

# Our faith, our work

A review of the activities of  
Quakers in Britain 2021 – 2022







# Welcome

Dear Friends,



As we reflect on the past year, we are all aware of how much our world faces the challenges of conflict and climate change. It underlines the importance of our work and witness on building peace and sustainability. Both have been central to the past year. Quakers were at the COP26 climate conference, advocating for more

urgent and far-reaching change. We've continued to support peacebuilding and peace education.

Our ability to sustain this work rests on thriving Quaker communities, more able to witness and grow

through more simple structures and practices, and better supported and connected through our local development network.

These have been our priorities over the last year. They are the priorities agreed by Quakers' national representative body, Meeting for Sufferings, as we work towards our vision – set out in *Our faith in the future* – of a simple church supported by a simple charity to reinvigorate Quakerism.

This is your work, Friends, drawn from your discernment. I am continually moved by your faith and determination, and that shown by the staff you employ, in delivering this work. I hope that it moves and inspires you too.

Thank you, always, for your support.

In Friendship,

Paul Parker  
Recording Clerk



Paul Parker at a workshop during Junior Yearly Meeting.

# Thriving Quaker communities

## Yearly Meeting

Yearly Meeting is the annual assembly of the Quaker church in Britain. It's when Quakers gather in worship to connect, explore current concerns and conduct business. In 2021 we continued our consideration of privilege, diversity and inclusion, and climate justice:

*"We have been wrestling with what it will mean to be truly committed to anti-racism and faith-based action for climate justice. We have thought about how to better affirm gender diversity in our meetings."*

From the Yearly Meeting Epistle

This year's Yearly Meeting will be the first with in-person attendance since 2019, as we blend online and in-person participation. We're excited by the opportunity to reconnect.

## Local development

Our local development work continues to connect Quaker communities, helping them to be a part of something bigger.

We've developed and strengthened a range of online networks, including online sessions, e-newsletters and email groups. 'Wardens talking' is a forum for discussion and advice on property and employment issues.

We have a group supporting those who engage children and young people in meetings, plus a new network for clerks and area meeting trustees. We've been supporting meetings to become more inclusive communities by offering sessions exploring anti-racism and transgender inclusion.

Local development workers have been using a framework devised by [Restore Our Schools](#) to support Quaker communities as they emerge from the pandemic. RESTORE offers a lens through which communities can come together to look at what's needed to move forward.

We've used the framework in a range of settings – from conversations to large gatherings – and Quakers have found it helpful, healing and even transformative.



We are excited to be welcoming Quakers into Friends House for Yearly Meeting again for the first time since 2019.  
Photo by Mike Pinches





Young Quakers socialising at Junior Yearly Meeting.

To find out how RESTORE could help your Quaker community, talk to your local development worker or email [supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk).

### Youth development

In 2021 we worked with Quakers in Bristol to welcome and engage young people from refugee and asylum-seeker families. During the summer our youth development worker helped to organise weekly sessions for a group of Syrian young people. In a safe, supportive environment, they enjoyed activities ranging from baking to bushcraft. To discuss and explore ways your Quaker community could reach out to young people, get in touch with us at [cypadmin@quaker.org.uk](mailto:cypadmin@quaker.org.uk).



A workshop discussion at Junior Yearly Meeting.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

At Yearly Meeting Quakers made important new commitments to equality. We are clearer on where we want to be:

*“We declare our commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist faith community. We are still wrestling with what this means for us. We have work to do.”*

From minute 17, Yearly Meeting 2021

We are examining our diversity and expanding our welcome. We aim to raise the equality agenda at Quakers in Britain and join with other faith groups to dismantle racist structures:

*“If we can’t accept our complicity in systems that have caused and continue to cause harm, any action we take will be inadequate – it won’t result in real, lasting change.”*

Edwina Peart, Inclusion & Diversity Coordinator for Quakers in Britain

Many Quaker meetings have been focusing on race, forming racial justice groups and reading groups, while Lancaster Area Meeting is researching its role in slavery.

We’ve responded to requests from meetings to help them explore gender diversity. While they can be challenging, conversations about transgender issues are starting to happen. We’ve supported London Quakers to run a series of sessions on gender diversity



# A sustainable and peaceful world

## UN climate talks – COP26

Those nations hardest hit by climate change have done the least to cause it. Typically in the Global South, they are also the least equipped to deal with its effects. That's why Quakers have joined with other faiths to call on the world's biggest polluters to commit to a 'loss and damage' fund to help vulnerable nations tackle the harm caused by climate change.

We see loss and damage finance as the moral responsibility of nations that have profited from carbon-intensive industries, and we made it the focus of our climate justice work in the run-up to COP26. It's an issue that helped galvanise faith groups ahead of the summit, and together we succeeded in bringing

it to the forefront of climate action.

As members of the **COP26 Coalition, Make COP Count** and **Make Polluters Pay**, Quakers in Britain played a leading advocacy role. In June we held an interfaith parliamentary event that allowed faith groups to connect with MPs. After attending the event, Stephen Timms MP asked the prime minister to address loss and damage for the first time at PMQs.

Although the pledges made at COP26 fall far short of what's needed, Quaker action strengthened the climate justice movement and raised the profile of loss and damage.

Take a look at the variety of inspiring climate action taken by Quakers in our **digital report**.



Outside the restricted zone of the talks, we held a vigil for people around the world who are bearing the brunt of climate breakdown, to keep the issue of finance for 'loss and damage' on the COP26 agenda.



Campaigning for Loss and damage finance at COP26.

*“We worked closely with Quakers in Britain in the run-up to COP26. What we achieved together still amazes me. Our combination of interfaith outreach and faith-inspired climate justice messaging resulted in the increased awareness, engagement and contributions of UK faith communities on the need for loss and damage finance.”*

Shanon Shah, Director of Faith for the Climate

## Making the case for peace education

**Peace education** is an approach to teaching and learning that puts positive relationships – peace – at its heart. The benefits of this relational approach are highlighted in a report we published in May. *Peace at the heart* shows that schools that have embraced peace education have increased wellbeing, reduced exclusions and enabled rights to flourish.

Despite this evidence, our report found a lack of statutory support in Britain and urges the governments of England, Scotland and Wales to support peace education in line with their international commitments.

Around 200 people, including headteachers and policymakers, attended our online launch of the report, and it was featured on BBC Radio 4’s Sunday programme. Read the report [here](#).

We also released six short films to showcase peace education in action. Each film focuses on a primary or secondary school that invests in building peace, whether by exploring identity and inclusion, training



Putting peace education at the heart of the classroom.

in conflict resolution, or tackling global issues. Watch the films on our [YouTube channel](#).

*‘Positive peace’ is what’s sought – the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies, including the flourishing of human rights.*

## Resisting the arms trade

In September we supported Quaker witness against the Defence & Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair. During a week of action, **Quaker Roots** used Friends House for briefings and held a multi-faith vigil and meetings for worship outside London’s ExCeL Centre. See how Quakers resisted the event in [this short video](#).

## EAPPI

After having to withdraw its volunteers from the region due to Covid, we’re pleased to report that the **Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel** is once again sending ecumenical companions (EAs) to Palestine and Israel. The growing use of ‘digital accompaniment’ has allowed us to keep in closer touch with people in the region and to share their stories publicly and with decisions-makers.



Young Quakers watch an online EA presentation.

## East Africa

In June 2021 Turning the Tide East Africa shared their learning in a practical peacebuilding handbook, **Practical peacebuilding**. Click [here](#) to find out more about our partners’ work.

## Migration

Our Sanctuary Everywhere programme came to an end in 2021, but we continue to speak out on migration. We will work with partners and draw on the extensive experience of groups like the **Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network**. Sanctuary Meetings can still access support from our new ‘Faith in Action’ team. Get in touch at [faithinaction@quaker.org.uk](mailto:faithinaction@quaker.org.uk) or [sanctuary@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sanctuary@quaker.org.uk).



# Simple structures and practices

At Quakers in Britain, we've been working to create simpler, more inclusive and more sustainable central governance structures. Our new governance strategy is being taken forward by a new department, Quaker Church Affairs, which is also responsible for events, committee support and the work of the library and archives at Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall.

We've been looking at how best to deliver an effective and appropriate events programme. Social and technological changes, which have led to us holding online and blended Yearly Meetings, have opened up new ways of running events.

We're on target towards achieving a balanced budget by 2023, while work on improving our planning and impact is ongoing.

September saw the official opening of our Yorkshire Centre, a new base for Quaker work outside London. To mark the occasion, Quakers of all ages joined us for a day of films, crafts and treasure hunts.

The office is attached to Central Leeds Quaker Meeting House and is an important step in becoming more responsive to the communities we serve. Juliet

Prager, our Deputy Recording Clerk, was interviewed at the launch by BBC Look North and BBC Radio Leeds:

"It's so exciting to have the centre up and running. Our mission is to help Quaker communities thrive, and this centre brings some staff nearer to Quakers in the North. All visitors are assured a warm Yorkshire welcome!"



Juliet Prager being interviewed by BBC Look North.



Quakers in Britain staff at our office in Leeds, Yorkshire.



# Fundraising

*"Quakers in Britain is more than the usual charity - it is a place where the spiritual and political meet. We need a quiet space within from which political action can grow. That is why I give."*

Stephen Rowland, Friend

All the work featured here can only happen with your support. Thank you for ensuring that Quaker faith and witness will continue far into the future.

Giving to Quaker work gives us the means and the profile to make a real impact, as a thriving faith community working nationally and internationally for peace, justice, equality and sustainability. To find out how to support this work with a gift visit

[www.quaker.org.uk/giving](http://www.quaker.org.uk/giving).

Legacy giving has always been an important resource for Quaker work. The generosity and deep values of Friends who came before are very much by our side. They put their faith into action for a sustainable and peaceful world. If you would like to give the gift of Quakerism to the next generation please visit [www.quaker.org.uk/legacy](http://www.quaker.org.uk/legacy).

*"The reasons for leaving the legacies is my sense of gratitude for the existence of Quakers in Britain and for the richness that belonging to a meeting, first Frenchay meeting, now Milton Keynes meeting, has brought to my life."*

Eva Barton, Friend



Fundraising Manager, Beth Follini, speaks with a Quaker in Leeds.

# Finance at a glance

This has been a tough year and, in the face of challenging economic times, we are extremely grateful to Friends for their continued generosity.

Our total income in 2021 was £10 million and our total expenditure was £9 million, a reduction of £6 million and £3 million respectively on the previous year.

## Income

Our main sources of income are contributions from individuals and Quaker meetings, legacies, grants, investment income and revenue from our trading operation.

In 2021 the income was £10 million, a decrease of 38% compared to the previous year (2020: £16

million). Donations were £2 million (2020: £3 million) while legacies were £4 million (2020: £8 million). Income from investments held steady at £1.6 million.

There was limited activity in our trading operation (Quiet Company) due to the pandemic and therefore the company did not generate profits to be gifted to the charity

## Expenditure

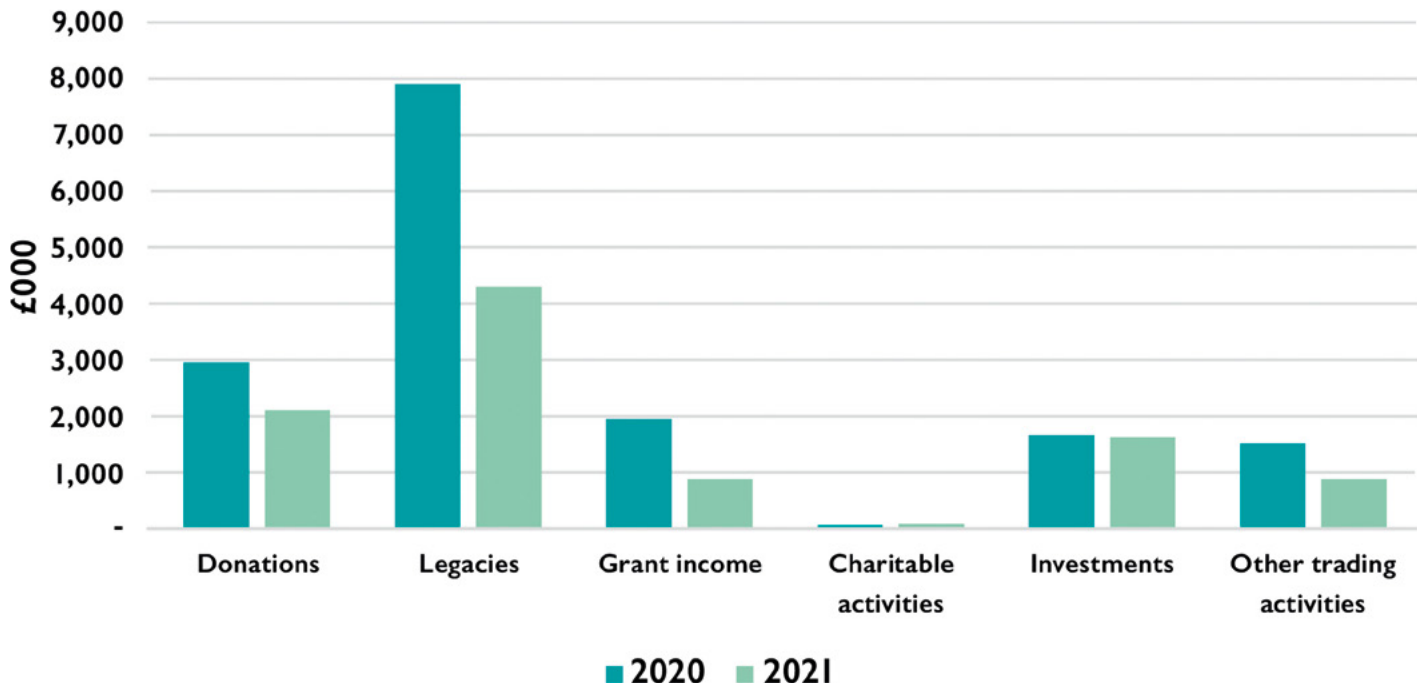
Total expenditure fell by 25% to £8.7 million (2020: £12.0 million). The reduction in expenditure was planned in order to offset the fall in income. Overall expenditure on trading activities, in particular staff costs, fell due to restrictions imposed on the hospitality sector in response to the pandemic.



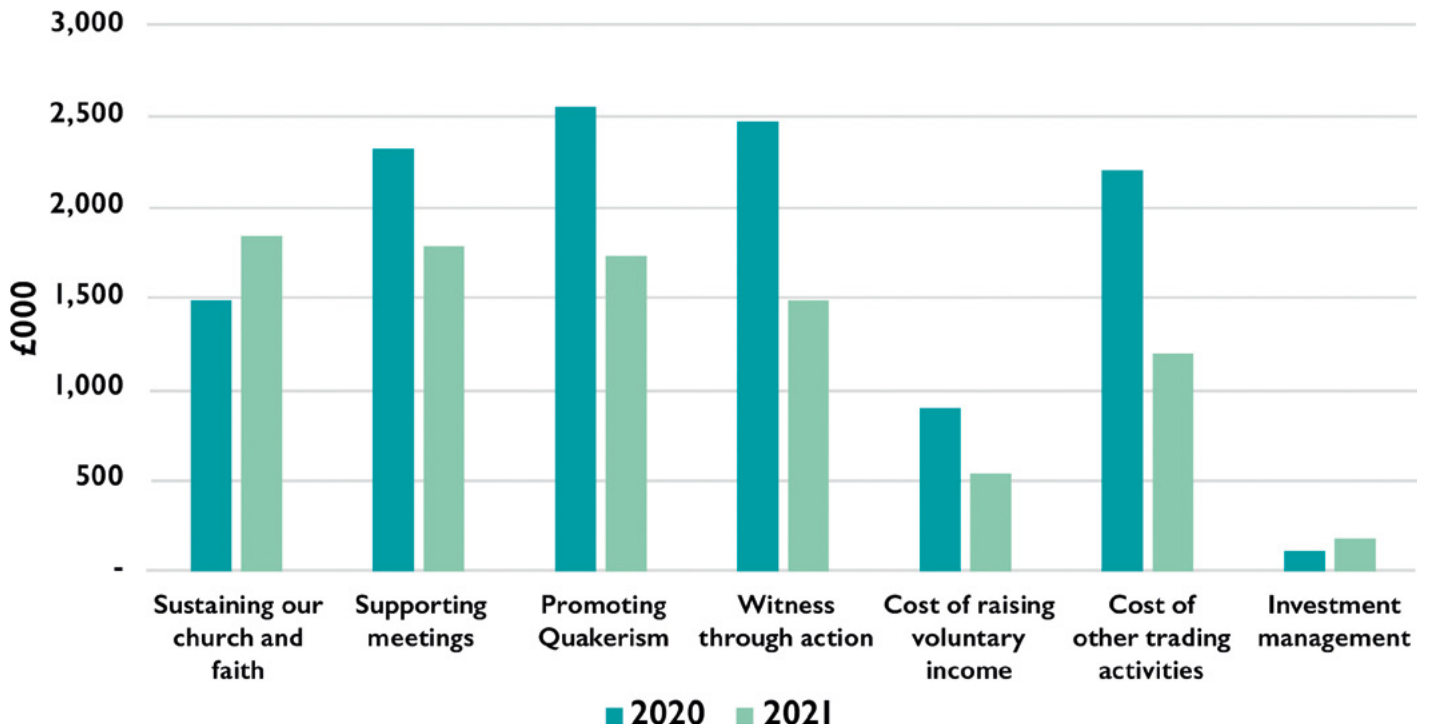
Quakers hold a Meeting for Worship for Peace in Tavistock Square, London.



## Quakers in Britain: Income



## Quakers in Britain: Expenditure



# Moving forwards with your support

We continue to work towards having thriving Quaker communities, simpler structures and helping to create a sustainable and peaceful world. And to keep moving forwards we need the support of meetings, Friends and supporters, whether financial, physical or spiritual.

You can support us financially, by making a donation or leaving a legacy at [www.quaker.org.uk/giving](http://www.quaker.org.uk/giving).

This gives us certainty in uncertain times to keep planning and delivering the shared work of Quakers for years to come.

You can stay up to date with our work by signing up to our Quake! newsletter at [www.quaker.org.uk/quake](http://www.quaker.org.uk/quake).

You can also give your time in many ways. Visit [www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-service](http://www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-service) for details.



Moving forwards







Quakers share a way of life, not a set of beliefs. Quaker unity is based on shared understanding and a shared practice of silent worship – a communal stillness.

Quakers seek to experience God directly – internally, in relationships with others, and with the world. Local meetings for worship are open to all who wish to attend.

Quakers try to live with honesty and integrity. This means speaking truth to all, including people in positions of power. The Quaker commitment to peace arises from the conviction that love is at the heart of existence and that all human beings are unique and equal.

This leads Quakers to put faith into action by working locally and globally to change the systems that cause injustice and violent conflict.

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