



**living witness**  
Quakers for Sustainability

**Draft**

# **Annual Report and Accounts**

## **Year to 31 December 2011**

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Living Witness is registered in England and Wales  
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# Living Witness

## Quakers for Sustainability

### Annual Report 2011

#### Contents

Introduction.....	3
Working with Britain Yearly Meeting and other Quaker organisations.....	4
Providing printed and internet resources.....	4
Developing the Quaker network.....	5
Courses and Retreats at Quaker Community, Bamford.....	5
People and governance.....	5
Trustees.....	5
Staff.....	6
Review of finances in 2011.....	6
Plans for the future.....	7
Summary of Financial Activity.....	8

## **Introduction**

Living Witness (LW) supports 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

Living Witness Project was initially funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (2002-2005). 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. The network has grown steadily and the work is now funded from a mix of sources including donations, subscriptions and fees for event participation. In December 2006 we set up a charitable trust to carry out the work, with six Quaker trustees drawn from around Britain. Living Witness Project was registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales in July 2007. In 2008 it merged with Quaker Green Action, the group of British Friends concerned with our sustainability witness since 1986. With an increasing level of activity on sustainability in Britain Yearly Meeting central departments and at Woodbrooke, Living Witness is just one among several sources of information and encouragement for Quakers on sustainability. However, we continue to function as the main grassroots network with 85 subscribing meetings and 200 individual members.

Living Witness has three staff members. Laurie Michaelis is the Co-ordinator and secretary to trustees. Dee Sayce is the Administrator. She manages the Website and edits the newsletter, earthQuaker. Jasmine Piercy co-ordinates our network of volunteer Resource People, who take on much of the facilitation work and speaking to groups.

Our work in 2011 fell into four main areas:

1. **Working with Britain Yearly Meeting and other Quaker organisations.**
2. **Providing printed and Internet resources.**
3. **Developing our network of individual Friends and Quaker meetings.**
4. **Offering courses and retreats at the Quaker Community, Bamford**

These are described in the following pages.

## **Working with Britain Yearly Meeting and other Quaker organisations**

The Yearly Meeting Gathering was a major focus for our work in 2011 with its theme of *Growing in the Spirit, changing the way we live to sustain the world we live in*. Laurie Michaelis was a member of the YMG Planning Committee and convened the subgroup working on core content. Living Witness offered a variety of special interest meetings, workshops and options during YMG. Yearly Meeting made a commitment in its Minute 36 to become a 'low carbon, sustainable community', with annual reviews and reporting on progress. At the end of 2011 Meeting for Sufferings agreed to set up a 'Minute 36 Commitment Group' to support and oversee the work. Living Witness is one of the organisations represented on the group (by Laurie) and two LW trustees are also members of the group in other capacities.

Laurie Michaelis, Anne Wheldon and Marion Winslow worked with QPSW staff on the sustainability toolkit mentioned under *Printed and Internet Resources*. The was originally intended partly to enable meetings to engage with the YMG theme, however publication was delayed until after YMG.

Jasmine worked with Woodbrooke, QPSW and the Transition Network to plan an event to support Quakers engaging with the Transition movement. This was held at Woodbrooke in summer 2011 and was well attended and is being followed up with further events at Woodbrooke.

Laurie convenes the advisory group for the Quaker Council of European Affairs Sustainable Energy Security Programme.

## **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](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk).

In 2011 we continued to produce our quarterly newsletter, *earthQuaker*, which includes project news and articles from our members and participating groups. Dee Sayce took over from Anne Brewer as editor in spring 2011 and has given her own stamp to the magazine. The circulation for the paper edition is about 300. It is also distributed by e-mail to about 500 people.

Our most substantial piece of work in 2011 was the publication with Quaker Peace and Social Witness of the *Sustainability Toolkit*. The toolkit brings together some of Living Witness' key resources including parts of *Walk Cheerfully, Step Lightly* (Anne Brewer's guide to 100+ ways of greening your life), workshop session plans from *Be the Change* and our climate impact calculation guides for individuals and meetings. LW Trustee Marion Winslow updated the workshop material and former trustee Anne Wheldon updated the climate impact guides. QPSW prepared new material including case studies of green action by Quakers and an environmental "check-up" for Quaker meetings, and compiled the material into an attractive A4 spiral bound book. We finalised the toolkit just after the residential yearly meeting at Canterbury, which made

the commitment to become a 'low carbon sustainable community'. Copies were distributed to all local meetings as a resource to support that commitment. The toolkit is available from *Quaker Books* at £5 a copy and can be downloaded free from the Britain Yearly Meeting Website at [www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability](http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability).

## **Developing the Quaker network**

In 2011 we continued to support and develop our Quaker network through events and responding to requests for advice and information. A number of meetings took up Living Witness membership following the Yearly Meeting commitment to become a low carbon sustainable community. We now have about 85 subscribing meetings and 200 individual members.

The spring Link Group gathering was cancelled due to low bookings but we held a gathering in the autumn focusing on follow-up to the yearly meeting commitment. From this and the two Resource People gatherings held in 2011, it is clear that there has been a shift in the way Quakers are approaching our sustainability witness. Friends are taking the issues more seriously and there is a great deal of practical activity in local meetings. However, there is also tension and conflict as some Friends are unhappy with a perceived shift in attention from traditional Quaker concerns, and with the pressure they feel to take up this emerging testimony.

## **Courses and Retreats at Quaker Community, Bamford**

Trustees have agreed to support the development of the Quaker Community at Bamford, whose purposes are closely related to those of Living Witness, by holding and promoting courses and retreats there. In 2011 these included the two RP Gatherings, one Link Group Gathering, and a retreat on *Quakers and Climate Change*.

## **People and governance**

### **Trustees**

Living Witness 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 trustees during 2011 were:

**Alan Allport**, Oxford Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2012). Alan is an emeritus professor of experimental psychology in Oxford University, and was formerly Vice Principal of St Anne's College. He convened Oxford Friends' Group on Sustainable Living (GOSLings) for five years.

**Rachel Berger**, Bradford-upon-Avon and Warwick Meetings (appointed to 31 December 2012). Rachel works for the appropriate technology charity, Practical Action.

**Rachel Boyd**, a lifelong Friend (appointed to 31 December 2011), studied Environmental Science at the University of East Anglia and has had a varied career including youth work and bookkeeping. She is the Finance Worker for Zaytoun CIC.

**Jonathan Dale**, Central Manchester Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2013). Jonathan is a former Clerk of Quaker Social Responsibility and Education, an animator of the rediscovering our Social Testimony work and the 1996 Swarthmore Lecturer. His second career was in Community Development in Salford.

**Graham Davey**, Bedminster Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2012). He 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. Graham was clerk of trustees during 2011.

**Marion Winslow**, Reading Meeting (appointed to 31 December 2011). Marion is a psychotherapist and counsellor. She has a particular interest in the psychological impacts of climate change and the Joanna Macy approach to group work. She also runs a non-violent communication group.

### **Staff**

**Laurie Michaelis**. Laurie acts as secretary to the 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 Living Witness.

**Jasmine Piercy** is the Resource People Co-ordinator. Her background is in education and she is an associate tutor for Woodbrooke. She co-ordinates and facilitates the working retreats programme for Quaker Voluntary Action. She has volunteered with BTCV and the Groundwork Trust including tree-planting on the foothills of Pendle Hill and served as warden of the Othona Community and of Selly Oak Meeting.

**Dee Sayce** is the Administrator. Dee is a former member of the Quaker Community at Bamford and works freelance as a website designer and a teacher of spinning and natural dyeing. She has a strong awareness of human environmental impacts and takes an interest in and participates in local initiatives relating to environmental and sustainable issues.

### **Review of finances in 2011**

We saw a sharp reduction in income in 2011 compared with previous years, mainly because we had no grant or consultancy income (£8042 in 2010). This was slightly offset by receiving Gift Aid this year on donations since 2008. Contributions from meetings were about £1000 higher than in 2010, but contributions and subscriptions from individuals were about £1000 lower. Income from events was substantially reduced because we cancelled one Link

Group gathering in 2011, and held no Summer School as we felt August was busy enough with the Yearly Meeting Gathering.

Expenditure was slightly reduced, mainly due to staff working shorter hours, and to the reduced spending on events.

At the end of 2011, our balance of £14,632 represented nearly 11 months operating costs, in line with trustees' reserves policy. Trustees will monitor expenditure carefully and review the need to generate additional income to ensure the charity remains on a financially sustainable footing.

### **Plans for the future**

In 2012 our main focus is on supporting the implementation of the yearly meeting commitment. This includes working with other Quaker organisations through the Minute 36 Commitment Group and running courses at Bamford focused on the spiritual and human dimensions of the commitment.

## Summary of Financial Activity

	2010 total	2011 total
<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fees for events	5,525.31	1,290.00
Sales of publications	11.41	10.00
Contributions from Meetings	3,373.70	4,288.96
Donations from Friends	1,113.02	45.00
Individual membership fees	2,033.05	1,903.05
Consultancy fees	4,042.40	0.00
Grants	4,000.00	0.00
Gift Aid	0.00	2,019.58
Bank interest	18.73	14.70
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,117.62</b>	<b>9,571.29</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
Salaries & NI	8,953.06	5,411.50
Recruitment	236.04	0.00
Fees for contract work	3,187.85	3,504.00
Office rent & electricity	71.67	44.71
Telephone, IT services	310.78	225.65
Equipment (incl. literature & software)	144.04	234.91
Stationery	136.00	196.59
Printing, publicity & postage	453.54	1,839.30
Staff and volunteer travel	1,499.75	1,562.84
Staff training	95.00	160.00
Trustees expenses	151.95	224.45
Event venues, catering	3,009.38	1,970.00
Insurance	489.40	464.68
Misc & contingencies	330.91	625.41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,069.37</b>	<b>16,464.04</b>
Excess receipts over payments	1,048.25	- 6,892.75
Balance at start of Period	13,101.48	14,063.20
Closing Fund balance	14,149.73	7,186.75
Balance in LWP Co-operative Bank Account	14,063.20	7,170.45
QGA Triodos Account	7,422.80	7,477.46
Plus creditors minus debtors (unrepresented cheques, unpaid invoices)	86.53	- 16.30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,572.53</b>	<b>14,631.61</b>