



Friends of Hlekweni



Report and Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2013

Charity number: 1126598



The main meeting room at Hlekweni



Administrative and financial information

Trustees:

Susan Lee Taylor (Chair/clerk)

Roger Moore (Treasurer)

Don Rowe

Ruth Findlay

Contact address:

The Quaker Centre, 1, Oakley Gardens, Downhead Park, Milton Keynes, MK15 9BH.

info@friendsofhlekweni.org.uk

Charity number: 1126598

Examiner of accounts:

Banker: The Cooperative Bank, Balloon St, Manchester.



Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st March 2013

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013.

Structure, Governance and Management

Friends of Hlekweni is administered and managed by the Trustees in accordance with the constitution first agreed on 21st April 2008, revised at the Special Meeting on 12th October 2008 and registered by the Charity Commission on 6th November 2008. This charity derives from charitable work formerly carried out by Milton Keynes Local Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, principally in support of the Hlekweni Friends Rural Service Centre (HFRSC) near Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (see www.hlekweni.org for more information about Hlekweni itself). We also support work in the wider area of Matabeleland.

The Trustees were appointed at the 2012 Yearly Business Meeting in accordance with the constitution. The Trustees met five times during the year and had contact by email and phone between meetings. At Trustees' meetings, grant applications are considered and decisions on grants are taken. Reports are received from existing projects. Decisions are taken on matters of policy and procedure for the running of Friends of Hlekweni. Fund-raising, publicity, contact with supporters and liaison with other bodies are also considered.

All meetings of Friends of Hlekweni are held in the manner of Friends, using Quaker business method for formal meetings. A Yearly Business Meeting is held in the month of May which all members are entitled to attend; due notice is given of the date of the YBM and its agenda.

Membership of the charity is open to any individual over eighteen who is interested in helping Friends of Hlekweni to achieve its aim, willing to abide by the constitution; and willing to pay the subscription agreed by the Trustees which is currently £25.

Object & Activities

The aim of Friends of Hlekweni is the relief of poverty and financial hardship, the advancement of education and the preservation and protection of good health, at Hlekweni Friends Rural Service and in Matabeleland, Zimbabwe

In order to achieve this aim, Friends of Hlekweni currently undertakes the following activities:

- a) Receiving and assessing applications for support from projects working to further the aims of Friends of Hlekweni, and agreeing grants;
- b) Supporting the development, management, monitoring and evaluation of approved projects;
- c) Raising funds, and organising events;
- d) Communicating with supporters through a twice yearly newsletter, speaking engagements and other means;
- e) Working with similar groups and exchanging information and advice with them;



- f) Keeping in close touch with colleagues at Hlekweni, Samathonga school, Bulawayo Quaker Meeting, and Quakers in Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting.

Risk Management

Trustees have considered and reviewed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and take an active approach to managing these. We recognise that working to support projects in Zimbabwe is inherently risky due to the situation there. The Trustees maintain frequent contact with grant recipients by email and phone, and receive written reports, often with photographs. The Trustees also meet with, or keep in contact with, returning volunteers and staff when possible. The clerk made a visit to Hlekweni in April/May 2012, primarily to meet the new Director; she was also able to meet with Quakers in Southern Africa during the World Gathering of Quakers in Kabarak, Kenya in April 2012. A further visit to Hlekweni was made in March 2013, prior to journeying on to Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting of Quakers.

It was possible to see the outcome of the supported projects during the clerk's visits, and report back at the next Trustees meeting.

Trustees keep themselves informed about the overall situation in Zimbabwe through the media, by liaison with other groups in this country and abroad, and contact with the relevant UK government department as appropriate.

Trustees recognise that Friends of Hlekweni is a small charity which has grown rapidly over its first five years and that there is the need to build a stable base in order to sustain further growth. We are grateful for the continuing support of Milton Keynes Quakers and a growing number of Quaker meetings across the UK. As experienced by most charities, it has proved harder to raise funds over the past year.

The major contextual operational risk is the continuing political instability in Zimbabwe leading to ongoing uncertainty which impacts on many aspects of daily life. The impending constitutional reforms and election have been the context of the last year. Insofar as Hlekweni itself is concerned, Trustees have been grateful to establish relationships with the new Director. We were pleased that the 2011 Hlekweni accounts were audited and that the 2012 accounts are in the process of being submitted to auditors in Bulawayo. In addition, Quakers in Southern Africa are demonstrating increased interest and involvement in Hlekweni.

In sum, this year has been one of consolidation rather than growth for Friends of Hlekweni, bearing in mind the context in which we are working in the UK, and in Zimbabwe.

Activities for Public Benefit

The Trustees have complied with their duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the public benefits guidance published by the Charities Commission.

In Zimbabwe, the very high cost of living compared to the average wage, the very high level of unemployment, unreliable water and electricity supplies, frequent failing harvests due to unpredictable climate conditions, poor health care and other infrastructure provision all combine to make life very challenging indeed for those living there. The Trustees' overall policy gives priority to projects that aim to tackle the problem of poor nutrition by improving



sustainable agriculture. They support possible routes out of poverty through vocational and small business training. The Trustees also respond to projects that aim to ensure basic survival needs are met, and projects aimed at supporting children's educational opportunities.

The twice yearly newsletter keeps supporters informed of the progress of projects. We still hope to develop a website to ensure that up to date information on the activities of the charity will be readily available on-line for the public to access.

The Trustees have been able to keep the operating costs of Friends of Hlekweni to a minimum, so ensuring that a very high percentage of money given by donors reaches the intended recipients.

Grant making policy and procedure

The Trustees aim to disburse the monies received as soon as practicable to meet needs through approval of grant applications. The Trustees usually make payment up front on approval of grants.

Grants that fall within the charity's area of work can be applied for at any time, and will be considered at the next Trustees' Meeting. There is a simple standard form for grant applications available from info@friendsofhlekweni.org.uk .

Achievements & Performance

2012 marked the forty-fifth anniversary of Quaker social witness at Hlekweni: 1967 – 2012, and we celebrated with a weekend at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, collecting stories and considering the way forward for us as a charity. We have used this anniversary as our 'strapline' for the year.



David Jobson and Craig Barnett planting the Hlekweni tree at Woodbrooke study centre, June 2012

This is the fifth year of our operation as a charity, and the Trustees continued our core work on fundraising, communication with donors, and providing grant support to the work at Hlekweni, Samathonga School and more widely in Matabeleland.



Fourteen grants were made, including six ongoing regular grants. The Trustees have continued to work in partnership with Quaker Peace and Social Witness, notably on the Samathonga School Feeding Scheme – however, we have been given notice that these funds are coming to an end in 2013 as the legacy which provided the funds is now spent. A further grant was made to Zimbabwe Food Relief Action, ZFRA, which works in the nearby drought-stricken Kezi District. A small ‘books for schools with no or few books’ scheme has proved successful: individuals have sent out jiffy bags with a few books via either Hlekweni or Quakers in Bulawayo. Two schools in Kezi district now have over 500 books between them, as well as the Hlekweni and Samathonga libraries being supplied with more books. The clerk was able to visit these schools in March 2013, to see how the books are being used. Trustees have received good reports of the completion of projects that had received our support; the Hlekweni Annual Report 2012 shows considerable innovative progress. Friends of Hlekweni worked with the Director, Innocent Moyo, on grant bids for specific projects, and thank the Scurrah Wainright Trust and the Simmons Trust for contributions towards bursary fees and Aberdeen Rotary and Just Trust for contributions towards entrepreneurial activity. We are also grateful to the Gwanda Trust, PW Webster Trust and Fitzer Lacy Trust. In addition, Ireland Quakers (IQFA) continued to be supportive.



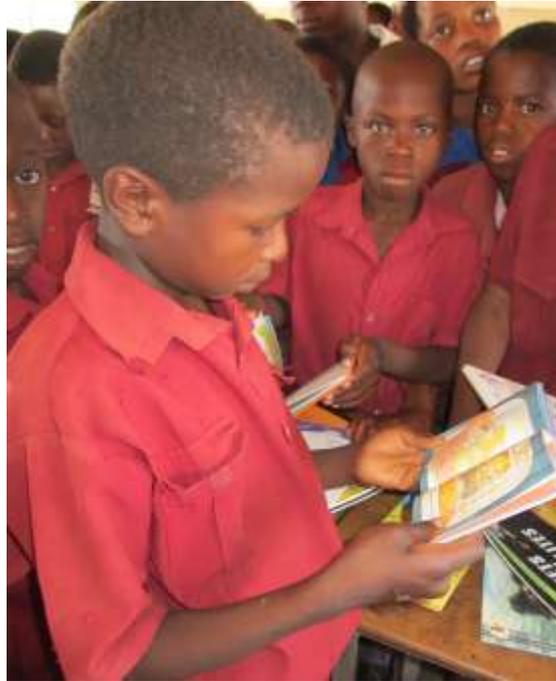
Lunchtime feeding scheme at Samathonga School

Broadly speaking, support from Friends of Hlekweni falls into a number of categories:

- Bursaries for trainees: £15,000 each semester;
- Samathonga school through the feeding scheme (currently funded with a grant from Quaker Peace and Social Witness and topped up by Friends of Hlekweni to account for inflation over the past few years), support for community orphans to attend school, and the book scheme;
- The community playscheme (through donations via Hazel Morris);
- Infrastructure and development:
 - repairs to the working borehole;



- refurbishment to buildings, including painting, window repair, roof repair;
- supporting the building of robust financial systems;
- Innovative schemes such as the introduction of the piggery and mushroom production;
- Individuals in need, including contributions to the Zimbabwe Secondary School Relief Fund



Looking at donated books, Mashumba school

Trustees have continued to prioritise communications to our supporters, primarily through the newsletter (either sent as e-attachment or hard copy) sent twice a year, and the annual leaflet (in 2012 highlighting the 45th anniversary of Quaker social witness at Hlekweni). These appear to be well-received. We are working on a range of e-resources so that information is available freely and in a timely manner to supporters.

Trustees repeated the successful autumn fundraising drive, first undertaken in 2011, aimed at raising £15,000 for trainee fee support. This was primarily done through Quaker channels, including an advertisement and leaflet insert in *The Friend*, and a mailing to all meetings (via Friends' House). This resulted in a number of meetings requesting more information, the possibility of a speaker, and inclusion in regular meeting donations. We have received donations from well over 120 Quaker meetings in the past two years.

Trustees were aware that 2012/13 was a period of change, partly because of the changeover of Director; we have confidence in good lines of communication with the Board of Hlekweni and the Director, and are pleased about the audits undertaken and in hand.

We thank all donors – individual, Quaker meeting and Trusts – for their contributions, which have meant that we have been able to continue significant grant funding for Hlekweni.



Carpentry trainees

Financial Report

a) Property and equipment

The charity owns no properties. Business meetings are held at rooms offered free of charge. The title to equipment purchased for projects is transferred to Hlekweni (e.g. the car for the use of the Director).

b) Funds

During 2012/2013 the charity's income was £65,568 (2011/12: £91,659) and expenditure was £64,223 (2011/12:£ 88,401). This represents a reduction in income of about 33%. The reasons for this reduction have been discussed above. The trainee bursary fundraising appeal in the autumn of 2012 has again provided a steady income stream. We have seen a continuing effect of this with donations received, from across the Quaker community and beyond, into the new year. We continue to see a steady increase in commitments to regular payments.

About 18% of income was to restricted funds; the trainee bursary support fund and donations for Samathonga support. To meet the demands of the trainee bursary project, money was transferred from the general income to this restricted fund.

Most of the expenditure was made towards the major support projects both at Hlekweni (42%) and Samathonga school (11%), capital equipment (33%), some donations to individuals, etc. About 2.9% was spent on the fundraising appeal costs of advertising & printing etc and about 0.2% on trustees expenses.

We have a balance forward of £34,966 (2011/12: £33,603) of which 54% is unrestricted. Trustees are confident that the finances of the charity are on a sound footing



c) Investment Policy

The charity aims to disburse its funding on approval of grant applications; and there is no investment account, so there has been no need as yet to agree an ethical investment policy. The current account is held in the Co-operative Bank which operates by strong ethical principles.

Plans for the future

The Trustees recognise that this year has been one of consolidation; whilst the context for work in Zimbabwe remains difficult, there is new energy to develop work there, with renewed support from Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting of Quakers, and with the growing confidence of Innocent Moyo as the Director, drawing on his extensive previous experience in NGO work. The Trustees note other active Quaker projects in Matabeleland, in addition to Hlekweni. We remain confident that we have good working relationships with the Director and the Board at Hlekweni, the headteacher at Samathonga and with Central and Southern Africa YM, and Bulawayo MM which oversee the Zimbabwe Food Relief Action scheme.

The needs remain great. It is expected that the Trustees will be called on for significant additional grants in the next few years; thus, Friends of Hlekweni will need to increase its activities to be able to respond. In particular, with the ending of the Samathonga feeding scheme monies from a legacy source, Trustees will need to decide if and how to continue that longstanding scheme which has proved so beneficial to its beneficiaries.

Trustees value the work of the growing network of supporters and donors and would like to offer more support for their fundraising activities.

In addition the Trustees also wish to ensure that the charity's work is publicised as widely as possible, and to liaise with other charities and bodies who are working with Hlekweni and in Matabeleland.

The Trustees recognise the need for more supporters willing to contribute to the ongoing work that Trustees have hitherto undertaken, e.g. help with fundraising, recovering Gift Aid, publicity and communications. We look forward to working with a wider group of well-wishers. . We recognise that we need to work on both a Communications and a Fundraising policy.

2012 marked the 45th anniversary of Quaker witness at Hlekweni; Friends of Hlekweni Trustees are committed to continued active support of Hlekweni's work on sustainable livelihoods and education in the coming years

Ruth Findlay, Roger Moore, Don Rowe, Lee Taylor

This report was agreed by the Trustees, May 2013

info@friendsofhlekweni.org