



Annual Report
2022 - 2023



Children's Commissioner Koulla Yiasouma with Board members Kate Campbell and Liz Dickson at Societal Change event in Stormont in October 2022

Quaker Service Management Board

Elizabeth Dickson (*Chair*)

Siobhán McElnea (*Vice-Chair*)

Aidan Pearson (*Treasurer*)

Kate Campbell

Margrit Grey

Jonathan Lamb

Nicholas Lane (*to January 2023*)

Timothy Hunt (*from November 2022*)

Stephen Browne (*from November 2022*)

Owen Fulton (*from January 2023*)

Quaker Service Staff

Shane Whelehan – *Chief Executive*

David Morton – *Operations Manager (to August 2022)*

Margaret Hastings – *Finance and Administration Officer*

Sharon Crainey – *Quaker Cottage Manager (to December 2022)*

Jain Livingstone – *Family Worker (to December 2022)*

Elaine Bailey – *Deputy Childcare Coordinator (to December 2022)*

Jillian Wright – *Childcare Worker (to December 2022)*

Grant McCullough – *Quaker Cottage Manager (to September 2022)*

Sin  ad Bailie – *Quaker Connections Development Manager (to December 2022)*

Rory Doherty – *Societal Change Project Manager (to September 2022)*

Thomas Faulkner – *Mounteens Leader-in-charge (to October 2022)*

Ron  n Cunningham-Walker - *Assistant Youth Worker (to December 2022)*

Quaker Cottage residential volunteers

Chloe Halstead - *USA*

Allanah McGuicken - *NI*

Quaker Care Staff

John Henry Parker – *Retail Development Manager*

Jennifer Hughes – *Online Retail Assistant*

Jean Morelli – *Retail Assistant*

Charity registration number NIC102457

Company registration number NI063929



IYM Friends visit the Cottage in August 2022

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Our Concern

Justice, fairness, and opportunity are not experienced equally by everyone in our community.

Our Purpose

Led by Quaker values, to provide services that give support and effect change.

Our Vision

A community in which each individual is valued, their voice heard, and their need addressed.

Our Values

All of our work is value-led - values which we hold in common with Quakers.

Because all human life is of equal worth, we hope to work creatively for **peace** and reconciliation. We seek to give voice where a need presents itself and to find creative ways of dealing with conflict by appealing to the capacity for understanding in ourselves and in others. We recognise the importance of human relationships for individuals, families, and communities. We believe that working in partnership with others to restore positive relationships is beneficial in bringing about reconciliation and can lead to change.

Our belief in **equality** inspires us to challenge those in power and to try to change systems that cause social injustice and hinder us from being a caring community. We aim to treat all people fairly and without judgement, respecting and accepting all, regardless of individual circumstances. We are true to the commitments we make and steadfast and compassionate in the support we provide. Clear sighted as to our purpose, we work quietly and with **integrity**.

As an organisation we seek to ensure that we are financially healthy, that we use our resources responsibly and that we work collaboratively to ensure the best outcomes for those we serve. Aware of our impact on the planet, we recognise our personal and collective role in promoting **sustainability** and of proactive environmental management.



Elizabeth Dickson
Chairperson

Chairperson's Foreword, Elizabeth Dickson

The 2022-2023 financial year saw a period of change and transition for Quaker Service perhaps unprecedented in its history. This Annual Report records the closure of the Family Programme at the Cottage and the departure of a number of experienced and highly valued members of staff. There was – and continues to be – deep sadness at the loss of that work at the Cottage. However, there is much to celebrate in all that was achieved over the 40 years of the Family Programme and in the knowledge of the difference that the Cottage made to the lives of so many. Laying down that work was not easy but there is an acceptance also of the inevitability of change, not all of it negative, and of the need for us to adapt in how best we provide service in the social, political, and economic landscape of Northern Ireland in 2023.

Quaker Service is rooted in the community of Friends in Ulster and Ireland and there is gratitude for the support and guidance provided by Quakers locally and further afield over the course of the year. The expertise of Friends such as Peter Couchman was invaluable to the Chief Executive and Board in mapping out the way ahead and in providing a clear course of action that has led to the publication of our new strategy for 2023 to 2026.

We are grateful too for the financial support Quaker Service is given by Quaker Meetings across Britain and Ireland and for the continued generosity of Friends through individual giving and in holding fundraising events for the charity. The funding we receive from a number of charitable Trusts and

Foundations has been more important than ever and we appreciate the long-term commitment so many have made to our work.

Quaker Service ended the financial year with a deficit of £109715. The Finance and Personnel Committee has exercised close stewardship over our finances, and, although we could not sustain continued losses on that scale, the steps that have been taken mean there is confidence in the financial sustainability of the charity.

The Management Board has legal responsibility for all the activities of Quaker Service. The Board was augmented by three new Trustees this year: Stephen Browne, Owen Fulton and Timothy Hunt, whilst Nicholas Lane stepped down after almost three decades of loyal service. My thanks go to each Board member for the time and care invested over the course of many meetings in steering a path forward. Their dedication is borne out of a common belief in the values and aims of the charity and in a shared sense of purpose.

There is enormous appreciation for the contribution made by staff and volunteers to all the activities detailed in this report. This is a period of learning and rebuilding, but the foundations have been laid in the substance and quality of the work across the years.

Elizabeth Dickson, Chairperson



Shane Whelehan
Chief Executive

Chief Executive's Report

The charity had to take some difficult but necessary decisions last year in laying down the Family Programme at Quaker Cottage. In the absence of the Belfast Health Trust's support, the programme was no longer sustainable financially or in terms of the validation of its beneficiaries. The Societal Change Programme was also laid down after an extended pilot period so that we could learn from the recommendations arising from its evaluation, and we thought it prudent not to replace our Operations Manager Dave Morton, upon his departure to take up the reins of another charity. A staff departure at Christmas in our Quaker Connections Programme tested us further. Like the passing of the seasons, our climate has changed, and we are adapting to this transformed reality and the opportunities presented to us. We have had to prune to make way for new growth, and in the months since winter we have been consulting widely and planting seeds for a new way forward.

Our new strategic plan plots our understanding and intentions to develop further our work in prisons and for the welfare of prisoners. With the appointment of a new Quaker Connections Development Manager, we have already changed our systems and processes to bolster our reach and support within prisons and transform our administrative efficiency. Our plans to move the charity to Frederick Street Meeting House are advancing and include developments designed to improve the charity's sustainability and to support new service that meets our concern. The move to

Frederick Street also positions us better to be responsive to the needs of local communities and provides us with a range of partnerships to increase volunteering throughout the charity. We also continue to support Black Mountain Shared Space Project in their use of Quaker Cottage and continue to engage with a variety of stakeholders to help us reinstate these assets into the service of the charity. Though this new strategic plan covers the period to 2026, I am certain that in progressing the aims and objectives proposed within it, we are building the foundations for the next 50 years of service. With a road map agreed, I look forward to the months ahead, and of the positive news that we might report next year.

I am so very thankful for all the work that our volunteers continue to do for the charity, whether engaging the public in our shop, on the landings or online with prisoners, in our stock rooms or on our Boards and Committees. Volunteers add value to everything we do, and their selflessness is key to the success of our work. Similarly, I want to thank all of those staff who left us during the year and wish them well in their new jobs. My thanks go also to the staff who remain with us and who felt keenly the loss of their colleagues. Thank you to all who uphold our work in so many ways and who continue to support us in the years ahead.

Shane Whelehan, Chief Executive

A Year of Challenges for the Charity

Following the publication of an evaluation on the Societal Change Project in February 2022 and a review of the recommendations emerging from it, it was agreed that this project would be laid down in September 2022. The evaluation was positive but there were recommendations that would require time fully to explore and enable, including how we might develop a clear strategy and position on a public-facing role in shaping and influencing policy.

In late March 2022, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust proposed a significant variation to the contract we had long held with them to support families at risk. The new contract involved a move away from group work based at the Cottage to individual home visits across Belfast for family support. The contract variation was reactive to staffing and operational difficulties within social services and would effectively end the use of the Cottage as our centre, moving staff onto social services' employment contracts, reporting directly to social services, and working in beneficiaries' homes. We felt that this was not in keeping with our approach and were aware also that other agencies were already undertaking such work and were better resourced and staffed to do so.

The Board and staff were in full agreement that we would not take up the contract. Despite the conclusion of Trust funding in July 2022, we made a commitment to completing the work with the three groups of women and their children referred to us by BHSCT. Quaker Service staff commenced intensive engagement with external facilitators and community partners and stakeholders over the summer to try and reconfigure the existing programme to a more sustainable model, analysing the existing programme, looking at the best use of the team's strengths and skills and talking with other organisations, professionals, and service-users past and present. The Board at this time set aside a significant sum of money from reserves to meet the immediate funding shortfall.

News that no new residential volunteers had been secured for the year ahead made our staffing situation more challenging. We paused recruitment of a new cohort of families due to commence the programme in June to allow the reconfiguration exercise to complete. The externally facilitated reconfiguration programme was completed by the first week of September, and though thorough in its scope, it failed to reveal a reconfiguration that was feasible. In the same months we saw our projected deficit rise sharply amidst a lack of certainty over the future of the programme and there was no funding secured to replace what had been lost. It was with sadness that we concluded that the model for our family programme was no longer sustainable and following a consultation with staff at the Cottage we laid down this work on December 22nd, 2022.

Throughout this period steps were taken to save costs across the charity, including not replacing the departing Operations Manager's post. Following the departure of our Quaker Connections Development Manager in December, it would be almost four months before that post was again filled. In total, nine dedicated and skilled staff left the charity.

Planning for the Future

The Board of Quaker Service held nine scheduled Board meetings from April 2022 to March 2023, four exceptional meetings regarding Quaker Cottage and two strategic planning meetings, with additional planning meetings taking place throughout April and May 2023. Eight meetings of Finance and Personnel committee also took place during the year along with additional ad-hoc meetings of Board members.

In mapping the route forward we engaged with Members and Friends of Quaker Service, current and former staff members, Quaker Connections, Family Programme and shop volunteers past and present, mothers participating on the family programme, senior management from BHSCT, South Belfast Cost-of Living group, South Belfast Eco-Quakers, the Law Centre NI, CEOs from

community and voluntary organisations, tech and third sector leaders, public representatives and Friends from across Ireland. Formal strategic planning meetings with Peter Couchman and others helped us frame our understanding of unmet need in 2023 and the charity's priorities going forward, and these have been published in our new three-year strategic plan.

A substantial but unsuccessful bid for funds to Belfast City Council's Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund had a number of positive outcomes. It provided us with significant documentary collateral moving forward including a business case, a development pathways document and architectural plans and sketches supporting our intention and planning regarding a move to Frederick Street.

Between July 2023 and June 2026, we will focus on four strategic aims



The Family Programme at Quaker Cottage

The Family Programme staff continued to support mothers, their pre-school children and afterschool programme participants as normal and during this time Sharon Crainey was appointed Cottage Manager following Grant McCullough's departure.

Programme delivery from April to December followed a familiar pattern and day to day, session by session and on bus journeys, the family team encountered the traumatic life circumstances and emotions experienced by these families. These experiences were always responded to in the most caring and empathetic way, enabling beneficiaries to feel cared for, believed in and understood.

The summer programme consisted of twelve Cottage sessions and ten-day trips. The Cottage sessions included art & crafts, group activities, roleplay and free-play and day trips were made around Belfast and County Down. The emphasis was on fun and educational activities including trips to parks, beaches, seaside towns, the Folk and Transport Museum at Cultra, and, in what proved a highlight, a session on the Hydro Bikes on the River Lagan. The focus was on mental health and wellbeing, physical health and healthy eating, social activity, and team building. Healthy eating was promoted through the provision of nutritious snacks and picnics and through the simple activity of taking time to eat and socialise together.

Overall, the summer sessions proved to be a great team building exercise and mums reported the significance of the programme for themselves and their children, especially in providing opportunities for families who were not able to have a summer holiday. For the first time in our summer programmes our teenagers were part of our day trips, enjoying interacting with their siblings as well as with our American volunteers and staff from childcare and the afterschool programmes.

The Cottage team continued service unwaveringly and the familiar love, care, and dedication to the families of north/west Belfast persisted. The final months of the Programme progressed with 3 weekly mothers' groups, 3 creche sessions and 2

afterschool groups, supplemented by home visits. The group sessions at the Cottage, as ever, provided the acceptance and support that enable an increase in self-confidence and self-worth. The women reported the importance to them of the relationships built up in the group over a period of time and the friendships formed which they anticipate lasting long beyond the programme. They emphasised too the value of the flexible approach of the Cottage and the worth of keeping children of different ages together through the pre-school, afterschool, and teenage programmes.

The final Early Years Inspection of the creche took place in October 2022. The report noted the 'warm, encouraging, child-centred approach, promoting the development of children's self-confidence, self-esteem, self-control and tolerance.'

During this time the Mums showed staff the strength and determination which they had gained through their time at Quaker Cottage through their own efforts to keep the Cottage open, while still dealing with their own daily challenges.

In December, with a huge collection of foodstuffs and gifts for the mothers, provided by Friends' School Lisburn and by Friends from local Meetings, over 80 substantial hampers were packed up by a team of volunteers at Frederick Street and delivered by staff to Quaker Cottage families past and present. The hampers were particularly welcome in such economically trying times.

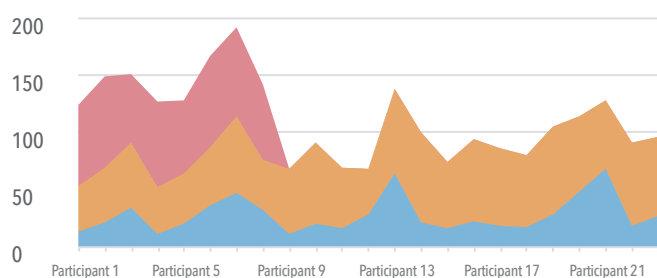
In early 2023 we entered into an agreement with a local community group, Black Mountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP) to enable them to move temporarily into the Family Centre at Quaker Cottage whilst their new multi-million-pound centre is being built just a few fields down the mountain. Working for peace and a shared future amongst interface communities, the Shared Space Project enables grass-roots reconciliation work in West Belfast. The scale of the new centre is an indication of the transformation in services that has taken place around the Cottage in recent years. It highlights too the importance of working closely

with other agencies and organisations. BMSSP will move into their new building in April 2024 and we are liaising with them to engage with the organisations and communities they support and take on their views about continued service on Black Mountain.

The staff may not always be able to see Quaker Cottage from where they live and now work, but the families who spent time there continue to do so,

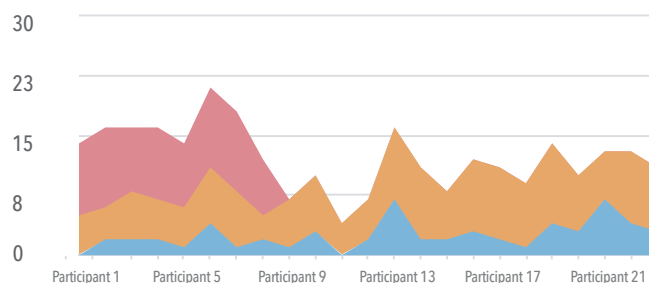
and we hope as they look to the white house on the mountain it will give them a feeling of a special place, a haven filled with love, a place where they felt safe and loved for being themselves. We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to Sharon, Jain, Elaine, Jillian, Thomas, Ronan and Grant for the unbroken love they gave to the families of Quaker Cottage throughout their time with the charity.

Children's Needs



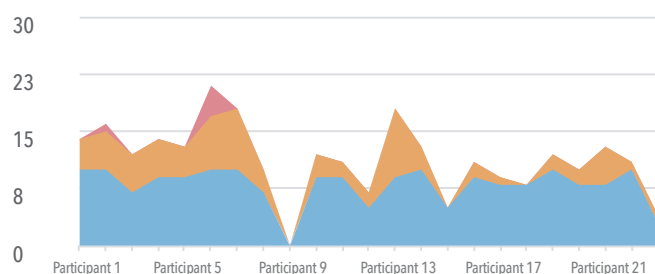
Before I started at Quakers
After 3 months at Quakers
After 9 months at Quakers

Self Confidence



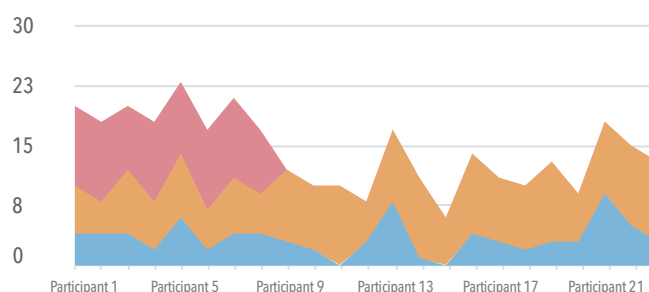
Before I started at Quakers
After 3 months at Quakers
After 9 months at Quakers

Anxiety



Before I started at Quakers
After 3 months at Quakers
After 9 months at Quakers

Social Skills



Before I started at Quakers
After 3 months at Quakers
After 9 months at Quakers

Quaker Service AGM attendees
at Moyallon in Sept 2022



Group Therapy & Crèche

25

Mums

26

Babies

106

Group therapy sessions

106

Play therapy sessions

112

Counselling sessions

131

Home support visits

106

Pro-social modelling sessions

850+

Minibus pick-ups

900+

Home cooked meals

80+

Christmas hampers
for families

Afterschools

35

Service users

66

Sessions

The Mounteens Programme

Mounteens typically delivered 4 group sessions per week with each group having their programme tailored specifically for each age range with an average of 5-7 young people attending each session. The Mounteens programmes focused on person-centred workshops such as:

- Budgeting and finance.
- Personal development
- LGBTQ awareness workshop.
- Community gardening.
- Risk taking and healthy choices.
- Music technology.
- Multimedia print and design workshop.

One to One support has always been critical in the success of the programme's delivery, spending time with individuals to help them overcome obstacles, navigate community support services and to encourage them to thrive. Typical issues in our participants' lives presented as poor mental health, social isolation, family relationship break-down, and challenging and aggressive behaviour. Showing the young person unconditional positive regard as well as challenging them on their behaviour helped them to open up about personal and family issues. Bringing these young people up to the Cottage was often cited by the families as a positive intervention in their lives. One young person's family was supported during eviction from their home through practical assistance in moving house and connecting them to housing rights and homelessness support. Other young people were assisted in college registrations, helping them to acquire basic qualifications and part-time work. Others were supported with help for substance misuse and addictions.

In July and August, the staff took the opportunity to work alongside the rest of the Family Programme team on summer programmes. On the regular summer programme, the young people were taken on separate trips. However, due to staff and volunteer shortages, we took a collaborative approach with Mounteens participants going on trips alongside the Afterschools and Childcare programme within Quaker Cottage. This was useful in allowing for the young people to share their Summer Programme with their even younger siblings and enabled staff to interact with more family members and gain a deeper understanding of family dynamics.

Throughout the months of September and October Mounteens delivered 3 group sessions per week. Numbers in the groups at this time had fallen from 28 to 18 young people due to participants transitioning off the programme. Staff noted heightened anxiety and poor mental health, including eating disorders, self-harming, and issues on gender identity. Our approach was to embrace all participants in the programme with empathy and with non-judgemental approaches to their circumstances, encouraging their engagement and allowing them to feel safe and supported.

As part of a collaborative storytelling project with the Societal Change Programme, young people worked together with their families to develop a platform for their stories to be heard. The young people involved, accompanied by their immediate families, presented their stories to MLAs, Civil Servants, and invited guests at Stormont at an event at the end of September 2022 with media coverage of the event provided from BBCNI. Young people also drafted a series of questions to ask Stormont representatives. All participants involved on this programme said they had seen significant changes with their mental and emotional wellbeing. They also stated they felt more trusting and open to talk about issues within their lives.

Initial engagement with several participants when they began the programme was sporadic, but through time young people began to see improvements in their school attendance, and improvements in relationships with their family members. Groups began to communicate with each other through social media and meeting up outside of group. One individual, who had issues with Body Dysmorphia, began showing more confidence, was more comfortable in group and more open for meaningful discussions around gender identity with peers. Staff observed his group showing him support, and empathy during these sessions, showing enhanced respect for others through the friendships they formed.

During the final months and weeks of the programme, participants were supported through individual personal development plans and helped to engage and connect with other community services and youth programmes.

Mounteens Data



Young people
16 male 12 female



Group session hours



One-to-one hours



Home visits



Number of
minibus journeys



Number of
staff meetings



Meals / snacks were provided
with every group session
and one-to-ones

"I'm happy because I feel more comfortable with myself, and I've become more comfortable with my family. I feel like I will make better choices in my life now."

"I used to riot and get into fights, now I am staying out of trouble and keeping my head down, keeping fit and staying at football."

Outcomes measured around confidence and self-worth included



Of participants felt better about themselves



Of young people felt more confident

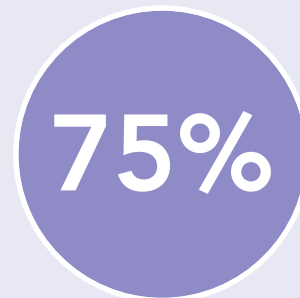


Of young people stated they had increased coping mechanisms

Outcomes measured during this period around practical life skills included

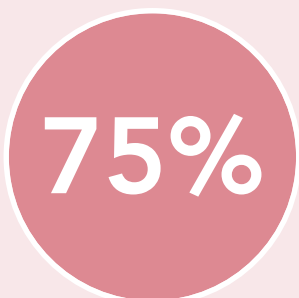


Of young people reported improvements in their practical life skills

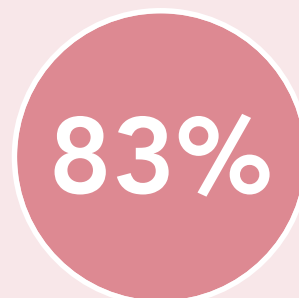


Of young people felt they could ask for help if needed

Outcomes measured during this period around respect for others included



Of young people felt they were able to make friends



Of young people felt they had gained more respect for others

Restorative Practice

In June, the Chief Executive was pointed as Co-chair of the Restorative Practices Forum NI, which promotes restorative justice philosophy and restorative practices across all aspects of life and society. The Forum is made up of experts and practitioners in restorative justice and practice from across Northern Ireland. Quaker Service is committed to incorporating Restorative Practice models and the Family Group Conferencing model into its practices and core activities.



Quaker Connections

This volunteer-led prisoner befriending programme provides practical and emotional support services for prisoners across Northern Ireland. People facing isolation in prison value the fact that the befriender chooses to spend time with them, rather than being under a professional or family obligation to do so. With the support of a full-time coordinator, our trained volunteers provide a non-judgmental, empathetic service primarily in HMPs Maghaberry and Magilligan. We use both individual and group befriending models of support including additional support for prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm, support for prisoners getting ready for release following a lengthy sentence, and circles of support for prisoners upon release and returning to the community. Quaker Connections Volunteers also support men in HMP Maghaberry through informal education, health and leisure activities, and a drop-in facility.

During the year, the programme continued to provide volunteer befriending support to serving prisoners and one individual in the community. Staff shortages at Maghaberry remain a problem and there were often difficulties in arranging both in person and online visits for the befriending volunteers. Quaker Connections has traditionally used the public facing visitor arrangements at HMP Maghaberry, but in early 2023 it was agreed to work from the Prisoner Development Unit within the prison estate going forward. The benefits of this arrangement in streamlining the visit process are already becoming clear.

We continue to work with a peer mentor, a serving prisoner, who has given us direct access to people that need an intervention due to their own challenging circumstances. The peer mentor developed an anti-violence and personal resilience programme called 'Making the Correct Moves' and we co-facilitate it with him at HMP Maghaberry. The programme was designed based on his experiences of completing the Alternative to Violence™

programme when in Portlaoise Prison. Being able to work directly with this prisoner in his role as a peer mentor to deliver this programme has given Quaker Connections volunteers access and pathways to supporting others who need an intervention due to their own challenging circumstances. Working directly with the peer mentor in co-delivering the training has allowed the men to be open in sharing their experiences and their willingness to change. It has helped men identify their own personal triggers to violence, helped them develop coping mechanisms, and improved their mental health and confidence. We have completed 3 x 6 week and 2 x 7-week sessions this year with 28 men graduating in year. The peer mentor signposts our volunteers to other prisoners on a waiting list to check their suitability and availability to participate and this allows us to make prisoners aware of other Quaker Connections programmes.

The Making the Correct Moves programme and the Drop In facility continue to support each other. The Drop-in Facility is when volunteers make themselves available in Davis House and other Houses to engage with men on an ad-hoc basis or through arrangement with their peer mentor. Volunteers are able to call on the support of NIPS staff, including healthcare and safety and support teams, meaning that they can offer a holistic response. Drop-ins take place every Tuesday and Thursday.

Volunteers also bring additional skills and interests into Maghaberry to support prisoners. Regular yoga and meditation workshops, cookery classes and mindfulness sessions have been facilitated throughout the year.

Staff and volunteers also visited and surveyed seventeen women prisoners in Hydebank Wood College as part of developing our understanding of the housing needs of women in contact with the criminal justice system and it is our intention to

develop our befriending service in this location in the coming year. With funding from Oak Housing and the Community Foundation NI we have been looking at how we can play a role in improving the housing and homelessness landscape for women in contact with the criminal justice system. As part of this project, we have been speaking to women with lived experience of prison impacted by housing issues and have been engaging with a range of community activists and individuals and agencies with gender led expertise in reducing recidivism and tackling homelessness amongst women.

Our Circles of Support volunteers continued to provide practical and emotional support to our core Circles Member throughout the year. We have now moved our core member to a number of one-to-one transition befrienders which has allowed the existing Circle of Support volunteers to refresh, and we will continue to work with NIPs and Probation to take on new prisoners next year.

The Quaker Connections volunteers make a tremendous contribution. They were supported during the year with several training courses including managing conversations with vulnerable persons and building resilience and well-being.

We would like to express our thanks to our Development Manager Sinéad Bailie for her service to the charity and to Megan Thompson for keeping the programme on course in the latter part of the year.

Quaker Connections Data

5

Anti -violence programmes
co-facilitated

28

Prisoners completing
anti-violence programmes

43

Hours of workshops delivered
in yoga, meditation and
cookery classes

161

Befriending visits

120

Prisoners supported in
one-to-one sessions at drop-ins

14

Hours of volunteer
training delivered

14

Volunteers trained

108

Circles of support engagements

"Before I done the course, I realised I had problems with being aggressive. I've learnt that I need to change my behaviour in the future so that I can stay on the right track and stay out of jail. I have applied what I have learnt on this course already. I found out that two brothers got stabbed while I was in jail. I was very angry, and I wanted revenge straight away. However, I spoke with D and B and told them how I felt. I then realised I had a choice on how to react. My choice now is to stay passive and assertive. It's not my problem, I don't have to seek revenge. I don't like violence and I don't want to be violent. I am out on Monday. Things are good. I'm going to be working with outside agencies to keep me on a good path. I have my Quakers/MCM booklet to remind me of what I have learned."

Making the Correct Moves Graduate

Societal Change / Keep Mum Programme

During this period the storytelling project, Keep Mum, was further developed, making links between the Family Programme and Mounteens Project at Quaker Cottage. Therapeutic storytelling was facilitated to enable reflective spaces for mothers and young people to share their stories and communicate their lives using various media.

Keep Mum commenced with a group of mothers from Quaker Cottage who had engaged on the storytelling programme in the year previously. Five of the seven mums registered completed the programme. Parallel to the mums' workshops, the project worked with four young people from the Mounteens programme to help them find their voice by sharing their stories. Two of the participants were daughters from the mothers' group and they found it comforting that both the mother and daughter were going through the process together, as it provided them with a platform to talk about the past in a safe manner together. The journey for the 4 young people was in their own words transformative - at the beginning their communication was poor but using art activities and reflective exercises the members of the group were able to connect better, open up and talk about their lives. During the year there were eight different media engagements with the programme including three interviews with the mothers.

The stories of the mothers and young people were launched at a celebration event in the Long Gallery in Stormont on September 29th and included a panel discussion made up of elected MLAs, the

Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health, and the NI Children's Commissioner. Chaired by Órlaithí Flynn MLA, the participants shared their stories with the panel, guests, and family members through the mediums of spoken word, video, and interpretative dance. The mums and young people had the confidence to use their experiences and stories to challenge and question the panel on the need to improve mental health services, and the need to change laws and legislate for change. The bravery of the participants in confronting and seeking to overcome their struggles was acknowledged by the public representatives present and commitments from panel members were made to follow up on specific queries.

All participants on the Keep Mum project reported increased confidence or improved relationships amongst family and friends because of their involvement.

Paddy Heathwood

Paddy, who died on 6th April 2023 following a fall at his home, was held dear at the Cottage. Lively and good humoured, he enjoyed a great relationship with members of staff over the years and they in turn followed with pride his progress through Mounteens, MyStory/Your Story and Societal Change on to becoming the father of Zara in 2019. Paddy was a staunch advocate for Quaker Service and spoke with tremendous power and conviction about his experiences. His contribution made a real difference. He will be greatly missed.



"Being part of these storytelling sessions has been a rollercoaster for me. It has opened old wounds but at the same time the other women put a band aid on them. I have found the process very emotional but at the same time very healing. This group of women who I've never met prior to this have been so honest, supportive, accepting, strong, generous, and true warriors. Their stories blew me away. Everything we all must deal with on a daily basis shows how strong we all are."

Treasurer's Report

At 31st March 2023, I can report a deficit of £109,715 at the year-end. This significant deficit reflects the impact of the loss of BHSCT funding for the Family Programme at Quaker Cottage, the redundancy settlements made following consultations with staff affected, including on the Societal Change Programme, and a shrinkage in our investment portfolio value of c£15k. Our projected budget of £631k for the financial year 2022-2023 was revised down to £465k in November 2022, primarily due to the agreed closure of these programmes and the departure of our Operations Manager in August 2022.

Overall income this year was £432K compared with £601K in 2022, reflecting the reduction in Trust funding as well as a fall in legacy income. Expenditure was £526k compared to £578k in 2022 with £71k being paid out in redundancy to six members of staff.

Our portfolio of investments fell in value in year from £176k to £161k. The charity holds an ethical defensive investment strategy which debars investment in fossil fuels, alcohol, hedge funds and tobacco amongst others, and the impact of the war in Ukraine along with rising inflation accounts for large parts of this devaluation.

The Finance & Personnel Committee met 8 times during the year reviewing fundraising, risk management, and recruitment, as well as monitoring of cash flow and income and expenditure. In response to BHSCT's proposed contract revisions, significant scrutiny of finances, cash-flow and risk took place during this period, including meetings with our auditor's restructuring and insolvency team. The Finance & Personnel Committee designated reserves in year to ensure compliance with our reserves policy in terms of

liabilities and to prepare for the requirements emerging from our strategic plan from 2021 to 2024. The loss of the BHSCT contract prompted the Committee to ring-fence £120k out of reserves for the Family Programme during the year whilst we grappled with future funding scenarios for a reconfigured Family Programme. However, sustainable options for the programme were not accessible in the time-frames available to us and it was with sadness that the programme was laid down to ensure the liquidity and future going concern of the Charity.

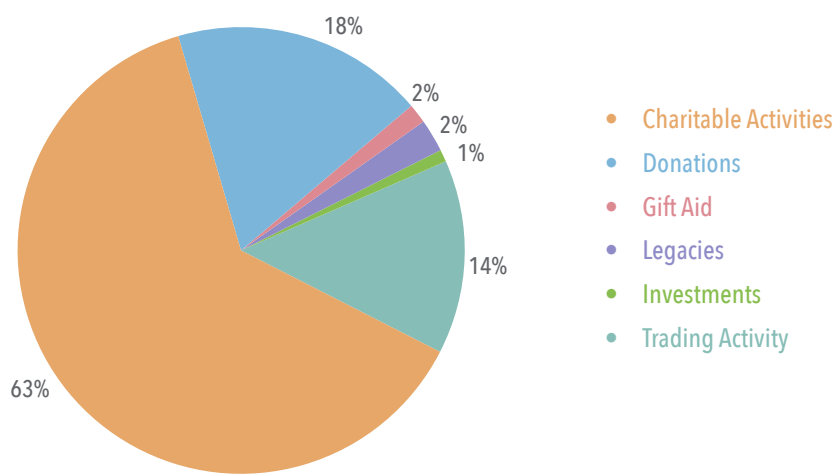
Quaker Care Ltd also had a challenging year, with a notable decrease in traffic for its online sales platform. The covenant to Quaker Service was £9,043 at year end.

This brief overview of the financial year perhaps does not reflect the many difficult conversations that took place regarding the escalating impact year on year of funding shortfalls resulting in the far-reaching decisions that had to be taken. I thank the Chief Executive and members of the Finance & Personnel Committee for their hard work. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the staff who departed the charity in 2022 for their commitment and transformative contribution to the lives of so many over the years.

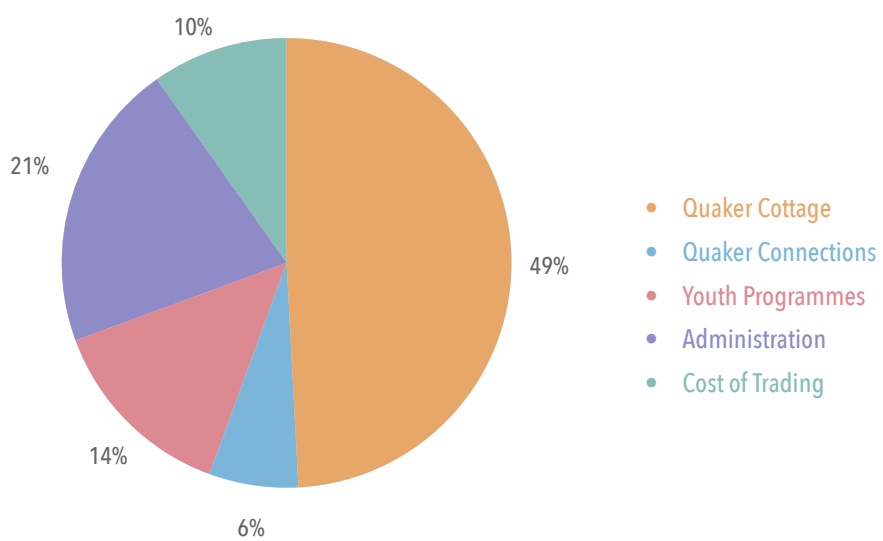
Quaker Service has always depended on the generosity of its supporters and continues to do so. We are very grateful to F/friends who continue to support our work financially, in kind and in voluntary endeavour.

Aidan Pearson, Treasurer

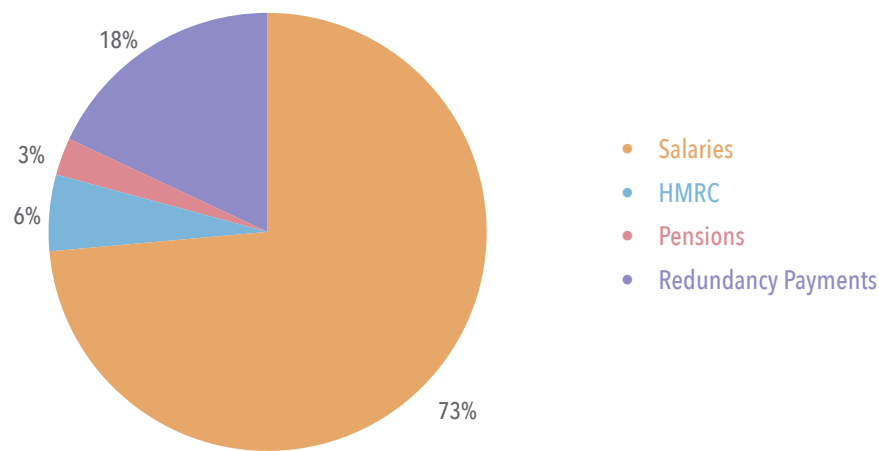
Group Income (£431,659) Source and Percentage



Group Expenditure by Workstream Percentage (£526,055)



Staff Costs (£394,294) by Percentage



Quaker Care Ltd / The Quaker Shop

2022/2023 was a challenging year for the high street with rising inflation and the resultant cost of living crisis changing customer shopping patterns. However, it was pleasing that the shop was able to remain open throughout the year, uninterrupted by the lockdowns that had continued into April 2021, and that sales in the shop showed a small increase. However, although income was up from the previous financial year and the cost of goods sold remained static, our expenditure rose in direct proportion to the staff cost of living uplifts agreed in late 2022.

Income from sales in the shop is supplemented by sales online. During the Christmas period our sales on eBay were disrupted by a series of strikes by postal workers which caused delays to deliveries and subsequent cancellations and requests for refunds. Overall, online sales remained at a similar level to 2021-2022, but increased costs meant that this part of the shop operated at a deficit in year. We will review our online performance, our understanding of the online shopping habits of customers and the types of platforms people are now using to buy and sell goods.

Our covenant to Quaker Service at year end rose modestly from last year's donation to a sum of £9,042.

Our volunteer team continued to do great work and I would like to express my gratitude to those who left us and welcome those who joined during the year. Our volunteers contributed on average 42 hours a week over the year, equating to almost £23,000 value-in-kind at the present real living wage rate. More than that our volunteers gave us access to their wide range of skills, knowledge, and experience that only a volunteer team made of people from all different backgrounds could provide. Volunteers also staffed a very successful stall for us at IYM in Stranmillis in August.

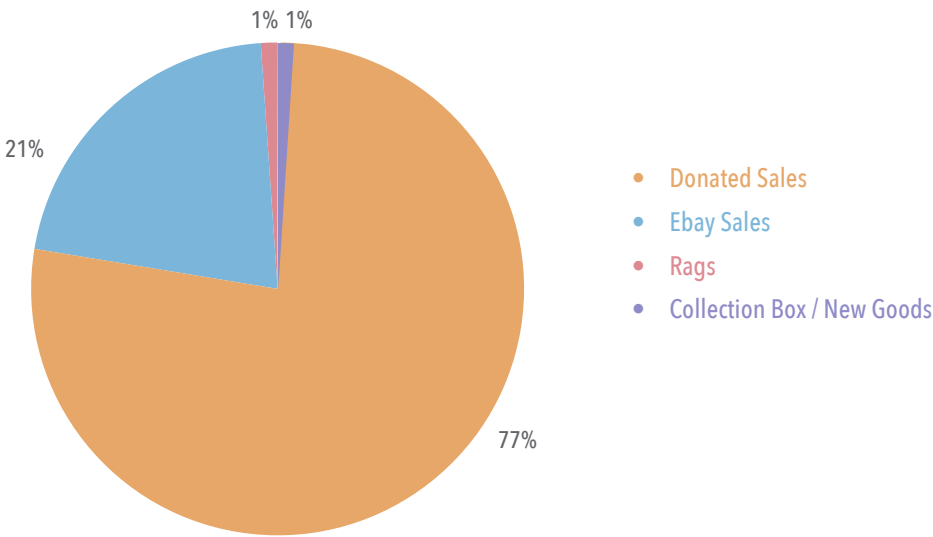
Three new Board members joined the company this year with the appointment of Margrit Grey, David Hobson and Roger Warnock as Chairperson. Planning priorities centred around the development of the shop and online sales, company development, operational efficiency and the opportunities presented by the charity's intentions to move to Frederick Street. During the year, Quaker Service made a funding application to the Dormant Accounts Fund to support the costs of a Social Enterprise Development Manager. This post will support the development and diversification of Quaker Care's interests to increase unrestricted income for the charity. New workplans and operational priorities for the charity shop were agreed in March 2023.

Our collaboration work with PBNi also continued supporting individuals completing their community service orders. These volunteers worked very hard, and we hope that the skills and experience gained in the shop will help them move on in positive directions.

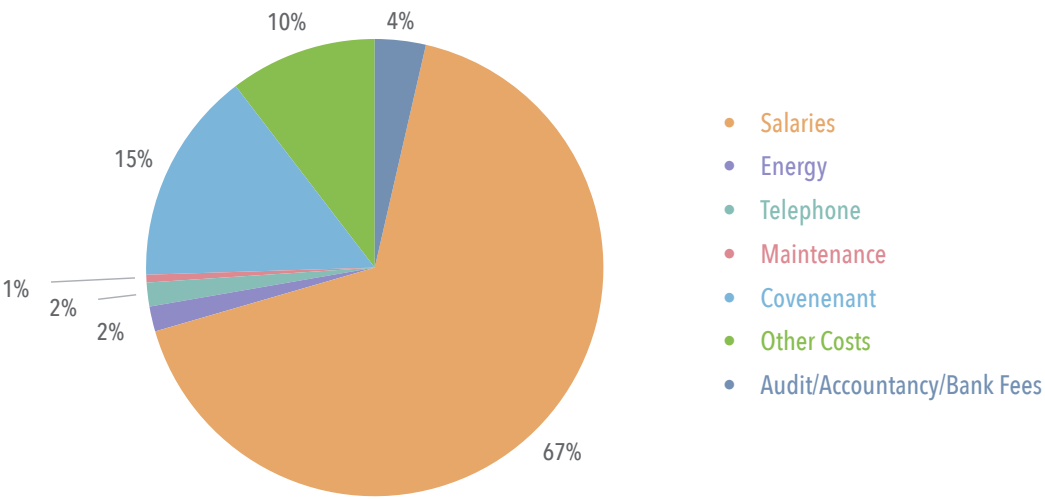
I would like to thank all our customers, volunteers, and Board members for their support during the year and encourage anybody who has even a couple of hours a week to support our work to get in touch.

**John Henry Parker, Retail Development Manager
Quaker Care Ltd**

Income Breakdown £59,991



Expenditure Breakdown £59,812



**Organisations
who donated
£500 or more to
the charity in
2022 - 2023**

Government:

Northern Ireland Prison Service
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Investment
Department of Education - Early Years Pathway Fund
Probation Board

Trusts, Corporates and Friends' Meetings:

CB & HH Taylor Trust
Sir James Reckitt Charity
Oliver Moreland Trust
R&S Bankcroft Clark Charity Trust
AE Harvey Charitable Trust
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
WF Southall Trust
LFT Charitable Trust
The Ireland Fund
BBC Children in Need
TW Greeves Trust
Bishop Street Meeting
Frederick Street Meeting
Lisburn Meeting
Lurgan Meeting
Monkstown Meeting
South Belfast Meeting
Waterford Meeting
Ireland Yearly Meeting
Western Regional Monthly Meeting
Friends' School Lisburn



Staff and volunteers at Quaker Cottage in August 2022



To find out more about how you can work
with us to make a real difference locally,
please get in touch by calling

Tel: 028 90 201 444

Email: info@quakerservice.com

www.quakerservice.com



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