

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Ireland, Ulster Quarterly Meeting Annual Report & Accounts for year ended 31 January 2024

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, Ulster Quarterly Meeting is governed by its governing document which was agreed by the Meeting on 15th February 2020. The Meeting was registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 19th April 2021 with registration number NIC 108015.

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 January 2024 were as follows:

Janet M Pritchard (clerk of Trustees), Helen F Boyd, W Paul Sinton

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 Meeting has put in place a data protection policy, based on guidelines from Ireland Yearly Meeting, which is reviewed regularly.

Purposes of the charity

Ulster Quarterly Meeting is a Meeting for Worship of the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland that practises in accordance with the principles of the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers.

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 in the geographical area of Northern Ireland;
- 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.

At 31st December 2023 we had a total of 650 Members (a net decrease of 3 on the previous year).

Our activities during 2023

Quarterly Meetings were held three times with representation from each Monthly Meeting present each time. The three monthly meetings reported to Quarterly Meeting that all their Annual duties had been carried out.

- Committee reports :

- Travel and Extension Fund received income from the Jessie Cairns Bequest (managed by Ulster Friends Trustees Ltd on behalf of Ulster QM), the Thomas Wainwright bequest and the Margaret Allen bequest. No grants were made during the year.
- The Moyallon Centre; A wide range of groups continue to use the centre, some of them returning after previous visits. The committee aims to keep fees economical for the groups, yet generating enough income to maintain the upkeep of the centre.
- Senior and Junior Moyallon residential Camps were held in the Moyallon Centre in June and July. The camps are not exclusively for young Quakers and campers are encouraged to bring a friend if they are worried about coming on their own. These camps help to encourage the development of a Christian faith among the young attendees.
- The Ulster Quarterly Meeting Education Committee gave small grants to 26 children attending Friends' School Lisburn. and local secondary schools in the Grange and Richhill area. Twenty young Friends in third level education also received grants. A gift of up to £6,000 was approved for Friends' School Lisburn towards providing a counselling service.
- The Archives Committee received a few enquiries relating to documents held in the archives over the year from members of the public. Most of these were dealt with by referral to the online Dublin and Lisburn archives on the Find My Past website. Two Quaker documents, held by PRONI, were selected to be showcased among their 100 most treasured documents, for their centenary.
- The Property Fund receives income from investments made following the sale of Portadown Meeting House. During the year a grant of £5000 was made to support the renovation of one of our Meeting Houses.

Looking forward

We look forward to God's continued blessing on our Meetings in 2024 and we hope to see growth in Christian understanding and spiritual experience in all our Meetings.

Public Benefit

The trustees of Ulster Quarterly 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 ensured that our Meetings hold regular Meetings for Worship 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; Some meetings are also held on-line to benefit those

who are not able to attend in person.

- Improvement in the circumstances of individuals and groups whom we support through practical action with charities such as Quaker Service
- Greater public awareness and understanding of a Quaker approach to peace building, sustainability, social action, education, spiritual growth and other concerns that we support financially and practically
- Appreciation of the legacy of Quaker historical buildings and records in Northern Ireland.
- Financial Review

Our financial statement for the period 31st January 2023 to 31st January 2024 is attached to this report and shows that we had income of £108,677.99 and expenditure of £91,017.11 This resulted in a increase of £17,660.88 with the bank balance of funds increasing from £151,740.53 on 31st January 2023 to £169,401.41 on 31st January 2024.

Declaration

This report was approved at the Annual General Meeting on 7th October 2024 and is signed on behalf of trustees.

Clerk of Trustees