



Treasurer recruitment and information pack 2023

“ 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

”

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

We are looking to recruit a treasurer in 2023, for a one-year handover period to support you to become familiar with the charity and its work, and the staff and trustee team, before taking over from our outgoing treasurer in September 2024. 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 for organisations like QSA.

The pandemic highlighted and deepened inequalities, 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 provides a unique contribution through its practical, innovative services, enabling people on low incomes to seek solutions to the issues affecting their lives.

This is an exciting and important time to join the team. In the current harsh environment, 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.

QSA is an innovative charity that boasts a rare combination: responsive, practical frontline support via evidence-based, unique projects; coupled with ambitious advocacy at national level, ensuring that the root causes of poverty are surfaced and challenged head-on. As a board we are supporting the leadership team to explore this field, taking the best from what has gone on before. We look forward to this exciting new chapter of the organisation's work and impact.

A WELCOME FROM OUR CHAIR

Volunteering as a trustee can be a hugely rewarding and valuable activity. There can be challenges but also opportunities to use your strengths, and to try out new things in a supportive and creative environment. I continue to learn and be inspired by the work that we do together, and find it immensely rewarding. I feel privileged to be able to contribute to an extraordinary organisation.

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



THIS WAY UP - PROFESSIONAL COACHING AND MINDFULNESS TRAINING

WHO IS QUAKER SOCIAL ACTION?



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

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; online/ telephone helpline. Across all services, we are keen to share our learning with others, through advocacy, campaigning, training or having a voice in the media on issues where we have credibility.

QSA was founded by Quakers in 1867, 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. So, 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.

[Learn more about our practical action against poverty >](#)

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Our current treasurer comes to the end of their third and final term as a trustee in September 2024. We are looking to bring in a new trustee to fill this role, but we are also thinking more broadly about our trustee recruitment.

We will have another two trustee vacancies coming up; therefore, we are keen to look more broadly than just one new trustee willing to take on the treasurer role. In particular, we are keen to encourage people working in finances who are younger in their career and/or not experienced as a charity trustee, to step up. We are open to consider co-treasurers, or for a mentoring model to grow the skills and confidence of a newer trustee. If we only appoint one new trustee, as a treasurer now, we will be recruiting again for trustees, likely in the spring of 2024.

First and foremost, our treasurer is also a trustee. The Charity Commission defines this as “trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run”.

Therefore, we need new trustees who are:

1. Willing to take on this responsibility and committed to learning more about charity governance, alongside other trustees
2. Aware of the time commitment needed to be a trustee and committed to taking this responsibility seriously, for an initial term of three years
3. Passionate about the aims of QSA and keen to contribute to our work
4. Empathic and understanding of the issues affecting people living in poverty, and keen to learn more

In addition, for our treasurer we are looking for someone who:

- Has a strong working knowledge of financial management of smaller organisations, and if this is not specifically charity finance, be willing to learn more
- Can explain financial information for others who have less financial expertise
- Will convene (or co-convene) the finance & fundraising committee on a quarterly basis

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

It is also not necessary to be a Quaker – some of our trustees are Quakers but others are not, and we warmly welcome applications from all faiths or none.

EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT QSA

QSA has been working hard on equity, diversity and inclusion, including bringing in external expertise to support our thinking. We are still learning and we would like to 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 about how our culture can be expanded and enhanced with 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 want to actively address any barriers to inclusion, so do speak to us if you're interested but you still have concerns, say about reasonable adjustments needed, or expenses. This is particularly important if you feel that being a trustee generally, or a trustee at QSA, isn't for someone like you, and you're concerned about tokenism and isolation.

Given that discussion and challenge are at the heart of good governance, we need people who are different from each other to create this. But we are aware that this requires strong support and commitment from us to make this work.

HOW DO I CONTRIBUTE AS A TRUSTEE AND A TREASURER?

The whole trustee body, known as the council, meet four times a year. Two of these meetings are in person, in London, usually on an afternoon, two are online and in the evenings.

There are also committees which meet quarterly, and online, including finance & fundraising, which is convened by the treasurer. Some committees meet in the afternoon, some in the evenings, depending on the needs of the trustees on that committee at any one time.

Further to this there are formal and informal opportunities to meet with fellow trustees and with the QSA staff team, in the form of away days or special events.

QSA employs a head of finance who is responsible for all operational matters pertaining to financial oversight and administration. The role of the treasurer is to liaise with the leadership team, particularly the head of finance, to ensure all appropriate stewardship and scrutiny is taking place, and to ensure QSA has a sound forward facing financial strategy.

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 on 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.

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 trustees and understanding more about the way that the trustees currently work together
- We have a buddying system in place for new trustees, to learn from a more experienced trustee, which can be reassuring, especially for the first few months
- New trustees receive all the key information needed about QSA; governing documents, organisational chart, plans and recent trustee papers, to assist with learning
- The new treasurer will have the opportunity to shadow and learn from the existing treasurer over a period of months to build confidence about what is needed in this role
- We support trustee learning and development and encourage our trustees to participate in opportunities that 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

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 on what support you would receive, the level of commitment we'd require, 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 with our treasurer should you wish.
3. We're running a couple of virtual open evenings where you can meet our outgoing treasurer, Loveday Shewell and our head of finances, Marvin Wallace, to find out more about the skills, experience and commitment needed. These will be online on:
6-7pm on Monday 18th September
7-8pm on Tuesday 3rd October

For any of the above, do get in touch with our director, Judith Moran, at judithmoran@qsa.org.uk.

To read more about QSA, and to find our latest annual impact report, please visit our website: qsa.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.

- 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 Thursday 19 October 2023**
- In person interviews will be on **Thursday 9 November 2023** (an online alternative can be offered)
- We will then work out with you a suitable start time, but it can be anytime from January 2024 up until September 2024, with time for shadowing and induction, and any other support needs, to be organised

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 our practices.