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QUAKER  
SOCIAL  
ACTION  
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**Trustee Recruitment and Information Pack 2024**

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**Four million people reported going hungry and 5.5 million low income households have cut down on food in the UK.**

*JRF cost-of-living tracker June 2023*

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## Thank you for showing an interest in the role of trustee of Quaker Social Action.

Are you looking to contribute to a small, influential organisation that will make the most of your time, energy and skills? There has never been a greater need.

The pandemic deepened inequalities, which have been made worse still by the cost-of-living crisis, with the impacts most felt by those with the least. Four million people reported going hungry and 5.5 million low-income households in the UK cut down on food due to rising costs, according to research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (summer 2023). QSA makes a unique contribution through its practical, innovative services, enabling people on low incomes to seek solutions to the issues affecting their lives.

We are looking to recruit **4 trustees** to join our board to provide QSA with direction and leadership, of those we are looking for one to serve as our treasurer. This is an exciting and important time to join the team. We are expanding our influencing and advocacy work, seeking to share the lessons we learn from providing practical support services with policy makers and leaders. We want to shine a spotlight on the inadequate support provided to the most vulnerable, and push for policy change where we are best placed to leverage impact.

Volunteering as a trustee can be hugely rewarding. There are opportunities to use your strengths, and to try out and learn new things in a supportive environment. I continue to learn and be inspired by the work that we do together. Please take time to explore this pack which gives more information about the role and about QSA. Do get in touch if you have any queries or if you'd like to talk it through with someone – we would love to hear from you.



**Caroline Humphries, Chair**

# WHO IS QUAKER SOCIAL ACTION?

**QSA works with people on low incomes to seek solutions to the issues affecting their lives.**

The services that QSA deliver are varied; with three themes:

- Work that supports people struggling on a low income
- Services supporting people who are homeless/vulnerably housed, such as asylum seekers
- Community empowerment projects operating at a neighbourhood level

Some of our services operate in person, mainly in east London, some are national and delivered online or through a telephone helpline. Across all services, we are keen to share our learning with others, through advocacy, campaigning, training or having a voice with policy makers and in the media on issues where we have credibility.

QSA was founded in 1867 by Quakers troubled by the social injustices of the time and keen to tackle them. This sense of taking practical action to address societal challenges has stayed with us over our 150-year history and our organisational values are aligned with Quaker values of equality, truth and peace.

QSA is the largest independent Quaker charity and Quakers across the UK support our work – with approximately 20% of our £1+million income coming from Quaker sources. We are proud of our Quaker heritage and our place within the Quaker community, while also clear that our services, jobs and trustee roles are open to all.

[www.quakersocialaction.org.uk](http://www.quakersocialaction.org.uk)



**COOK UP - SPACE AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITHOUT ACCESS TO KITCHEN SPACE**

# WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

The Charity Commission defines trustees as "the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run".

Therefore, we need new trustees who are:

1. Passionate about the aims of QSA and keen to contribute to our work
2. Empathic and understanding of the issues affecting people living in poverty, and keen to learn more
3. Keen to make a positive contribution to our commitment to increasing inclusion and diversifying our body of trustees, including giving voice to those with relevant lived experience
4. Willing to take on this responsibility and committed to learning more about charity governance
5. Able to commit the time needed to be a trustee and to take this responsibility seriously, for an initial term of three years

And for our treasurer, in addition we need someone who

6. Has a strong working knowledge of organisational finances, ideally charity finance
7. Is able to explain financial information to others who have less financial expertise and
8. Is willing to convene our finance and fundraising committee.

It is not necessary to have previous trustee experience, training and support will be provided.

While trustees do not need to be Quakers, we hope that all trustees will be in sympathy with Quaker testimonies to peace, equality, integrity and simplicity. Some of our trustees are Quakers but others are not, and we warmly welcome applications from people of all faiths or none.



**DOWN TO EARTH - FUNERAL COSTS HELPLINE**

## EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT QSA

The whole trustee body, meet four times a year. Usually, two of these meetings are in person, in London, on an afternoon, two are online and in the evening.

There are also committees which meet quarterly, online. Committee meetings are arranged to meet the needs of the trustees on the committee. There are also formal and informal opportunities to meet with fellow trustees and with the QSA staff team, including away days and special events.

Trustees as a whole are responsible for setting the strategic direction and for the financial oversight of QSA, ensuring we comply with relevant regulation and supporting the 40 paid staff of the charity to deliver our mission.

Being a trustee for a charity as diverse and energetic as QSA offers an exciting opportunity for people who are passionate about tackling poverty.

## HOW DO I CONTRIBUTE AS A TRUSTEE?

QSA has been working hard on equity, diversity and inclusion and have brought in external expertise to support our thinking. We are still learning and we invite new trustees to join us on that learning journey.

Inclusion is important to us – the arrival of new trustees brings fresh perspectives and we are excited that our culture will expand and be enhanced by new people joining the board.

We are particularly keen on recruiting trustees who are closer to our cause. By this we mean people who have current or previous experience of living on a low income. We're aware that poverty disproportionately affects people with disabilities and also people who are black or from ethnic minority communities. Therefore, we'd particularly like to encourage you to come forward and talk to us further if you're from one of these groups.

We are committed to addressing any barriers to inclusion, so do speak to us if you're interested but have concerns, say about changes we might need to make to enable you to participate or about expenses. This is particularly important if you feel that being a trustee generally, or a trustee at QSA, isn't for someone like you, or you're concerned about tokenism or that as a trustee you might feel isolated.

Discussion and challenge are at the heart of good governance, so we need people who are different from each other to make that happen. We know this requires support for all our trustees and commitment from us to make it work.

# WHAT SUPPORT WILL I GET?

We know that getting to grips with any trustee role takes time and we offer support:

- New trustees receive an induction; meeting key staff and other trustees , learning how our trustees work together
- We have a buddying system in place for new trustees, providing support and reassurance from a more experienced trustee, especially for the first few months
- New trustees receive all the information needed about QSA; governing documents, organisational chart, plans and recent trustee papers
- We support trustees' learning and development and encourage our trustees to take opportunities to broaden their knowledge and skills
- We do not want cost to be a barrier for trustees. Expenses incurred in fulfilling the trustee role, such as travel, accommodation, and childcare, are covered by QSA



**TURN A CORNER MOBILE  
COMMUNITY LIBRARY**

## A FINAL WORD FROM OUR CURRENT TREASURER

**It has been a great privilege to be able to contribute my training, skills and experience to QSA, an innovative, professionally run charity which makes a real difference to people's lives.**

As I come to the end of my third and final term as a trustee, as well as a treasurer, it is exciting to pass that baton onto someone else. Let me share with you what I see as the key responsibilities of being a treasurer, the time commitment and what I've got out from my time at QSA.

Responsibility for oversight of the finances of QSA, like any charity, is shared by all the trustees but they look to the treasurer for a specialism in finance, amongst the range of complementary skills and experience which they bring to support the work of QSA. In particular, the role has responsibility:

- As convenor of the finance & fundraising committee which looks at all finance issues in more detail than is possible in the full council of trustees.
- For liaison with, and support for the staff finance team providing a strategic overview and advice on managing the finances of QSA and with the preparation of appropriate papers for the council.
- And to ensure, as far as possible, that all trustees have sufficient understanding of the important financial issues to have confidence in making the necessary decisions on finance.

Experience as a financial professional is essential, ideally with particular experience of the management of small charities which depend on grants and donations, many of which are restricted, to enable its activities in support of its beneficiaries. If newer in your career and without this experience, but keen to learn, you might wish to consider a co-treasurer role, to enable you to learn more.

The role requires a time commitment beyond that of most trustees who attend the four council meetings. As treasurer, I've also been a regular member of the people & wellbeing committee, as well as other ad hoc groups as necessary depending on current projects and the financial situation QSA faces at any time. The charity is in a healthy financial position with reasonable reserves just now, but income is uncertain and with commitments to staff and continuing activities financial risks are constantly monitored. The current finance team are very experienced and have been stable for some time so can be relied upon to give appropriate support to the organisation.

It is very satisfying to be working with interesting colleagues both on the staff and the council – I have learnt a lot over the years and will miss my involvement.



**Loveday Shewell, current QSA treasurer**

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

If you want to find out more, including more information about the support you would receive, the level of commitment we need, or anything else, please do contact us.

We've got three different ways you can do that:

1. We'd be delighted to answer any queries you've got directly, so do get in touch.

2. We'd also be happy to arrange a conversation for you with an existing trustee or, if you are interested in the role of treasurer, with our treasurer

We're running a couple of virtual open evenings where you can meet a couple of trustees, to find out more about what they get out of being a trustee.

These will be online on:

7pm on Wednesday 6 March and Tuesday 9 April 2024

For any of the above, do get in touch with our director, Judith Moran, at [judithmoran@qsa.org.uk](mailto:judithmoran@qsa.org.uk).

To read more about QSA, and to find our latest annual impact report, please visit our website: [www.quakersocialaction.org.uk](http://www.quakersocialaction.org.uk)



**DOWN TO EARTH - A NATIONAL HELPLINE TO SUPPORT BEREAVED PEOPLE**

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM INTERESTED?

If you decide to apply, then you will need to send the following to [judithmoran@qsa.org.uk](mailto:judithmoran@qsa.org.uk).

- A recent CV or a link to your LinkedIn profile if you prefer
- A covering letter or supporting statement in written (no more than two sides) or video form, letting us know why you would like to join QSA and what you would bring to this position
- We also invite you to complete our online [equality and diversity monitoring form](#)

## WHAT IS THE RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE?

- We need to receive your application by **10.00am on Monday 15 April 2024**
- In person interviews will be on: **Tuesday 14 May 2024** (an online alternative can be arranged)
- If you are successful, appointment will start in **September 2024** with time for shadowing and induction, and any other support you need, to be arranged.

Thank you for your interest. We hope our information pack and indeed our whole trustee recruitment process is clear, friendly and inclusive. We warmly welcome feedback so we can improve.