

Project Agora

(a charitable company limited by guarantee)

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2009

Company Number 4430518

Charity Registration Number 1110788



Contents	Page
Structure, governance and management	3
Report of the Trustees	4
Letter from the Independent Examiner	6
Statement of Financial Activities	7
Notes forming part of Financial Statements	8
Balance Sheet	9

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 2008 until 31 March 2009)

Mr Alan Morris (Chair)

Ms Amy Robinson (Treasurer)

Rev Canon Tim Higgins

Mr Alan Baker

Ms Vala Ragnarsdottir (until Jan 2009)

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, former Chief Accountant, Bristol City Council

Bankers

HSBC, 24 College Green, Bristol BS1 5TD

Solicitors

Wrigleys, 19 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AG



Report of the Trustees of Project Agora for the year ended March 31st 2009

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2009.

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

This year has been a time of endings and beginnings.

Our work at St Stephen's Church in the City Centre attracted attention through several high profile guests including Matthew Taylor, Chris Underhill and Prabhu Guptara. Professor Guptara's address entitled 'The world financial system and the institutionalisation of greed' was providentially timed to coincide with the threatened collapse of the global banking system. Agora's intention to foster conversation on matters of public importance was aptly demonstrated in this event. Unfortunately our 'Work and Spirit' project came to an end earlier than anticipated due to an unexpected failure of trust fund support and our office space at St Stephen's has now been vacated.

In a similar way the *Chooseday* project continued strongly through the early part of the year with notable activities in Bristol Primary Care Trust, Beachcroft LLP and several schools and local communities. We discovered that this 'Tuesdays without cars' campaign worked well when we had active Chooseday champions within the organisation. A project later in the year, on a particularly challenged site of the University of the West of England, was less successful. Funding for *Chooseday* has remained a particular difficulty with continual capacity shortages. A major grant expected from the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) failed to materialize and caused serious damage to our plans for Chooseday's expansion through the South West. Agora is now seeking to pass the Chooseday project on to national travel consultants who have the capacity to take it forward.

Last year's AGM saw the launch of our *EarthAbbey* project, which encourages members to live more in tune with the earth. A fledgling EarthAbbey community has been formed in the Bristol area, together with a project known as *Grow Zones* where people work in teams on each other's gardens to ready them for growing edible produce. This has proved extraordinarily beneficial, not only in the actual growing of food, but also in education about horticulture and land use, the building of community life and a sense of reconnection with the earth. In March 2009 EarthAbbey published a book entitled 'The Dream that inspired the Bible', by Chris Sunderland, the Coordinator of Agora. This development had been facilitated by a grant from Bible Society.

Financial review

The trustees have been considerably exercised about our financial position this year. The termination of the 'Work and Spirit' grant and the failure of expected SWRDA funds came as a hammer blow to our business plans. Sensing the importance of the launch of our EarthAbbey project, the Trustees agreed to allow the spending of a portion of our reserves up to the year end and the Co-ordinator offered to commence part-time working from October 2008.

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.

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 four as at 31 March 2009.

Independent Examiner

Philip Hodges has been appointed by the board as independent examiner for the year up to 31 March 2009.

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

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

Alan Morris (Chair)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Project Agora

I report on the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2009

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:



Date:

29/10/09

Philip Hodges,

Former Chief Accountant, Bristol City Council

Statement of Financial activities for the year ending 31st March 2009

Incoming Resources

	Agora Core £	Chooseday £	Work & spirit £	Earth Abbey £	Earth Abbey Publishing	Total 0809 £	0708 £
Donations	19,738	5000	6,882	8,886		40,507	65,595
Fees	5,757	7735	0	0		13,492	7,952
Sales	230	241	0	0	102	573	
Other Income	135	0	0	358		493	3,934
Bank Interest	267	0	0	0		267	1,221
Total Incoming Resources	26,128	12,976	6,882	9,244	102	55,332	78,702

Resources Expended

Staff Costs	30,371	2,840	4,600	1,140	0	38,951	46,262
Cost of Sales	103	125	0	380	43	652	
Travel Costs	119	8	0	0	0	127	909
Office Costs	1,793	2,854	457	794	0	5,898	12,280
Conferences	12	0	803	224	0	1,038	4,298
Legal & Professional	0	7,148	900	9,523	0	17,571	15,630
Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0	0	405
Total Resources Expended	32,399	12,975	6,760	12,060	43	64,237	79,783
Net incoming resources	-6,271	1	122	-2,816	58	-8,905	-1,081

Accounting Policies

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

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

Fixed Assets

There were no fixed assets at 31/3/09

Staff Costs

	£
Salaries	35,148.00
National Insurance	3,803.16
	38,951.16

Cash in Hand

Current Account	665.23
Deposit Account	1,347.80
Petty Cash	10.85
	2,023.88

Stock

83 T Shirts valued at £5.67	470.61
488 books valued at 3.66	1,786.08
	2,256.69

Debtors

	£
PAG 157Earth Connect	30.00
Tax refund re Gift Aid	165.00
Income T Shirts form PCT PAG 151	100.00
Consultancy Chooseday PCT PAG 151	2,000.00
	2,295.00

Creditors

	£
P Gane/T Beale re UWE	940.00
Chooseday Gem Consultancy	920.00
	1,860.00

Income in Advance

There was no income in advance at 31/3/09

Balance Sheet at 31/3/2009

Current Assets

Fixed Assets 0

Cash in Hand	2,024
Stock	2,256
Debtors	2,295

Current Liabilities

Income in advance	0
Creditors	-1,860

Net current assets	4,715
Total assets	<u>4,715</u>

Financed by

Surplus c/f	13,621
Loss 0809	-8,905

	<u>4,715</u>
--	--------------

- a) For the year ended 31st March 2009 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)