

Project Agora

(a charitable company limited by guarantee)

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2008

Company Number 4430518

Charity Registration Number 1110788

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Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee incorporated on the 1 May 2002 and registered as a charity on 9th August 2005. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established its objects and powers and is governed under its Articles of Association. Under those articles the Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting for a period of three years. New trustees are identified through existing networks or by advertisement and may be invited to attend a board meeting on an exploratory basis prior to co-option, followed by formal election at the following Annual General Meeting. Their induction is managed by the Chair in accordance with their previous experience. The Board welcomes enquiries from people interested in serving as Trustees.

The Board of Trustees (from 1 April 2007 until 31 March 2008)

Mr Bill Robbins

Mr Alan Morris

Mr Peter Gifford (until Oct 2007)

Dr Trevor Cooling (until Oct 2007)

Rev Canon Tim Higgins

Ms Amy Robinson (from Oct 2007)

Mr Alan Baker (from Oct 2007)

Ms Vala Ragnarsdottir (from Oct 2007)

Company Secretary

Rev Dr Chris Sunderland

Co-ordinator

Rev Dr Chris Sunderland

Registered Office and operation address

50 Guest Avenue, Emersons Green, Bristol BS16 7GA

Independent Examiner

Mr Philip Hodges, Chief Accountant, Bristol City Council

Bankers

HSBC, 24 College Green, Bristol BS1 5TD

Solicitors

Wrigleys, 19 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AG



Project Agora

Report of the Trustees of Project Agora for the year ended March 31st 2008

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2008.

Constitution and Objects

Project Agora, which is also known as Agora, is constituted as a charitable company limited by guarantee whose objects are:

1. The promotion of civic responsibility and good citizenship
2. The advancement of religion
3. The advancement of education

Principal activities to achieve objectives

Agora's experience this year might be aptly summarised in Dickens' phrase 'it was the best of times and it was the worst of times'.

Agora has taken work forward in three areas.

In order to stimulate a wider conversation about climate change we invited a series of well-known speakers to lead evenings in Bristol, including Mark Lynas, Susan Roaf and Leo Hickman. This series was put on in partnership with 'The Climate Outreach and Information Network' and culminated in an event in conjunction with Oxfam that featured George Monbiot, Kate Haworth and others and which attracted around four hundred people.

A series of lunch time conversations provided a new meeting point for local environmentalists, whilst another series called *Holy Ground* took forward our concern to make links with spirituality.

Our continuing interest in working life was expressed through a partnership with St Stephen's Church in Bristol and with Creative Metier. Together we have put in place a series of events for summer and autumn 2008 which focus on working life and spirituality. Agora has also worked with Creative Metier to produce a Christian version of their vocational software and accompanying course, which has been reviewed very positively.

Much of Agora's time and energy this year has been devoted to a green travel initiative called Chooseday. Its aim is to stimulate both conversation and action in regard to climate change. Running with the slogan 'Tuesdays without cars', Chooseday has proved enormously attractive both within Bristol and beyond. It was launched in Bristol in October 2007, gaining support from all the political parties, the council leader, chief executives of the major public sector organisations and business leaders, including Business West. Banners on the hospital and the Council House proclaimed 'Tuesdays without cars' to the city throughout the autumn of 2007.

The Chooseday campaign was founded on a feasibility study funded by 'The Converging World' and it has developed a corporate process that includes the recruiting of Chooseday Champions to take forward the green travel concerns of organisations. A 'Travel and Tell' scheme encourages people to report their alternative travel experiences, while First Bus and First Great Western have provided tickets to new travellers.

The Chooseday campaign achieved national recognition through the Guardian's website, which featured it as Campaign of the Week.



Project Agora

Chooseday has survived through this year on minimal funding with many people giving of their time and energy on a part-voluntary, or at cost, basis. This has made for a dynamic and extraordinarily well-motivated team, but the absence of significant core funding has meant that we have not been able to develop Chooseday as the major city-wide campaign initially envisaged and Chooseday has been a continual threat to Agora's finances.

Agora's Co-ordinator continues to serve on the editorial team of *The Bible in Transmission*, an influential publication among Christian leaders.

Achievements and Performance

In summary the year 2007 – 2008 has been a time when Agora has attained recognition for one of its projects beyond anything we have achieved before, while continuing with a substantial body of other work. At the same time the charity was deeply frustrated in not being able to develop the Chooseday initiative to its full potential due to funding constraints.

Financial review

Our turnover this year has increased markedly, this being largely due to the Chooseday project. Despite increased outgoings we did not have to draw significantly on our reserves over this period.

Having been unable to find a publisher for our 'Bible as Wisdom' series we successfully renegotiated the use of the existing Bible Society grant (£20,000) so as to be able to utilise it for our working life initiative, known as Work and Spirit, and for the development of a new project to be known as Earth Abbey, which will engage the Christian community with environmental issues.

Other major donations included an Awards for All (A4A) grant from Lottery funds towards our climate change speaker series, a grant from Temple Ecclesiastical Charity toward environmental work with churches and a grant from Bristol Archdeaconry Charities toward work with St Stephen's church.

Risk management

The Trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the company faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

Company law requires the board of Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing these financial statements the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.



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The Board of Trustees is responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. The Board are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. Having become a charity in August 2005, the Trustees have also prepared this report and accounts in the light of SORP 2005 and its requirements for small charitable companies.

Members of the Board of Trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees who served during the year up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

Members of the Board guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the company in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees was five as at 31 March 2008.

Independent Examiner

Philip Hodges has been appointed by the board as independent examiner for the year up to 31 March 2008.

This report has been approved by the Directors and signed on their behalf by :

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS Morris'.

Alan Morris (Chair)



Project Agora

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Project Agora

I report on the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2008

As to the company's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the requirement for an audit does not apply on the basis of section 249B(2) of the Companies Act 1985.

I have made an examination including a review of the accounting records kept by the company and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items presented with those records, and seeking explanations from you as Directors concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with accounting requirements in accordance with the Companies Act 1985

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *Philip Hodges*

Date: *21/11/08*
Philip Hodges,
Chief Accountant, Bristol City Council



Project Agora

Statement of Financial activities for the year ending 31st March 2008

Incoming Resources

	Agora Core £	Chooseday £	A4A £	Work & spirit £	Earth Abbey £	Total 0708 £	0607 £
Donations	25,677	23,300	10,000	3,118	3,500	65,595	47,184
Fees	5,865		2,088			7,952	9,356
Other Income	2,061	1,873				3,934	250
Bank Interest	1,221					1,221	968
Total Incoming Resources	34,823	25,173	12,088	3,118	3,500	78,702	57,758

Resources Expended

Staff Costs	29,362	6,000	4,400	3,000	3,500	46,262	45,364
Travel Costs	909					909	2,458
Office Costs	2,599	6,996	2,567	118	0	12,280	2,818
Conferences	1,585	293	2,420	0	0	4,298	1,820
Legal & Professional	1,124	11,805	2,701	0	0	15,630	579
Depreciation	405					405	1,364
Total Resources Expended	35,983	25,093	12,088	3,118	3,500	79,783	54,403
Net incoming resources	-1,160	79	0	0	0	-1,081	3,355



Project Agora

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2008

Accounting Policies

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

Staff Costs

There was one paid member of staff during the year.

	£
Salaries	41,605
National insurance	<u>4,657</u>
	46,262



Project Agora

Balance Sheet at 31/3/08

Current Assets

Fixed Assets	0
Cash in Hand	19,060
Stock	595
Debtors	10,003

Current Liabilities

Income in advance	-13,382
Creditors	-2,656

Net current assets	<u>13,621</u>
Total assets	<u><u>13,621</u></u>

Financed by

Surplus c/f	14,702
Surplus of income over expenditure	-1,081
	<u><u>13,621</u></u>

- a) For the year ended 31st March 2008 the company was entitled to exemption under section 249A(1) of the Companies Act 1985.
- b) Members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 249B(2) of the Companies Act 1985.
- c) The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for:
- i) ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with section 221; and
 - ii) preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year, and of its profit or loss for the financial year, in accordance with the requirements of section 226, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company;
- d) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions in Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies together with the requirements of SORP 2005 for small charities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Alan Morris (Chair)