

**The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Ireland, Grange and Richhill Monthly Meeting Annual Report and Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**Grange and Richhill Monthly Meeting**

**Trustees (at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023)**

**Evan F Hobson (Clerk of Trustees)**

**W Paul Sinton**

**Lesley P Haydock**

**Address**

**Grange Friends Meeting House**

**21 Dreemore Road**

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**NIC 108020**

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# **The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Ireland, Grange and Richhill Monthly Meeting Annual Report and Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

## **Trustee's Report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> 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, Grange and Richhill Monthly Meeting, is governed by its Governing Document which was adopted by Monthly Meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The meeting was registered by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

The Trustees, of whom there should not be 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 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 were as follows :

Evan F Hobson (Clerk of Trustees)

W Paul Sinton

Lesley Patricia Haydock

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.

Each of the Meetings i.e Grange and Richhill; have put in place a data protection policy, based on the guidelines from Ireland Yearly Meeting, both of which are reviewed regularly and reported to Monthly Meeting.

### Purposes of the Charity (Grange and Richhill Monthly Meeting)

Grange and Richhill Monthly Meeting is primarily a Meeting for Worship 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 :

1. Strengthening the Christian understanding and religious development in the geographical area of responsibility of the Monthly Meeting;
2. Contributing financially and practically to the relief of suffering at home and abroad; and
3. Providing for the pastoral care of individual Members and Attenders of Preparative Meetings, including assistance of those in need.

A Monthly Meeting consists of all those persons who are recorded upon its list of members. Meetings are held alternatively between Grange and Richhill Meeting Houses on the Wednesday following the first Sunday during the months of February, April, May, September, October and

December. Meetings are held to carry out the business of Grange and Richhill Monthly Meeting and to ensure that they are represented at the Quarterly Meeting of which they form a part. They also nominate representatives to attend Yearly Meeting which are forwarded for appointment by Quarterly Meeting.

An important duty which falls upon the Monthly Meeting is the ongoing keeping of careful and accurate records of births, marriages, deaths and transfers of membership. As is the norm, in December 2023 a group of Friends was appointed to complete the annual statistical return which showed the total number of members to be 300 at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, which was a decrease of 28 on the previous year. This was mainly due to a detailed review of the membership following which, in accordance with the guidelines as stated in the Book of Organisation and Christian Discipline, a number of names were removed from the list of members as they were deemed "lapsed membership" i.e. they no longer were seen as taking an active part or showing any interest in the running of the Society or its Meetings for Worship. In addition 3 members passed away during the year.

During the year the Monthly Meeting Education Committee applied to Quarterly Meeting for financial assistance to be provided to a number of boys and girls towards their education. Subsequently grants were made to 5 boys and 5 girls from Richhill Meeting and 1 girl from Grange Meeting.

Monthly Meeting is responsible for providing each local meeting with the resources for oversight i.e. the pastoral care of all members and attenders of the meeting. In February 2021 the meeting appointed 4 Overseers from Grange and 7 Overseers from Richhill for a 3-year period ending in January 2024. It also nominated 6 Elders from Grange and 4 Elders from Richhill. These Friends continued to carry out their duties during 2023.

Our activities in 2023 are reflected in the summary of Annual Reports from both Grange and Richhill Meetings.

Richhill Meeting organised a short series of bible studies based on a book by Tony Merida called "Love your Church". Both Meetings got together to explore the theme "The Jesus I didn't know" based on a series of videos written and presented by the Christian writer Philip Yancy. A Thanksgiving celebration was held to highlight the work of the recently established Life Triumphant Church. Both Meetings ended the year holding their annual Christmas Carol Service which was well supported by adults and children. Richhill Friends participated in the local Women's World Day of Prayer held at St Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, Stonebridge.

#### Public Benefit

The Trustees of Grange and Richhill Monthly 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 the following ways over the past year:

- We have held regular Meetings for Worship immediately prior to the Monthly Meeting business meetings which are open to the public as well as our own members and attenders. These Meetings for Worship provide spiritual nourishment and deepen the Christian experience and understanding of those who attend;
- We have provided financial assistance towards the education of children within the meeting where required;

- We have undertaken pastoral and family visits to those who were ill, bereaved, lonely and those, for whatever the reason, were unable to attend Meeting for Worship; and
- We brought to the notice of members annually the importance of keeping their financial affairs in good order and of making and revising their wills in time of health.

### Financial Review

Our financial statement for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 is attached to this report. The account had an opening balance on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 of £173.18 and a closing balance on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 of £157.87.

### Declaration

The Annual General Meeting of the Trustees was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024.

This report is approved and is signed on behalf of the Trustees.

*Evan F Hobson*

Evan F Hobson (Clerk of Trustees)