



The Association of Talking Friends

Registered Charity no. 299656

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31:12:2018

The purpose of the Trustees' Annual Report is to highlight the activities of the charity in accordance with the aims and objectives in the Constitution.

Trustees and Committee Members

The Constitution of the Association requires that there shall be not less than 3 Trustees:

(a) The responsibility for appointing Trustees was transferred from Dorking and Horsham Monthly Meeting to Central England Area Quaker Meeting in 2007. Trustees shall be appointed from amongst persons who are and remain Members of the Religious Society of Friends.

(b) A Trustee shall automatically resign on ceasing to be a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

(c) Persons appointed as Trustees may retire at any time of their own volition or at the request of the Appointing Body for the time being.

The following served as Trustees during 2018:

Anne Austin	appointed 11:2012 to 12:2018
Sue Thompson	appointed 08:2018 to 09:2021
Diana Lampen	appointed 01:06:2016 to 07:2019

All subscribers and readers are members of the Association of Talking Friends. Committee members are appointed annually at its AGM, and may be re-appointed subject to their consent at the following AGM. The following served as Committee members during 2018:

Anne Austin	appointed 17:07: 2007
Gillian Bryan	appointed 15:05: 2010; Treasurer 2018 - 2021
Alan Johnson	appointed 17:07: 2007; Clerk of Committee 2018 - 2019

The Clerk and Treasurer are normally appointed for three years at the first meeting of the Committee following an AGM.

Sue Thompson	appointed 07: 2017; to Oversee Website
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The Trustees meet with Committee members at least four times each year. Trustees and Committee members have a wide range of relevant qualifications and experience; the Committee includes, as required by the Constitution, one member who is visually impaired.

The object of the Association is:

‘to relieve the blind, or the partially sighted, or those labouring under some temporary or permanent incapacity or disability which makes reading a strain, by provision of equipment, materials and facilities all of whatsoever nature or description to provide for audible reproduction of printed or spoken material and music or tactile reading matter’.

Members of Talking Friends may subscribe to any or all of *The Friend*, *Friends Quarterly* and *Towards Wholeness*. All subscribers also receive an audio version of *Quaker News*. New subscribers receive an audio copy of *Advices and Queries*.

During 2018, the Association continued to record these publications. The Royal Mail ‘Articles for the Blind’ free postage concession continued to be used for delivery.

In addition, subscribers can now receive an audio version of a number of Quaker Books that have been recorded, by sending a USB to the Clerk. The list of books available can be found on the website: www.talkingfriends.org.uk

Review of the activities of Talking Friends in 2018

The Association of Talking Friends continues to supply visually impaired and blind Friends with audio versions of current periodicals. However, the number of Friends requesting this service has continued to decline; we have not covered our running costs during 2018. This is a matter of considerable concern to the Trustees and Committee.

The Association agreed to carry out a survey to find out why the numbers are decreasing and to discover whether we are missing groups and individuals in our publicity. This survey is ongoing.

The flyer sent out with the Clerks’ mailing in March 2018 has stimulated interest and some correspondence. It has not resulted in an increase in subscribers, however.

The Association did not have an individual publicity event at Yearly Meeting in 2018, but Hilary Johnson shared information with the Quaker Disability Equality Group at the Groups Fair about the work of braille –labelling the audio-visual publication titles at Woodbrooke Library.

Hilary and Alan have now completed the braille-labelling which will assist blind and visually impaired Friends to access AV publications. There is a braille index in the Library at Woodbrooke and Friends can access the information by sending a USB to the Library. There is more information to be found about this on the website.

The Website is also an asset to the Association; information can be found easily. It is clearly presented and regularly updated. An extra page has been included to explain the work done in braille-labelling the audio-visual publication titles, with information for Friends wanting to find out more. Its address is: www.talkingfriends.org.uk.

The appeal made in 2017 brought a further £580.00 pounds in 2018, bringing the total to £3208.00. We are very grateful for the generosity of Friends in supporting the Association in this way.

We are also grateful to all those who support the work of the Association in practical ways: the readers whose efforts are particularly appreciated by the subscribers; the volunteers at Friends House who duplicate and send out the publications work faithfully; Stella Brinzeamu, staff member at Quaker Life and the staff at *The Friend* office –we thank them all.

Signed: