting (£4,295). Leicester Meeting also received a grant of £2667 from Leicester City Council.

Gift Aid

The process for collecting gift aid from HMRC changed when we became a registered charity in 2020. We now make one claim as an Area Meeting and the funds are then divided proportionately between the meetings. There was no claim made for 2021 during 2022. However, there will be a claim for 2021 and 2022 during 2023.

Expenditure**Meeting Houses**

There were no major building projects for any of our meeting houses during 2022 and expenditure in this category was mainly for repairs and maintenance. In addition, Leicester Meeting purchased new chairs, a new mower and a new cooker for the meeting house.

Conferences and training

Expenditure on conferences and training remained lower than in previous years, mainly as a result of most events being held online.

Donations

Total donations were £15,179. These were mainly to Quaker organisations, including Britain Yearly Meeting. Area Meeting continues to give £1,800 a year to support local asylum seekers. This is divided equally between Leicester City of Sanctuary and the Leicester branch of the Red Cross. A report from the Asylum Seekers' Committee can be found in Appendix C of this report. This committee monitors how this donation is spent on behalf of Area Meeting.

Children's Bursary Fund and Care Fund

There were no payments made from the Children's Bursary Fund this year, but we made two payments from the Care Fund totalling £253. The Children's Bursary Fund still stands in theory at £1802.30 and the Care Fund at £29,466.42. 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 our investments with Rathbone Greenbank had been rising steadily in recent years, with an increase of £18,271 in 2021 to £215,451. However, the Russian invasion of Ukraine early in 2022 had a major impact on global stability and the costs of energy. These changes resulted in instability in the stock market and the value of investments became volatile, particularly in the early months of 2022.

The year ended with some recovery for the Area Meeting's investments, but overall their value fell by £37,555 during the year to £178,661. However, dividends continued to be paid and we received a total of £2,761 of income from this source.

Trustees monitored the situation carefully and Rathbone Greenbank, our investment managers, provided regular updates. 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.

Signed: J. Dnes.....

Date: 7th Sept. 2023

Jenny Dnes Area Meeting Treasurer.

APPENDIX A: Accounts Year End December 31 2022

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 2022.

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 14/09/2023

John O'Brien MSc, FCCA, FCIE

Employee of Community Accounting Plus

**Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In
Britain
Receipts & payments account
for the year to 31 December 2022**

2021			2022
Total		Unrestricted	Total
funds		Funds	Funds
£		£	£
	Receipts		
663	Bank interest	735	735
42965	Contributions & collections	28148	28148
2158	Dividends	2893	2893
7031	Gift aid receipts	-	-
43812	Grants & legacies	3667	3667
17041	Hirings	33650	33650
94	Sales	87	87
-	Insurance claim	24126	24126
3582	Other income	-	-
<u>117346</u>	Total receipts	<u>93306</u>	<u>93306</u>
	Payments		
19084	Wages, NI & pension	20318	20318
158	Bank charges	72	72
543	Conferences, training, BYM	963	963
731	Library & literature	603	603
302	Office holders expenses	81	81
152	Overseers and out reach	180	180
83	Printing ,marketing & office costs	153	153
26558	Donations given	15179	15179
6469	Legal & professional	4908	4908
420	Furniture & equipment	6587	6587
4781	Insurance	5068	5068
1241	IT & website	1351	1351
30982	Major works & repairs	6152	6152
2014	Materials & supplies	2900	2900
4123	Other support costs	4850	4850
389	Room hire	989	989
2853	Utilities	5453	5453
2185	Gardens	1172	1172
106	Sundry	12	12
<u>103174</u>	Total payments	<u>76991</u>	<u>76991</u>
14172	Net receipts/(payments)	16315	16315
291696	Opening transfers	-	-
-	Cash funds at start of this period	305868	305868
<u>305868</u>	Cash funds at end of this period	<u>322183</u>	<u>322183</u>

**Leicester Area Quaker Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends In Britain
(Quakers)
Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 December 2022**

2021		2022
	£	
	Cash assets	
305868	Bank accounts	322183
<u>305868</u>		<u>322183</u>
	Other monetary assets	
215451	Investments :Area Rathbone Greenbank (Area General)	178661
6654	Investments: CCLA (Area general)	5889
<u>222105</u>		<u>184550</u>
	Assets retained for the charity's own use	
	General equipment.	
	Liabilities	
(1071)	Creditors	3 (804)
<u>(1071)</u>		<u>(804)</u>
	In addition the charity holds functional property comprising three meeting houses with insured values as follows:	
2739174	Meeting House Leicester	2739174
704464	Meeting House Rugby	704464
919393	Meeting House Oakham	919393
<u>4363031</u>		<u>4363031</u>

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

Signed J. Dnes
Jennifer Dnes, Area Meeting Treasurer

Dated 7th Sept. 2023

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	61003	3967	(4855)	182	60297
Leicester General	97544	62647	(56187)	-	104004
Loughborough	55838	4997	(2351)	(160)	58324
Oakham General	7087	3756	(5221)	(22)	5600
Rugby General	84396	17939	(8377)	-	93958
	305868	93306	(76991)	-	322183

The transfers to the Area General Fund cover shared expenses.

3. Creditors

	£
Independent Examination	804
	804

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 2022 by Meeting

Leicester Area Quaker Meeting Receipts and Payments account by meeting for the year to 31 December 2022

	Area	Leicester	Loughborough	Oakham	Rugby	Total
Receipts						
Bank interest & gain on investments	510	22	9		194	735
Contributions and collections	696	11652	4988	3151	7661	28148
Dividends	2761	132				2893
Gift aid receipts						0
Grants & legacies		3667				3667
Hirings		27292		605	5753	33650
Other income		19831			4296	24127
Sales		52			35	87
Total receipts	3967	62647	4997	3756	17939	93306
Payments						
Wages, NI and pension	0	20318	0	0	0	20318
Bank charges		72				72
Conferences, training, BYM	415	475			73	963
Library and literature		298	130	61	114	603
Office holders' expenses	13	68				81
Overseers and outreach	75		25		80	180
Printing, adverts, photocopying, media	91	42	20			153
Donations given	2803	10770	821	235	550	15179
Legal and professional	933	3325	0	0	650	4908
Furniture & equipment		6317			270	6587
Insurance		3200	124	908	837	5068
IT and website costs	526	250	174	197	204	1351
Major works						0
Materials & supplies		2731	68	80	21	2900
Other support costs (cleaning)		1756		484	2610	4850
Repairs & maintenance		3538		2280	334	6152
Room hire			990			990
Utilities		2613		976	1863	5453
Sundry					12	12
Gardens		412			760	1172
Total payments	4855	56186	2351	5221	8377	76990
Transfers	182		(160)	(22)		
Net in/out	(706)	6461	2487	(1488)	9562	16316
Opening balance at bank	61003	97544	55838	7087	84396	305868
Closing balance	60297	104004	58325	5598	93959	322183
Closing balance held in bank accounts as:	8380	102524	51089	5598	77833	245423
	51918	1480	7237		16125	76760
	60297	104004	58325	5598	93959	322183

APPENDIX C: Report from Asylum Seekers Committee

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.