Quaker Commercial Strategy 2026-2031 SUMMARY

Executive Summary

The upcoming commercial strategy will need to ensure, as a bare minimum, that gift-aided income to the Charity outpaces the rate of inflation and other rising costs. In the current climate, this is not a small ask.

However, there is also the opportunity to simplify our offer, thereby creating efficiencies; simplify our brand, creating a more direct link with our audiences, and explore new income opportunities that will continue to drive forward Quaker in Britain's commercial strategy with ambition.

Underlining these priorities is a belief that being much more aligned to the Quaker faith will not only enhance our market position but is also simply the right thing to do. We also expect to continue to be a key introduction of our audience to Quakerism.

Financial Growth Goals

By implementing the strategy as outlined below, we believe it is possible to achieve something within the following range:

Growth Type	Annual Growth Rate	2030 Revenue
Conservative	5%	£6.6M
Moderate	8%	£7.6M
Ambitious	12%	£9.2M

The assumptions are as follows:

- **5% annual growth**: Keeping pace with inflation with some light innovation, perhaps around everyday technology.
- **8% growth**: Strong, strategic execution e.g., launching new ventures relating to Quaker branding, and scaling existing profitable services, such as the cafe.
- **12% growth**: High-performing commercial arm, which would include entering new markets or significant investment, such as a new conference centre or cafes.

The intention is to forecast conservative growth, but to *aspire* to moderate growth. Once the strategy is underway, there will be greater visibility of how impactful the new income streams could be. Ambitious growth would be dependent on the charity's appetite, and budget, to invest in additional locations.

It is important to note that both the bookshop and Swarthmoor Hall currently run at a loss, with the Bookshop loss growing year on year at c.£45k per year. Swarthmoor Hall is forecast to cost £100k per year. Over five years, including inflation, this would cost us £755k. It is also worth noting that the dedicated Swarthmoor Hall fund would run out in ten years at this rate of expenditure.

Therefore, it is important to designate a review point for both operations should they have not moved to a profit-making position in the next five years; it is recommended that this is **2027**.

Strategic Goals s Objectives

Vision

To be the company of choice for those seeking ethical and sustainable events, accommodation and services.

Mission

To responsibly generate profit for BYM and provide an introduction to Quakerism.

Key Objectives:

- Realign with and reprioritise Quaker Values during a climate emergency
- Make better use of our assets so that we can increase our market share – and not be afraid to take risks where appropriate
- Maximise the Quaker brand to attract new audiences
- Make everything as simple as possible for our clients and staff

Areas of Activity – Key initiatives

The items below are a non-exhaustive list of activity that we expect to be further investigated and then take place under the strategic objectives identified above. We anticipate this to be an evolving list that will react to external trends and factors, but will act as our 'guiding stars' over the next five year.

Realign with and reprioritising Quaker Values during a climate emergency

Buying Policies

Have clear buying policies in place for our retail and catering that outlines our sustainable and ethical approach

Centralised Buying

Create a centralised retail buyer to create consistency of offer, to build better relationships with our suppliers, and ensure products meet our buying policy.

Positioning

Look at how we market our Quaker Bookshop to emphasise Quaker values around social justice. Position the bookshop as THE destination bookshop for books on race, peace, social justice, climate change and so on.

Influencing

Encourage our customers to embrace Quaker values. Discounts for providing your own cup, pay it forward in our cafe, plant a tree scheme in our catering.

Sustainability Goals

CO_2 emissions from operations will have been reduced by at least 50% on 2025 figures and the residual emissions offset. Ideally, a more substantial reduction will be made. A plan will be in place to fully reach net zero by 2050.

Make better use of our assets so that we can increase our market share – and not be afraid to take risks where appropriate

Reposition conferencing strategy

Move away from offering all room configurations to focusing on larger (30+ delegates) events; reconfigure spaces to increase the number of rooms that can host 100 delegates, knocking down walls where appropriate. This will result in fewer, but higher value events, and will require fewer staff to deliver to rooms.

Review Building Opening Hours

Test different opening hours, including evenings and weekends. Consider closing the building on quiet days or weeks. Use part-time contracts to help flex up and down accordingly.

Extend the cafe

Expand the floor print of the cafe by adding a glass extension to the front of the cafe, into the courtyard. As well as increasing the number of covers, this will create a valuable ‘shop window’ onto Euston Road.

Investigate cafe outposts

Conduct market research to identify whether the Seed Cafe offer could exist outside of Friends House.

Investigate the viability of a co-working space within the building

Collaborate with Estates to identify potential co-working spaces, with QC taking responsibility for the operations of the service.

Rent out our assets

Kitchen spaces are in demand as ‘dark kitchens’, rented out by businesses who deliver food via Ubereats or similar. Investigate the potential for our two kitchen spaces.

Maximise the Quaker brand to attract new audiences

Realign with the Quaker Brand

Remove the Quiet Company brand and CEO title. Reposition as the Commercial department of Quakers in Britain, with a Commercial Director.
Review messaging and signage to ensure link with Quakers in Britain is clear, and that customers understand the cause they are supporting – and how they support it.

Supper Clubs

Introduce supper clubs that showcase Quaker values, partnering with known brands and chefs. Open to the public but aimed at our Quaker community, creating a sense of togetherness. Ensures use of our cafe space out of hours to generate more sales per square foot.

Partner with Library

Work with the Library C Archives team to add tours and behind the scenes experiences to conference guests. Look at Open House todays. Create interest in heritage of the building and Quakers.

Education s Training

Work with QPSW to offer Quaker-led training or consulting to corporates in:

- Conflict transformation

- Discernment and decision-making (e.g., Quaker business methods)
- Nonviolence, simplicity in leadership, ethical governance

Public Events

Develop a full calendar of events and recruit a public events manager and team that expand use of the building during the quieter shoulder months and showcase Quaker values. Aim to build on 4 events in 2025 to 1-2 events a month in 2026. These events can be tested at Friends House or Swarthmoor Hall, with learnings shared across the two sites. *A provisional calendar is shown in Appendix 7*.

To make everything as simple as possible for our clients and staff

Restructure Team

Review the team structure to remove layers of hierarchy and simplify our ways of working. Reduce our fixed costs to reduce financial pressure and create more flexible, part-time roles.

Booking Process

Reviewing our current booking process, making it more streamlined for clients, and working for both commercial and public events. Identify suitable technology so that clients can use self-service where required, and lettings policy approval is transparent and easily updated.

Aligning systems

We will bring all of our retail systems – the cafes and shops at Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall – onto one POS, ensuring value of money, adequate integration with Finance, and robust business data.

Democratise decision-making

Create an investment fund for staff to spend within their teams to improve their ways of working. Each team to be given a modest amount, initially, of £2k, to review how they work.