

Living Witness Project

Quakers for sustainability

Draft Annual Report and Accounts

Year to 31 December 2008

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Living Witness Project is registered in England and Wales
as Charity No. 1119938

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Quakers for Sustainability

Annual Report 2008

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Introduction

The Living Witness Project (LWP) aims to support the development of spirit-led approaches to sustainable living, among Quakers and in the wider society. Its aims are:

- 1) education on the many dimensions of the sustainability challenge,
- 2) encouraging and informing practical action for sustainability, and
- 3) deepening Quaker faith and practice as it relates to sustainable living.

In support of these aims, its main activities are:

- providing advice, study guides and resources for spiritually-grounded action, in person, in print and on the Internet
- speaking to groups and running courses and workshops
- supporting spiritual exploration and grounding, learning and action in networks of individuals and groups developing their own approaches to sustainability

The project was funded initially (2002-2005) by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. It built up a network of 24 Quaker groups around England and Wales. They participated in regular “link group” gatherings and experimented with activities and approaches in their meetings to develop as spiritual communities working for sustainability. In 2005-2006 the work was funded by participating meetings and the network grew to about 45 groups including our first Scottish meetings.

In December 2006 we set up a charitable trust to carry out the work, with six Quaker trustees drawn from around Britain Yearly Meeting (the Religious Society of Friends in Britain). Living Witness Project was registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales in July 2007. The work is now funded from a mix of sources including grants, donations, subscriptions and fees for event participation. In 2008 we continued to broaden the project within and beyond Britain Yearly Meeting. By the end of the year our network had grown to about 80 member groups, with a further 30 involved to some degree.

The project is co-ordinated and supported on a day-to-day basis by Laurie Michaelis working with a management group of six Friends in Oxford. Much of the work is done by volunteers – including editing and distributing our newsletter and some other publications, and organising some of our events. We began in 2008 to establish a community of volunteer Resource People who will take on much of the facilitation and speaking to groups.

Our work in 2008 fell into four main areas:

1. **Providing printed and Internet resources.**
2. **Developing our network of individual Friends and Quaker meetings.**

3. **Working with other bodies within Britain Yearly Meeting.**
4. **Working with the Quaker Council for European Affairs on its Sustainable Energy Security project.**
5. **Reaching out to other organisations and faith communities**

These are described in the following pages.

Providing printed and internet resources

Our range of publications includes newsletters, practical guidance for individuals and organisations on environmental and sustainability issues, guides for study groups, policy briefings, and occasional reports. All are available to download from our website, www.livingwitness.org.uk.

Publications in 2008 included:

- Our quarterly newsletter, *earthQuaker*, which includes project news and articles from our members and participating groups, and is edited by our clerk of Trustees, Anne Brewer. The circulation for the paper edition of *earthQuaker* is about 300. It is also distributed by e-mail to over 400 people.
- A revised and updated edition of our greenhouse footprint sheet, *Your contribution to climate change*. It is available on our website, along with a background paper explaining where the figures come from.
- The 2008 edition of *Walk Cheerfully, Step Lightly*, revised and updated by Anne Brewer. The booklet provides a guide to 100+ ways of greening your life, and is one of our most popular resources. Anne put considerable work into reviewing the advice it gives, responding to comments, checking the phone numbers and web addresses for organisations, and improving the layout.
- A policy briefing on *The Triple Crunch*, exploring the implications and potential responses to the combined crises of climate change, tightening commodity markets and the failure of the credit system.

We saw a continuing demand for advice from local Quaker meetings, especially on carrying out environmental audits. Our sheet on working out the greenhouse gas emissions from a meeting can also be used for other kinds of small organisation. Our booklet on *Carrying out an environmental audit of your meeting* particularly encourages Friends to undertake audits as a collective process, to build understanding and the sense of community in the meeting, and to make use of their business meetings in making difficult decisions.

Laurie Michaelis continued to act as environment editor/correspondent for *The Friend*, contributing articles on a number of sustainability-related themes. Laurie also produced the first draft of a book connecting sustainability and spirituality, looking particularly at the potential contribution of Quaker values and practices in responding to climate change. *The Friend* has agreed to publish some of the material as a series of articles

Developing the Quaker network

In 2008 we continued to support and develop our Quaker network through events, publications, and responding to requests for advice and information. The network grew during the year to include about 80 Quaker groups and meetings.

We held two Link Group meetings, one at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in April, and one at the Bilberry Hill Centre in Rednal, Birmingham, in October. These events continue as our main focus for sharing our experience, spiritual roots and vision, building the LWP community, and for empowerment, learning and evaluation within the project. Our Link Group weekend in April 2008 focused on supporting Friends to get involved with other organisations and networks, especially Transition Towns. Several Friends in our network are on the steering groups for their local Transition initiatives. We are finding that Quakers have a distinctive contribution to make especially in encouraging and sustaining a listening environment and effective meeting practices.

The Link Group weekend in October focused on Peak Oil and other resource crises. Participants developed a number of scenarios of possible future developments. Scenario building is a powerful tool for developing shared understanding in a group of the driving forces and possible surprises in a very complex situation. The scenarios themselves can be very effective communication tools for engaging policy-makers and the media. We aim to develop a set of scenarios that can be used in this way in the run-up to the Copenhagen climate negotiations.

In August we organised a five day summer school at Swarthmoor Hall in the Lake District. Fifteen Friends participated including several hoping to become LWP Resource People. The week included opportunities for them to facilitate sessions and was a first endeavour to pull together a LWP “core curriculum”.

We provided about 30 events for Quakers around Britain with a variety of themes and approaches (“LWP on the road”). Most of these were facilitated day or weekend workshops in response to requests from local, area and regional meetings. Attendance is typically in the range 20-40.

Working with Quaker bodies in Britain Yearly Meeting

Meeting for Sufferings agreed the text of *A Framework for Action* in September 2008. The framework aims to provide a guiding vision for all of the work of Quakers in Britain in 2009-2014. It includes a section on sustainability as one of the main priorities. The drafting group largely adopted text suggested by Laurie Michaelis for that section, and added a recommendation for Friends and meetings to work together, "led by projects such as Living Witness".

Within Britain Yearly Meeting our main relationships are with Woodbrooke and Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW).

In April 2008 Woodbrooke announced plans to develop a new teaching programme on sustainable living called "Good Lives". The programme aims to support Friends in developing practical and spiritual responses to Peak Oil and climate change, and the initial focus has been a series of courses entitled "World Without Oil". We have had a number of discussions with Woodbrooke on the relationship between their programme and the Living Witness Project. Helen Rowlands, Woodbrooke Head of Education, and Pam Lunn, who will be leading the programme, met with LWP Trustees in December and we have agreed general principles of co-operation.

QPSW has focused its environment-related work on human security issues, carrying out case studies in Bangladesh and Uganda on environment-conflict links. Towards the end of 2008 work began on briefings for Quakers on climate change, aiming to prepare Friends for policy engagement in the run-up to the December 2009 climate talks in Copenhagen. We are still exploring ways of collaborating with QPSW in this work.

QCEA Sustainable Energy Security project

We agreed with the Quaker Council for European Affairs to work with them on their project on Sustainable Energy Security. Our contribution will include developing a series of briefing papers as a basis for policy advocacy on sustainable consumption and production, and on the relevance of Quaker business method to sustainability. We worked with QCEA on their conference in December 2008, in particular organising the Saturday afternoon session, again as a participatory scenario building exercise.

Reaching out

We worked with a number of non-Quaker groups in 2008, including Christian Concern for One World and Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue. Our main focus was on Transition Towns. Alan Allport and Laurie Michaelis have been closely involved in Transition Oxford. Laurie serves on the Seed Group (steering committee) and organised events in 2008 including a vision building meeting, a workshop on greenhouse footprints, and a discussion group on "Transition and Spirituality".

Plans for the future

In 2009 our main new areas of work will be in developing and supporting our community of volunteer Resource People (RPs), and contributing to the QCEA Sustainable Energy Security project.

We began recruiting RPs at the 2008 Summer School and eleven Friends are planning to attend our first RP gathering in spring 2008. In February 2009 we appointed Jill Fisher as part-time RP co-ordinator. Our intention is that the RPs will form the core of our LWP community. Essential elements of the planned programme include:

- **RPs** who make long term commitments to work with us, in particular speaking at and facilitating events for Quaker and other groups and organisations.
- An **RP co-ordinator** responsible for RP recruitment, training and support
- **Twice-yearly RP gatherings** to share experiences and new approaches and provide mutual support.
- **A regular newsletter** containing articles by RPs, reflecting on their experience of the work, probably as a section of earthQuaker.
- **A curriculum** of core texts and background reading for the use of RPs and others, developed by staff and RPs.
- **Resources** including workshop agendas and learning materials for use by RPs and others, developed by staff and RPs.

We expect the new programme to enable a major expansion of our capacity to work with Quakers and others around Britain.

The work with QCEA will have four main elements:

1. Developing LWP-Europe. We have agreed to provide up to four events per year in continental Europe, potentially including sessions at yearly meetings and one or more international gathering.
2. A study on the EU Sustainable Production and Consumption Action Plan. This is a proposal from the European Commission for a range of policies. The study will evaluate the action plan in terms of its own objectives, and also with respect to Quaker values and priorities.
3. A study on the potential role of Quaker Business Method other aspects of Quaker process and practice, and our listening spirituality in developing approaches to sustainable energy security.
4. Support to QCEA in developing a series of ethical consumption factsheets.

People and governance

At the start of 2008 we employed two staff members, Rachel Howell and Laurie Michaelis, based at an office in Oxford Quaker Meeting House. Rachel left us to resume her academic studies in April 2008, and is now working on her doctorate at Edinburgh University. We ended our tenancy of the office on 31 October 2008. Oxford Friends agreed to our continued use of the Meeting House as our formal charity address and for Trustees' and other meetings. In early 2009 we appointed an additional staff member to work as co-ordinator for our volunteer resource people. Our staff members now work mostly from home.

Our management group of six Oxford Friend was set up in 2006 by the Oxford Friends Group on Sustainable Living. It guided the establishment of Living Witness Project as a registered charity and the recruitment of the trustees, whose regular meetings started in December 2006. The management group met monthly up to the summer of 2008 but it was becoming clear that two governance bodies are not needed, the trustees were functioning well and were as closely involved in the work as the management group. We therefore decided to lay down the management group at the end of 2008.

During 2008 the trustees, management group and staff of Living Witness Project were as follows.

Trustees

Living Witness Project is a charitable trust. It has a group of six Quaker trustees who meet quarterly using Quaker Business Method. The first group of trustees were nominated by the management group and they met and signed a declaration of trust on 21 December 2006. This was revised and the current governing document is a declaration of trust dated 11 June 2007. New trustee appointments are agreed by the trustees themselves. The first group of trustees, serving throughout 2007, were:

Alan Allport, Oxford Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2009). Alan is an emeritus professor of experimental psychology in Oxford University, and was formally Vice Principal of St Anne's College. He convened Oxford Friends' Group on Sustainable Living (GOSLings) for five years.

Anne Brewer, Dorking Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2009). Anne is publications officer for Quaker Green Action and was formerly its treasurer/membership secretary. Anne has a chemistry background and has worked on industrial air pollution.

Graham Davey, Bedminster Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2009). Graham was formerly chair of Quaker Green Action and is treasurer and organiser of the summer school for the Gandhi Foundation. Graham has a background in engineering.

Martin Quick, Stroud Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2009). Martin has an engineering background, and has worked especially on energy and climate change issues. He is on the co-ordinating committee of Scientists for Global Responsibility.

Rachel Strachan, Charlbury Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2008). Rachel has worked for local government on waste management and now works for a tree/plant nursery.

Anne Wheldon, Reading Meeting (appointed June 2008 to 31 December 2010)
The trustees have appointed Anne Brewer as their clerk (chair).

Management group

The initial management group was formed in 2006 from participants in Oxford Friends' Group on Sustainable Living. It was appointed by Oxford Preparative Meeting in September 2006 and consisted of Alan and Virginia Allport, Steve Cappelman, Pat Dannahy and Stephen Yeo. The group was joined by John Toye in June 2007 and Sandra Figgess in December 2007. Pat Dannahy was released in October 2007.

Alan Allport (see above).

Virginia Allport. Virginia has a Diploma from LSE in Applied social studies. She was formerly a trustee on the National Board of the YWCA, as well as chairman of the local committee. She teaches music.

Steve Cappelman. Steve is a philosophy teacher and was formerly outreach secretary at Friends House.

Sandra Figgess is currently a psychotherapist in private practice, and previously worked as a manager in the Oxford Community Work Agency.

John Toye. Is visiting professor of economics at St Anthony's College, Oxford. He was formerly director of the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University, and a divisional director at the UN Conference on Trade and Development.

Stephen Yeo. Stephen is a trustee of CfBT, an educational charitable trust, former Principal of Ruskin College (also an educational charity), and former chair of the board to the Co-operative College. He is a historian of social change with particular interest in the co-operative movement.

Staff

Rachel Howell. Rachel worked with LWP from September 2007 to March 2008. She had just completed an MSc in environmental sustainability at Edinburgh University and is now continuing there with a doctorate. She has worked for the Student Christian Movement; lived in a number of intentional communities, including St Francis House in Oxford where she was co-ordinator; and served as co-ordinator of the Oxford Quaker Centre.

Laurie Michaelis. Laurie acts as secretary to the management group and trustees. He has worked on energy, climate change and other environmental policy and education for over 25 years. Since completing his PhD in energy studies in 1986, he has worked as a policy analyst at the UK Energy Technology Support Unit, the International Energy Agency and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; he was a Lead Author or Convening Lead Author for several reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change; from 1999 to 2002 he was Director of Research for the Oxford Commission on Sustainable Consumption; and since 2002 has been running the Living Witness Project.

Review of finances in 2008

At the beginning of 2008 Living Witness Project merged with Quaker Green Action, putting QGA resources under the management of LWP trustees. At the end of 2008, our balance of £19,813 represented roughly eight months' operating costs, a level of reserve that trustees aim to sustain and increase in the long term towards eleven months.

Our major donors in 2008 were the Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation, the A. Kramer Charitable Trust and the Ian Mactaggart Trust, with total grants amounting to £16,000. Donations and subscriptions from meetings and individuals provided a further £7,000, and fees for event participation a further £6,000. Meetings are also increasingly making payments to cover our staff costs when we provide facilitated events. Overall receipts exceeded payments partly because of the unexpected departure of Rachel Howell to pursue her academic work.

Staff salaries and consultancy fees formed the largest part (60%) of our expenditure, the second largest item (about 20%) being accommodation and catering for events. However, participant fees more than covered the latter cost.

We are confident of sustaining funding for our current level of activity, and in 2009 a high priority will be to secure income to enable us to expand, strengthen and deepen our work.

Statement of financial activities

Living Witness Project annual accounts for the year to 31/12/08

	Notes	Total £
	1a	
INCOMING RESOURCES		
From Charitable Activities		
Fees for events		5,420.20
Sales of publications		436.18
From Generated Funds		
Contributions from Meetings		3,986.78
Donations from Friends		2,823.22
Individual membership fees		685.00
Grants	2	16,000.00
Bank interest		171.39
Total Incoming Resources		<u>29,522.77</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Charitable Activities	3, 5	26,078.36
Governance Costs	4	352.23
Total Resources Expended		<u>26,430.59</u>
Net Incoming Resources		<u>3,092.18</u>
Funds Brought Forward		9,261.40
Prior Year Adjustments	1b	8,647.93
Total Funds Carried Forward		<u>21,001.51</u>
Represented By:		
ASSETS		
	1c	
Computers	1d	900.00
Debtors	6	1,796.00
Cash at bank & in hand		<u>18,811.07</u>
Total current assets		21,507.07
LESS creditors due within 1 year	7	(505.56)

TOTAL ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES

21,001.51

Notes to the accounts

1. a. Consolidated accounts

Quaker Green Action and Living Witness Project merged in 2007. The opening balances in these accounts are the consolidated accounts of both organisations.

b. Prior year adjustments

At 1 January 2008, in addition to the cash book balance of £9,261, the Living Witness Project also had Fixed assets of £1,400, Accrued Income of £896 and creditors of £504. Quaker Green Action had been a separate charity and merged with Living Witness project in summer 2007. At 31 December 2007 it had a fund balance of £6,856, consisting of Bank £6,279, Debtors and Accrued Expenses £576. Adjusting for all these items gives an opening fund balance of £17,909.

c. Deposits

Deposits for events in a future year are written off at the time they are paid as they are not refundable

d. Depreciation

Two computers were bought in 2007. They are depreciated over the life of the asset. For computers this is three years.

e. Pensions

No employer contributions were paid to any pension scheme.

2. Restricted funds

All income in 2008 was unrestricted except for a grant of £5000 from the A. Kramer Charitable Trust, which was restricted to use for work other than developing Quaker faith and practice. This grant was used to support LWP engagement in the Transition Towns movement and for the production of resources for the general public. At least £2700 was used for these purposes in 2008. £2300 is carried forward in this restricted fund.

3. Analysis of charitable expenditure

Living Witness Project is a small charity that does not have different projects. So all the support costs are allocated to the work of the charity which is all one project.

Directly Charitable	
Salaries & NI	14,834.04
Fees for contract work	200.00
Equipment (incl. literature & software)	118.21
Stationery	280.81
Printing, publicity & postage	980.18
Staff travel	777.70
Staff training	81.20
Event venues, catering	5,232.92
Total directly charitable	<u>22,505.06</u>
Support Costs	
Accountancy Fees	664.10
Office rent & electricity	1,750.00
Telephone, IT services	243.98
Insurance	403.28
Depreciation	500.00
Misc & contingencies	11.94
Total support costs	<u>3,573.30</u>
TOTAL CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	<u><u>26,078.36</u></u>

4. Governance costs

Governance costs consist of Trustee expenses. Trustees are not remunerated. They are reimbursed for actual expenditure incurred in relation to attending trustee meetings. £352.23 in 2008.

5. Staff

No employee was paid more than £60,000 full time equivalent.

January to March Two half time staff

April to December One half time staff

plus occasional hours not exceeding 4 hours a month.

6. Debtors

Gift Aid for 2007	896.00
Gift Aid for 2008	900.00
	1,796.00

7. Creditors

HMRC Oct - Dec PAYE	505.56
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