

Quiet Company Annual Review 2021



Quiet Company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) ('BYM').

The company shares the ethos and values of its parent BYM, and seeks to put those values into practice through the provision of hospitality services to all who visit Friends House.

The company also manages Swarthmoor Hall, the Bookshop, and facilities on behalf of BYM.



Matt Baker
Clerk to the Board of Directors

Following the events of 2020, the board of directors set three key priorities: to **Re-build** our current service offers and resourcing to make them more resilient, to **Re-engage** with customers and with Friends to rebuild confidence and to **Re-imagine** what new opportunities lie ahead.

Though the year started and ended with restrictions on public gathering, Friends House was able to welcome conference and events customers back safely for part of the year. To help bolster confidence, we maintained our COVID resource centre and peace of mind promise that we launched in 2020. Lower footfall and a smaller staff team meant we had to keep the café closed, but we made best use of the gardens with colourful deckchairs offering a peaceful sanctuary to passers-by.

In readiness for conservation work, we paused visits and pilgrimages to Swarthmoor Hall, and instead welcomed self-catering holidaymakers – ensuring a steady stream of visitors to the cradle of Quakerism. The bookshop spread the Quaker message beyond our borders, with books shipped across the world.

We were delighted to restart Bake the Difference, our programme for ex-offenders, with six-month placements resuming in October. We have expanded

the scheme to include a dedicated trainer, and we participated in a new initiative organised by London Pathways Partnership which offers twice-weekly gatherings and support for ex-offenders.

Our team at Friends House was awarded ‘Best Client Support During COVID-19’ at the London Venue and Catering Awards. The teams at both Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall always go the extra mile to ensure our customers, Friends and BYM staff are well looked after, and to see this recognised was one of the highlights of the year.

Although the year was still financially challenging, the times between lockdowns saw a return to in-person meetings, some of which are featured in this review. However, we are still unable to make a gift-aid contribution to BYM this year, and we are grateful for the continued support of BYM Trustees as we build back better.

We are committed to doing our part in tackling the climate emergency and will continue to seek out opportunities to protect the world we live in. The company’s performance is assessed on the triple bottom line – people, planet, and profit – and this review shows our progress in each of these areas.



The Royal College of Ophthalmologists graduation ceremony in The Light



Paul Henderson-Grey
CEO of Quiet Company

Welcome to our annual review of 2021, a year that was again dominated by the COVID pandemic. However, 2021 also had its highs such as Quiet Company being awarded an ECOsmart Platinum Venue Award; and it had its lows; as a team we grappled with the government's indecision about the full reopening of the hospitality and events industry.

Despite the many challenges thrown at the team, they have showed amazing resilience in ensuring our customers were well informed via the COVID-19 resource centre, they built customers' confidence to book with us by offering a Peace of Mind Promise, they offered support by making sure our venues are safe and welcoming to all and I want to take this opportunity to thank them all.

Our facilities team took the opportunity of this quiet period to undertake heritage and conservation works at Friends House. We have started planning for a major project at Swarthmoor Hall in 2022/23 which will see the removal of the render to the hall, improved parking facilities and a reinterpretation of the historic house.

It is clear we are seeing the green shoots of recovery with bookings and visitor numbers steadily growing,

but there are challenges ahead with rising inflation and utilities costs as well as the continued effects of Brexit on recruitment of new staff.

Despite these challenges, I feel confident that our ethical business model, customer loyalty and the commitment of the team will see us return to a profitable position by the end of 2022.



Swarthmoor Hall prior to removal of render

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Total income*

Income is slightly down, due to Friends House being closed for half of the year and being limited to meetings under 30 delegates for 3 months after reopening. Despite difficulties, we have almost managed to maintain our income as in 2020.

Total income breakdown

Our 2021 turnover was £1.08m. We continued to make use of the Government’s Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (£191k), which is shown within the income.

*Figures for Quiet Company income do not include Facilities, Swarthmoor Hall or the Quaker Centre Bookshop.

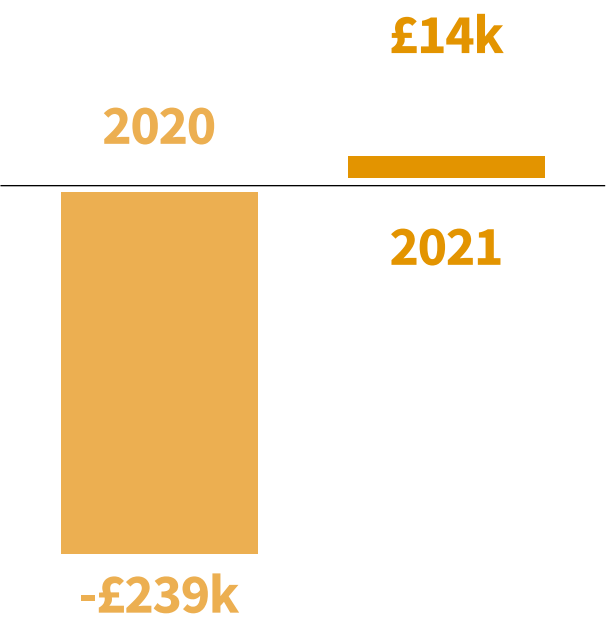


Profit and impact on gift-aid to Quaker work**

Despite the challenges of operating during a pandemic and navigating the ever-changing government guidelines we still managed to make a £14K profit in 2021

We were not able to gift-aid any profits to the charity of Britain Yearly Meeting this year. We are confident that we will be able to make contributions in the very near future.

**Gift-aided (pre-tax) income for BYM, generated from Quiet Company profits.



A photograph of the exterior of Friends House in London. The building features a mix of white stone and dark red brick. On the left, a white stone entrance is partially covered by a large blue patio umbrella. To the right, a red brick section has several windows and two vertical banners: a red one that says 'A place to eat' and a blue one that says 'A base for worship'. Both banners feature a circular logo with a 'Q'. In the foreground, there is a green lawn with purple flowers and a paved area where several people are walking. A white patio umbrella is also visible in the background near the brick section.

Friends House

When we reopened, in May 2021, we had one priority: to reassure our customers and staff. What would events look like under restrictions? How would we protect the health and safety of staff and customers? Would events even be enjoyable again?

What did we do?

- We organised a two-day re-induction training for all our staff. Team members who had been furloughed or who continued to work throughout the pandemic gathered to do some team building exercises but also be updated on all our Covid-safe processes and what the customer journey would look like in the “new normal”.
- We continued to regularly update our Covid-19 resource centre.
- We adapted and extended our Peace of Mind Promise, enabling customers to change their bookings at no extra cost.
- We released videos and blogs of the team, talking about their experience working in this new environment but also reassuring customers.

And all those efforts paid off as bookings increased again and customers left great feedback for us.

We provided a great event experience for customers:

Imogen O’Brien
The Royal College of Ophthalmologists

“From the first point of enquiry right up to the event itself, I felt that I received a 5-star service from the team. No matter how random or strange a query, you were always happy to help me and I felt like I was in safe hands throughout. We’re planning to hold future events at Friends House as we can trust that everything will be run efficiently and professionally.”



The Royal College of Ophthalmologists graduation ceremony in Friends House courtyard

Our staff on reopening Friends House:

Sou Manhsinh
Sales and Events
Supervisor

“The build up to finally reopening Friends House to the public again was an exciting yet scary feeling! To see our first customer walk through the door since returning back after the pandemic was a huge moment for all of us. It was so nice to see the building in full use again, especially only after seeing just each other and the builders for months! As a team we all worked so hard to ensure that we had everything in place. The feedback we have received from customers have been so rewarding and make all those months of planning, waiting, and pushbacks all worth it in the end.”

Part of building back the business to pre-pandemic levels has been recruiting a senior team who not only bring experience but are also sympathetic to our core values.

One of these new staff members is Marina Radojevic and we ran a profile on her for International Women’s Day. We also welcomed Adrian Wyer as our Facilities Manager.

Marina Radojevic
Service Delivery Manager



“ When I came to London five years ago, I knew I would have to prove myself all over again in this new city, with companies or people. I was prepared for challenges, but what I wasn’t prepared for, was being welcomed, praised, and supported by my managers.

As a woman you’ve got to work extra hard to prove yourself, that’s true. So, what was so refreshing was to see many of us women just supporting each

other and giving 150% of our energy in different roles. It’s amazing to see that more and more women feel empowered and are conscious of their strength, courage and just how great we are. Sometimes I feel that I belong to this big group of super women that is just getting bigger and bigger, and it’s the best feeling ever!

Working here at Friends House, with all these amazing people, I see that we’re breaking the bias. I’m just happy that I get to experience this every day. Encouraging women to step up, speak up, and to find themselves, is important and one way to break the bias.

Marina’s favourite quote:

God hath put no such difference between the male and female as man would make.

Margaret Fell

Adrian Wyer joined Tony Richards, our Head of Facilities Services and Property, to maintain Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall.

Adrian Wyer
Facilities Manager



Q What’s your background?

A I have worked in Facilities Management for twenty years in various sectors including the Arts and Media.

Q What do you like to do with your spare time?

A In my spare time, I like hiking and exploring the countryside. I also volunteer for homeless charities.

Q What’s your favourite thing about working at Friends House?

A It’s being part of an environment where Quaker values and the commitment to working for peace and equality is key to the business.

Q What’s been the most rewarding aspect of working at Quiet Company?

A Working closely with the Maintain the Difference programme. Quiet Company helped to launch Bake the Difference and Maintain the Difference in recent years to help ex-offenders blend back into society. The programme helps the workers feel more connected socially and gives them responsibility and ownership in the workplace. They work part time within the team I work alongside: our Maintenance, Housekeeping and Audio Visual /Conference Support.

Highlights of the year

- We hosted **The Royal College of Ophthalmologists** graduation ceremony, our biggest one-day event (620 attendees).
- We welcomed a new customer: **The Left Publication**. Their 3-day event was a success (500 attendees per day). They have already re-booked another 3-day event for October 2022.
- We attracted new clients to Friends House. We hosted a table read in The Light auditorium for a streaming platform.
- We launched our commercial videos for Friends House and The Light.

Number of events

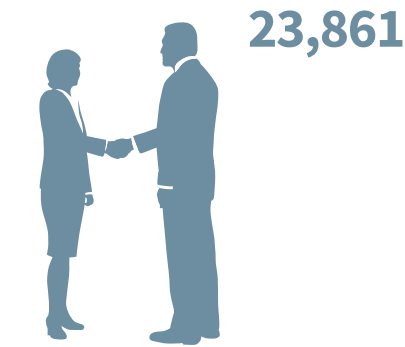


2021

Click an image to open a Youtube video

Commercial video for Friends House

Number of delegates



2021

Commercial video for The Light

Roger Sykes
University of Oxford

“ I wanted to say a massive thank you to all the staff for making our event run so well this week. The team has been fantastic in our long journey to make the event happen [we changed dates due to Covid], and always incredibly flexible and helpful to make sure our event was a success. They also provided exceptional support to us from the moment we arrived to the point we left.

Friends House is an excellent venue and I will recommend it to friends and colleagues. It has been such a challenging time for the hospitality sector over the past 18 months, but in spite of that the service you and your staff provided was exemplary.

The Friends House team won the award for **Best Client Support During Covid-19** at the London Venue and Catering Awards in November 2021, against the likes of Chelsea Football Club. It's always a great achievement to see our work acknowledged by our peers from the events industry and a wonderful recognition for the work of our team. We stayed true to our Quaker ethos and values, and it paid off. Winning felt like a huge validation after months of difficulties and uncertainty for the venue.



From second left to second from the right:
Steve Aucott, Tony Richards, Natascha Kilts, Cecilia Bouenissa, Paul Henderson-Grey, Sou Manhsinh, Nicola Purdy, Alex Pannell, Olesea Brinzeanu

What it meant for our team

Cecilia Bouenissa
Media and
Marketing Officer

“ I still remember the joy when we won! It was amazing to gather as a team and see all our efforts and hard work being recognised. It has been a few tough years due to the pandemic, and even if we don't run after awards, I felt a real sense of accomplishment for the team. We managed to make events safe and look seamless, while a lot of work happened behind the scenes. This will stay as one of my best working memories for sure!

Natascha Kilts
Business
Development Officer

“ When it was announced that we had actually won, it took a few seconds to really sink in - and then it became quite emotional. It's been such a difficult time for all of us, individually and as an industry. I was very proud to be part of this team who had worked really hard to make it to the other side while taking care of our customers safely. It's proof of how special and resilient hospitality people can be.



Here are a few comments from the judges on our winning entry

- “ Impressive commitment to clear core values, staff welfare and sustainability - to the benefit of clients.
- “ Innovative, sustainable solutions to pandemic challenges like maintaining social distancing and creative catering.
- “ Training offered to staff encouraged empathy – fully supported and retained staff during the pandemic.
- “ The online Covid resource centre is great and the staff training sessions are a great idea to help staff stay on top of requirements and support clients.



Swarthmoor Hall

We worked in partnership with Cottages.com to advertise the self-catering accommodation at the Hall. We had a record number of over **100** guests staying, from March to December, leaving some fantastic feedback.

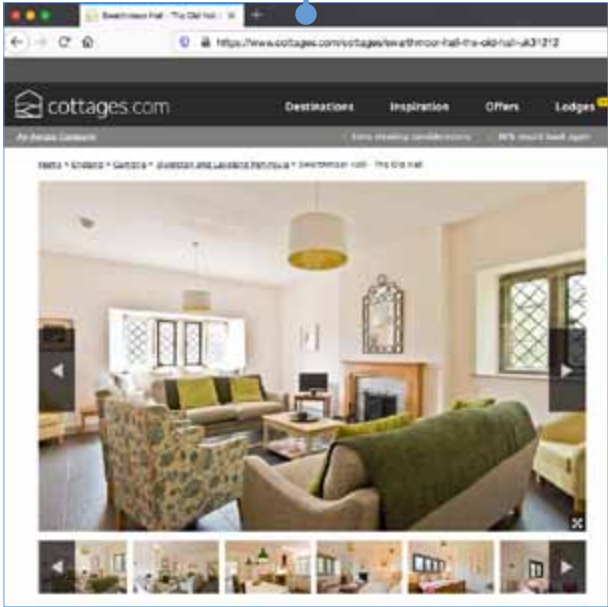
Wansfell Suite review:
“We had a very enjoyable stay and could find no fault with the facilities or service. Everyone who works or volunteers there was very friendly, and anxious to be helpful. And it is a delightful spot.”

10/10

The Old Hall review:
“We had an excellent stay thank you. The accommodation was very good. It was great to be in this historic hall in this beautiful and quiet part of the Lake District. Ulverston is within walking distance, and is charming, and well supplied with restaurants and quality shops. Highly recommended.”


10/10

The team also worked on new garden pathways and overall maintenance of the site.



James Newman-Shah
Quaker Centres
Manager

“ Starting to work on the Swarthmoor Hall project is tremendously exciting, but working with the team on site has been the biggest joy over the past year. The gardens look the best I have ever seen, and having the support of the administrative team to take on jobs that support us at Friends House has been vital and beyond helpful.

A photograph of a window with a diamond-patterned metal grille. The window is set into a rough, textured wall. To the right of the window, a large, ornate lantern with a glass body and a dark metal frame stands on a wooden surface. The lantern has a tiered top and a handle. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from the window, creating a warm, historical atmosphere.

Preserving our heritage

In 2021, the Facilities team led an ambitious and vital refurbishment project at Friends House. The exterior of the building was fully revamped. The following work happened:

- Essential maintenance of the building fabric.
- Correction of some defects which were causing ingress of water in some parts.
- Repair and replacement of decayed timber on the windows.

This work is cyclical and happens every seven or eight years. The building closure gave the opportunity to the team to lead this project without disturbing customers. Scaffolders, masonry specialists, carpenters and painters worked on the project, while scaffolding was installed all around the building.

Refurbishment work also started in the Library, located on the ground floor of Friends House. The aim is to bring back some original features that were replaced 25 years ago. The library will reopen in 2022. New displays will be included.

Friends House covered in scaffolding



Tony Richards examining stone work



Library refurbishment - before



During refurbishment



Completed refurbishment

Tony Richards
Head of Facilities
Services and Property

“ Friends House is a three-storey building, extremely exposed to the elements, and the scaffolding gave me the opportunity to look at the building from up close. It was also the opportunity to restore the building to its optimum condition while preserving its unique architecture and style.

The team prepared the site for the removal of the render:

- They cleared out most of the objects in the Old Hall and stored them in the conference centre.
- A condition survey was ordered where conservators visited the site to avoid damage before building work started.
- A steering group was set up.



The Old Hall

Whilst still being used as a meeting room, most objects and furniture have been removed from the Old Hall. Conservators will carefully package any remaining furniture.



Construction tests

Test sections have been cut into the south and east walls of the original building to remove the current cement rendering. This will allow for a better insight into the construction style and materials used in the Hall's walls.



Rendering tests

New replacement lime rendering tests have been done on the north side of the Hall. The new lime render will be breathable and more 'elastic' than the current cement render, expanding and contracting with the building.



Libby Adams
Head of Library and Archives

“ We have a programme of development underway at Swarthmoor Hall. As a Grade II* listed building, Swarthmoor Hall needs ongoing maintenance and conservation, and we are planning a programme of conservation building work in 2022, to ensure we maintain high standards of stewardship of the building.

In preparation for this, in 2021 we began a review of the collection of objects and furniture in the Hall, and appointed some consultants to work with us to review the visitor experience and the interpretation of the site, to ensure that it supports our vision and aims.



Working with the community

After a hiatus due to the pandemic, the Bake The Difference programme restarted in the Friends House kitchen in October 2021. The programme helps ex-offenders reintegrate back into the community through learning how to bake and cook. The programme is run by Quiet Company in conjunction with London Pathways Partnership (NHS).

In 2021, it was decided that the work placements would be extended to six months. This length gives enough time to the trainees to really nurture their newly acquired skills. A new trainer, Alice, also came on board. After just a few months of baking, we have seen some major improvements in the baking and cooking skills of the trainees. The cakes and biscuits produced are delicious!

At the end of their placements, we hold a graduation ceremony for the trainees where staff and family can come to celebrate their achievements. All refreshments are made by Bake the Difference and a certificate is given to everyone.

Amy Wollny
Social Inclusion Clinical Practitioner

“ We have really welcomed a return to Friends House after a scary and lonely time for so many of us during lockdown. We have been able to re-establish ‘Bake the Difference’, which has had 8 men enrol on the course. Feedback has been both heartfelt and all have appreciated the therapeutic benefits of being with others again.

As we start with our new part of the project, ‘Maintain the Difference’, some of society’s most marginalised men are motivated and very keen to engage with a work environment. And although early days, they are thriving. There is not only the ‘skilling up’ of people, who often have

been excluded from mainstream education or training, they have also voiced feeling cared for, respected and that they have a right to belong and be part of society again.

As a service, we want to offer therapeutic and risk assessed opportunities, but what we all know is that to desist from re-offending, you have to offer real opportunities to belong, to thrive and to re-build self-esteem and a non-offending identity. With this in mind, we all really value every opportunity our partnership with the Quakers has to offer.

Thank you.



Bake The Difference certificate

Trainee
Testimonial

“ Being here was more than learning a skill. It did that, but it did so much more. For years I have struggled with school, family, drug use, crime and being told I was wrong. All the time. So, for me, the experience gave me a sense that I belonged to this world and the people in it. I felt cared for. And I care. I felt listened to and respected and I felt like I was able to be me. Without all the baggage and mistrust.

Alice Turner
Training Chef

“ Through the ‘Bake the Difference’ project the Quakers have provided an enabling and safe working environment to those who I believed represent some of the most marginalised in society. I have been impressed how the trusting ethos has empowered the men and how they have grown in confidence and ability throughout their work placements. In turn I have been impressed with the commitment and dedication that the men have shown to the project. Thank you to the Quakers and the Bake the Difference men!

The HUB

We decided to help ex-offenders even further by opening our doors to the HUB in October 2021. The HUB is a space co-designed with men who have experienced the prison system and who are screened into the PD Pathway. It is a safe place to meet other people and to get support. Every Thursday, men can meet in the Leslie Forster suite and the Seed Kitchen (which is still closed to the public) and get the following:

- 1-1 professional advice and support with housing, benefits, volunteering, employment, education, training, health and wellbeing.
- Peer led substance misuse group, mindfulness and service user involvement training.
- Free delicious snacks and lunch freshly prepared on-site by ‘Bake the Difference’.
- A space to chat and relax.

We are pleased that our space is being used to help them get back on their feet. And with lunch and snacks being cooked by the trainees from Bake The Difference, we feel a nice virtuous circle is being put into place.



Maintain the Difference

Building up on the success of Bake The Difference, we have decided to extend the range of skills we offer to trainees. This is why we launched ‘Maintain The Difference’.

Trainees work within our Facilities and Maintenance team at Friends House and are involved with daily maintenance tasks.



Tony Richards
Head of Facilities
Services and Property

“ On the back of the successful Bake the Difference programme we are planning to introduce Maintain the Difference in early 2022 offering three trainees the opportunity to learn essential work skills working alongside the teams in Maintenance, Housekeeping and Conference Support.

These 9 hours paid work placements offer the service users to get used to a routine of working in safe and supportive workplace, which we know helps them to gain long term confidence they need to get jobs into future.

A photograph of a vibrant, green meadow filled with numerous small yellow wildflowers. Some taller, thin-stemmed plants with reddish-brown seed heads are also visible. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the middle of the image, containing the text "Contributing to a greener world" in a dark green, serif font.

Contributing to a greener world

A new green accreditation for Friends House

Friends House was awarded the **ECOSmart Platinum Venue Award** by Greengage Solutions, a sustainability consultancy for the travel and events industry. This accreditation comes after an independent assessment and is awarded to venues that operate in a sustainable way.



Paul Henderson-Grey, CEO of Quiet Company with Andrew Perolls, CEO of Greengage Solutions

‘No Planning – No Planet’ event at Friends House

On Tuesday 30 November, we held the ‘**No Planning - No Planet**’ event at Friends House, in partnership with Greengage Solutions, Trident Hospitality and UK Harvest. We looked into how the event industry can reduce its food waste. We gathered with other venues to look at solutions and ate a great lunch prepared by UK Harvest. The meal was made with food rescued from being wasted from supermarkets or hospitality companies, highlighting once more the issue with our overproduction of food.



Paul Henderson-Grey presenting at ‘No Planning - No Planet’

What it meant for our team

Paul Henderson-Grey
CEO

“ We planted seeds of thought about coming together as an industry for the greater good. I believe this is just the start of something bigger. And as COP26 has shown us, as an industry, we need to be part of the solution, not the problem. It won’t happen overnight but we hope to get more and more venues taking a small step approach to solving the problem.

What do we do to tackle climate change and become carbon neutral?

By 2025, we want to:

- reduce the quantity of deliveries by 40%
- reduce the carbon footprint per delegate
- remove air freight from our supply chain: zero non-essential parts and equipment or food produce to be air freighted
- offer carbon positive solutions to delegates including our 'Plant the Difference' menu.

Next year we plan to launch our 'Plant the Difference' menu which will be 100% healthy, delicious and plant-based. Furthermore for every 50 guests who this menu is ordered for, we'll plant a tree.

A continued reduction in electricity usage and a return to the use of certified Green Gas in the second half of the year contributed to the reported decrease, although reduced delegate numbers at Friends House due to COVID caused an increase in emissions per delegate.

The report comments that the organisation has made significant data quality improvements in recent years and that the quality of data submitted for analysis is very high, resulting in a carbon footprint with a high degree of accuracy.



November 2021 saw the start of work to create more than two hectares of woodland at Jordans, Buckinghamshire in conjunction with BYM. Over 6,000 trees have been planted and initially this is expected to sequester 6-10 tCO2e/ha per annum with an expected increase as the woodland matures. This initiative aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goal 15 which is one of five goals which align closely with our values.

What significant steps has Friends House taken to reduce its carbon footprint?

Tony Richards
Head of Facilities

“ Natural Gas is by far the biggest contributor to the Friends' House carbon footprint. However, the procurement of a Green Gas certificate in September 2021 has already made a significant impact and will continue to reduce our emissions and overall footprint in 2022.



Governance



Welcoming more people to Friends House, making progress on the conservation and interpretation work at Swarthmoor Hall, and growing sales in conferencing and hospitality to £1.9m.



Remodelling our business offers to deliver new and inventive services will be key so we plan to work with a new catering partner, Hubbub, and to invest in technology to help improve customer experience and blended meetings.



As we grow we want to recruit and retain talented staff, continue to offer opportunities to all where we can from within the communities where we work and to strengthen employee voice as part of the 3P's approach to decision making.



The team will be working to retain our Meeting Association AIM silver accreditation which is due for re-evaluation in early 2022.



A new website and online bookshop on Instagram is planned to help make it easier for customers to browse and order online from wherever they are in the world and we hope to start book events later in 2022.



Our goal of building back better means we are committed to doing our part to tackle the climate emergency, starting with relaunching the café at Friends House as the Seed Café, which will primarily be serving vegan inspired cuisine.



In 2022 our plan is to promote meat and fish-free lifestyle by introducing Plant the Difference, a plant based lunch and delegate package for our conference delegates which will include us planting a tree in the National Forest for every 50 delegates.



We recognise food waste plays a big part in environment cost. We need to tackle both pre-production and waste returning from our conference meeting rooms so have set some targets to achieve by 2023. Next year we will start measuring waste streams to get a baseline.



We welcomed Jane Stephenson on the board this year

What is your background?

I have worked in the environmental and social enterprise sector for over 40 years and bring lots of experience of working at Board level. ‘Resource Futures’ the social enterprise that I ran until 2016, offers consultancy services and manages community engagement and education programmes on resource reduction, reuse and recycling across the UK and globally in low and middle income countries. I now chair their Board and was also Chair of Bath & West Community Energy until September 2021. I have been a member of Bath Meeting since 2003. I have been Clerk of AM Trustees and a member of Meeting for Sufferings. As a Director of the Quiet Company, I am serving on the Working Group to develop Swarthmoor Hall.

Why did you choose to join the board of Quiet Company?

I have been enthused by the changes that the Quiet Company have made to Friends House over the past years. I am now mostly retired and was looking for a role within the Quaker movement where my professional experience could be useful. When a vacancy arose at the Quiet Company Board this appeared to fit the bill. I was involved in the setting up of the CREATE Centre in Bristol, an environmental centre run by the Council, and am aware of the

challenges in managing buildings and public spaces. As Clerk of AM Trustees, I have experience of strategic planning for Quaker buildings.

What are your aspirations for the company?

The focus now is on recovering from pandemic’s impact on the business and its financial contributions to the Charity. The company has shown great resilience during incredibly challenging circumstances. I am looking forward to the company returning to generating profits and building on its success with programmes such as Bake the Difference. It was such a privilege to be able to share lunch with the ‘bakers’ who have joined this programme at one of our recent meetings. I am also looking forward to finalising the plans for Swarthmoor Hall to reach its potential and to share its rich history in a sustainable way.

What do you wish to learn from this experience?

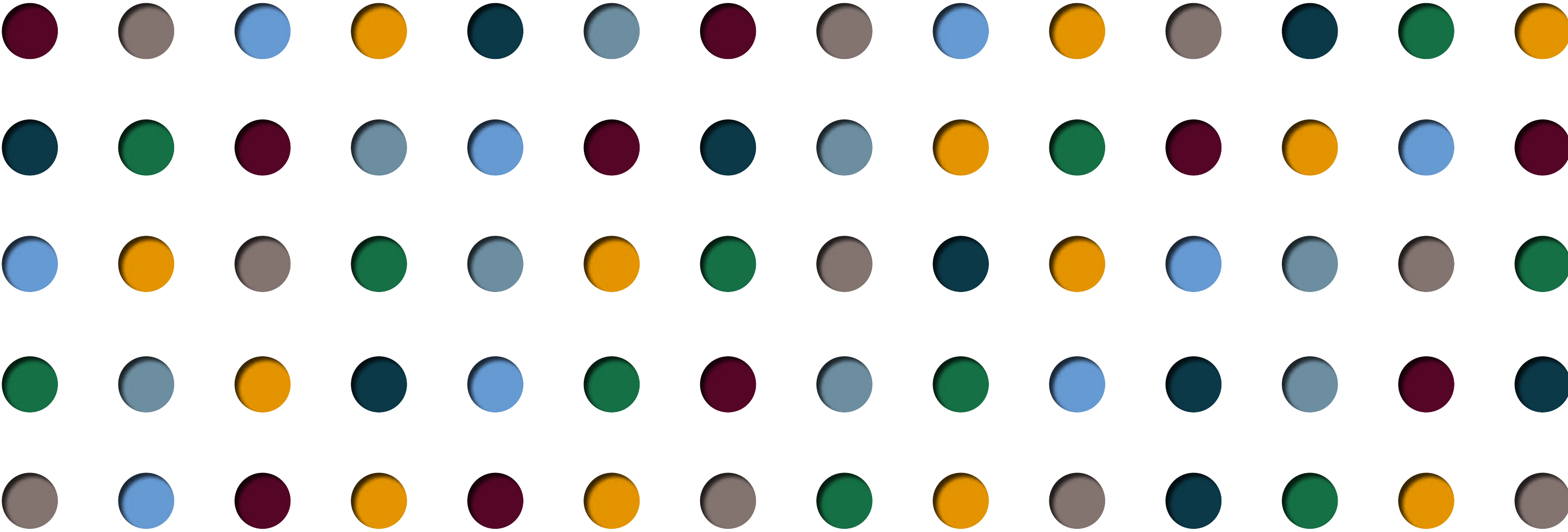
I am learning more about the hospitality sector and how it is adapting to the changing circumstances post Covid and continuing my exploration of how Quaker values and ways of working can be successful in a commercial environment. It has been very good this last six months to have the opportunity to meet staff and fellow Board members in-person and some of us spent a particularly useful couple of days at Swarthmoor Hall in November 2021. I look forward to more of this.

Where 2020 posed new questions, we now have some positive answers. There is still real demand for in-person meetings, and Friends House is especially well placed to provide space for this. We used the enforced closures in 2021 to do even more with what we have. Better equipment for blended meetings, the refurbished café and bookshop, and the expansion of the Bake the Difference programme all make for a better welcome, wherever people come from and however they want to connect.

The upcoming work at Swarthmoor Hall to protect the building and improve the interpretation – telling the story of Quakerism in Britain – will help keep the house a welcoming site for pilgrimage and develop our links with Ulverston and the whole Furness peninsula.

And then there is our place in the wider world. 2022 will see the launch of new initiatives to tackle the climate emergency. With steep rises in the price of energy, and in the cost of living generally, there are still some headwinds. The world ahead will be different to what we knew before the pandemic, but a Quaker approach to business has worked for the last few centuries, and there is no sign of that changing.





Quiet Company

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Friends House

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London, NW1 2BJ

www.friendshouse.co.uk

friendshouseldn

Swarthmoor Hall

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www.swarthmoorhall.co.uk

swarthmoorhall

Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd. t/a Quiet Company

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www.quaker.org.uk

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