

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Ireland, Bessbrook Preparative Meeting

Annual Report & Accounts for year ended 31st
December 2023

Bessbrook Preparative Meeting

Trustees (at 31st December 2023)

Nigel R Hampton

Edmund J A Harvey

Lesley Burney

Registered Address

c/o Nigel R Hampton

7 Glen Road

Ballyward

Castlewellan

BT31 9QT

Charity number

NIC 107084

Bankers

Bank of Ireland

Website

<http://www.bessbrookmeeting.org>

Trustees' Report for year ended 31st December 2023

Introduction

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and in line with the guidance produced by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Constitution and governance

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Ireland, Bessbrook Preparative Meeting is governed by its governing document which was agreed by the Preparative Meeting on 4th February 2018. The Meeting was registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 4th June 2018.

The Trustees, of whom there should be not less than two, are appointed at the Annual General Meeting. They are appointed for a period of up to three years and are eligible for re-appointment for a further two terms. Trustees who served during the year ending 31st December 2021 were as follows:

Nigel R Hampton (Clerk of Trustees)

Edmund J A Harvey

Lesley Burney

The Trustees are responsible for the policies, activities and assets of the charity. No Trustee received any remuneration for services as a member of the Board of Trustees and the charity has no employees.

The Trustees have put in place a data protection policy and a child protection policy, both of which are reviewed annually.

Purposes of the charity

Bessbrook Preparative Meeting is established by Lurgan Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland. It is primarily a Meeting for Worship that practises in accordance with the principles of the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers.

We are based in a Meeting House at Bessbrook near Newry.

The purpose of our charity, as set out in our governing document, is the advancement of the general religious purposes of the Religious Society of Friends by the following means, in so far as they are exclusively charitable:

- i. Strengthening the Christian understanding and religious development of the Quaker meeting both in the geographical area of the Preparative Meeting and beyond;
- ii. Contributing financially and practically to the relief of suffering at home and abroad;
- iii. Providing for the pastoral care of individual Members and Attenders including assistance to those in need

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[Our activities during 2023](#)

Our Meeting continues to meet weekly in a pleasant family like atmosphere in the presence of God.

We miss the presence of our dear Friend – Ross Chapman. After worshipping at Bessbrook for many years – he felt he was no longer able to attend due to his age and ill health. He is a great loss to Bessbrook Meeting as he had a superb knowledge of Quaker practice.

This year we welcomed three Friends to Bessbrook. They are David and Olive Hobson and Dawn Marie Rafferty. All three transferred their membership to Bessbrook Meeting from other Meetings.

We had to ask for advice when we discovered a number of dead bats in the upstairs balcony. Two people with a knowledge of bats visited our Meeting House and were able to explain what had occurred. Bats are protected species by law, and we have made sure that bats can live safely in our roof space.

We also received notice that our Meeting House is a Listed Building and any building works will have to be approved before taking place.

Sadly, we have to report the death of our Friend Eilis Manning. Eilis was a highly respected and well thought of Member of our Meeting.

Nigel Hampton continues to maintain our compliance with the requirements of the Ireland Yearly Meeting Child Safeguarding Policy.

Austin Bonner read the Advices on the ‘Making of Wills etc’.

[Public Benefit](#)

The trustees of Bessbrook Preparative Meeting are pleased to confirm that they have complied with their duty to have regard to the public benefit requirement statutory guidance of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Our public benefit has been demonstrated in a number of ways over the past year:

- We hold regular Meeting for Worship every Sunday morning and these Meetings are open to members of the public as well as our own members and regular attenders – these Meetings provide spiritual nourishment and deepen the Christian experience and understanding of those who attend;
- Using legacy funds that have been left to the Meeting in the past, we provide financial support to those in need within our Meeting;
- We make annual donations to Quaker Charities and other charities as agreed by our Members.

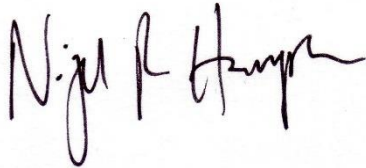
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[Financial Review](#)

Our financial statement for the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 is attached to this report and shows that at 31st December 2023 we had balances in our General Account of £17,334.09 and in our Property Account of £2,506.82.

[Declaration](#)

This report was approved at the Annual General Meeting on 4th February 2024 and is signed on behalf of trustees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel R Hampton', is written over a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp or watermark.

Nigel R. Hampton
Clerk of Trustees