

Keep
It
Simple
Appendices

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APPENDIX 1

Ideas for Our Structure and Meetings. Is there a simpler way?

Too many groups in Area Meeting?

The number of informal and special interest groups in AMs, Quakers in Wales and Britain Yearly Meeting has created many additional layers to the simpler Quaker structure. More roles have sometimes been added because of this.

Is it time to consider whether some of them can be replaced by Friends joining similar non-Quaker groups, thus giving those groups a Quaker presence to try to influence their aims and methods? Would this not be effective outreach?

An LM sharing a Meeting for Business with another LM

Two or three Local Meetings sharing a clerking team would schedule a Meeting for Business together. A clerk or convenor from each meeting would take turns to 'hold' the meeting and take minutes or one would hold the meeting and the other take minutes.

Business common to all the meetings would be dealt with on the agenda first after the period of worship.

Business specific to each LM would ideally be next on the agenda and dealt with in separate physical spaces if possible. Each meeting's clerk or convenor would 'hold' this part of the meeting and write the minutes.

The LMs would come together again for the last part of the agenda, usually Notices, the signing of the collective minutes and a closing silence.

Using this method each LM retains its own identity but shares the burden of our busy-ness.

A Meeting for Business online would, of course, cut down on travelling for the above, and extra 'rooms' (breakout rooms) could be created to hold the separate business.

A joint discernment to hold fewer Meeting for Business could be made. Some meetings have cut down dramatically on these.

Could the same method be used for shared meetings for various roles across AMs?

Local Meetings combining

Already some of our Local Meetings have combined to do various things.

Bala/Pwllheli have led the way in this.

Mold and Ruthin are coming together to worship.

With some of our LMs no longer meeting every Sunday this is a possible solution.

The online worshipping group is there every Sunday for those unable to go to their LM. For some it is the only way they can worship unless the LM comes to their home.

Some Friends worship at home, waiting in the silence at the same time as their LM.

Some Friends do not want to travel a long way to an LM. Some Friends have to. We need to find solutions that we are all comfortable with, surely we can have options to suit us all.

APPENDIX 2

Ideas for Roles in Area Meeting and Local Meetings. Is there a simpler way?

At the centre of our faith is our silent worship. It is the thing that matters most to us. It lasts around an hour and a half, including Afterword, once a week and some of us also worship in addition to that. Let us say that our worship for many of us occupies 2 to 3 hours of time a week. Should we ask anyone in a role to spend more time than 2 to 3 hours a week on things that are secondary to us?

Is it timely now to ask Friends in roles to write down the time they take on Quakers business outside our worship? Could we ask them to do that for 3 months? 6 months? Let us have a true picture of what we are asking role holders to commit to.

Let's try to mould the roles so that there can be enthusiasm and joy in service.

Working Friends and Friends with young families need to be sure that if they take up a role they are confident that they can fit it into their lives without being overwhelmed.

Roles are often taken up for anything from 1 to 3 years. As one gets older a role for three years is daunting. A year or a shorter Task and Finish group is much more appealing. It's so much easier to say yes to a short task.

However, if Friends serve trienniums, it gives stability and builds experience.

We need to think of ways to support and nurture people in these roles.

A support group of knowledgeable Friends could be used to help Friends in roles gain knowledge and confidence while getting on with the job.

Many older Friends may no longer wish to hold a role themselves but would be happy to use their experience as a mentor from time to time.

A pool of Friends with a variety of skills could be used to do many one-off or short but regular tasks usually expected of role-holders, e.g. sending out communications for clerks, organising special events, online meeting for worship, facilitating ideas groups. Could this model be used by several combined Local Meetings as well as Area Meeting's already functioning Clerks' Support Group?

Britain Yearly Meeting's website has pages of useful documents on roles and more. Clerks, Treasurers, Quaker Chaplains and others have email groups where Friends in role answer any questions asked.

If there was a panel of Friends who have done a variety of jobs linked to, say, the Quakers in Wales website, a blog of some kind for questions and information could also be created. This would avoid yet more emails. Should this idea be suggested?

Can some roles be taken on by a paid worker? E.g. treasurer, buildings management, a bookings agent, counsellor for Friends in great need of professional help, i.e. jobs 'understood in the world.'

If a Friend is happy and capable of doing a role – good. If not, let us use a different model. We cut our cloth to suit our coat. We must respond to the situation as it is. A small Local Meeting responds differently to a large Local Meeting.

Team working = fewer roles and committees.

Let sharing roles with other area and local meetings become a habit.

Tasks involved in each role can be split up and dealt with by different Friends. These Friends do not have to be in our meeting, depending on the task.

Tasks not needed to be done at every meeting for business can be shared between several Local Meetings. E.g. membership registrar, funerals.

Some tasks are ongoing, e.g. dealing with day-to-day correspondence, but some are time limited. e.g. membership. This means that a Friend who may not want a long-term role might well say yes to a short task.

More Task and Finish groups could replace some jobs. There are many parts to some of our roles. Some are ongoing, some are short and regular, and some are one-off tasks. A Task and Finish group could fulfil the last of these and an assistant the second.

An assistant in a role is good experience for taking on the role itself in the future. It's training on the job.

We need to cut down roles, but also identify roles that are stepping stones to a larger role, allowing Friends to take on a less challenging role and feel confident in that. Younger Friends could gain from taking on roles; students need to build their CV to help them progress.

Have fewer meetings for business. Only have them when something needs to be done. Be flexible. Do what is right for the present circumstances.

Ask Friends in meeting about the skills they have. Use them. We could fit the job to the Friend rather than the Friend to the job.

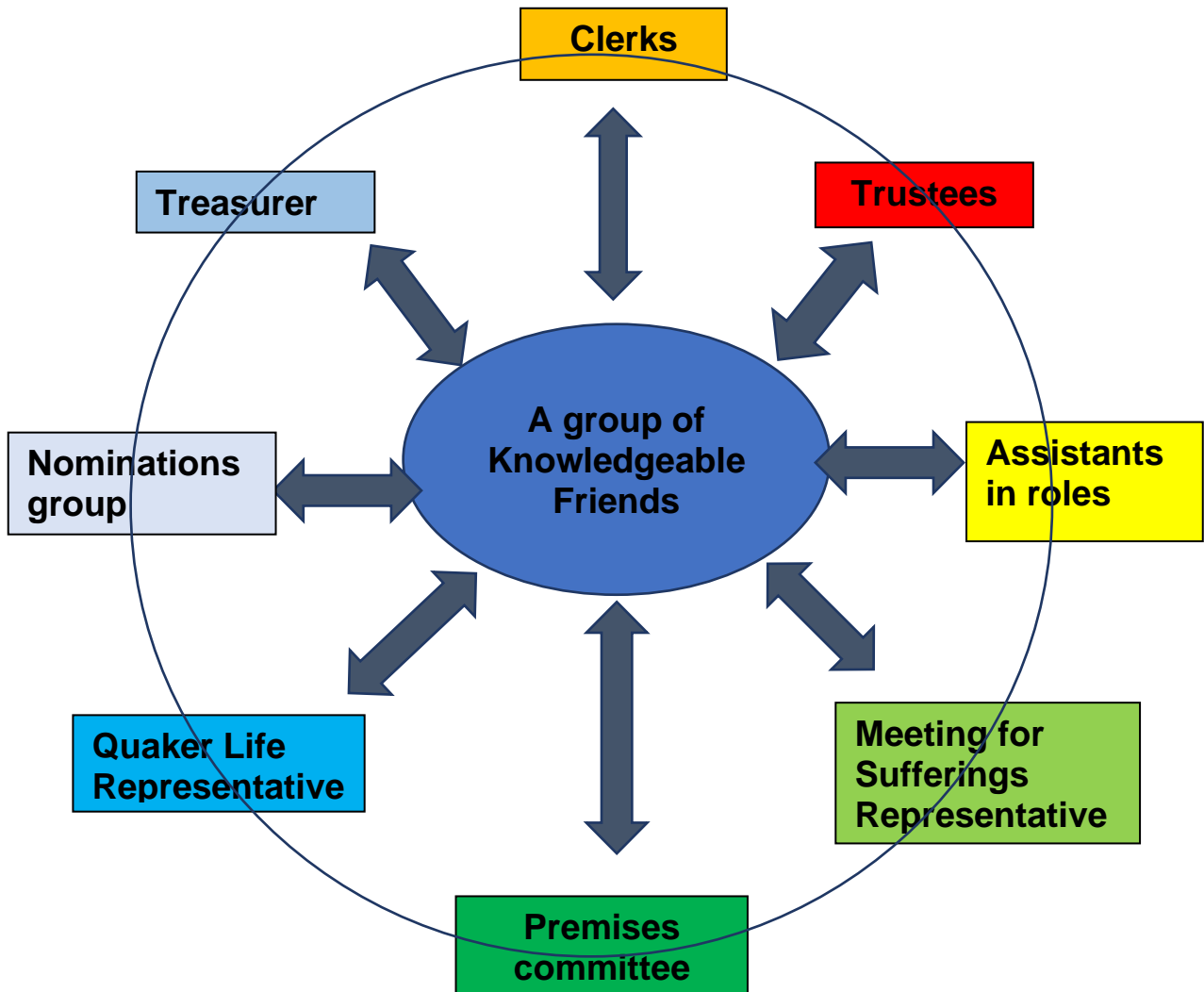
For a Friend in role it makes a real difference to hear 'Thank you.' Sometimes we forget this.

More thought is needed on how we nurture people's interests and capabilities. How can people new to Quakers be given a grounding in Quaker methods, structure and roles without making it as daunting as that phrase sounds i.e. *a grounding in Quaker methods, structure and roles?*

Mentors Supporting Role Holders

A support group of mentors could be used to help Friends in roles gain knowledge and confidence while getting on with the job.

The same group of mentors could be used for LM and AM perhaps.



Appendix 3

1 Being a Treasurer - a different way

We're treading water at the moment because Symud Ymlaen is currently consulting with Area Meeting Treasurers and is moving forward slowly.

Area Meetings in Wales are really in a holding position at present. The ideas outlined below, however, demonstrate a way to do our finances more simply. We are waiting until the future becomes clear.

The important thing is that **someone** has to do all of the financial business.

2 Local Meetings could give up their bank accounts.

All transactions will then be made by a central Area Meeting account. Transactions would be authorised at local level and then acted on centrally.

Bristol AM has already done this

3 Meetings transactions include the hiring of premises and paying for them and that need income.

The membership contributes to create this income.

The Local Meeting also contributes to Area Meeting, Quakers in Britain and Britain Yearly Meeting.

There's also any fundraising.

There are also monthly collections for charities.

These transactions must be enacted by someone.

At the moment it is usually a treasurer.

BUT it doesn't have to be **only** a treasurer.

4

- A Local Meeting treasurer or a treasurer for several Local Meetings or a Finance group for several Local Meetings, could organise the hire of premises and the collection of money for income.
- Similarly any of the above could deal with the income, expenditure and hire of Meeting Houses in our Area Meeting.
- Another Friend, i.e. not the treasurer, could collect monthly donations for charities. Alternatively Friends could be informed of the monthly charity and send money themselves, thus removing one duty from the treasurer.
- Area Meeting could pay a bookkeeper to take care of all payments for every Local Meeting. *To be clear each Local Meeting would take the decision as to what would be paid and to whom.*

5 An explanation from a working, paid bookkeeper

You have to separate out the decisions and the actions.

The Local Meeting or Area Meeting makes the decision.

The book keeper or the treasurer just acts on those decisions.

*A bookkeeper makes **no** decisions.*

A bookkeeper just takes action as a result of a decision and reports back to the Meeting who made the decision.

They can advise if the outgoings are not balancing with the incomings, but this is advice, not a decision.

*A Meeting would **not** lose the responsibility of making community decisions about which charities it supported, and where it wants to meet, **or** what it wants to do in relation to hiring premises, in fact any decision that has to do with money.*

Local Meetings would need to simplify their affairs for any centralisation to take place. Symud Ymlaen is currently working on how to take this forward.

Centralisation of transactions would mean the following possibilities.

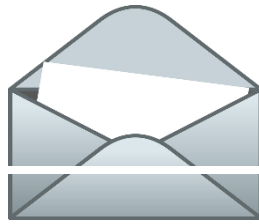
- All centralised transactions would be electronic. Any banking of cash has to be done by a local person.
- **If the finances are done by a volunteer Treasurer, like we have presently,** central management of monies would be strictly for Local and Area Meeting funds only.
- **Therefore**
If a local group wanted to collect and send money out to a charity then they would need to arrange that themselves, as a separate transaction, using either a separate Local Meeting bank account or a willing Friend's account. The money should *not* go through the centralised bank account (as it would make things too complicated).
The alternative would be sending money as individuals to a charity. However this may lead to fewer donations to external charities getting made, for, with the best will in the world, some of us will forget.
- **But**
If a group of Meetings are paying a book-keeper, then the book-keeper can do as many, or as few, transactions, as required by each Local Meeting. This would include transactions involving donations to monthly charity collections.

To be clear, anything centralised needs to be electronic.



Face to Face

Appendix 4

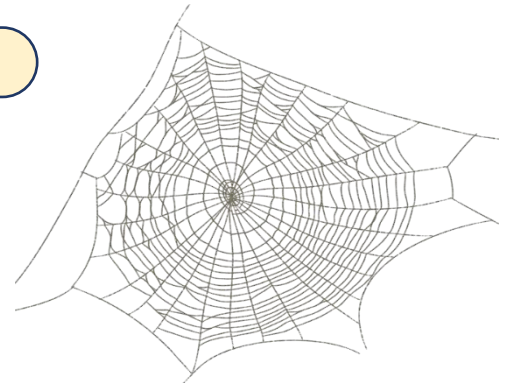


Social Media



How do you communicate?

How do your family communicate with you and with each other?



Website



Paper or Online Newsletter



Appendix 5 Virtual Meeting Circle of Support

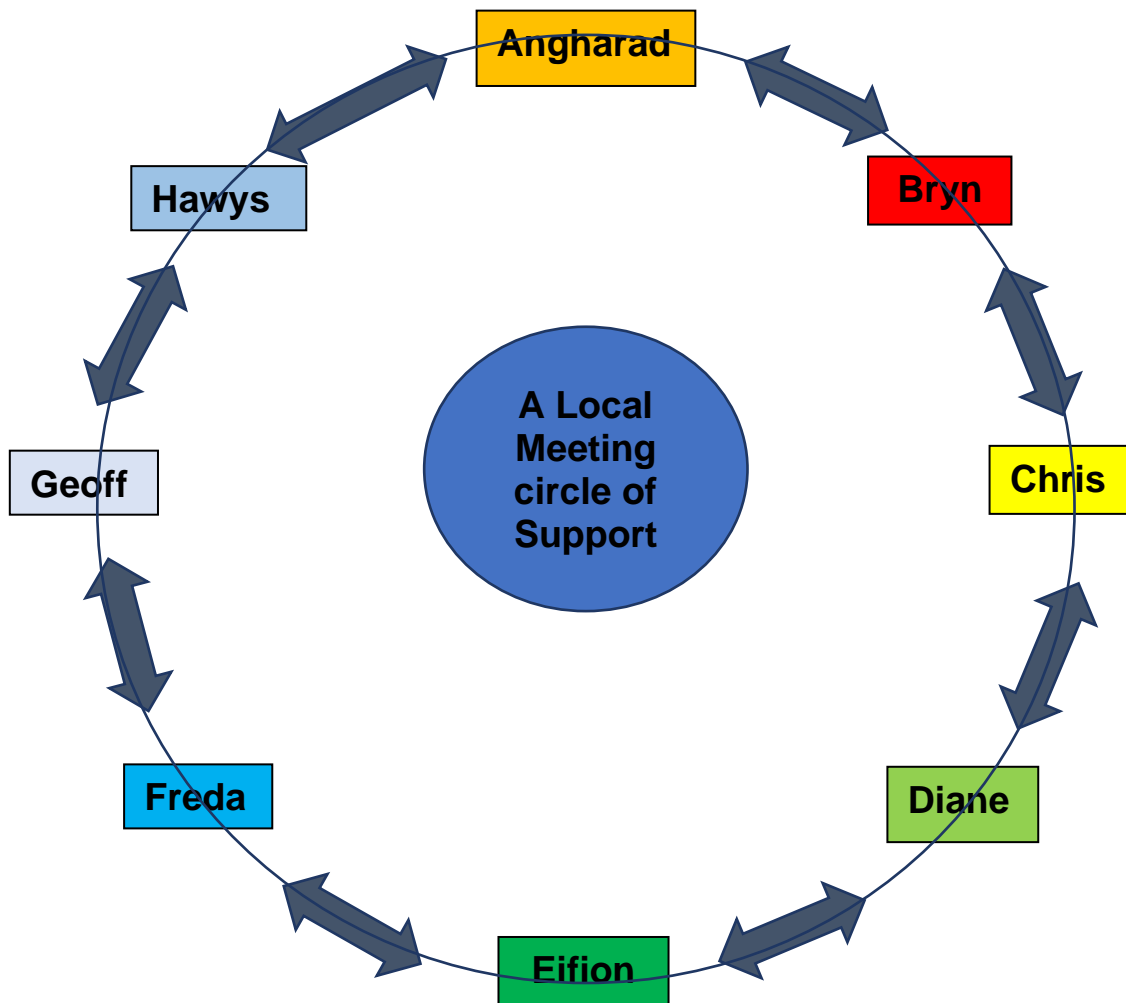
Appendix 5

A Local Meeting Circle of Support

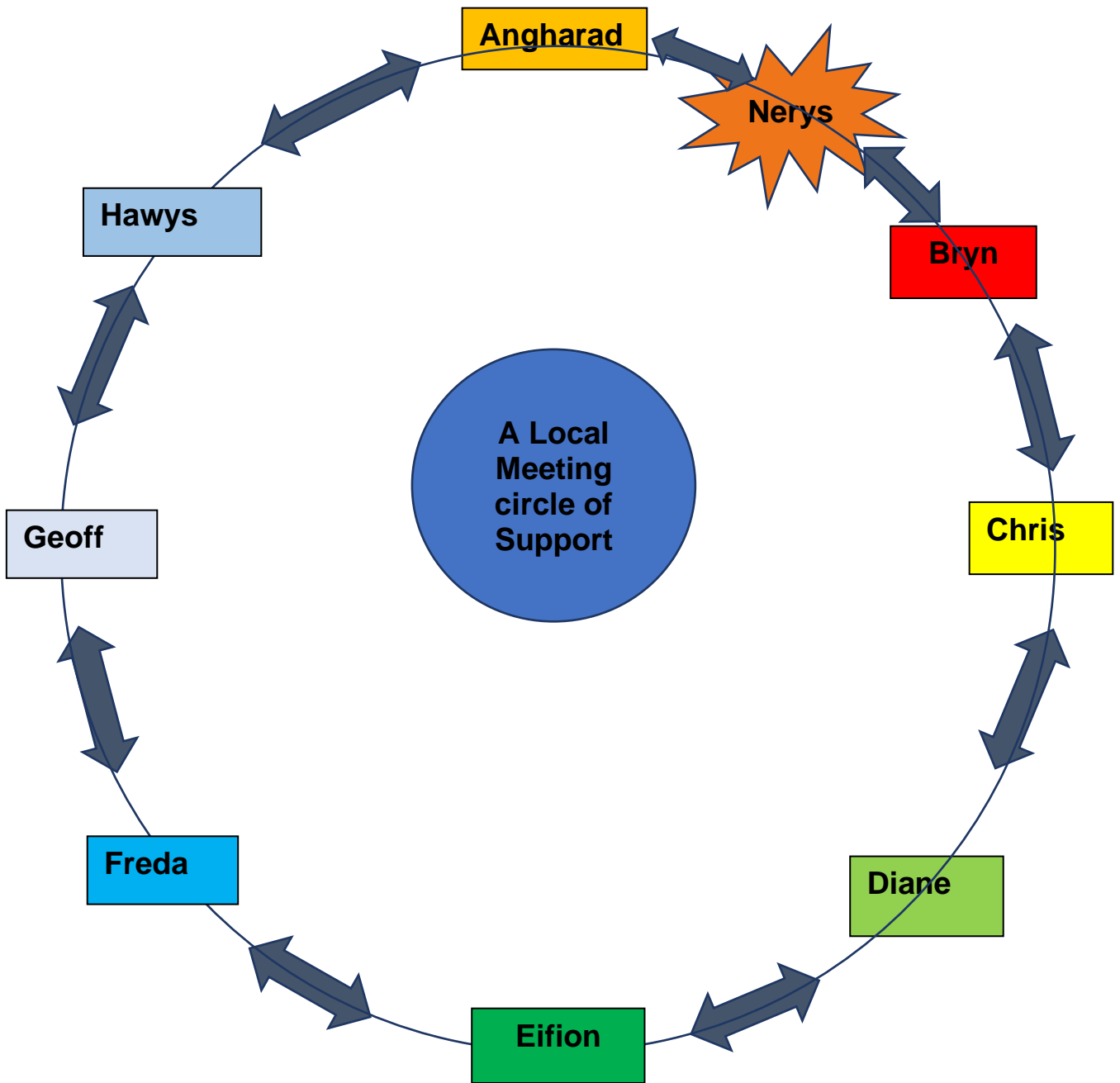
Making use of a circle of support in a Meeting ensures that no-one is forgotten. Putting Friends in a physical or virtual circle gives everyone in the circle named Friends to look after. Friends keep in contact with the two Friends either side of them.

It can be used as a method of pastoral care without having a named Pastoral Carer.

It can also be used as an aid to a named Pastoral Carer and Elder: Friends, with the permission of a troubled Friend, contact the named Pastoral Carer or Elder who acts as additional support or seeks more help from Area Meeting, Quakers in Wales or Britain Yearly Meeting.



If a new person joins the meeting, the circle is revised.



Appendix 6 Ministry What Friends said

I think we need to have regular conversations about what Ministry is. I know that what is not Ministry for me may be for another Friend, but sometimes what I hear really isn't Ministry.

I have to get the Quaking feeling in order to minister, and if I don't get that, I say it in Afterword instead.

Sometimes I love a silent Meeting and find Ministry intrusive. Sometimes Ministry is just what I need to hear.

Service is Ministry.
Let your life speak

To witness how Friends are treated in a particular group, how they go about what they do, the respect they have for each other, society, the world, and the desire to make things better by their work is a joy and an education. My Ministry is in working alongside them.

I'm always nervous if a Meeting for Worship is silent all the time as it feels like Friends don't trust each other to say the valuable thing inside. Having some Ministry is a sign of a healthy meeting.

My Ministry is in committees, structures, in small groups of people working together to do things, whether it's local or national. Connections and good friends are made this way. Working together for the good of all is my ministry.

Ministry can be welcome as a silent hour can be hard going. I learn from people about what they think and where they are in spiritual journey.

I wait in the silence and sometimes words come. Sometimes the warmth of unconditional love comes. This love fills me and there is no need for words.

Appendix 7

Questions and Thoughts About Owning Property

*We are aware that this is being discussed by Symud Ymlaen
but here are our thoughts.*

A small meeting with a Meeting House has to spend too much time and energy on its upkeep. It is time and energy spent in the wrong place.

A small meeting makes a Meeting House not so essential.

To have joined Quakers because one is attracted by the spiritual life and Quaker values, then to find oneself having to fundraise and look after a building in some way, is not what most people joined Quakers to do.

Do we have too much property across Wales and BYM? If so, what is enough property?

Our Meeting Houses are owned by AM and managed by a LM. Can this be changed? For example, having an AM premises committee containing representatives from each LM with a Meeting House. At present an AM trustee is assigned to each LM to give help and advice.

Could a group of willing and appropriately knowledgeable Friends be found to look after our 4 Meeting Houses with enthusiasm? Could we then get better deals on utilities, repairs etc?

Is shared ownership of a Meeting House worth exploring?

What to do with a Meeting House in need of repair or upgrading can split a meeting, and has done so, with some Friends leaving a Meeting altogether.

We need to use our resources and gifts creatively. Is a Meeting House a gift? A valuable resource?

Do Meeting Houses enable us to minister to the world? Do they distract from ministry?

How property is managed is being discussed by several AMs around Britain. Symud Ymlaen has led the way in this.

We could give up all our property and become a presence in our community through living our Quaker way and doing visible good for that community.

Meeting Houses are a visible presence in the community and can be valuable outreach, provided the running/caring for them does not absorb too much of the Meeting's time and energy.

Meeting Houses are there to support community and nourish and provide outreach to the community in which we live.

If they do this, then keep them, but if they become a drain, then they are not essential.

The present group of Friends with a Meeting House may find it hard to manage. However, in the future, others may come to join the meeting, who find the Meeting House a great joy and essential to their work. Quakers always take the long view, thinking in terms of decades.

Landmarks in our history are important. However, if we have an elderly Meeting House, we ought to share the care, in order to avoid burdening its Local Meeting if it's a small and aging community.

Preserving a Quaker graveyard is important.

People drop in to a Meeting House because they can. The ideal is that our Meeting Houses become real community-based buildings, buildings for the whole community, not just for Quakers.

The harsh problem with Meeting Houses in need of repair is that the work, effort and organisation required to put things right can be immense. How much of Area Meeting's financial resources can you justify using on a Meeting Houses?

If we intend to use buildings for community outreach, then repairs become essential.

Appendix 8 What is a Viable Meeting?

Quaker Faith and Practice Chapter 18 » 18.18

Testimony concerning Annie Morris (1900–1980):

....About this time [1950] Westhoughton Meeting sharply declined in numbers. As her contemporaries died one by one, eventually Annie Morris remained as the only active member of Westhoughton Meeting, and for thirty years... Annie Morris took upon her frail shoulders the responsibility of maintaining the life of the meeting. As months and years passed, the meeting house became unsafe, but Annie.... continued to hold meeting for worship alone.

Eventually, first one and then another joined Annie in meeting for worship in the cold damp meeting house. Soon there were about ten people attending...

She died on the 14th September 1980. She had been attending Westhoughton Meeting for more than seventy years – a faithful Friend.....

Below are some Friends views and ideas

By finding ways to distribute the work in order to share the burden we enable a small Meeting to grow.

There must be a core of people who come to worship, at least 6

A viable Meeting needs some weighty friends, people who understand the Quaker business method, understand what Quaker worship is, and who are prepared to be there for others.

I am minded of the quotation:

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” ([Matt. 18:19–20.](#))

I’ve had years and years of very intense Meetings when a few gathered together in all kinds of circumstances.

The Friends who come to North Wales Area Meeting online worship are a viable community for me. It doesn’t suit everyone, but I believe that it could be a Local Meeting too if needed.

The Meetings for Worship in that first lockdown were a surprise to all of us. The silences were deep and gathered, and the Ministry, for the most part, was profound.

Two years have passed, and the online meeting is now a loving community of 10 to 22 Friends. It serves as the main Meeting for Worship for Friends who cannot get to Meetings easily or at all. It serves as the second worshipping community for Friends who do not have weekly Local Meetings or are prevented for various reasons from travelling to worship on a particular week.

We don’t have meetings for business, but we do have Doorkeepers and Elders, and we look after each other.

No, it can never have what is offered by a face-to-face meeting, but it offers other things, and for those of us who are physically or mentally unable to come to a face-to-face Meeting regularly or at all, it could be our Local Meeting.

Appendix 9

How do we build an inclusive meeting? Some Questions and Thoughts from Friends

What does 'an inclusive meeting' mean?

QF&P 19:08 Francis Howgill –

The Kingdom of Heaven did gather us and catch us all, as in a net, and his heavenly power at one time drew many hundreds to land.

Who is missing from our Meetings?

Do we need to create the net of the Kingdom of Heaven first before we gather in 'the missing'? The net is a loving, welcoming community, open to all.

Do we have that community yet?

Can we raise our profile in the community as Quakers through Quakers in Wales?
More members mean more hands to help.

We've got to be responsive to our situations; they vary so much across the Area Meeting. How do we respond to the situation when there are gaps? Why are there gaps, is it because of transport? Do we lack something sufficiently interesting?

Community building resonates with me deeply. Strikes me that if we are involved in communities and participate in them then '*By their fruits shall you know them*' is fulfilled.

We can discover ways of being together for those who do come to Meeting, like the example of Meeting with Eating.

If you participate in the wider community, you get to know more people in that community and that seems to be how people can come to Meeting. It's not about having more people in Meeting on Sundays but having Quaker values at work in the world. Participating in the wider community, by doing work that speaks Quaker values, makes connections in that community and helps us think more broadly than simply trying to build the numbers. It's going out into this wider community, making things porous and therefore connecting with it.

There is a difference between building an inclusive and welcoming meeting where no one is excluded and actively trying to recruit new Friends.

I get a bit worried when it feels as if we're just wanting more people to attend or be members. To me, it's much more important to concentrate on what welcome are we offering rather than growing a meeting.

Let's be active in our communities, being yeast in them in whatever way we can and not being shy in talking about the things which are important to us as Quakers. Let's not get hung up on just growing our numbers.

Appendix 10 Resources

Britain Yearly Meeting Simpler Meetings

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/support-for-meetings/simpler-meetings>

Resources

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources>

Quaker Roles

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/quaker-roles>

Safeguarding

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/safeguarding>

Role-holder updates

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/role-holder-updates>

Support for Meetings

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/support-for-meetings>

Our Structure

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/our-structures>

Free Resources

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/free-resources>

Crynwr Cymru/Quakers in Wales

<https://crynwyr.cymru/>

<https://quakers.wales/>

This is Quakers in Wales's new website and is in the process of being enlarged. The documents of all Quakers in Wales and the documents of our Area Meeting will be accessible here in the near future.

Other resources will also be available.

Appendix 11

Points arising from a short, interesting discussion we had about paid staff in Britain Yearly Meeting

We are a church of volunteers. We are all priests. We have no paid staff in church roles. We have a system of committees to enable social action, in which we employ, usually young, very able, bright staff to support us to be well-informed in order to take social action.

However, there is a huge gulf between the paid staff members and the ordinary Quaker. Is the structure of having a paid staff, quite a lot of them costing a lot of money, in a building in London which is also very expensive to keep going, the right way for Quakers?

There is a disconnect between Britain Yearly Meeting and Quakers in LMs and AMs, particularly as you get further away from London.

The structure that George Fox and early Friends set up is tried and tested. We know it works. But this element of having a large paid staff of consultants to support our committees so that they can be well-informed and to support us actively is a relatively new addition.

A lot of Friends have nothing to do with them. Do other churches have this, consultants advising them on social action? I'm not sure it's good for us.

I'm glad you've articulated what I couldn't. I don't understand that part of our structure. It seems like an add-on that doesn't sit well with me.

I can see the need for it in administration and finance roles or specific things that need specialist knowledge like child protection, but finding things out about things like peace or economic justice? Can a consultant not be hired for a specific task in a specific time frame? Do they need to be on a regular payroll? I see that being linked to a legal team of some kind is vital, but they would not be on a payroll.

I have wondered in the recent past if I can afford being a Quaker as it sometimes seems to rely on giving money to keep the structure in place. Are we top heavy in the structure, money-wise?

I have a Friend who worked for the Catholic church in concerns of child protection.

Church of England has paid roles both at diocesan and national level.

I don't see it as such a division. There do seem to be more paid staff now.

Perhaps in the past, Friends on committees had more support in different ways?

We ask people to do onerous tasks, and I have always been very grateful for paid staff so that they may assist further Quaker work from Friends House. I think it's an effective and galvanising role. I also think it's a very effective way of informing ourselves so that we can take things forward.