

Appendices

to the report of the Moving Forward / Symud Ymlaen Group

These appendices give some of the background information the Moving Forward Group has drawn on in compiling their report and reaching their proposal. Some is very detailed and some more general.

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Vibrant but Fragile, the state of Quakerism in Wales and the Marches

Vibrant but Fragile: The fragility that creates the urgency

Quaker *numbers are falling*. Not only are fewer people coming into formal membership, but the overall number of members and attenders is decreasing steadily.

There are *fewer people who were brought up in a Quaker household*, so are less familiar with Quaker practices, and although this can be a source of freshness and enriching experimentation it also carries the risk of diluting Quakers' distinctiveness.

When you are the *Single Quaker in the Family*, (SQIF), you have to make compromises between your own needs as a Quaker and those of your non-Quaker household, so you may be unwilling to serve in some roles.

Quakers are *ageing*: we are distinctly older than we were a generation ago, when people came into membership in their 30s and 40s. Now it is in our 60s. This means that by the time we have 'learned the ropes', we have fewer years ahead of us to give, and may find it harder to take on new responsibilities.

We are also encumbered by the *over-elaborate governance structures* set up when churches were obliged to register with the Charity Commission and to submit reports and accounts, and could no longer benefit from an exception to this as religious charities.

The resulting large number of small charities was intended to keep decision-making and oversight close to the Area Meeting, but as the duties of trustees were clarified and as the reporting standards required have increased over the years, *finding enough trustees has become harder*.

In the area covered by Meeting of Friends in Wales, this problem was seen early on and a group appointed to look into possible remedies. In 2006, that group recommended amalgamation of all the Area Meetings into one All-Wales Area Meeting, with the spiritual nurture and outreach functions staying local, in what would be called Clusters. But some Friends could not countenance this change and so the proposal was quietly shelved.

Now, in 2020, the *situation has deteriorated* to the point where several AMs are struggling to appoint and retain trustees. Also, *Mid Wales Area Meeting* which has not had to register because its turnover is so low, will have to do so *by March 2021 unless an alternative process* acceptable to the Charity Commission is underway.

Therefore, unQuakerly as it may feel, the Quakers in Wales and the Marches must *make up for lost time and arrive at a decision on our future structure very soon*.

Vibrancy: How the spirit prospers in Wales & Southern Marches

Quaker Faith & Practice (13.02) tells us that a special inward calling to carry out a particular service may come to anyone. Here is a flavour of how we as Friends across Wales and Southern Marches have been expressing our faith and witnessing to our Quaker values over recent years, either as individuals or collectively with other Quakers or with other organisations:

- Abroad - serving as an Ecumenical Accompanier in Palestine and Israel; a visit to the Quaker Council for European Affairs in Brussels; linking with Friends in Germany and in America; building schools in Monze
- National and locally - “Equipping for Ministry” through undertaking courses at Woodbrooke Study Centre in Birmingham and exploring leadings; running a Peaceful Schools project in Mid Wales; creating a peace centre and peace garden in Abergavenny; running workshops and events (on issues including economic justice in North Wales, climate change at Llandrindod Wells). Also producing a CD (Voices of Conscience) and an exhibition on militarism and peace; Pity of War – a project to remember innocent civilian victims of war; Prison chaplaincy (including Berwyn, Usk); supporting asylum seekers and refugees – a number of meetings are “Sanctuary Meetings”. Working with the Quaker campaign against torture, Quaker Housing Trust, Quaker Concern for Animals; a Quaker presence at the Hay festival, and part of the Cytun interdenominational presence at the Eisteddfod and Royal Welsh Show
- In our own lives - personal lifestyle choices such as methods of transport, sustainable building or renovations, not being a home owner, reducing meat consumption; writing books (eg A travelling Quaker Writes by Dewi Heald) and poetry (eg A part of the Main by Philip Gross and Lesley Saunders); making white poppies for the Peace Pledge Union and Quaker Arts Network “Collateral Damage” project

Appendix 2

The remit of the group

The Symud Ymlaen / Moving Forward Group was set up by the four constituent Area Meetings (North Wales, Mid Wales, South Wales and Southern Marches) of Meeting of Friends in Wales (MFW)¹ in October 2019 to look at ways that Quaker structures could be simplified. Two representatives were appointed from each AM and MFW and included a Trustee from each body.

Moving Forward group membership:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>LM</u>	<u>AM</u>
Jeff Beatty	Almeley Wootton	SM
Alan Clark	Aberystwyth	MW
Gerry Craddock	Wrexham	NW
Peter Davies	Bridgend	SW
Brian Jackson (released)	St Davids & Fishguard	SW
Diana Morrison-Smith	Machynlleth	MW
Huw Meredydd Owen	Pwllheli	NW
Peter Rivers	Clun Valley	SM
Christine Trevett	Bridgend	SW
Frances Voelcker	Porthmadog	NW
Lesley Richards (clerk)	Church Stretton	W&S
Helen Oldridge (LDW, in support)	QL	BYM
Jonathan Carmichael (in support)	QL	BYM

The remit:-

1. to bring the views of and to consult widely with associated AMs and their trustee bodies by September 2020
2. to research work done last decade (Steering Group 2006-8) to see if there are growing points
3. to put all options on the table for working together more effectively within Wales by having an overarching trustee body, and otherwise, and to identify which ones AMs might take forward
4. to liaise with other groupings working at simplification e.g. Yorkshire, London and with BYM Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) and the Simpler Meetings Project Officer
5. to identify further work required and by whom, as necessary
6. to produce a report to MFW in October 2020 on next steps

¹ See Appendix 6 – For information about Meeting of Friends in Wales

Appendix 3

The process of the group

Methodology

The first meeting of the Group was confounded by floods but was before lockdown and so met face to face on 3 March 2020. It was agreed at that meeting to form three sub-groups to work on particular areas of ideas:

Group A – property and trusteeship

- Linked trustees across AMs
- Boundaries may not be significant, (the groupings on the tabular statement make little sense.)
- Property management, different parts of the country have long experience of working differently, (i.e. Six Weeks Meeting now called London Friends property trust), or are considering the possibilities (e.g. Yorkshire.)
- Meeting houses or not meeting houses. Would it be best to sell them and reuse the resources, perhaps to build up meetings in the places where they are needed?

Group B – A fresh story

- A fresh story to tell ourselves and then to tell others, the metaphor of a tree
- Better use of Friends time, not just a lot of stuff to do.
- What do we want to be? What do we need?
- Envisage having fun, godly play.
- The care we need to give each other.

Group C – Looking outward

- The distinctive role of MFW, the voice of Quakers to the Welsh Assembly, BYM etc. It's a channel for us to speak truth to power.
- Not prisoners of our recent history (we've always done it like this when in fact we haven't).
- Language issues
- Diversity, not shying away from class issues
- Do our structures arise from the intellectual make up of the Society of Friends
- Small numbers

Consequent meetings were by Zoom and these groups reported back to the whole group on April 29th.

Group A Property & Trusteeship concluded that the existing five charity structure, four Area Meetings and Meeting of Friend in Wales, is a drain on resources. They suggested that we move to a single charity which would enable pooling of expertise and enable different ways of managing property and finance^{2,3} and shared Policies and Procedures⁴. We are in a different place from when proposals were made to change Quaker structures in Wales in 2006, but we feel that report⁵ had a lot to commend it. Just as circumstances have meant we have to use IT in ways we would not have considered, perhaps circumstances are now forcing us to change our structures.

Group B Telling a new story explored the metaphor of a tree, a metaphor that can be used in a variety of ways but goes to the heart of the purpose of the group's work. Each part of the tree has a purpose which allows the rest to do more, although at the moment, there is a certain degree of disconnect between these different parts

Group C Looking Outward reminded us that Local Meetings are our bedrock and need to be helped to flourish but this requires a focus both on Local Meetings and on wider Quaker groupings. Spiritual hospitality is key to our ability to nurture our local meetings. We are looking outwards from our Local Meetings to Quakers in Wales, from Quakers in Wales to wider Quakerism and from Quakerism to the wider world.

Jonathan Carmichael, BYM Simpler Meetings Project Manager, spoke about experiences from around the rest of Britain Yearly meeting, in particular from London where Friends are considering having a single charity for the seven Area Meetings and the London Quaker Property Trust. We should not underestimate the number of different perspectives of the situation, nor the number of different aspects to it. If we don't all see the same problem, there is not going to be agreement on the solution. People respond to change in a range of different ways enthusiastic, resistant or not interested and some will be more articulate about their feelings than others. It is better to look at the big picture first and solve the smaller problems later. Trusteeship includes the care of assets, of money and so important issues of trust. If change is to happen, we have to deal with concerns about power, control and influence. What is fundamental to all this is communication.

We saw two aspects to our response to these reports and set up two new groups to progress them:

Communication Our reading of the outcome of the report made in 2006 was that although it was received with enthusiasm, it seems to have felt to Friends that it was a top down solution and that communication is essential. This group was tasked to develop a way of communicating with Friends that would lead them through our thinking. They were asked to develop the tree metaphor in a way that would enable discussions between members and attenders across the four constituent Area Meetings of Meeting of Friends in Wales in order to help Friends to discern a common articulation of the challenges facing us. This material has been widely circulated and we are grateful for all the responses that we have

² See Appendix 10a – What each Area Meeting would bring to a joint charity

³ See Appendix 10b – Report on the properties owned by the four Area Meetings

⁴ See Appendix 12 – Draft common Policies

⁵ See Appendix 9 – The 2006 Report Quaker Structures in Wales and the Borders

received from individuals, Local Meetings and Area Meetings which has informed the writing of this report.

Stewardship to do further research on;

- How an all Wales Quaker Charity might be set up
- The usage and state of repair of Quaker Meeting Houses within the four Area Meetings
- How finances might be managed perhaps looking at the London Quaker Properties Trust and Central England Area Meeting.

The result of this research forms the basis for our report.

In addition to the various small groups the whole Moving Forward Group has met four times to collate this report.

Appendix 4

Consultation with Friends in Wales and the Marches

The Moving Forward Group sent out a consultation document entitled 'Release the hidden life of Quakers in Wales and the Marches'. It was circulated in late May and invited responses by mid July. The consultation asked Friends to:-

Imagine our Religious Society as a tree, a living organism: it has worship, spiritual learning, community outreach, mutual support and children. There is Yearly Meeting with Local Meetings, Area Meetings and Meeting of Friends in Wales and a cumbersome structure. There are business meetings, properties to manage and bank accounts. We work on projects and campaigns both run as a part of our Society and by Friends working with others.

- *How do you respond to the image of a tree? Which of our activities are the root, the trunk, the branches and leaves?*
- *Which parts of the tree do you know about? Which are you involved in?*
- *Which parts are in good health? Which parts need pruning?*

Although we are a Religious Society which is recognised as a church, we are also a charity with the legal responsibilities which that implies.

- *How well are the church and charity aspects of our Society working? Are there any problems?*

We have received more than 60 responses from individual Friends, Local Meetings and Area Meetings

We have heard from those who have wide experience amongst Friends and from very new attenders, from Friends with experience of working for other charities at a high level and from Friends who know nothing about the ins and outs of formal structures. They have all been useful. This is a compendium of ideas taken from what we received.

We suggested Friends might think of Quakerism as a tree. For some Friends this was unhelpful, but the metaphor allowed others to say all sorts of things about Quakerism:-

This is a compendium of ideas taken from what we received.

- Trees have to be managed.
- You have to prune trees so that the branches aren't too heavy if they are to survive a drought.
- The living parts of a tree are flexible, you need to prune out the dead wood to liberate growth.
- The strength of a tree is not in its rigidity but in its flexibility.
- A tree bends with the wind to avoid being broken.

- What we need is a paradigm shift so we are a conifer not an oak.
- The BYM mould for looking after a tree might work in a park, but not in more marginal conditions.
- A tree is stuck in the ground like Woodbrooke or Friends House, Quakers are like a flock of birds with a Quaker meeting as their nest.
- The Banyan tree has aerial roots which hang down and take root wherever they touch.
- Quakers are not solid or static or visible like a tree but rather they're amorphous, changing, spread thin, hard to pin down but effective at bringing change.
- You can build all kinds of tree houses which are fun.
- Trees can provide a rich habitat for other organisms.
- Quakerism is part of a wood with attenders acting as bees pollinating the flowers.
- Trees are linked by mycorrhiza underground.

Summary of feedback

Some wanted to be part of an evergreen tree so the leaves didn't drop off, others wanted to be deciduous so the leaves could be refreshed, and some wanted to be an evergreen whose leaves dropped as they became old so it was never bare and there were always new leaves.

There were Friends who warned against change. It is difficult to find Friends to do the jobs now, if you make some of the jobs larger you'll never find anyone; one former AM trustee won't take on anything bigger. There were worries that the only Friends who would take on expanded roles would be 'weighty' Friends. We are working as amateurs in an increasingly complex world and up till now we have just about got away with it. That greater managerialism is inimical to the workings of the spirit. It was worrying that one of the responses most critical of any change was sent anonymously, this suggests a concern about how divergent opinions would be received.

There were Friends who were critical of the present situation. Over the last couple of years there has been an increase in the amount of discussion of process and structure and not enough emphasis on communicating 'the way.' There is a tension between secular demands and Gospel order and we need to come together with trust and tenderness to find a way. (QF&P 15.03) If Quakers identified more as part of a larger community they might be more likely to take on roles as an act of service. With too fast a changeover of Friends undertaking roles knowledge is lost, on the other hand some Friends have lives where it might be possible to offer short term service but not the three or six years our current system assumes.

Some don't understand our administration system, it seems laborious. A number questioned why we had to be formally a charity. Area Meetings are too long, nobody comes. But we also heard that Friends don't feel inclined either to be patient with essential business or to pitch in and help with doing a bit of the donkey work. Some Friends have just given up because nothing ever changes.

There was a lot of support for 'doing things once for Wales (and the Marches).' The importance of communication was spoken about. Local Meetings are the bedrock of Quakerism; local needs require local responses so we need to keep Area Meetings relatively local, but we could amalgamate trustees and some other functions. Clergy have to do a lot of administration, not just find inspired words, we are all clergy it is no different for us.

Energy levels are decreasing with age rather than decreasing enthusiasm. It seems we're hanging on to the bathwater even when it's gone cold and the baby is dying of hypothermia. 'We've never done it like that will' no longer be an acceptable argument. We need to think the unthinkable.

As the consultation took place while we were locked down because of COVID 19, there was a lot of comment about the use of Zoom. Indeed, one new attender had more experience of online meetings than physical meetings for worship. There were worries that the use of technology excluded some Friends because they couldn't or were not comfortable with using it. On the other hand, it enabled a number of Friends to take part in business meetings that they would not otherwise have been able to attend. Many Friends commented on the facility it offered to hold business meetings without the time and cost (money and environmental impact) of travelling long distances to physically meet. It makes possible working in geographically disparate groupings. However, meeting physically enables people to get to know one another in a way that is just not possible meeting online so some sort of mixed economy is important.

There are two issues which are unique to Wales. The national border and the Quaker boundaries don't match for all kinds of reasons including, friendship, history and geography. There were some English Friends who were not comfortable about becoming a minority part of a largely Welsh organisation, but there was no wish to make the boundaries match. It's a complication, but one which most Friends seem to content to live with. The other issue is about the nature of Welshness. (There are many English Friends currently looking enviously over the border at the more nuanced approach to corona virus on the Welsh side.) Would Friends living on the English side of the border be welcome amongst Welsh Friends. Does language unite or divide? Are we able to talk openly about these matters?

Simplification does not have to be a complicated matter.

Appendix 5

Why do we have to be a registered charity?

A response from Paul Parker, Recording Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting.

Firstly, we are a charity because we have always been a charity. The only change that has happened since 2006 is that we have become (at area meeting and yearly meeting level) registered charities. That's because the Charities Act that year ended the old 'excepted status' for religious bodies – whereby they could be charities without registering with the Charity Commission for England & Wales (or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator). The process of registering required us to have named trustees – prior to that, all members of the (then) monthly meeting were *de facto* trustees (whether they knew it or not!), and liability was shared between them all. For all sorts of reasons, that wasn't a particularly satisfactory arrangement.

Secondly, we are a charity because there's not a lot else we can be. If you want to open a bank account, own property, take out insurance, carry out activities with children/ vulnerable people, etc. then you need to be a legal entity – which means you either have to be an individual, a charity or a company. There aren't really any other options. There are distinct advantages to choosing to be a charity over the other options – notably to do with the amount of tax you pay. And it's hard to imagine Quaker meetings wanting all their resources to be owned by a single individual. There are three Area Meetings that chose to register as a company (incorporated organisation), and it's not a course of action I'd recommend.

Thirdly, we are a charity because once a charity has assets (money, property, etc), then those assets can only be used for the charitable purpose they were given to the charity for. So if you stopped being a charity, you'd have to find another charity that could take on your assets and use them for that purpose. So an AM that gave up charitable status would also have to give up all its money and property to another body which could make use of them.

Fourthly, we are a charity because Yearly Meeting 2005 decided that was the right course of action and wrote it into *Quaker faith & practice* (in chapters 4, 14 & 15). Yearly Meeting set up Quaker Stewardship Committee to guide this process and develop policy around charitable registration. Any change in approach would require decision at Yearly Meeting. There is no sign that YM would be amenable to any such change, and I would strongly advise Friends not to entertain that possibility.

Fifthly, we are a charity because it's a transparent thing to be. Friends have always set great store by truth and integrity, so putting our financial affairs and annual reports into the public domain should be something we welcome, and the associate accountability is something we would want to encourage, rather than shy away from.

Finally, we are a charity because the 'advancement of religion' is seen as being of public benefit in charity legislation. Being a charity does not unduly limit Quaker activity. Whilst Charity Commission guidance (in CC9) prevents charities from *party*-political activity, there is no restriction on political engagement of a wider nature, unless it becomes the primary purpose of the charity. As our primary purpose is, and always will be, the 'advancement of religion' – we are, first and foremost, a church – then there's no threat to us there. The

one aspect which is of concern is the Transparency of Lobbying Act 2014, which places some limits on activity during the regulated period before elections – but that would apply to us whether we were a charity or not, as the Act is cast very broadly. So in practice charitable status makes very little difference to what we are allowed to do in the political sphere.

Appendix 6

What is Meeting of Friends in Wales?

Meeting of Friends in Wales (MFW) is the national body for Quakers in Wales (see **QFP 5.04**) and it is a charity with its own trustee body. It exists in British Quakerism in recognition of Wales's distinctiveness, its heritage and its two official languages. Scottish Friends have a similar body. Most of us few hundred Friends in Wales mostly live out our Quakerism in this small country with its diversity, its widespread poverty and cultural richness, its economic, political and geographical challenges and its ongoing experience of devolution.

What does MFW do? On BYM's behalf it is tasked with speaking for Wales and Wales's Quakerism to BYM and also with being the voice of Quakerism to Wales and its institutions. So MFW is the platform for speaking to the Senedd and Cytûn; for ensuring a Quaker presence and activities in cultural events such as the National Eisteddfod, the Royal Welsh Show and the Hay Literary Festival; for publishing material for outreach and inreach in both Welsh and English; for disseminating information electronically and maintaining a website and for being in touch with Meetings in Wales at local and regional levels. MFW produces *Calon*, concerns itself with campaigns, has special events and provides practical support - and all these things in addition to its three meetings a year which are for business and for spiritual renewal. More than this, though, MFW is for drawing people together and being a spiritual home.

Through MFW, Quakers in Wales have been given the means to think and act nationally and to reach out internationally as a body in Wales. It must be an objective to speak cohesively and effectively as Quakers in Wales. That might be to the Senedd in relation to policy, for example. Strengthening this aspect of our witness depends on participation and engagement with MFW and willingness to see beyond the local in Quaker terms. Simplifying those of our processes which devour personnel and time (in MFW and other Quaker bodies) would help. So too would using modern technology to make our interactions easier and less transport-dominated. In this small country with diminishing numbers of Friends but 'a great people to be gathered' we could be building all kinds of 'cross-border' engagement, with networking and co-operation across our regions for matters of spiritual nurture, for example, for outreach, for training and knowledge and skill-sharing, for action and fellowship and for sharing Concerns which might be furthered more quickly and effectively. For we, all who live in or worship in Wales as Quakers (welcoming Friends from local meetings over the English border also) are MFW. MFW is not something additional or 'other'.

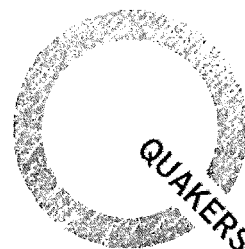
Quaker Faith and Practice 4.02

Area Meeting Constitution and Function

- *The area meeting is the primary meeting for church affairs in Britain Yearly Meeting. Its role is to develop and maintain a community of Friends, a family of local meetings who gather for worship and spiritual enrichment. It should provide that balance between worship, mutual support, administration, learning, deliberation and social life which can make its meetings enjoyable occasions and build up the spiritual life of its members.*
- *Area meetings act as facilitators and co-ordinators, ensuring that their constituent local meetings have access to opportunities for fellowship, spiritual development, and spiritual and pastoral care, including the care of children and young people. They also provide mutual support through the shared testing of concerns.*

Area meetings also carry responsibilities for ensuring the right stewardship of local and area resources. Each area meeting is a separate charitable entity and is [it may be] required to be registered as such with the relevant charity regulator.

The 2006 Report 'Quaker Structures in Wales and the Borders



Yearly Meeting
of the Religious
Society of
Friends in
Britain

Quaker Structures in Wales and the Borders PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE IN STRUCTURES

AIM: To release spiritual energy and reduce burden and duplication

BACKGROUND

Local Meetings have had several opportunities in recent years to respond to consultations about Quaker Structures in Wales and the Borders. Meeting for Sufferings has approved further work to explore new structures. These may be different from the rest of Britain. The purpose is to support small, scattered meetings, to release spiritual energy and avoid duplication. Meetings now have an opportunity to get involved in developing proposals arising from suggestions included in the latest consultation by the assistant recording clerk.

PROPOSAL

Replace the current Monthly Meetings in Wales, and Meeting of Friends in Wales with a more integrated framework:

• **An All Wales Quaker Meeting (AWQM)**, with administrative support from Central Funds, to help the functioning of **ALL** meetings in Wales by linking them up directly, and continue the current work of Meeting of Friends in Wales.

• **Clusters** of local meetings, to support one another, with pastoral matters, but also test and forward concerns from local meetings and seek to involve more Friends in the wider work of the Society, in Wales and beyond.

• **Other links.** Existing programmes and links both within Wales and across the border, which are working well, especially those for **children and young people**, should continue, and be strengthened. As far as possible, these opportunities should be opened out.

WHO DOES WHAT?

A possible arrangement for primary responsibility - see overleaf.

All Wales Quaker Meeting AWQM	Clusters
Admin function (on behalf of clusters as well as its own work)	Eldership and oversight
Contact Lists of members and attenders	Membership
Relates to national bodies - CYTUN, Senedd, etc.	Right ordering of meetings
Coordination of CYP and other events	CYP child protection
National Outreach, publications	Local outreach
Spiritual nurture through national gatherings, retreats etc.	Local nurture and fellowship opportunities
Representing Wales to BYM committees and MfSufferings	Representatives, drawn from, and report to local cluster
Property and trusteeship (opt in)	Property and trusteeship (opt out)
Creating a shared calendar of events	Offering opportunities to neighbouring clusters

HOW IT MIGHT WORK

• It is the *relationship* between the AWQM and the clusters that is important.

• AWQM should strengthen the functioning of the clusters and the clusters feel enabled to engage with the issues considered by the AWQM.

Calendar of Meetings

• Clusters might meet 4-6 times a year. Evening weekday meetings for business might be possible for some clusters, rather than all-day Saturdays (Wirral and Chester MM, which is geographically compact, do this).

• AWQM might meet 3- 4 times, with a small group (who would be the trustees) to make decisions between meetings and prepare business so that there would be time for Spiritual Nurture and proper consideration of Quaker Witness at all-day meetings.

Stewardship / trusteeship

- A trustee body might work for all of Wales but members would be nominated and need to be in touch with detailed information from their Cluster.

- Property might be managed locally but the accounts held by AWQM.

- Clusters might administer a joint bank account for a number of small meetings.

Administration

- The administrator could produce leaflets and flyers for Clusters, or other groupings of meetings and handle bookings for residential events.

- Electronic communication channels including email and the Website should be developed and used as much as possible, without jeopardising the involvement of those without IT connections.

- Outreach material - exhibitions, publications and leaflets can be developed for all of Wales but in response to local needs.

Representation and communication

- Committees and groups of AWQM (e.g. Nominations, arrangements) would normally consist of people doing this work in the cluster to avoid duplication.

- Representation at Quaker conferences etc might be at an all-Wales level or might be disseminated to clusters for appointment.

- Representatives to Meeting for Sufferings might be appointed as far as possible one for each cluster, and they might report alternately to the cluster and to AWQM. NB The role and the pattern of meetings of Meeting for Sufferings is likely to change and evolve over the next few years with the introduction of the new small Trustee body for Britain Yearly Meeting.

Membership

- Clusters might handle membership matters, to ensure the care, nurture, education and support required but the actual membership list might be held by the AWQM.

- Clusters might need to make arrangements to expedite membership matters between meetings, if they met less frequently.

Steering Group

October 2006

Our meetings for worship for business should be times to build community, so as to be responsive to God as a people.

Report from Assistant Recording Clerk to Meeting for Sufferings, September 2006

Appendix 9

Almeley Wootton LM minute

ALM 20.18 Preparation for Area Meeting via Zoom on June 13th 2020 at 11am

We have given consideration to the agenda.

We have been asked to reflect on the main agenda item (5) – The Future of Area Meeting.

Friends have considered the challenge of appointing a sufficient number of Trustees, which has been raised in several of the accompanying papers for Area Meeting. In discernment it became clear that whilst Friends acknowledge the difficulties and believe this is the time to consider a different approach they would value a staged approach which would provide time for reflection and evaluation rather than create a situation which can never be reversed. We support the approach outlined by our Friend, Ian Sterry, and summarised below and ask our Clerk to forward this to the Area Meeting Clerk and to Peter Rivers for the Change/Transformation Group.

Trustees

“Trustees are key to a well-managed charity. We need to appoint persons with the right innate abilities, the right acquired skills/experience, and the right motivation to do the job.

In the context of the member AMs of Meeting of Friends in Wales, one proposed option to increase the pool of potential trustees would be to merge the four AMs, or merge all 5 charities, by laying down each one and forming one new one. However, as Stevie Krayner points out, this is a lengthy process, not possible in our time scale. I would add that it would be costly, we may not have the skills available to manage the process, and it would be irreversible.

There is another option:-

Clause 13(i) of our Governing Document says that Trustees must be appointed from members of our AM.

I propose that clause 13(i) be amended to say that Trustees can be appointed who are members of any AM within BYM.

It is within the power of AM in Session to make this change. (clause 7(i)) It could be done at the next meeting. If each AM of Friends in Wales made the same amendment, then the same group of say 12-15 people could be appointed to each of the AMs as trustees for the next triennium.

Advantages

1. Speed - can be done immediately.
2. Cost – No legal or professional costs
3. Achieves objective of increase in the pool of potential trustees. We would be looking at appointing 12-15 Trustees from 684 members. [SMAQM is currently looking for 12 trustees from 199 members). We would still have the option to appoint from other English AMs.
4. The Trustees would have the next triennium to learn how to work together, adopt and develop best practice without the pressure of immediate crisis.
5. The process is reversible. At the end of the triennium we would have the options of:
 - 5.a. Go back to where we are now
 - 5.b. Continue with the new system
 - 5.c. Proceed to a full merger, in which case we would have a team of competent trustees to manage the process.”

Almeley Friends support the overall desire to reshape Area Meeting so that its focus is less on business and more on the spiritual life of Quakers and on outreach. We recognise that much of the business of the SMAQM has properly been passed to the Trustees, who are responsible for Finance, Property, Legal Compliance, and employment and in that sense AM in session is already almost free of ‘business’ matters. The only ‘business’ matters which have to be on the AM Agenda are half a dozen or so agenda items per annum:- to approve Trustee reports; approve the annual accounts; approve membership changes; and nominations matters, which have not been delegated. Any other ‘business’ item therefore is a matter of choice, not necessity. Friends however are aware of other agenda items loosely referred to as ‘business’ which can involve them sitting for long periods listening to ‘discussions’ and then picking over a Minute. Friends wonder if this is what leads some to avoid AM.

We have been reminded of the value of thinking creatively and living adventurously and of the opportunities which can be lost by the temptation to adhere to the past and to what we know.

Appendix 10

What each AM would bring to a joint Charity

What each Area Meeting brings is more than members and attenders; but it helps to understand the relative sizes. The primary purpose of a meeting house is to provide a place for Friends to meet, they also can be a means of outreach, but it is useful in this situation to understand the financial cost or benefit.

10 a) People and meetings

Area Meeting	Mid Wales	North Wales	South Wales	Southern Marches
Members	85	146	197	199
Attenders	86	78	149	143
Total adults	171	224	346	342
Children	23	11	31	18
Meetings	6	10	12	9
Worship groups			3	

10b) Schedule of properties owned by the four Area Meetings

<i>meeting</i>	<i>date of building</i>	<i>listed</i>	<i>latest quinquennial survey</i>	<i>comments</i>	
South Wales					
Cardiff	1857	No	N/a	Planning a major redevelopment either of the current building or a complete rebuild.	
Bridgend	1920's ? poss earlier	No	Jan 2019	In reasonably good state of repair but needs a bit of structural work	
Neath	1800	Grade 2	Dec 2017	Closed because of severe damp problems.	
Swansea	1858	Grade 2	Aug 2018	In reasonable state of repair, but needs some repair work and a lot of updating.	
Milford Haven	1811 + new extension on 2000's	Grade 2	March 2018	Needs work to reduce damp problems, and updating heating.	

<i>meeting</i>	<i>date of building</i>	<i>listed</i>	<i>latest quinquennial survey</i>	<i>comments</i>	
North Wales					
Bangor	1983	No	2018	Good state of repair	
Colwyn Bay	1899	Grade 2	2017	In reasonable state of repair, but needs some repair work and a lot of updating. Gifted to Q's 1906	
Oswestry	1933	No	Due 2020	Reasonable state of repair - Q ownership c1952	
Wrexham	2006	No	2016	Good state of repair	
Mid Wales					
Aberystwyth	1953/4	No	they do not commission quinquennial inspections	The Friends paid £75,511 for the building in February 1995 and raised a further £59,000 to improve the building including re-roofing, new windows and a ramp to the side	Good condition. The building is well-maintained on an ongoing basis by the premises committee
Dolobran	1700	Grade 2 *	A quinquennial inspection has not been carried out, but extensive repairs were undertaken by John Lloyd before he gave the building to Friends in 2015	Exceptional significance as the earliest purpose-built meeting house in Wales, although not in continuous Quaker use	
Burial Ground				The burial ground is considered to be in a generally satisfactory condition but with minor localised problems	
2 detached Burial Grounds				Detached burial grounds: Llwyngwrl - NGR SH 59214 10163 and Langurig - NGR SN 945 802	
Southern Marches					
Llandrindod	1985	No	2016	Former MH sold in 1985 with footpath access to new MH. Meeting struggles to appoint to roles	
The Pales	1745	Grade 2*		Oldest Quaker Meeting House in continuous use in Wales. Managed by Pales Management Group reporting directly to Trustees. MfW held once per month. Application to Powys CC	Good Condition re-thatched 2015

<i>meeting</i>	<i>date of building</i>	<i>listed</i>	<i>latest quinquennial survey</i>	<i>comments</i>	
Pales Cottage				Adjoining accommodation for Warden/Resident Friend in very poor condition. Application to Powys CC for refurbishment	Poor condition
Burial Ground	1670's			Predates MH. Open for Burials	Optimal / Satisfactory
Ludlow	1986	No	2012	Former barn (late C18 th / early C19 th) bought in 1986 and remodelled	
'New extension'	2019	I think so		Adjoining cottage and garden purchased and refurbished. There are plans for further work	
Newlands Burial Ground				In Leominster, maintained by Ludlow	
Almeley Wootton	1672	Grade 2*	2019	Built by Roger Pritchard on his own land at his own cost then given freely to Friends. New extension has problems with roof	Good condition except for roof problems.
Burial Ground					Optimal / Satisfactory
Hereford	1821	No	2018	21 King Street, former factory. Upstairs recently refurbished and let to community group	Good
Investment Properties				21A King Street	
Ross On Wye	1804	Grade 2	2015	1 Brampton Street. Has had a lot of remedial work carried out recently problems with English Heritage. Meeting has difficulty appointing to roles. Has considered sale in the past	Fair
Investment Property				3 & 3A Brampton Street let to Housing Association	
Burial Ground				Closed except for interment of ashes	Satisfactory / Optimal
Syches Fields				Syches Meadow Freehold Title No HE 43605	

	place	date	listed	condition and comment
NWAQM				
Attached BGs	There are no attached burial grounds in North Wales			
Unattached BGs	There are no unattached burial grounds in North wales			
MWAQM				
Attached BGs	Dolobran	Meeting House c. 1700	With Grade II* MH	Maintained by Dolobran LM as part of the oldest FMH in Wales.
Unattached BGs	‘Llwyn Du’, Llwyngwrlil	Land donated c. 1664		Nearest LMs Dolgellau & Machynlleth. Clifftop site with vehicle access. Recent donation for its upkeep. Now working parties try to bring it back from neglect.
	‘Bryn Mawr’ nr. Cwm Belan	1708		Maintained by Llanidloes Friends. Used for Meeting picnics and open for scattering of ashes.
SMAQM				
Attached BGs	Ross on Wye	1668	With Grade II MH	Open for Interment of ashes. Maintained.
	Almeley Wootton	1672	With Grade II* MH	Open for use, maintained.
	The Pales, Llandegla	Burials c.1673 onwards	With Grade II* MH	BG predates Meeting House (1717), oldest MH in continuous use in Wales. BG open and maintained. <i>This is the only SMAQM burial site which is in Wales.</i>
Unattached BGs	Newlands Rd. Leominster			Open and maintained by Ludlow Friends
SWAQM				<i>The unattached burial grounds listed below are those named as insured for public liability purposes by SWAQM. That need not imply certainty that Friends continue to own them.</i>
Attached BGs	Milford Haven	1801	Grade II	BG predates MH (1811). Open for scattering of ashes and ‘Part of the burial ground is now a wildlife sanctuary’ (Milford FM website). MH is historically significant for its American associations. BG is maintained.
	place	date	listed	condition and comment

	Neath	1800	Grade II	MH and burials are of industrial historical significance. Neath MH has recently closed due to damp etc. BG is now secured and maintained by a Neath Friend.
Unattached BGs	Grace Dieu, Haverfordwest			No details of this site readily available
	Sutton, Haverfordwest	1661	Grade II	'Substantially intact' and 'made safe for public use' after concerns about stonework. Recently seen to be overgrown.
	Trewern, Llanddewi Velvrey/Whitland		Grade II for its enclosure walls, steps and memorial plaque	'On farmland without public access' – Friends reported failure to access it.
	Laugharne and Llandingat			No details readily available for this site.
	Quakers' Yard, Treharris	1667		Walled enclosure with stone benches. Open access and with LA's Taff Trail heritage plaque. Maintained.
	Redstone nr Narberth			No details readily available for this site
	Trosnant, Pontypool	c.1800		Rumoured to have been built over, probably without Friends' permission
	Werndriw, Llanddewi Brefi	18 th century?	Grade II listed for walls, steps and memorial slate plaque and pediment	'Reputed to be in private ownership'. A Friend's recent viewing found the walls good but the enclosure becoming overgrown. The substantial Wer ndriw House, a base for meetings in the 18 th century, is unoccupied and is falling derelict.
	Swansea			Rumoured to have been sold, it seems that in fact the site is on long-term lease and is not publicly accessible. Its future and possible sale is being considered.

Income & Expenditure for Properties

owned by NWAM, MWAM, SWAM & SMAQM

Introduction

For the purpose of assessing the scale of the involvement with Quaker properties in Wales and Southern Marches have been collecting information on the income and expenditure relating to the properties that are owned in the four Area Meetings. The information is as yet incomplete but will be available to the group appointed to take forward the recommendations of Grŵp Symud Ymlaen if they are acceptable to the AMs.

Income includes; Rent, Casual lettings, Grants & Any other income assigned to a property (e.g. investment income) and expenditure will include; Major refurbishments, Repairs & maintenance, Furniture & Equipment, Utilities & Employment, cleaning, gardening & other costs.

Additional information is available in a consolidated account for FY2018 of the accounts for Meeting of Friends in Wales and the four Area Meetings, which gives another view on the overall financial situation of Quakers in Wales and Southern Marches.

Observations

1. 5 Year Summary of Property Income and Expenditure

On looking at the overall Summary of the three Welsh AMs, it is apparent that we are dealing with very significant amounts of money, with income over £600,000 and expenditure over £540,000 for the five years. Southern Marches would add significantly to these figures.

Of the three AM's summarised, South Wales produces 66% of the income, and has spent 75% of the expenditure; it is the only one of the three which has an AM Building Fund into which rents from Swansea and Bridgend MH's are paid directly, and also has agreed contributions from the Cardiff MH Building Fund. SWAM Building Fund also pays for the major work on the meeting houses, although Cardiff raised most of its own funds for much of the work recently undertaken, and has accumulated a £26,000 Appeal Fund for future work.

Cardiff MH now generates very significant income under a recently appointed management company, and is showing an overall 5 year surplus. It is currently working with a housing association to redevelop the whole site by building a new meeting house facility included in a block of affordable flats.

SWAM's quinquennial reviews of the other four meeting houses revealed that major work was needed, probably far in excess of the current value of the Building Fund at £78,000.

North Wales AM properties show a healthy surplus over the five year period of £68,000. There are peaks of income in 2017 and 2018, and of expenditure in 2018 in Oswestry which was obviously undergoing some major refurbishment; this produced a surplus over the two years of about £20,000 which would therefore be available for more building refurbishment in the future.

In contrast, Mid Wales AM only has two meeting houses with relatively small amounts of income and expenditure, and is broadly in balance over the five years. Dolobran has a significant bequest for the maintenance of its meeting house, which eases concerns over how such an important historical building can be kept by Quakers.

Southern Marches AM has 6 meeting houses, 4 of which are listed, and some associated properties one of which is also listed. Almeley Wootton generates very little income but expenses are covered by generous donations from Friends, Hereford has had major refurbishment expenses alongside consistent income and expenditure which generates a surplus, Llandrindod generates a small annual surplus, Ludlow has had major building and refurbishment costs but income from lettings covers general expenditure, Ross has had refurbishment costs but normally generates a small annual surplus, Pales expenditure is roughly £10,000 per annum which is covered by some restricted funds, an income from lettings and events, regular donations from Friends of the Pales and a transfer from Area Meeting of £3,000 per annum.

2. 2018 Consolidated Accounts

Firstly, they show an overall deficit on Income and Expenditure of about £43,000, which can be traced to the costs of refurbishment of Oswestry Meeting House for which most the funding had been raised in 2017; so excluding this, they were broadly in balance that year.

Secondly, it is worth noting that the total value of the twenty properties in the five balance sheets is over £7million, though this represents mainly the insured values of the properties rather than their current values on the open market.

A possible model for Financial Recording and Reporting

for NWAM, MWAM, SWAM, SMAQM & MFW under the auspices of the new charity for Quakers in Wales and the Marches.

The Trustees of the new charity will be required to lodge an Annual Trustees Report to the Charity Commission which will consist of a narrative as required by the Commission and a Financial Report written to meet the requirements of the current SORP and BYM's Stewardship Committee.

The charity will require a bank account preferably with a bank that can 'talk' easily with the online accounting system. The details of the Bank Mandate should be recorded in the minutes of the charity. It will also be necessary to open a deposit account perhaps with COIF to hold the financial assets of the charity.

Each year the Trustees will be required to appoint an Auditor (It seems likely that an Auditor will be required because of the total turnover of the new charity).

The Financial Report will include a consolidated report of all the financial activities of the constituent Area Meetings. We envisage that this will be enabled by the introduction of an online accounting system possibly administered by someone employed by the charity.

The Charity will have to appoint a Treasurer. There is a question about whether or not the Treasurer should be a Trustee. Paul Parker has advised that Treasurers don't technically have to be a trustee, although they commonly are, in fact. So long as the appointing body is clear about it, either is possible. If treasurers attend all of every trustee meeting, then they become de facto a trustee – so if they're not to be a trustee, then there should be some items for which they do not attend.

This raises more questions concerning how the Treasurer is to be nominated and what is the appointing body. QfP does not seem to indicate the process for the BYM Treasurer but we understand that the BYM Treasurer is appointed as a BYM Trustee and this would suggest that this is the appropriate model for the new charity.

There is a decision to be made here, perhaps not at this time nor by us but our view is that the Treasurer of the new charity should be appointed as a Trustee and neither ex-officio nor de facto.

The Treasurer should be the convener of a Finance sub-Committee comprised of representatives of the four Area Meetings and MFW which will be responsible for preparing and agreeing budgets and the suggested level of contributions from each LM via its AM to the charity.

Each Area Meeting and MFW will appoint a Treasurer who will manage the Area Meeting accounts and report to the appointing body and to the Treasurer of the new charity for consolidation of the financial reports and for reporting to the Charity Commission and BYM

Stewardship Committee. The Trustees of the new charity will have the responsibility of oversight that the income from the Area Meetings and assets are being used efficiently and in line with the registered charitable purposes.

Local Meeting treasurers will continue to receive and record local income using the online accounting system which will ensure consistent and simple recording of all financial transactions throughout the whole charity and considerably reduce the work of the local treasurers.

2021-24 Triennium

During the interim period financial recording and reporting will continue in the same way as at present (i.e. to Area Meetings and Area Meeting Trustees or MFW Trustees)

Once agreement has been reached about the use of an online accounting package training must be given to all treasurers so that if the merger goes forward for FY2025 Friends will be prepared for a smooth migration to a new system.

Appendix 12

Possible Road Map to a Charity

to a single Wales and Southern Marches Charity with temporary intermediate step

Actions needed by:-
AM
MFW
AMs and MFW
Joint trustees
MfS
Charity Commission
Trustees of single charity

(Advice needed indicated in brackets)

1. Set up Symud Ymlaen Group
2. Receive report from Symud Ymlaen
3. Amend governing document to allow the appointment of members of other AMs as trustees
4. Agree in principle to work towards a single charity and work with the interim arrangements as described on page 7
5. Complete the details of a register of funds and properties (Friends House, Quaker Stewardship committee, Friends Trusts)
6. Agree to adopt a common set of policies (Friends House)
7. New quinquennial surveys on buildings where needed
8. Draft new governing document for single charity (Friends House, Charity Commission)
9. Agree how local funds will be managed
10. Draft memoranda of understanding between AMs and single charity (Friends House)
11. Draft memoranda of understanding between LMs and single charity (Friends House)
12. Draft memoranda of understanding between MFW and single charity (Friends House)
13. Draft memoranda of understanding between AMs and MFW (Friends House)
14. Accept recommendation to form singles charity if other parties do §
15. Repeat previous step until it is clear which charities wish to be involved
16. Adjust membership of working group as necessary
17. Minute from each existing charity to BYM via MfS

18. Minute of endorsement from MfS
19. Agree new governing document
20. Set in motion process for nomination of trustees for single charity
21. AMs agree MOU between them, their LMs and the single charity
22. AMs agree MOU between them and MFW
23. MFW agrees MOU between them and each AM
24. MFW agrees MOU between it and the single charity
25. Paper work submitted to Charity Commission (Friends House, Charity Commission)
26. Agreement from Charity Commission
27. Appoint trustees for single charity
28. Set up joint bank account
29. Agree date of transfer of funds and property to single charity
30. Amalgamate funds

Appendix 13

List of Policies and procedures we have worked on

1. Equal Opportunities
2. Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults in Need of Care and Support.
3. Risk Management
4. Health & Safety
5. Privacy
6. Data Protection
7. Finance
 - Overview
 - Reserves
 - Funding Policy for Friends and Attenders
 - Personal Expenses
8. Right keeping of records
9. Between Meetings Decisions
10. Draft Trustee terms of reference

Appendix 14

Other material referred to in our report

1. Thoughts on the future shape of Quakers in London
2. London Quakers Properties Trust
3. Cumberland United (cumberlandquakers.org)
4. Norfolk and Waveney Area Meeting
5. Simpler Meetings Project (quaker.org.uk)
6. Quaker Meeting Houses Heritage Project (heritage.quaker.org.uk)