



Minutes of the Meeting held at Lampeter, Ceredigion Saturday 22nd February 2020

2020.01: Opening worship, welcome and attendance

During our opening worship number 7 of *Advices & Queries* has been read in Welsh by and in English.

We welcome 37 Friends here today as recorded on the attendance list.

Area Meeting representatives today are:

- South Wales AM : Chris Holmquist
- Southern Marches AM: Peter Rivers
- Mid Wales AM: Alan Clark
- North Wales AM: Rhian Parry and Mike Clark

Our elders today are Theresa Haine (morning), Hock Lim (afternoon) and Jess Morgan.

Our translator today is Steffan William.

2020.02 Reports for Calon and The Friend

Christine Trevett will write a report of this meeting for '*Calon*' and David Harries will write for '*The Friend*'.

2020.03 Minutes of record of between meetings' decisions

- i. A Task and Finish Group to develop and create a new MFW website has been appointed, consisting of the following Friends: Medi James (MW), Jules Montgomery, Alma Whitten (MW), Catherine James (NW), Huw Meredydd Owen (NW) and Rhian Parry (NW - convenor).
- ii. An initial working group has been set up to take forward work on the Simplification of our Structures, according to Minute 19.33i of Meeting of Friends in Wales. The following Friends agreed to serve on this group: Eleri Elliott (co-clerk, NW), Gethin

Evens (ex-clerk of trustees, MW), Penny Harding (SM Clerk of Trustees), and Deborah Rowlands (SW and clerk of MFW Trustees). It was decided that Helen Oldridge (Local Development Worker, BYM) should attend meetings.

- iii. We have invited Lesley Richards (Church Stretton LM, Worcestershire and Shropshire AM) to act as convenor for the Simplification of our Structures Steering Group. Lesley has indicated her willingness to serve.

2020.04 Minutes received since our last meeting

We have received the following minutes from our Area Meetings

- NWAM 11th January
- SMAQM 11th January + response letter
- SWAM 20th January

2020.05 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)

Our area meetings were asked, following the October meeting in Newtown, to send comments and suggestions on the proposed MOU between

- MFW and AMs and
- MFW and BYM

The MOU between MFW and BYM will be brought to MFW's June meeting in Bangor to give time for further discernment by the Forward Planning group.

AMs have read and discussed the MOU between MFW and AMs and have sent comments to the clerks of MFW and MFW Trustees.

We recognise the benefits and challenges of our current structure – also that the MOU between MFW and AMs may need further revision as we look at simplifying our structures. We agree to keep this MOU as a draft for the time being. A copy will be saved with these minutes, and any comments should be sent to the Clerks.

2020.06 Reports:

- i. We have received a composite report from Gethin Evans with regard to Meeting for Sufferings, CYTUN and QCCIR, and this report is saved with these Minutes. We note Gethin's suggestion that we should put aside some time in the near future to reflect on the changing face of faith in Wales and its implications, as well as asking ourselves the question: 'How doth Truth prosper amongst you?' Gethin Evans has told us of the support Hannah Brock Womak has received, not just from Friends nationwide, but also from other churches.

- ii. We have received a report from Chris Holmquist on the role of Children and Young People's Advocate at Area Meeting level and in BYM. We note that, following a review by Quaker Life, the role of CYP work advocate support continues in Wales and Scotland but been laid down elsewhere.

We are reminded of the importance of work with children, young people and families as part of our testimony to equality and springing from a desire for meetings to be inclusive, welcoming and diverse communities. We are all responsible for the care of our children and young people. How do we ensure that our meetings are ready to receive children, young people and families and to nurture their participation and growth? A copy of Chris's report is saved with these minutes.

2020.07 Nominations and appointments

Nominations brought:

The Nominations Committee brings forward the following names:

Christine Trevett (SWAM) to serve as MFW representative on the Steering Group on the Simplification of Structures.

The search group (comprising Deborah Rowlands and Sue Shreeve) brings forward the name of
Jeff Beatty (SMAM) to serve the MFW Nominations Committee until December 2022
Catherine James (NWAM) to serve the MFW Nominations Committee until
December 2020

In addition, the search group brings forward the name of
Jeff Beatty to act as convenor of the Nominations committee until December 2021
(allowing for the hand-over of the role)

These Friends being willing, they are duly appointed.

Appointments from October meeting in Newtown 2019

Jeff Beatty to act as liaison for the Royal Welsh Show July 20th to 23rd 2020

Request to be released from Role

Shazia Jamshed has asked to be released from MFW Nominations Committee. We agree to this request and thank Shazia for her service.

Nominations sought:

We ask Nominations to search for

Name for co-clerk for 2021 and 2022

Name for a trustee from MWAM

Name for assistant treasurer as soon as possible

A Representative to liaise with Cytûn and coordinate the Quaker presence at the National Eisteddfod in Tregaron, 1st – 8th August, 2020.

2020.08 Focus Group Report

Peter Hussey has led us in a consideration of priorities for Quakers in Wales. What is vital to Quakers in Wales? Are we heard? Have we got anything to say, and are we saying it?

Peter requested that the Focus Group be more integral to the life of Quakers in Wales. We need to concentrate on the future. Wales has to a large extent been invisible in public life and this is an ongoing issue. Why is this the case? We need to be aware of achievements in Wales since devolution, which include progressive legislation such as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – also decisions such as those on the M4 and on fracking. Also, Wales is a global leader in promoting a bilingual culture. The Welsh Government also has aspirations in other areas such as health, education, transport, agriculture and land use, although change is slow.

We are facing a new challenge in Wales under the current political climate, including the potential undermining of Welsh devolution and its achievements.

How does this affect us as Quakers? Is it true that Wales is also invisible to Quakers, including in Wales itself? Have Friends in Wales got anything to say and are we promoting work that is happening here, including in schools and with refugees?

How can Friends connect with one another across geographical and cultural divides in Wales? One answer is technology: through using applications such as Zoom.

We have a tried and tested method for sharing concerns as Quakers. This is one way of sharing our leadings – from the grassroots to Meeting for Sufferings. We need to test our discernment through Quaker channels, but also express our leadings in other fora and in the media.

We need to be aware of our choice of sources of information and be careful that we are discerning in our use of them.

Grace Da Costa, Parliamentary Liaison Officer at Friends House, is very open to what is happening in Wales and Scotland and we need to be in regular touch with her.

Peter suggested setting up an email group which Friends can join if they are concerned about political issues and developments in Wales, and taking action on these.

A consultation took place during lunch time whereby Friends present could indicate their priorities.

Friends in Wales have expressed the wish to get to know one another better despite the challenges of geography. Chris Holmquist noted that better access to Wifi in our Meeting Houses would support us to connect with one another digitally.

Christine Lewis reminded us that we have already raised the issue of Truth and Integrity in Power at Meeting for Sufferings. We hope to continue with this concern.

We thank Peter for his inspiring presentation, which will be saved with these minutes.

2020.9 Website Task and Finish group

The website Task and Finish group has reported to us.

The main tasks of the group are to ensure that there is a new website which is bilingual, and which reflects Quakers concerns in Wales. The website will be another tool which will enable us to network and stay in touch. It can also support the constituent Area Meetings.

The group has asked those present today to take part in a consultation on the website during the lunch hour, giving feedback on the site's proposed structure, content and design. Rhian Parry introduced the consultation and what the group hopes to achieve from it.

The group would like to have feedback by the end of March.

2020.10 Trustees' report

Deborah Rowlands has spoken to the Trustees' report which has been circulated via email, which is here in print today.

Trustees have also presented to us their proposed budget for the coming year, a copy of which is saved with these minutes.

We accept the Trustees' budget, which includes a figure for working with Area Meetings on simplification matters to take forward minute MFW 19.33i, as well as funds for the development of the website.

We agree to ask associated Area Meetings to contribute £5.25 per head again this year.

We note Trustees' decision to produce a bilingual summary annual report this year, in addition to the full report as required by the Charities Commission.

We accept Jeff Nagle as independent examiner again this year.

We note the appointment of Huw Meredydd Owen as Trustee representative on the Steering Group on the Simplification of Structures.

2020.11 Simplifying our Structures

The initial working group appointed to take forward Minute 19.33i on Simplifying our Structures met on 14th January 2020.

We note the names of the Simplification Steering Group as printed on the agenda.

MFW Trustee: Huw Meredydd Owen, NW Pwllheli LM

MFW: Christine Trevett, SW Bridgend LM

MW Trustee: Diana Morrison Smith, Machynlleth LM

MW: Alan Clark, Aberystwyth LM

NW Trustee: Gerry Craddock, Wrexham LM

NW: Frances Voelcker, Porthmadog LM

SM Trustee: Jeff Beatty, Almeley Wooten LM is also an MFW trustee.

SM: Peter Rivers, Clun Valley LM

(Penny Harding, clerk of SM Trustees Alternate)

SW Trustees: Peter Davies, Bridgend LM *

SW Brian Jackson, St David's LM (is also a SW Trustee)*

1. We note the appointment of an Initial Working Group to take the minute forward.
2. We agree the Terms of Reference as circulated with the agenda.
3. We appoint Lesley Richards as the clerk to the group.
4. We agree to ensure that allocation of funding for this work is included in the 2020 budget, as recommended by MFW Trustees. Trustees will also be budgeting the possibility of administration time to support the group.
5. We lay down the initial working group and thank them for their service.

2020.12 Groups discussion of Friends in Roles:

Friends present have had the opportunity to take part in a discussion looking at key Quaker roles within our AM and MFW structures. These are the roles of Trustee, Treasurer, Children and Young People's Work Advocate and member of Nominations committees. We have considered the opportunities and challenges which these roles bring, and how service is grounded in, and feeds our lives as Quakers. We have also explored ways in which role-holders can share tasks or work together more closely across AMs, thus lightening the load and enabling the spirit to flow.

Notes from the 4 discussion groups will be saved with these minutes, and will be forwarded to the Simplification of Structures Working Group to help inform their work.

Signed: Tricia Bridgewater (clerk)

Jane Harries (asst. clerk)

Ruth Moore Williams (asst. clerk)