

# Trustees' & Treasurers' News

Issue 3 – July 2015



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## Editorial

Welcome to **Trustees' & Treasurers' News 3**. All trustees should note first of all their conference, of which we give details below, and the encouragement from Yearly Meeting to live adventurously. On finance and governance, 'Friends Trusts Limited: custodian trustee or holding trustee?' (p. 3) is important. Items that relate primarily to financial or bookkeeping matters include reports on contributions, using Paxton software on Mac computers, making social investments, difficulties with bank accounts and contacting HMRC about Gift Aid. We have a first note about the recent Annual Conference of Treasurers. We also have an alert about a scam. There is a survey on 'Progress towards a low-carbon sustainable community' and, for Scottish meetings, another on risk and resilience.

Do write in with your comments, questions and anything that you would like to see included next time. Meanwhile, next month new advice sheets on property stewardship will be available at [www.quaker.org.uk/property-matters](http://www.quaker.org.uk/property-matters) (to replace the Care of Meeting Houses Handbook). Enjoy the summer!

The editorial team ([ttnews@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ttnews@quaker.org.uk))

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## 'Walking together: how good working relationships build trust'

**The Trustees' Conference to be held at Friends House on Saturday 26 September, 10.00am to 4.00pm.**

**Calling all trustees!** This conference will include workshops on health and safety, induction and succession planning, employment practice, and charitable incorporated organisations. There will also be an opportunity to find out more about the Quaker meeting houses heritage project and the QSC link friend scheme. It would be wonderful if every AM trustee body could send at least one of their trustees (who need not be the clerk). To encourage as many AMs as possible to be represented at the conference, one trustee will be registered per AM in the first instance. However, if you would like more than one trustee from your AM to attend, you are welcome to send more than one name to Helen Griffith ([heleng@quaker.org.uk](mailto:heleng@quaker.org.uk)) and we will try to slot in as many Friends as possible.

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## Trustees: live adventurously!

Yearly Meeting (YM) 2015 called on meetings to give practical support in the current housing crisis (minute 25) and asked 'Friends and meetings to engage with the evil of social and economic injustice which creates a world in which the wrong things are valued. To do this requires owning and upholding the work that is already being done by Friends and in our name; helping to fund that work as generously as possible; and becoming involved in however small a way' (minute 36). That these concerns have been minuted by YM brings them within our Quaker witness and our charitable objectives. We encourage trustees to be courageous in using their reserves and property to fulfil their charitable objectives, including these discerned at this year's YM, and to be robust enough to manage the work. QSC can help to support such efforts and would welcome approaches from trustees carrying or thinking of carrying such work forward. The YM 2015 minutes can be accessed at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym2015-minutes](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym2015-minutes).

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### Abbreviations

We will try to avoid using abbreviations in the *Trustees' & Treasurers' News* but the following will often occur:

AM – area meeting                      LM – local meeting  
BYM – Britain Yearly Meeting  
OSCR – The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator  
QSC – Quaker Stewardship Committee

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## Progress towards a low-carbon sustainable community

Huddersfield Quaker, Chayley Collis, has been active around reducing fossil fuel dependency in recent years, from using renewable energy suppliers to disinvestment. She is now keen to find out about what other meetings across the country have been doing.

Chayley has designed a short survey which intends to get an understanding of where we are as a yearly meeting, and to celebrate the progress Quakers in Britain are making to being a 'fossil free' low carbon sustainable community.

Please share information about your meeting by filling out by the end of August the short survey at [bit.ly/ChayleySurvey](http://bit.ly/ChayleySurvey). The results will be shared with QPSW and *The Friend*.

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## The Annual Conference of Treasurers (ACT): a first report

The ACT at Friends House on 27 June included a keynote address from Paul Gibson on the right use of money: how the power of money can be used to deliver economic justice, aligned with social justice and care for the environment. The text is to be placed on the ACT web page ([www.quaker.org.uk/annual-conference-treasurers](http://www.quaker.org.uk/annual-conference-treasurers)). Material related to some of the workshops is also being provided for the website. This includes 'Encouraging contributions – resources for treasurers', 'Workshop on Ethical banking', and 'Spending for sustainability' with a link to [www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability-stories](http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability-stories). Further notes on other workshops are expected in the near future. There was not enough time to answer all treasurers' questions. Any treasurer who has a question is, however, always free to contact Gaby Scott ([gabys@quaker.org.uk](mailto:gabys@quaker.org.uk)) who will try to find an answer either directly or from her network of consultees.

Treasurers are recommended to visit the ACT web page and see for themselves.

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## Paxton charity accounting software: developments for Mac users and others

QSC supports AMs which use Paxton charity accounting software for preparing collated annual accounts. A number of AMs already do and Paxton have produced a version of the single-user package with 'Quakerised' headings, which should be ordered by phone or email, not via the Paxton website. However, Paxton is a Windows-based application. It can be run on Macs but Windows has to be installed before Paxton can be run. That involves extra expense for the Windows software and some extra installation work. However, there are two ways round this that AMs might like to think about.

First, if an AM considers that using Paxton would be helpful but is discouraged because the treasurer uses a Mac, then trustees might consider buying a PC laptop for the treasurer's use. This 'laptop for treasurer' need not be high-end and expensive – only match the system requirements on the Paxton website ([www.paxtoncharities.co.uk](http://www.paxtoncharities.co.uk)) – and would be passed on to the treasurer's successor when the time comes for a change.

Another possibility is that Paxton now provide an online version of their charity accounting software which is available on a subscription basis ([www.paxtoncharities.co.uk/#!/charities-online/citi](http://www.paxtoncharities.co.uk/#!/charities-online/citi) has details). The online version is equally accessible to Windows and Mac computers. Paxton have confirmed that the online version includes the changes for Quaker use.

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## Phoning HMRC about Gift Aid

To get through to a member of HMRC staff to have questions about Gift Aid answered. A Quaker treasurer has found it most useful to phone **0300 123 1073** (M-F, 8am to 5pm).

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**To update treasurer contact details and for treasurer support please contact:  
Gaby Scott, 020 7663 1045, [gabys@quaker.org.uk](mailto:gabys@quaker.org.uk).**

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## Difficulties with bank accounts

QSC has had reports of some LMs having difficulty updating the details for their bank accounts. You will all be aware that banks are now required to check the identities of organisations and signatories more thoroughly than was the case in the past. If LMs need to make changes to their accounts and encounter difficulties, it might be useful to ask the clerk to the AM trustees to provide a signed letter from the trustees confirming that the LM is authorised to make the changes and that the changes themselves are in order. It is difficult to be clear what individual banks will require as there are differences in how the various institutions interpret the regulations so, if changes are needed, why not start by asking the bank what it needs from the LM for the changes to be accepted smoothly.

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## Area meeting contribution reports – sign up now!

If you are an AM treasurer and have not signed up to our quarterly area meeting contribution reports, please do so by the end of July in order to receive the reports for the first two quarters (January to June 2015). Please contact Maisa Monteiro, [contributions@quaker.org.uk](mailto:contributions@quaker.org.uk) to be added to both the July and future updates.

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## Making Social Investments: the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Bill

Meetings from time to time wish to invest in something that, while not providing the highest possible financial return, is in accordance with our governance and concerns. This bill implements in section 13 ([bit.ly/NewBills13](http://bit.ly/NewBills13)) a Law Commission recommendation to give charities a power to make such 'social investments'. Currently there is some legal uncertainty over charities' ability to make social investments, which is putting charities off making social investments. The power in the new bill is permissive, aiming to make it easier for charities that want to make social investments to do so.

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## Friends Trusts Limited: custodian trustee or holding trustee?

Many AMs in England and Wales use Friends Trusts Limited (FTL) as custodian trustee. A custodian trustee enables unincorporated organisations to own property without having to transfer it between sets of individual holding trustees when the composition of the trustee body changes. This requires, however, that FTL must hold all the property of the charity for which it acts, investments as well as land. Some meetings now use either stockbrokers' nominee companies or fund platforms to hold their investments. To allow for this, the Charity Commission agreed a protocol for applying for an Order to discharge FTL from its custodian trusteeship and reappoint it as holding trustee or nominee for land. This permits the meeting to use another method of holding its investments. Further information can be obtained from the current Secretary of FTL, Christopher Gregory – [chrisg@quaker.org.uk](mailto:chrisg@quaker.org.uk). Without such an Order, all common investment funds (CIFs), gilts, shares, unit trusts or open-ended investment companies (OEICs) owned by an AM, including its constituent LMs, should be held in the name of Friends Trusts Limited and not in the name of the AM, LM, individual trustees or other nominees.

If FTL is custodian trustee for your AM can treasurers and trustees please check in what name investments are held? If you find that there are some investments not held in the name of FTL, please contact Christopher Gregory – [chrisg@quaker.org.uk](mailto:chrisg@quaker.org.uk).

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**Woodbrooke**  
Quaker Study Centre

1046 Bristol Road, Selly Oak  
Birmingham B29 6LJ  
0121 472 5171



### **Being a Quaker Trustee** **A Woodbrooke course for new or less experienced Area Meeting trustees or for anyone wanting a refresher.**

This factual and practical course starts at 6pm on day 1 and ends

at 2pm on day 3. It includes legal requirements and good practice for charities, and how these fit with Quaker good practice; also relationships between trustees and area and local meetings. Search for details with keyword **trustees** online at [www.woodbrooke.org.uk](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk).

**Fri 4 – Sun 6 Sep 2015 – *Book soon to avoid disappointment***

### **Being a Quaker Clerk** **An online Woodbrooke course for new or prospective clerks with little or no experience of Quaker clerking.**



Five modules cover the clerk's role before, during and after a Meeting for Worship for Business. Why do we use our particular business style?

Though focused on local meeting clerks, other clerks will also find they can learn much about their role. Included is a rest/catch-up week from 26 Oct to 1 Nov. For details search for **clerks** courses as described above.

**Mon 5 October – Sun 15 Nov 2015 – *Book soon to ensure a place***

### **Risk and resilience in the Scottish charity sector – survey**

Scottish AMs may be interested in a survey being carried out into risk and resilience in the Scottish charity sector. Charities need to be resilient when facing risks in uncertain times but not much is known about how charities cope in such circumstances. The survey, recently publicised by OSCR in one of its email updates, is being carried out by Diarmuid McDonnell, a doctoral student at the University of Stirling. It should only take 5-10 minutes to complete, and anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. The survey can be accessed at [bit.ly/RiskSurvey15](http://bit.ly/RiskSurvey15). Any queries about it should be sent to [diarmuid.mcdonnell@stir.ac.uk](mailto:diarmuid.mcdonnell@stir.ac.uk).

### **Fake charity scam: Charity Commission alert**

The Charity Commission has warned charities to look out for scams used by fraudsters to obtain bank details. A recent scam identified in the USA may be used in the UK as well. Charities were contacted to say that they were due to receive a large donation from an organisation promoted as being a legitimate and registered charity in the UK, which did not exist. To make the scam appear more credible, the fraudster used false documentation showing parts of the Commission's logo and a forged staff signature. Before giving out any information, particularly of a financial nature, to another charity, trustees can take the simple step of looking up the registered charity number and the charity's entry using the online charity search tools (CC at [bit.ly/CC-SearchTool](http://bit.ly/CC-SearchTool) and OSCR at [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)). Trustees who receive correspondence falsely claiming to be from a genuine charity should report it to the CC or to OSCR as appropriate and to [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk), the UK's national fraud and internet crime reporting centre.