

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Meeting of Friends in Wales and Associated Area Meetings in Wales.

2020 draft based on the document drafted by Meeting of Friends in Wales (MFW) clerks and clerks of trustees and associated Area Meeting clerks and clerks of trustees in 2009 and on discussions by all these Friends in a joint meeting on 09.09.19 at the Pales.

Meeting of Friends in Wales and the associated Area Meetings, which lie in or partly in Wales¹ are a constituent part of Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM). Meeting of Friends in Wales has national responsibilities on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting to represent and advance the life and witness of Quakers in Wales. It consists of all Friends who live in Wales or who are members in local meetings within Wales². Its responsibilities, set out in full in section 5.04 and 5.05 of *Quaker faith & practice*, are in summary, to:

- a) promote spiritual life and witness of Friends in Wales
- b) represent BYM in Wales, particularly in relation to Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales); and, dealings with the National Assembly for Wales and with other public and voluntary organisations in Wales especially those concerned with social witness, peace and interfaith relations
- c) encourage communications between meetings in Wales and with Yearly Meeting
- d) represent Wales to BYM, for example through representation on BYM committees and bodies.

The existence of Meeting of Friends in Wales does not alter or affect the fundamental relationship between BYM and Area Meetings as set out in *Quaker faith & practice* in any way, but recognises and supports Friends in the particular cultural, linguistic, political, social, spiritual and geographical life of Friends in Wales. Meeting of Friends in Wales is committed to ensuring its business is relevant and vital to Friends in Wales of all ages, stages of life, personal circumstances and parts of the country and is committed to operating in a fully inclusive manner.

Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is:

- To build a mutually supportive relationship that helps each trustee body and Area Meeting to fulfil its objects
- To clarify respective roles and responsibilities to help us work effectively and efficiently together
- To provide a framework for the working relationships that already exist
- To make best use of resources through collaboration, avoiding duplication, gaps occurring in supporting requirements of Friends and Meetings
- To help identify gaps and areas of support needed by Area Meetings and to address these where possible / appropriate
- To facilitate co-operation and collaboration and to foster communication

¹ Currently North Wales South Wales, Mid Wales and Southern Marches

² This includes some Friends who live in Wales but who are members of meetings that are not the Associated Area Meetings above, for example the Forest of Dean and Chester and Wirral AM. These Friends are members of the Meeting of Friends in Wales, are invited to MFW in session, can take roles and can communicate with MFW by minute.

Scope

This MOU respects the primacy of *Quaker faith & practice* in the responsibilities of both Area Meetings and Meeting of Friends in Wales and the overarching principles in *Quaker Faith & Practice*. Associated Area Meetings and Meeting of Friends in Wales recognise the mutual advantage of setting out this relationship in greater detail and so the purpose of this MOU is to describe the practical arrangements in place to fulfil each body's responsibilities.

The content of the MOU should not be understood as a restraint to explore further cross fertilisation of ideas and being open to new ideas or potential new ways of working.

The MOU is not a contractual document and does not impose any legal or financial obligation on either side. It is voluntary and independent of other statements and agreements.

Agendas and Bringing Concerns

Meeting of Friends in Wales clerks set the agenda for Meeting of Friends in Wales meetings in session in consultation with Meeting of Friends in Wales groups, those in Meeting of Friends in Wales appointed roles and in response to minutes and communications from Local Meetings³ and Associated Area Meetings in Wales and Britain Yearly Meeting.

Concerns relating to matters affecting Wales as a whole may be raised by Area Meetings for consideration at Meeting of Friends in Wales and should be tested in accordance with the usual practice set out in *Quaker faith & practice*. Area Meetings should exercise care to ensure that their own consideration is adequate and that in forwarding the matter to Meeting of Friends in Wales they are truly recognising a leading that the subject be considered further at a national level (see Qfp 4.18 and 19). It is essential that before forwarding a concern the Area Meeting should consult at an early stage with Meeting of Friends in Wales Clerks / Trustees / the relevant Meeting of Friends in Wales group in order to find out what facts and experience can be offered to the consideration of their concern, and in order that items can be put on the agenda in a timely way. Area Meetings are also required to receive, and respond to, minutes of MFW which are formally sent to them.

Nominations

Meeting of Friends in Wales Nominations Committee will normally include Friends from all 4 associated Area Meetings. In addition, one member of each of the four Area Meeting Nominations Committees will have responsibility for liaising with Meeting of Friends in Wales Nominations Committee to help advise and find appropriate Friends for Meeting of Friends in Wales roles. Meeting of Friends in Wales and Area Meeting clerks and Trustees will review periodically the roles Meeting of Friends in Wales seeks nominations for, to ensure that the number, range and type of role are appropriate to the needs of Meeting of

³ All Local Meetings which lie in Wales and all Friends who live in Wales (includes those in other neighbouring AREA MEETING, who live in Wales.

Friends in Wales, manageable within the capacity of Friends and proportionate to Meeting of Friends in Wales business.

Training and Workshops

Meeting of Friends in Wales and Area Meetings will occasionally arrange training or an awareness raising workshop on topics of mutual interest. In these cases, Meeting of Friends in Wales and Area Meetings will work together to promote and organise the events.

Administrative Support

Meeting of Friends in Wales will regularly monitor the amount of support Area Meetings request / require from the Meeting of Friends in Wales Administrator. The type of support that is available to Area Meetings is: requests for and circulation of information, publicity, preparation of flyers, notices, group emails, requests for resources.

Communication

Meeting of Friends in Wales and associated Area Meeting Clerks and Clerks of Trustees will meet annually in a meeting called and clerked by Meeting of Friends in Wales Clerks. Area Meeting Clerks and Clerks of Trustees are invited to contribute items to the agenda of this meeting.

Calling letters, agendas and minutes of meetings of Meeting of Friends in Wales in session and all relevant reports will be sent in a timely way to all associated Area Meetings and Local Meetings.

Where minutes or letters are sent from Area Meetings or Local Meetings to Meeting of Friends in Wales or vice versa, an acknowledgement will be sent immediately and a response provided as soon as possible and by any deadline date.

The Meeting of Friends in Wales website includes information about Area Meetings and Local Meetings and links to the 4 Area Meeting websites / social media pages where these exist. Area Meeting websites will include information about Meeting of Friends in Wales and a link to the Meeting of Friends in Wales website. Where Area Meetings or Area Meetings wish to have information included in the Meeting of Friends in Wales website, this should be sent to the Meeting of Friends in Wales Administrator, who will check with the Meeting of Friends in Wales clerks before posting.

Meeting of Friends in Wales will communicate regularly via a range of ways to ensure Local Meetings and Area Meetings are fully informed about the business of Meeting of Friends in Wales and will consult regularly to ensure that Meeting of Friends in Wales business is 'relevant and vital' to the life of Area Meetings and Local Meetings.

Meeting of Friends in Wales in Session

Meeting of Friends in Wales meets three times a year and all associated Area Meetings are invited to send representatives to these meetings to report back issues of interest to their Area Meetings. Likewise, these

representatives may bring minuted matters of concern, from their Area Meetings to MFW. Area Meetings and Local Meetings should encourage Friends to attend Meeting of Friends in Wales.

Friends in Roles

Meeting of Friends in Wales is committed to supporting Friends in roles across Wales. This support will include (but is not restricted to)

- Providing opportunities for Friends in specific roles to come together to offer mutual support and advice (eg. Area Meeting clerks and treasurers, safeguarding coordinators, Area Meeting trustees, children and young people's work advocates, clerks of Elders / Overseers, Cytûn reps etc.)
- Offering or facilitating training for roles and awareness raising workshops
- Facilitating discussions on the realignment or merging of roles across Area Meetings or Wales to better match the capacity of Friends with the number of roles

Welsh Language Resources

It is the role of Meeting of Friends in Wales to ensure BYM and other Quaker resources are funded and available bilingually for Friends in Wales. Meeting of Friends in Wales will communicate via its website the range of bilingual, including outreach, resources available.

Area Meetings and Local Meetings should communicate their requirements for Welsh Language resources to Meeting of Friends in Wales (Administrator / Clerks). Area Meetings and Local Meetings may also request the translation into Welsh of text for outreach activities from Meeting of Friends in Wales.

Welsh Government

Meeting of Friends in Wales has a direct link to the Senedd, the Welsh Assembly via its representation on the national Cytûn board of Trustees, the Laser Group⁴ and other Meeting of Friends in Wales appointments to Cytûn. Area Meetings and Local Meetings should communicate and consult with Meeting of Friends in Wales (and vice versa) about devolved matters in Wales.

Data Collection and Protection.

Data are collected from the Associated Area Meetings and other Friends living in Wales, stored and used for legitimate purposes only. The ways in which data are collected, stored used and protected are explained in the Meeting of Friends in Wales Data Privacy Notice.

Financial Contributions to Meeting of Friends in Wales

Meeting of Friends in Wales will set a capitation amount for Friends in Wales annually, which each Area Meeting will pay to Meeting of Friends in Wales annually to contribute to the funding of its business. Meeting of Friends in Wales' annual accounts will be included in the Meeting of Friends in Wales annual Trustees Report and will be sent to Area Meetings.

⁴ The Laser Group is the group of policy officers of the churches in Wales
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