

GREEN OLIVE TRUST UPDATE

Some Friends and their Meetings have kindly supported the Green Olive Trust during the 11 years since we started. We have, however, reluctantly agreed as a Trustees body to close having secured enough funds to make sure all our present students can complete their schooling in the Kakamega region of Kenya by the start of 2028. This has not been as easy decision for any of us. Our founders, Bronwyn and Bob Harwood from Lewes Meeting, expressed a wish to step back from December 2025 and the remaining Trustees have not been able to find a way to move forward in the present uncertain times.



Belatedly though we have recently been able to welcome Dr Oscar Shamalla from Kenya. He had applied for a Visa to visit YM for the last 2 years and to help us celebrate at our 10th Anniversary celebrations, but all his applications were rejected with almost laughable reasons: “you haven’t attended an event like this before!” Some Trustees wrote to their MPs following the election and the Brighton Green MP, Sian Berry, took up our concern and subsequently a visa was issued.

We were delighted to be able to meet with Paul Parker, Ann Pfeiffer from QPSW, and Michael Booth at Friends House. We shared our successes with them, especially the QPSW funded Greenhouse Project. Although inevitable damage in recent storms there has been the knowledge of technology self-sufficiency learnt for the future. The legacy is the borehole providing fresh water to the local area.

Our initial focus was on education, and we have sponsored around 60 students through either High School or University with bursary provision helping students from poor backgrounds and poverty. During Covid we supplied laptops to enable them to continue their studies as well as funding uniforms and books for the poorest families. We are delighted that we have a qualified doctor, several schoolteachers, an agricultural management specialist and a student working for Quaker bodies following her international Communications and Public Relations degree amongst our qualified students.

Finally, along with the Kitchen Table Charity, we facilitated the rebuilding of the Primary School run by Mary, one of the Widow’s group (who were also previously supported by us). This is now under the local Quaker Church and is looking at moving to Middle School status.

We want to thank all individual Friends and Meetings who have supported us, and in speaking with Oscar, the Green Olive Foundation in Kenya is hoping to continue the work, seeking new sponsorship.