

# **A review of the Material Resources of Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting Autumn 2015**

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## Terms of Reference

This review is the consequence of an ongoing concern for our stewardship of our material resources. Trustees appointed a group (T15/21) to gather more information about our Material Resources and information from the local meetings about their particular vision for the future, which might be used to create a vision for the future for the Area. This recommendation was affirmed by Area Meeting (15/48).

The Area Meeting Trustees Visionary Group has met. At our initial meeting we clarified our terms of reference to be to:

- Collect and collate information about the Material Resources of the Local Meetings and the Area Meeting in order to clarify the current situation with regard to our properties and finances.
- Ask the question of ourselves, local meetings and area meeting which we identified as “What business are we in?” We recognised that this is not Quakerly language but have kept this in mind with the understanding that the question is what is our vision for Quakers in the Southern Marches in the twenty first century.
- Review this collated information and responses to the second question. In the light of this make recommendations to Area Meeting Trustees and Area Meeting about these resources.
- Present an initial response to Area Meeting in September 2015. This date was subsequently adjusted for reasons of logistics regarding timings and availability.

We needed to address both aspects of these terms of reference concurrently but in many ways believe that the question about the future is prior in that it will inform decisions concerning our material resources in the present.

## Timetable

The proposed timetable is:

5 September	AM clerk to inform AM about this timetable
14 September	AM Trustees to receive the report
14 September	AM Clerk to forward report to LM clerks for LM consideration
14 September	Report will be available on AM website
10 October	AM to receive and consider report
19 October	AM Trustees to receive AM minute
24 October	Threshing meeting to consider the Pales (including Meeting House, Cottage, Grounds and Burial Ground)

## Approach Taken

We began by looking at our governing documents which say:

*The object of The Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain in the area of The Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting and beyond.*

This is further developed in Quaker Faith & Practice:

*QF&P 14.04 'whilst the work of area meetings may vary, our assets are used for:*

- a. strengthening the life and witness of our local meetings;*
- b. spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Religious Society of Friends;*
- c. undertaking our service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad;*
- d. funding the concerns of Friends that our meetings have adopted or agreed to support;*
- e. providing for the pastoral care of individual Friends, including assistance to those in need and for education;*
- f. maintaining and developing our meeting houses as places in which to worship and from which to carry our witness into the world;*
- g. administering and maintaining the organisation of Britain Yearly Meeting.'*

Which gives Southern Marches Area Meeting and Southern Marches Area Meeting Trustees room for manoeuvre but Trustees' responsibility is to ensure that SMAQM complies with these charitable objects.

We also asked Local Meetings to consider the implications of the Canterbury Commitment (BYM Minute 12/36) and Living out our faith in the world (BYM Minute 15/36). These two minutes are in Appendices 1 & 2 respectively. We see that the

question that we have asked, "what is our Vision for Quakers in the Southern Marches in the twenty first century" relates directly to these two minutes and forms part of the ongoing exploration by BYM of how we live out our faith in the world.

## **Our Local Meetings**

We have made a distinction between Local Meetings, Meeting Houses, Burial Grounds and other Properties.

We have nine Local Meetings; four meet without Meeting Houses and we have six Meeting Houses; we have a duty of care for our Burial Grounds and for various reasons we own a number of Properties.

Our Annual Report for 2014 shows that our Local Meetings are in good heart but that some of our Meeting Houses, notably Llandrindod, the Pales, Ludlow and Ross, give rise for concern.

One aim of this review is therefore to free Local Meetings to be able to be Quakers in Southern Marches for the twenty first century and beyond.

The Visioning Group looked at the Tabular Statements (Appendix 3) and Finances (Appendix 4 & 5). We are aware that many meetings say that the numbers recorded in the Tabular Statements do not reflect the reality. However if we look only at the column which indicates the usual numbers at meeting we can see that:

Hereford and Ludlow have comparatively high numbers and we consider that they are well equipped to maintain their Meeting Houses. This is also reflected in their annual accounts in terms of receipts and reserves.

Almeley Wootton and Ross have fewer numbers but their receipts and reserves demonstrate an ability to maintain their Meeting Houses.

Llandrindod & Pales has fewer numbers and comparatively low income and reserves. We do not consider that this meeting has the ability to maintain one meeting house let alone two.

The four meetings without meeting houses have comparatively small numbers. Abergavenny and Clun break even, Brecon reports a deficit but has reserves to cover this and Ledbury reports a deficit.

## **Our Material Resources**

We own six Meeting Houses: Almeley, Hereford, Llandrindod, Ludlow, Pales & Ross

In addition we have Burial Grounds at Almeley, Hereford, Newlands, Pales and Ross

And we own the following Property:

Pales Cottage

21 & 21A King Street, Hereford

3 & 3A Brampton Street, Ross on Wye

Syches Meadow

We asked each Local Meeting to supply us with the following information:

- A copy of their last set of accounts
- A copy of their last quinquennial report
- For those with a Meeting House, then a brief indication of the state of the Meeting House
- An indication of any unusual expenses that are foreseeable in the next five years
- Any response that has been made to Canterbury Yearly Meeting Minute 2012/36
- Any response that has been made to Yearly Meeting Minute 2015/36

We have collated this information below:

## Local Meetings without Meeting Houses or Burial Grounds

We have four Local Meetings which meet without Meeting Houses. Inevitably their responses to our questions are different to those with Meeting Houses and Burial Grounds. However, their responses demonstrate the effectiveness of this alternative model of Quaker Meetings:

### Abergavenny

[From the Annual Report](#) - We are a young meeting that continues to steadily grow with getting on for 20 people coming regularly for meeting for worship at Llanfoist village hall. We are very roughly three quarters single Quakers in a family and predominantly women though there is lots of male energy on the football fields outside the village hall with young teams of footballers playing most Sundays during the season watched by their families – an interesting opportunity for outreach maybe – and certainly a stimulus for reflection. Also outside are three rowan trees planted in memory of our founder members, now all deceased.

The Hedd Wen peace project created by one of our members and supported by our meeting has been an inspiration. The project consists of a peace garden with a statue of Sadako as a memorial to children killed by war. There is also a room we can use for meetings and shared lunches and workshops and above a retreat flat which can be stayed in. Funds and donations from use of the flat and meeting space go into a peace fund which has, for example, purchased “Teach peace packs” which have been given to local primary schools via personal visits and discussion. This also leads onto the organising of a performance of “Lover of souls” a one woman dramatic evocation of the life of Quaker Elizabeth Hooton which raised a significant amount of money for a women’s co-operative in Palestine.

Our general meeting life has continued with a regular routine of monthly shared lunches, monthly charity collections with associated awareness raising and connections built, a Becoming Friends group over the Summer, mid-week meetings once a month with two of our frailer older members, children’s meetings with our small band of three children and at least one all age meeting a year. We managed to take half a year discussing the long term framework in various ways from working artistically to walking a labyrinth with more usual conversations in between. The discussion aired our concerns, helped us see outside meeting to the larger Quaker world and affirmed the centrality of meeting for worship in providing our spiritual base.

We haven't foreseen any unusual expenses for our meeting in the next few years ... but perhaps we might develop some if we got really involved with the community centre for example.

## Brecon

**From the Annual Report** - 2014 was a year of growth for Brecon Meeting, when we were very happy to welcome two new Friends into membership. It was also a year of change, as we worked during the year to secure new premises that would answer our need for a larger and more flexible space and perhaps a little less traffic noise. We made a further change during the course of the year, as we transferred our finances into a new home, by joining the Brecon Credit Union, where our funds could be put to good use and at the same time be conveniently managed according to our own requirements.

We contributed to the development and work of the Brecon Food Bank in 2014 and continue to do so. Our Meeting has shared and enjoyed some fruitful opportunities for spiritual, inter-personal and ecumenical growth. We held a series of discussions exploring ideas about the way forward for ourselves and for Friends in B.Y.M. for the next five years. Brecon Friends hosted Area Meeting in 2014, a valuable opportunity for meeting one another and for learning, growth and spiritual development.

We welcomed an ecumenical gathering, of at least four denominations, to the tiny Cobbles Café, which was so popular that some of our visitors had to sit on the floor. The Meeting for Worship held at that time was a moving and enlightening experience. This was also true of the our Meeting for Worship held at the Peace Gardens on Armistice Day, and our gatherings at Christmas time to discuss and send charitable contributions in support of peace, equality and justice and to sign cards for Amnesty International.

2014 was a year of reflection, movement and change. A good foundation for Brecon Meeting in 2015 and beyond.

Our hopes and plans for the next five or ten years include:

- The hope that we might attract younger people, perhaps with families, to join us.
- Linked with this is our hope and plan to increase our Quaker outreach.
- We hope still to be here as a Quaker Meeting – our average age is high.
- We would like to be part of a community of other denominations and faiths, and will consider attempting to revive 'Cytun' in Brecon.
- We plan to hold events in the community, for example, a Fair Trade event, with an outreach element.
- The wellbeing of our own Meeting and our own spiritual development will continue to be important to us.

## Clun Valley

**From the Annual Report** - As a meeting we have held steady over the year. We still average 10-12 people at Meetings for Worship, whereas by national standards Bishop's Castle should have two thirds of a Quaker. The World War I commemorations have been much in our minds. In November we screened the film *Joyeux Noel* about the spontaneous football match during the Christmas truce in 1914, while also putting on the FAU/FRS Exhibition. 20 members of the public attended and the event provoked lively discussion. We were pleased when the concern for a memorial to the innocent victims of war to be installed at the National Arboretum, initially brought to Clun Valley meeting by our Friend Joyce Gee, was taken to Area Meeting and from there to Meeting for

Sufferings. A genuine momentum appears to be building up. With regard to the theme for Britain Yearly Meeting in 2015-2017, "Living out our faith in the world today", our clerk, Jan Arriens, was asked to introduce a session on the subject at the Yearly Meeting Gathering in Bath in August.

We were delighted when David Hughes, aged 95, spoke to us in September. Part of David's childhood was spent at Pendle Hill in Pennsylvania, where his father, John Hughes (who later delivered a Swarthmore Lecture) was for a while the acting director. David vividly remembered Rufus Jones from that time. We were moved when David spoke about his mother's work with refugees in York in the 1930s and his own work with the Friends Relief Service during and after the Second World War. David appeared before four tribunals as a conscientious objector. He now describes himself as a Christian humanist.

The Festive Friends lunch held in Bishop's Castle on Christmas day was once again very well attended and received wonderfully generous support from local businesses and individuals. It is clear that the event is greatly appreciated and has become something of a tradition. One person said it was the best Christmas she had had in 20 years.

#### Minute 2015/15

- We feel there is a limited amount we can say, as we do not have a Meeting House, and have no plans to acquire one. We hope that Trustees will seek to strike a balance between aspirations, cost and usage, while also bearing in mind the other uses to which Area Meeting funds could be put.
- We agree to hold a special collection at Clun Family to support refurbishment work within the Area Meeting. Once the Property Vision Group's plans are more advanced we will also examine how much we can release from our Local Meeting funds.

## Ledbury

[From the Annual Report](#) - Our weekly Sunday MfW, monthly half hour MfW held for a very elderly Friend in the residential home where she lives and our monthly children's meeting for the two children of attenders continued. AM was held in Ledbury in September. Although it was hard work for a small few, it was a big gain for our attenders who attended an Area Meeting for the first time, and spoke about the experience very positively. The Becoming Friends group continued, though slowly. One of our attenders was accepted into membership during 2014. The monthly 'Friendly Friday' discussion and social group continued. We had a "stall" at the Ledbury Community Day. Although we talked with people and they took leaflets; none came any following MfW. For the first time, we initiated the sale of white poppies at Meeting and in Ledbury (thanks to a local shop keeper). During the year we said goodbye to two founder members of our Meeting, who move to Suffolk to be nearer family. By the end of the year the number of active Friends was down to two fully active members and one partially active member, with one partly active attender and about seven others.

## Reflection:

The Visioning Group see these LMs as models of the way that energy can be released for outreach in an LM which is not burdened by the administration associated with a Meeting House.

## Local Meetings with Meeting Houses (& Burial Grounds)

### Almeley Wootton Meeting House, Garden and Burial Ground [QQ March 2012]

#### State of our Meeting House

The Property consists of three parts, the Meeting Room which has been in use since 1672, the garden and burial ground which are from the same date, and a new extension containing the Roger Prichard meeting room with modern kitchen and toilets, completed in 2013.

Maintenance is up to date, the snagging list on the new extension has been completed, but some items while within Spec we would like to improve e.g. exterior painting and rainwater drainage. There are various other things we would like to do such as improving access for wheelchair users, but all are within local budget.

#### Unusual expenses within next five years

Towards the end of the five year period we will have the costs of exterior redecoration of both the original and modern buildings, but we anticipate those costs will be able to be met from funds held locally. There will be a further quinquennial survey which may lead to further work but hopefully nothing serious.

The next major item is hoped to be the purchase of land and conversion for use as a car park. We have sufficient funds for the purchase held as a restricted sub-fund of the AM Property Fund, which hopefully will also meet most of the cost of conversion to car parking. Because of the location, straightforward tarmacadam would be a visual anathema so cost will not be cheap, but again we are not expecting to call on AM Funds.

### Hereford Meeting House [QQ May 2013]

#### Current position

The most recent quinquennial survey was in May 2013. Based on the recommendations for remedial work we decided to prioritise work on the exterior initially. This work was completed in Spring 2015 at a cost of approx. £27,000. A retention of £900 is due for repayment next year.

We have also replaced the main kitchen this Spring – cost £12,700 plus a retention of about £300.

The whole building was reroofed and new guttering fitted in 2009.

#### Next 8 years

Internal maintenance of the upstairs offices is the responsibility of the tenants.

We budget each year for routine repairs and maintenance costs of £2000.

Other estimated costs that are envisaged at this stage are:

Arising from quinquennial survey:

- Internal redecoration - £3000
- Repairs to toilet walls plus additional equipment in toilets – guesstimate £500
- Other works recommended in quinquennial survey - £400

- (A further possible item of work arising from the survey is a major repair to the damp proofing at the base of the west wall. The estimated cost would be £4000, but this is under review and may not be proceeded with.)

Additional Items:

- New cupboard in back kitchen - £1000?
- Carpet replacement in Meeting Room - £5000
- Replacement of wooden chairs with stacking chairs - £400

## Llandrindod & the Pales Local Meeting

From the Annual Report - Llandrindod and Pales Meeting had quite a dramatic year last year. It started well. Cindylou and Charlotte Turner-Taylor had moved into the area and were keen to take on responsibilities within the meeting, which offset, to some extent at least, our concerns about a small, aging meeting in which some of the most active Friends were beginning to think about moving on.

We were due to make our Spiritual Report and were very encouraged by the warmth of the responses we got when we circulated Friends and Attenders to get their feedback for the report. Time and again people commented on the warmth of the welcome when they first made contact, and how they felt that they had "come home". So our Spiritual Report reflected confidently on the past three years, but I also added a warning that the next three years did not look so smooth.

We had to think how our little meeting could adapt itself to manage once Martin and Lynda Williams, Wardens at the Pales for 21 years, and Linda Green moved as they were due to. These three had been the stalwarts of the Meeting for many years, but also Beryl Sewell had died after a long illness and Carole Inman had moved to Cornwall. It looked as though we would only have five active members and a similar number of Attenders regularly attending Meeting and available to assist in the running of the Meeting.

At the end of August we held a discussion meeting to discuss the future of the Meeting. Some twenty friends met together without the Williams and Linda Green, who felt that they should not contribute as they would not be a part of that future. It was a constructive meeting that followed a Meeting for Worship in which Advice 27 "Live adventurously" had been read. Our adventurous conclusion was to move our base to the Pales, and to ask the Trustees to find another use for the Llandrindod Meeting House. We recognised that we would have to also be adventurous in thinking about how and where we would hold our Meetings for Worship and how we would continue to be a part of the community.

The appeal for assistance in re-thatching the Pales was already underway and it was soon clear that we would not be able to make the move until the thatching was complete, and that following the re-thatching, any work to the cottage may further delay the change. This created something of an hiatus, which allowed doubts and fears to creep in. As we approached Christmas those emotions were developing, particularly amongst Attenders. We were in fact approaching a crisis; feeling that we were coping week by week with the fears and doubts, but, in fact, just building up a problem which would make the early part of 2015 very difficult.

What we did not know, at that stage, was that the Turner-Taylors would find that they had to leave the Meeting early in 2015, and putting us in a situation where three active

members and half a dozen Attenders would have to keep things going and make the necessary changes.

Today, in mid June, I can feel much more positive about where we are. One highlight that came into this year was the Quaker Life course on New Approaches to Community. The course brought about some realisation amongst Attenders that keeping a Meeting in existence could not be left to three or four people.

Mainly due to very hard and efficient working by Martin and Lynda the re-thatching did not draw on AM funds at all, a possibility which had caused considerable concern amongst AM members. The local meeting, with Trustee direction and help, had begun the process of planning the renovation of the cottage. By Carole Chapman agreeing to become Resident Friend, we bridged a dangerous situation which would have occurred if it had been left untended. We realise that there is a huge amount still to be done, and that there are already things that should have been done which have not been done. However ... yma o hyd ... still here, and I feel that we will still be here for next year's report and considerably stronger than we were at the end of last year.

**We recommend that Llandrindod & Pales Local Meeting should be asked to consider in a Business Meeting if they would like to be relieved of the burden of responsibility for either or both of its Meeting Houses by transferring this responsibility to the direct management of the Trustees. If this is their wish then we further recommend that AM Trustees set this in progress. We believe that this will enable the Local Meeting to flourish.**

### **Llandrindod Meeting House.** [QQ August 2008]

AM has already decided (minute AM14/77 – Appendix 7) that this Meeting House should be sold. **We recommend that AM upholds the decision that Llandrindod Meeting House should be sold.** Indications are that the value of this property is in the order of £40,000. This group understands that this will require the permission of the Charity Commission.

### **The Pales Meeting House, Burial Ground and Cottage.** [QQ 2014]

We agree that the Pales is a place of great spiritual strength to which many are emotionally attached. It has historical significance in Wales, in England, and also in the USA, not just in the New England States but unusually also in the Southern states. It has a small but very committed Local Meeting.

We are delighted to know that the members and attenders of the Local Meeting have such a commitment to the future of the Pales and we support the fundraising campaign that has been instigated for renovations to the Pales Cottage.

The site is capable of further development, but how and in what form would depend on who was involved in running it and for what purpose. While agreed that responsibility for the Pales should not be a burden on Pales Local Meeting, we do not at this point see a viable alternative management for the longer term. We express a desire that, whatever the future, the Pales remains available for Meeting for Worship.

We note that following the recommendation of the Pales Steering Group regarding short term needs, a Pales Cottage renovation group was formed, and engaged Nick Salt. Costed plans and specifications have been agreed to make the cottage habitable, energy

efficient and with more flexible space. Fund raising has been inaugurated. The group is ready to instruct the builder as and when AM discerns the time to be right.

**We recommend that a Threshing meeting be held to consider the Pales. We suggest that such a meeting be clerked by someone from another AM and that in addition to SMAQM, members of Friends in Wales and Mid-Wales AM be invited to contribute.**

## Ludlow Meeting House [QQ 2012]

There is an ongoing concern with regard to the Ludlow Meeting House. The meeting house is in reasonable repair except that part of the roof is in real danger of collapsing and is propped up and would need to be repaired if the decision was made to continue to use the current building which would also involve reroofing that part of the building. The rest of the roof has been given four more years, though it hasn't changed for a long time and may last a lot longer. The toilets are accessed from outside, so there are a few changes of level and so not good for disabled people. The kitchen is new (about five years) and lovely, a collapsing drain has recently been repaired.

Some building on the site adjacent/behind the Meeting House is being planned. Objections have been made to the bigger part of that. It won't directly affect the fabric of the building, but almost certainly would have an effect on the resale value and of its letting potential. A recent valuation has set the value of the building at £100,000 – £130,000.

Ludlow LM has asked for the help of AM in discerning its right way forward and the future of its Meeting House, which might involve either minor improvements or the demolition of the current building and construction of a new one. Ludlow LM felt that the latter option was beyond its current capacity and would 'need considerable help from people in other Meetings to take the lead...'

AM minuted (AM14/63) that 'we feel we should accept our responsibility for the Quaker presence in Ludlow and North Herefordshire' and 'strongly recommend' support for complete rebuilding. The AM minute was referred to Trustees. The latter have minuted their support for this proposal (T15/47), but expect Ludlow LM to take the initiative.

Ludlow LM is in the process of discerning the way ahead and have recently minuted:

15/55 The future of Ludlow Meeting House (extract)

... We have considered what may be the right use of our meeting's spiritual, personal and financial resources. It is more important to concentrate upon spiritual rather than physical resources ... In these circumstances; our sense is that it may be unwise to take on any major fundraising burden that would inevitably put a drain on our ability to meet the callings we have identified. We have considered our Meeting's calling and the matters on which we need to do more to carry that out. ... In the light of what we know could be done on our present site to improve access and provision for children, and that the costs of this would be closer to our present resources, we now wish to come to a firm agreement to by the end of the year about work that we will ask Area Meeting to enable.

**We are excited about the possibilities that are being explored in Ludlow and recommend that Trustees and AM continue to support this exploration and offer as much practical help as possible.**

## Ross-on-Wye Meeting House and Burial Ground [QQ 2015]

**From the Annual Report** – Ross on Wye is a small local Quaker Meeting with an average attendance of around 12 Friends at Meeting for Worship on Sundays. Although we are a small meeting with many of our members becoming frail, we have had an active year.

Meeting for Worship takes place each week. There is a monthly shared lunch usually after Meeting on Sunday, and this is often preceded by a discussion. Our monthly evening discussion group evolved over the year – becoming something of an action group as we discussed issues of the day – for example the need for food banks and how we could find out about local employers who pay the Living Wage etc. We keep in touch through the production of a newsletter each month and we are encouraging Friends to share their personal concerns through this medium.

A new development was to hold an occasional open Pastoral Care meeting when all members and attenders are invited to attend. These have proved beneficial with new ideas emerging from them. The introduction of Afterword following Meeting for Worship was one such idea which has proved valuable.

Once again we have had a Fair Trade Big Brew coinciding with Fair Trade Fortnight and we also opened the Meeting House for the Historic Churches Ride & Stride and Heritage Open Days. With a historic Meeting House and peaceful burial ground we are pleased to welcome visitors both individually and on guided walks round the town. This often brings opportunities to talk about Quaker ways.

A highlight of the year was the holding of an exhibition of The Forgiveness Project in the library – an event which we jointly sponsored with Churches Together. This was attended by around 100 people and was well-publicised locally.

Other events included an evening talk by Ann Davison, an EAPPI volunteer on her return from the West Bank, when local people joined us for the occasion. An impromptu visit from a young Bolivian Friend was a very happy occasion and we were full of admiration for her work with Alternatives to Violence in Bolivian prisons.

Lettings to local groups continue. We were particularly pleased to welcome the local Muslims to hold their Friday prayers each week. Other groups also appreciate the calm atmosphere of this lovely historic Meeting House with its garden.

Listed Building Status applies to the whole of this site.

Trustees have received a Quinquennial report for Ross Meeting House dated March 2015. There are a number of items identified as Priority both as ongoing maintenance and essential immediate work. In addition there is essential work to be carried out during the Quinquennium and some desirable work. Included in the desirable work is a recommendation regarding insulation of the walls of the small meeting room to reduce heat loss. We consider that this work would form part of our Canterbury Commitment (BYM minute 12/36).

We are encouraged by the use to which the Ross Meeting House is put, supported by a relatively small Local Meeting. The recent Quinquennial Survey identified a number of areas of work which were needed and we understand that Ross Premises committee has started the process of getting the work done. We would wish Trustees to support Ross in doing so to allow the Building and the outreach of Ross Meeting to flourish.

## Burial Grounds

We have already commented on the burial grounds in relation to their associated Meeting Houses and add that one, namely Newlands in Leominster, is not physically associated with a Meeting House.

We register a concern about the Custodianship of some of the Burial Grounds as shown by this table:

Name	Open/closed	Custodian	Training Required QF&P 17.11-17.13 Burials Act s1	Records held by
Newlands Rd	Open	Vacancy (was John Voysey)	Yes	John Voysey
Almeley	Open	D.Binney/ Jeff Glyn-Jones	Yes	David Binney
Hereford	Open Ashes only	Susanna Grunsell	Yes	
Pales	Open	Vacancy	Yes	John Senior
Ross	Open Ashes only	(Jean Wadge)	Yes	

**We recommend that the situation with regard to Custodians of our Burial Grounds is addressed by AM Nominations Committee.**

## Other Property:

Name	Description	Tenant	Value	Income
SYCHES Meadow LR Title HE43605	Pasture Land	Let on Secure Agricultural Tenancy to Mr J.R.Franks	Guess £28-42,000 based on £2-3k p. acre	£700 p.a. to AM
3 & 3A Brampton St Ross (adjoining FMH) LR Title freehold HE43601 Leasehold Title HW100502	2 residential apartments	Evesham & Pershore Housing Association T/A Rooftops		£600 p.a. to Ross LM
21A King St Hereford Freehold title HE43591 Leasehold title HW47328  Grade II listed	Residential accommodation for 6 (?) persons with learning difficulties	Leased to Homegroup Ltd t/A Stoneham Housing		50pence p.a. to Hereford LM
First Floor 21 King St Hereford Freehold title HE43591	Office Accommodation	Non-registrable lease to Concern Universal		£6,919 p.a. to Hereford LM
Newlands Road Burial Ground Leominster, Freehold Title HE43604	Quaker Burial Ground	none	nil	nil

- **Syches Meadow.** We do not think that Syches Meadow represents an appropriate use of our resources or provides an income to fund more appropriate activities.

**We recommend that the process of disposal of Syches Meadow should be started, i.e. valuation, tenancy negotiations and application to charity commission, leading to sale.**

- **21 King Street, Hereford**
- **21A King Street** was leased at a peppercorn rent to the Stonham Housing Association in 1983. The building was overhauled at their expense and opened for six residents in 1985. This is a 50-year full-repairing lease.
- **3 & 3A Brampton Street, Ross on Wye**

We see no reason to change the existing arrangements for these properties at this time.

## Finance

A Summary of Local Meeting Finances, including Reserves held locally, is shown in Appendix 4 and of Area Meeting Finances, including Reserves and Endowments, is shown in Appendix 5.

Observations:

Both show that there are reserves which could be considered for redistribution should the need arise with regard particularly to the upkeep and development of our Meeting Houses subject to a prudent reserves policy and the restrictions placed upon restricted funds.

**We recommend that a careful analysis of all of the reserves, both restricted and unrestricted, is made to enable good decisions with regard to the needs of our properties.**

## Responses to BYM minute 12/36 and BYM minute 15/36

We received responses from Almeley, Abergavenny, Brecon, Hereford and Ludlow with regard to these minutes and these are at Appendix 6.

We note AM Minute 15/64 which says (in part):

Sustainability and Economic Justice are vast topics and Friends understand them in different ways, but we value very highly our testimonies to the earth and the environment and the promotion of equality, as two of our testimonies. In our meeting today, we questioned how as an Area Meeting we could demonstrate to those in our community and to those outside it, that we not only espouse these values, but devote time to reflect on them and act in a sustainable and economic way.

We agree that changing our lifestyle individually and learning from others, at Local and Area Meeting levels, are achievable goals, as is reducing our carbon footprint. These themes have the potential to strengthen our community. These issues should be addressed at a local level first. We encourage local meetings, where possible, to appoint a correspondent on these matters and agree on the formation of an e-mail/electronic forum for communication and ask Chris Robertson our website manager to set this up.

We believe that the five responses that we have received each show a different way that LMs might approach their response to these minutes.

**We recommend that each LM takes forward the implications of AM Minute 15/64 by way of responding to this review.**

## The Way Ahead

We wish to thank all of those who have contributed to the content of this review. We are very grateful for the speed with which individual Local Meetings have responded to our requests. We consider that this is an outward expression of a commitment to Quakers in the Southern Marches. The Trustees Annual Report prepared for the Charity Commission is a further expression of this and we have drawn on material contained in that report in this review.

We see that the Area Meeting to which we all belong has a number of strengths and also some challenges to face. We have seen a strength in the Local Meetings which do not have Meeting Houses but recognise that these are small meetings with associated challenges.

The Meeting Houses of Almeley Wootton and Hereford Local Meetings are in good repair and well supported. However Ross Meeting House is in need of repairs and both the Pales and Ludlow Meeting House present challenges. We see that these two Meeting Houses represent two aspects of Quakers in Britain and we have expressed a hope that they can be supported in taking the next steps.

With respect to the Pales we have recommended that a Threshing Meeting is held, involving not only Southern Marches but also Friends in Wales, to help discern the way ahead. We hope that this will enable us to build on the foundations of the long history of the Pales and the recent history expressed by Lynda and Martin Williams as Wardens and the work already done by the Pales Steering Group and the Pales Cottage renovation group.

With regard to Ludlow Meeting House we are pleased to hear that the Local Meeting is engaged in finding a way ahead. We have expressed the hope that there will continue to be a Meeting House in Ludlow. We hope that that Trustees and AM continue to support this exploration and offer as much practical help as possible.

The Financial Statements appended to this review indicate that there are reserves which could be made available for developments at the Pales or Ludlow but they are limited. We are of the opinion that for different reasons both of these Meeting Houses could raise the funding needed by the use of good focussed fundraising appeals.

Our aim with this review has been to discern a way ahead which would free our Local Meetings for our life and witness as Quakers in the twenty first century and beyond and we offer this review to Southern Marches Area Meeting Trustees and Southern Marches Area Meeting with its Recommendations which could form the next steps.

## Summary of Recommendations

- ❖ We recommend that **Llandrindod & Pales Local Meeting** should be asked to consider in a Business Meeting if they would like to be relieved of the burden of responsibility for either or both of its Meeting Houses by transferring this responsibility to the direct management of the Trustees. If this is their wish then we further recommend that AM Trustees set this in progress. We believe that this will enable the Local Meeting to flourish.
- ❖ We recommend that AM upholds the decision that **Llandrindod Meeting House** should be sold.
- ❖ We recommend that a Threshing meeting be held to consider **the Pales**. We suggest that such a meeting be clerked by someone from another AM and that in addition to SMAQM, members of Friends in Wales and Mid-Wales AM be invited to contribute.
- ❖ We are excited about the possibilities that are being explored in **Ludlow** and recommend that Trustees and AM continue to support the idea of this exploration and offer much practical help as possible.
- ❖ We are encouraged by the use to which the **Ross Meeting House** is put, supported by a relatively small Local Meeting. The recent Quinquennial Survey identified a number of areas of work which were needed and we understand that Ross Premises committee has started the process of getting the work done. We would wish Trustees to support Ross in doing so to allow the Building and the outreach of Ross Meeting to flourish.
- ❖ We recommend that the situation with regard to **Custodians of our Burial Grounds** is addressed by AM nominations committee.
- ❖ We recommend that the process of disposal of **Syches Meadow** should be started, i.e. valuation, tenancy negotiations and application to charity commission, leading to sale.
- ❖ We recommend that a careful analysis of all of the **reserves**, both restricted and unrestricted, is made to enable good decisions with regard to the needs of our properties.
- ❖ We recommend that **each LM** takes forward the implications of AM Minute 15/64 by way of responding to this review.

## Appendix 1 - Canterbury Commitment (BYM minute 12/36)

"Sustainability is an urgent matter for our Quaker witness. It is rooted in Quaker testimony and must be integral to all we do corporately and individually."

(A framework for action 2009-2014)

A concern for the Earth and the well-being of all who dwell in it is not new, and we have not now received new information which calls us to act. Rather we are renewing our commitment to a sense of the unity of creation which has always been part of Friends' testimonies. Our actions have as yet been insufficient.

John Woolman's words in 1772 sound as clearly to us now:

"The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age."

(Quaker faith & practice 25.01)

So we have long been aware that our behaviour impoverishes the earth and that it is our responsibility both to conserve the earth's resources and to share them more equitably. Our long-standing commitment to peace and justice arises in part from our understanding of the detrimental effect of war and conflicts, in damaging communities and squandering the earth's resources. As a yearly meeting we have considered this before, and in 1989 we adopted The World Council of Churches' concern for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, minuting that this concern "grows from our faith, and cannot be separated from it. It challenges us to look again at our lifestyles and reassess our priorities, and makes us realise the truth of Gandhi's words: 'Those who say religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion is'".

In 2009 the Yearly Meeting endorsed the statement made by Meeting for Sufferings on 'A Quaker response to the crisis of climate change'. This statement was addressed to the Copenhagen Conference and all Friends and meetings were urged to take up its challenges.

In preparation for this yearly meeting gathering, in the background reading, in many of the events and activities, in the Swarthmore lecture and in yesterday's introduction and threshing groups, prophetic voices have prompted us to wrestle once again with the immensity of the challenge we face.

We are grateful to those Friends who have responded in their own lives and who have encouraged and informed us. We know that some Friends and meetings have made changes to reduce their impact on the environment, and that there is much more which may yet be done.

We need to arrive at a place in which we all take personal responsibility to make whatever changes we are called to. At the same time, we need to pledge ourselves to corporate action. The environmental crisis is enmeshed with global economic injustice and we must face our responsibility as one of the nations which has unfairly benefited at others' expense, to redress inequalities which, in William Penn's words, are 'wretched and blasphemous.' (Quaker faith & practice 25.13)

The action we are ready to take at this time is to make a strong corporate commitment to become a low-carbon, sustainable community. This will require a process to establish a baseline of current witness and a framework in which individual Friends and local meetings can share their successes.

We need to allocate adequate resources to this process. This process needs to be joyful and spirit-led, with room for corporate discernment at local, area and national level. We believe this corporate action will enable us to speak truth to power more confidently. Growing in the spirit is a consequence of taking action, and action flows from our spiritual growth; here is the connectedness we seek. Only a demanding common task builds community.

'Whom shall I send?' We hear the call to this demanding common task. How will we answer it?

We have been reminded of the current work of Quaker Peace & Social Witness. We ask Meeting for Sufferings to work with area meetings and our staff to make better known our current witness and to give thought to appropriate aims for our corporate commitment and the framework which will allow our successes to be shared. We ask them to look at the priorities in A Framework for Action and ask Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees to see where there are resources that can be allocated to these priorities to support our corporate commitment and to take our action forward. In addition we ask Meeting for Sufferings to look at the issues of public policy that we might be led to adopt and advocate in the political arena.

We ask Meeting for Sufferings and Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees to report back to Yearly Meeting each year on the progress of this concern.

We ask area meetings to consider how truth prospers with regard to sustainability, taking care to relate this to all our testimonies – peace, truth, simplicity, equality and care for the environment.

We encourage local and area meetings to practise speaking truth to power at local level by establishing relationships with all sections of local communities, including politicians, businesses and schools, to encourage positive attitudes to sustainability.

To individual Friends we issue a clear call to action to consider the effect of their lives on the world's limited resources and in particular on their carbon usage. We ask Friends to keep informed about the work being done locally, centrally and throughout the Quaker world and to educate themselves.

But above all that, Friends keep in their hearts that this action must flow from nowhere but love.

If we are successful in what we set out to do, we will need to be accountable to one another, but we will also need to be tender with one another, and to support one another through the grief and fear that radical change will provoke.

"I may have faith enough to move mountains; but if I have not love, I am nothing... Love keeps no score of wrongs, takes no pleasure in the sins of others, but delights in the truth. There is no limit to its faith, its hope, its endurance. Love will never come to an end." (1 Corinthians ch. 13: verses 2-8 (parts), New English Bible)

Lis Burch, Clerk

## Appendix 2 - Living Out Our Faith in the World (BYM minute 15/36)

How are we led to live out our faith in a world where we see systemic injustice and increasing inequality?

We have been reminded that God's work is where our deep gladness meets the deep suffering in the world, as in Psalm 85:

'Mercy and truth are met together;  
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other,  
truth shall spring out of the earth;  
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.'

We are all activists and we are all worshippers. Our worship and action spring from the same spiritual source. The light not only illumines us but pushes us to seek change.

We recognise the problems in the world and the urgency of acting on them. Our current political and (especially) economic systems only recognise and encourage part of the human condition, the selfish, competitive, greedy part. So much of what is good and beautiful and true in the world is being trashed. The model of power as domination needs to be challenged and replaced with a model of power as service to the community; in doing this, we need to live our testimony and hold firm to its source in faith.

The damage of the present systems, like the benefits, are not shared equally. We need to recognise how many of us benefit through the possessions we hold and the houses we live in, and to consider when we are part of the problem. In living out our faith in the world, we may be called to give up our privileges, but if we do so our voice and our lives will be all the more authentic and powerful. We can be at our most powerful when we are vulnerable.

The damaged and damaging structures of the world are not the only influence on our lives: there is also the power of faith and the leadings of the Spirit, which if followed will lead us, will push us, towards a better world. That, then, may be the first action we need to take: to be more faithful.

What are the changes which are needed to the systemic injustice and inequality that we see in society? We need to go deeper to find the roots of our social ills, and how we might uproot the powers that maintain them. We should rethink what needs to grow in this world and what does not. Can we transform the way the world is going and recognise that everyone and everything on the planet matters and can be thought of as a divine commonwealth, or kin-dom? Quakerism is all about putting our faith in a power which transforms us.

Many of us have spoken of the anger we feel about the current injustices of the world, and sometimes our hearts are heavy with all the things we cannot do. Anger can be a spur to action, but we need Light and guidance to use it wisely and sparingly. We already have a way of finding this wisdom in our corporate discipline and our testing in worship of leadings. Through these our righteous anger and passion can be transformed in order to tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality. Our action begins in worship, in seeking and reflecting before we act. Our practices of listening within and being open to what comes to us from without are rarer than we think, and are a precious gift that we should both use and share.

We are called to consider what we each can do and also make and build on connections in our communities and across the globe.

We are also called to be a community of Friends as a yearly meeting, pushed towards the important things we can only do together. We have a body of experience we can draw on and maintain. We are in this for the long haul.

As a yearly meeting we are restless to take corporate action to change the unequal, unjust world in which we live.

We ask Friends and meetings to engage with the evil of social and economic injustice which creates a world in which the wrong things are valued. To do this requires owning and upholding the work that is already being done by Friends and in our name; helping to fund that work as generously as possible; and becoming involved in however small a way. For ourselves we need to find some action however simple to do now.

We ask Meeting for Sufferings to take the work on social and economic injustice forward, co-ordinating the work of local and area meetings who might wish to become more deeply involved, and encouraging the deep spiritual and intellectual searching that could underpin a 'true social order' for our age.

We ask Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee to align their work with that of Meeting for Sufferings and to keep this issue before the Yearly Meeting for further consideration over the next two years. Between Yearly Meetings we should all try to share our experience.

We ask our Recording Clerk and staff to make our concern about social and economic inequality known as widely as possible and in particular to challenge the incoming UK government to adopt policies which decrease inequality and value equally the contribution which all can make to developing a more just and sustainable society.

We must remember that what makes the real difference is not adding further to the words in the world but being and living out the new social order, testing our leadings together and trusting to our Quaker processes, 'opening ourselves to the Light to guide us in each small step'.

Chris Skidmore, Clerk

### Appendix 3 - Tabular Statements Year ending December 2014

Local meeting	Members (adults)	Members (total)	Attenders (adults)	Attenders (children)	Attenders (total)	Usual numbers at meeting	Children's meeting provided
Hereford	52	52	34	6	40	30	Yes
Ludlow	44	44	27	5	32	29	Yes
Almeley Wootton	34	34	22	9	31	16	Yes
Llandrindod & Pales	13	13	15	5	20	16	Yes
Abergavenny Y Fenni	26	26	14	3	17	15	Yes
Ross-on-Wye	18	18	19	8	27	13	Yes
Clun Valley	10	10	12	0	12	12	No
Brecon Aberhonddu	11	11	6	2	8	9	No
Ledbury	10	10	8	2	10	8	Yes

[http://www.quaker.org.uk/search/apachesolr\\_search/tabular%20statements](http://www.quaker.org.uk/search/apachesolr_search/tabular%20statements)

## Appendix 4 - Local Meeting Finances

Local meeting	Receipts 2014	Payments 2014	Surplus (Deficit) 2014	Unrestricted Funds
Abergavenny Y Fenni	£10,275	£9,663	£612	£5,026
Almeley Wootton	£23,925	£20,741	£3,184	£14,153
Brecon Aberhonddu	£1,656	£1,886	-£231	£1,069
Camp	£4,202	£3,242	£960	£0
Clun Valley	£3,811	£3,103	£707	£4,537
Hereford	£36,616	£34,989	£1,627	£41,617
Ledbury	£945	£1,841	-£896	£4,592
Llandrindod	£2,622	£2,849	-£227	£1,637
& Pales	£1,958	£1,504	£454	£850
Ludlow	£22,711	£22,459	£252	£66,463
Ross-on-Wye	£7,073	£4,679	£2,395	£24,548
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£137,326</b>	<b>£129,601</b>	<b>£7,704</b>	<b>£98,029</b>

### Observations:

These figures suggest a basic stability with regard to finances in our Local Meetings and show that there is a significant amount held as reserves which could be considered for redistribution should the need arise with regard particularly to the upkeep and development of our Meeting Houses.

## Appendix 5a – SMAQM Statement of Income and Expenditure FY14

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Endowment Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds 2014</b>	<b>Total Funds 2013</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary income	107,327	38,681	6,746	152,754	200,704
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Charitable activities	97,271	50,938	1,850	150,059	262,363
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers	10,056	(12,257)	4,896	2,695	(61,659)

This table is extracted from the Annual Accounts where the full detail can be found

## Appendix 5b - SMAQM Finances (Reserves & Endowments)

### Analysis of funds

	At 1 January 2014	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 December 2014
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>General Funds</b>					
Unrestricted income	168,215	107,327	(97,271)	(3,763)	174,508
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Millichap (Hereford)	1,232	545	(498)	-	1,279
Margaret Beach	1,122	-	-	-	1,122
Syches	170	701	(370)	-	501
Property Fund	45,915	68	-	-	45,983
M & M (Ross)	4,031	408	(408)	-	4,031
Richardson (Ross)	2,359	351	(351)	-	2,359
Ludlow Wilkes	32,584	314	-	-	32,898
Ludlow Kenya	2,492	1,264	(4,753)	1,015	18
Ludlow Special Collections	355	5,880	(5,784)	(16)	435
Almeley Building	149	-	-	-	149
Owen Owen Fund (L	4,136	112	-	-	4,248
Pales Thatch	17,242	19,184	(30,257)	-	6,169
Ledbury Fund	(123)	4,249	(4,147)	-	(21)
Camp Fund	2,330	5,070	(94)	-	7,306
Almeley Building	28,831	10	(3,851)	-	24,990
Abergavenny Hedd	1,249	525	(425)	-	1,349
	144,074	38,681	(50,938)	999	132,816
<b>Permanent Endowment</b>					
Megan & Carl Jenkins (Almeley)	15,367	84	(100)	-	15,351
Florence Jenkins	9,892	3	(309)	-	9,586
Watkins Bowen (L &	4,431	6,659	(1,441)	-	9,649
	29,690	6,746	(1,850)	-	34,586
	341,979	152,754	(150,059)	(2,764)	341,910

### Observations:

These figures show that there are sufficient funds held in the General Fund to cover approximately two years of expenditure. This would suggest that some funds could be released for the upkeep and development of our Meeting Houses. In addition there are restricted funds some of which could rightly be used for the upkeep and development of our Meeting Houses.

## Appendix 6 - Responses to BYM minute 12/36 and BYM minute 15/36

### Almeley Wootton

**Responses to the two Minutes 36** - The meeting has discussed various ideas, but these all involve small scale local initiatives involving no significant capital outlay.

In response to the obvious follow up query with regard to energy usage in the Meeting House, I can say that after exhaustive research, we have not found a way of reducing our energy consumption without either destroying the ambience of the Meeting Room or incurring enormous expense in terms of money and materials.

Our energy consumption is relatively low anyway with a lightly used meeting room and a modern extension, and so we have taken a positive decision to take no major action but just make small improvements to draught-proofing etc.

### Abergavenny

**Any response that you have made to Canterbury Yearly Meeting Minute 36** – we calculated our carbon footprint as a meeting and looked into the carbon footprint of Llanfoist village hall – most of our meeting carbon footprint is travelling but we do quite well on car sharing – LVH has a very low carbon footprint even though the roof is not suitable for solar panels and they couldn't afford to put in ground source heating when they did the playing field – mostly the problem is the carbon footprint of a new build – then as a meeting we have a growing awareness as in the group of us who have gone to the CAT weekend – lots of individual people have made good steps

**Any response that you have to 2015 Yearly Meeting Minute 36** – none yet I think – at camp there were meetings about the issues of social inequality and injustice and steps planned there – there was a rising sense of concern and a call to action in a way that there hasn't been in recent years

### Brecon

**Response to Canterbury Yearly Meeting Minute 36** – we have chosen premises to rent for our Meetings that are environmentally friendly. The premises are used responsibly, seven days a week, by the local community. Brecon is a Fair Trade Town and we use Fair Trade products. We share transport where this is possible.

**Response to 2015 Yearly Meeting Minute 36** – our rented premises are accessible, with an adapted toilet. We occasionally hold Meeting for Worship at the home of a Friend, disabled with dementia, who can now no longer cope with Meeting in public premises. We collect for Meeting for Worship, and take home, a Friend who is aged and blind.

### Hereford

Eco Audit

Eco-audit for Hereford Quakers August 2010 An up-date of eco-audit of September 2001:

Recommendations for policy and action written in bold type.

**We propose that environmental considerations be kept under regular review and built in to decision-making about actions or purchases now and in the**

**future. "Reduce – Reuse – Recycle". Try to use local products involving local people. Use Fair Trade goods and organic food when possible.**

A building which has neither cavity walls nor windows which are easily double-glazed, and which has high ceilings, is not easy to retro-fit to high environmental standards. However, even if there were environmental gains in moving to other premises, that is not appropriate at this stage, neither financially nor in terms of the effort needed by members of the Meeting. In fact, it is very unlikely that there would be any more suitable premises in the town centre, and there would be no overall environmental gain if the subsequent owners made no changes. There is always the embodied energy of any work to be considered too.

1. Heat (including hot water) and light.

August 2008–August 2009 we used 6496 KWh of electricity. To make a reasonable comparison, this is estimated to be the equivalent 4.443t of carbon dioxide if not using 'green' energy. Using electricity from renewable sources this is said to be 0.095t.

In June, a typical month, the Meeting Room was used for 43 hours, Classroom 1 for 71 hours and Classroom 2 for 18 hours. Most of the use was during day-time rather than evening, but usage varies from month to month.

The heaters are old, but working. They are checked and maintained regularly by members of Premises Committee. They provide rapid on/off heat appropriate to the occasional room use. They are somewhat noisy. When they need replacing we shall consider having something different, but we shall not replace them yet.

There is fibreglass ceiling insulation over all of the premises, except in the inaccessible roof-space between the false ceiling of the Meeting Room and the roof above it. Kingspan insulation has been installed on the walls upstairs and between upstairs and downstairs, and fibreglass (?) insulation has been installed in the roofspace. There is no wall cavity. The upstairs premises have gas-fired central heating.

**We encourage the fitting of double glazing when any windows need to be replaced, both downstairs and upstairs.**

**We recommend steady attention to turning off heat, lights and water heating when not needed.**

**When the water heater is replaced, we suggest we consider buying one, for washing- up only, with instant water-heating like an electric shower.**

We think our roof is not suitable for photo-voltaic generation of electricity, because it does not have a large enough area in one plane.

We note that if we had the money and resources at some future time we could insulate the building using insulating wall panels on the insides of the exterior walls, so the heaters would bring the temperature to the required level more quickly and so would use less energy. This would probably be most useful on the external wall in Classroom 1. It might also be possible for the external walls of the Meeting Room and Classroom 2, but as always it is not only the financial cost but also the embodied energy which has to be considered.

2. Premises inside and out.

We recognise that the primary purpose of the small garden is for amenity and any management should further this aim, while at the same time favouring wildlife if

possible. Woody prunings are removed, but other garden waste is composted successfully, even though the bin is on concrete.

The premises need repairs and decoration from time to time.

**Environmentally safe paints should be used for all interior work, and for outdoor work the least damaging available paint should be used.**

**When wood is required, either for building or furniture, Premises Committee will mention the need to consider where the wood comes from. For wood that has not been grown locally, FSC certification is currently the best guideline.**

When the carpet needs to be replaced, we favour replacing it with another carpet, for insulation. Before a purchase is made, it will be necessary to study the environmental and health issues relating to carpets and the glue used to make and install them.

The staff of Concern Universal are trying to reduce their carbon footprint. They are mainly doing this by reducing the number of plane flights needed and using video-conferencing instead, but they are aware of their responsibilities in the premises too. [We might consider secondary glazing upstairs, but not now.]

3. Purchased items – cleaning materials, toilet paper, drinks

**We should continue to use Fair Trade tea, coffee and sugar, recycled toilet paper and paper towels, and environmentally safe washing up liquid and cleaning materials. We encourage the use of organic milk when possible.**

**We shall buy a re-usable bag for the vacuum cleaner for use when the current supply of bags has run out.**

The permanently mounted liquid soap dispensers require a specific design of re-fill pack. We currently have about 4 – 5 years' supply of these in stock. When these run out (or when a dispenser breaks and needs to be replaced) we shall consider what is the best available at the time.

- paper, copying, printing

**E-mail is used increasingly, and we encourage this to save unnecessary use of paper.**

**We encourage the use of two-sided printing and copying**

**Ordering the correct number of publications and naming copies for distribution reduces waste and assists delivery**

**The children's class re-uses some cardboard from packets and rolls.**

4. Waste disposal

The use of black sacks is in order

**Re-recyclables should be taken home. We shall have a notice in the kitchen asking people to do this.**

5. Water

The water supply upstairs is metered and Concern Universal pay for their water. We are not charged for the water used downstairs.

When the WCs need to be replaced, we shall consider the most water-saving devices available at the time.

## 6. Transport

We encourage people to share rides to Meeting for Worship and other events when appropriate, and we encourage those able to walk or cycle to do so.

At such time as there are regularly more bicycles than we have spaces in the bicycle rack, we shall consider having a low rail beside the wall beside the surgery. If the paving slabs are re-laid, we shall suggest installing a rail (or other fixture to which bicycles can be locked) at that time.

(If in fact a fire exit has to be made through the garden, it would then be possible to park bicycles at the back)

## 6. Education – library, information, meetings

We do have opportunities through the children's classes, discussion groups, other events and our newsletter to bring environmental matters to Friends' attention.

There is information about 'Green' funerals in the Meeting library; the Funeral Advisory Group also gives out information about this.

Our premises make a statement to others who use them.

The box for paper for recycling makes a statement about paper re-use and recycling.

We suggest having a notice in Classroom 1 asking people to draw the curtain after dark to save energy.

We shall put a notice on the new consumer unit [fuse box] publicising the fact that our energy is from Good Energy, which uses only renewable sources.

We recommend adding a statement to the instructions for use of premises about saving energy. We do not favour groups other than us putting organic waste in to our compost bin, as it may mean disturbing another group in Classroom 2, and also involves unlocking and locking the back doors

## 7. Our finances

All our money is with CAF Bank Ltd. (Charities Aid Foundation), which itself is ethically sound. HSBC does some work for CAF Bank, but we cannot avoid this.

## 8. Community and political action.

We know that many individuals in the Meeting contribute in a variety of ways to the wider scene. We seek to be aware of the interconnectedness of the issues of environment, peace and justice, and our Meeting supports the Millichap Peace Lectures

## Ludlow

### **Report of Sustainability Group: May 2014-May 2015**

The group was appointed early in 2012, following the Yearly Meeting Gathering in Canterbury in 2011, at which Minute 36 committed the Society of Friends to become a "low carbon sustainable community".

Our main aims are to change our own lifestyles, inform members of the meeting about what they could do to reduce their carbon footprints, and what the meeting as a whole could do. We also try to support the work of other bodies such as Ludlow 21.

Since May last year we have written letters to the Building Group with suggestions about the meeting house and any new build that might take place or buildings we might buy.

We have been keeping a record of the gas and electricity used by the meeting house since 2012. We therefore have a baseline from which to assess the effect of any changes to the building or its use.

In August we had a stall at the Green Festival organised by Ludlow 21 at which we publicised Quaker work and also the report of the Centre for Alternative Technology on Zero Carbon Britain. We plan to do this again this year. Some of us went to the ZCB conference in Hereford in November, organised by the Area Meeting Sustainability Group on which we are represented.

As a follow up to a survey we did in 2012 on carbon dioxide emissions due to members travelling to meeting for worship, we are now asking people to record their mileage for all journeys in connection with the meeting in June. We plan to multiply these figures by 12 to get a rough idea of our annual emissions. We could then give a donation to a charitable body to do with sustainability towards compensation.

After the Zero Carbon event we realised how much our emissions are due to the food we buy and eat, and are planning Wednesday evening 24<sup>th</sup> June on "low carbon" food. We shall have a talk by Graham Lambert of Myriad Organics and are asking people to bring "low carbon"/ vegetarian/vegan food for snacks, and any recipes they may have. We may be able to produce a booklet of such recipes as a long term goal.

We have written a draft letter from the Meeting to be sent to our M.P. for the Climate Lobby of Parliament on 17<sup>th</sup> June on what we would like the government to do about climate change. The draft will be finalised, if agreed by the Meeting, at our Meeting for Worship for Business on 7<sup>th</sup> June and sent off, signed by the Clerks.

We find the material from the QPSW team including their newsletter, "Earth and Economy", helpful in giving facts, suggestions of actions, and news about what other meetings are doing. We also get "earthQuaker" from the Living Witness Project with helpful articles and information. Both these are quarterly and on line.

Some of us have been to conferences on the subject outside the Area, organised by Friends, and to Yearly Meeting special interest groups.

We would be very grateful for suggestions from others in the Meeting of more work we could do on the subject, which concerns us all, globally and in the future.

As to Economic sustainability, we had already become involved (Friends were/are "leading lights" in the district) with the local churches initiative of "Ludlow in Need" which also involves other organisations in helping people learn to grow and cook food,

lobbies MPs and for some years has provided food boxes for young people finding themselves homeless.

Last year the group visited our MP, Philip Dunne, to discuss climate change and the targets the UK Government has set. Some members of the meeting plus some of Ludlow 21 are going to see him again, after discussing among ourselves (on Monday) what we want to say again about how the government is going to reach its target of 80% decrease in CO2 emissions compared to 1990, by 2050.

Each of us also visited members of the meeting individually last year to find out what they thought about climate change, what they were doing about it, and if they needed any advice.

To summarise, we are working on ourselves, on the meeting, and in the wider world such as our MP. Hopefully co-operation with Ludlow 21 will be fruitful.

## Appendix 7 - AM14/77 - Llandrindod and The Pales Steering Group Report

Trustees Minute T14.46 17 August 2014 reads:

*We have discussed Terms of Reference for the Pales Vision Group and agreed the following...*

- *Firstly identify the issues surrounding The Pales and discern which body they feel should consider each issue.*
- *Secondly consider the position of the Pales in the wider context of the needs, witness and vision of AM, Meeting of Friends in Wales and Britain Yearly Meeting. Reporting back to AM on 13 September 2014.*

*On Wednesday 31 August Llandrindod and Pales meeting held a Discernment Meeting on the future of Llandrindod and the Pales. The notes from that meeting are written below.*

*16 members & attenders being present, it was discerned that:*

*The worshipping community is more important than bricks and mortar.*

*Llandrindod MH is a millstone round our neck, both in terms of financial resources due to decreased hirings and in terms of financial and human resources due to key members moving away from the area. A projection based on current income and expenditure indicates that the bank account will be £123 in the red by the end of 2015.*

*This drain on resources is detracting from our engagement with the non-Quaker community.*

*A 'thin place', vital for spiritual renewal, is necessary: this is provided by The Pales both for LM and for visitors from far afield.*

*New members and attenders coming into the area and others leaving the area have resulted in a concentration to the north of Llandrindod, with fewer living in or south of Llandrindod. It therefore would be practical to hold meeting for worship weekly on Sundays at The Pales.*

*Pales shortcomings:-*

- *Improvements in access for the disabled need to be made.*
- *There is nowhere for children to be accommodated during meeting, the screen between the meeting room and the 'schoolroom' affording little sound insulation – not currently a problem as we have no children, though this could change with the arrival of new wardens, tenants or retreat centre managers.*

*Meetings for worship at any time of the week and occasionally on Sundays could be held in members / attenders homes and in the wider community such as church halls and cafés, facilitating engagement with the community at large.*

*Disposing of Llandrindod meeting house would release financial resources to provide transport from Llandrindod to The Pales for those without their own transport, and to start a spiritual development fund.*

*Although there were ideas on how best to dispose of Llandrindod meeting house, such as selling outright, selling with short-term leasing back, bulldozing and selling land to adjacent property-owners, or creating a peace and memorial garden, this was recognised as a subject for discernment elsewhere.*

*The feeling of the meeting was that we need to be scattered: this would benefit meeting by promoting the creation and development of a hinterland. Disposing of Llandrindod meeting house would provide the necessary impetus.*

Following this meeting, Meeting for Worship for Business on Sunday 7 September at Llandrindod and Pales wrote the following Minute:

### **14/32 the Future of Our Meeting**

Following an amazing Meeting for Worship when 20 friends shared worship which began with reading Advice 27 – “Live adventurously ... take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of (our) gifts in the service of God and our community. Let your life speak.” Our ministries embraced the need for, and the excitement of, change. After a shared lunch we held a specially convened, worship sharing meeting to consider the future of our meeting.

Our Clerks reviewed our situation, our meeting houses and our role within the Area Meeting of which we are a part and which has the responsibility for our buildings. We recognise that our financial situation is unsustainable, but our concern is that our role has to be to discern what the Spirit wants of us in our community. This once included the provision of quiet space in Llandrindod, but although this no longer appears to be the case, the energies of the few Friends that undertake roles for us is expended on care-taking buildings. We feel that we must scatter ourselves, by holding meetings in different locations, to join partnerships and to let our lives speak throughout our rural, dispersed, community; however we recognise the need for a base, a home, a geographical centre, and that centre is The Pales. The centre of our remit area is no longer Llandrindod. The Pales is much nearer to our geographical centre. This ancient, spiritual place is held in great affection by us and is valued not just by our Area Meeting but by Quakers throughout Britain.

From October 2014 we will discontinue the morning meeting in Llandrindod on the third Sunday, and from 1 November 2014, dependent upon the completion of the thatch, we will begin to meet weekly at The Pales at 10:30am, except for the third Sunday which will remain as a 3pm meeting. From this time we should be known as The Pales Local Quaker Meeting. We ask Trustees to consider the future of the Llandrindod building. We will begin to develop our programme of Meetings for Worship in other venues and at other times. As our meeting house, The Pales will require improvements to our disabled access and provision for a children's meeting space. We will place a notification in the Friend; make a change to the Book of Meetings entry; change our Temple Street signage and our website; and we will create a rota for transport provision.

### **Pales and Llandrindod Steering Group Report, 10th September 2014**

Trustees Minute T14.46 set the Steering Group's terms of reference as:

- To identify the issues surrounding The Pales and discern which body they feel should discern each issue;
- To consider the position of The Pales in the wider context of the needs and vision of AM, Meeting of Friends in Wales and Britain Yearly Meeting

Cognisance was taken of the following:

- Llandrindod & Pales LM Meeting for Worship for Business Minute 14/32 of 7th September 2014, which includes the statement that: 'from 1st November 2014, dependent upon the completion of the thatch, we will begin to meet weekly at The Pales at 10.30 am, except for the third Sunday which will remain as a 3.00 pm meeting. From this time we should be known as The Pales Local Quaker Meeting. We ask Trustees to consider the future of the Llandrindod building';
- Trustees Minute T14.43, which includes the statement that: 'the following Trustees will carry oversight for particular areas as follows...Meeting Houses: Ruth Mills (subject to consent), Jamie Wrench'.
- The move of Local Meeting to The Pales means that, relieved of the burden of Llandrindod Meeting House, resources and organisational structures already existing in Llandrindod could be transferred to The Pales: of particular relevance are the Premises Committee and the Garden Committee.

The Steering Group considers it to be essential to ensure the continuity of, and build upon, the work done by Martin and Lynda during the past 21 years. We suggest that the vision is of a centre offering a range of nourishing spiritual experiences in an environmentally-friendly carbon-neutral environment to Area Meeting, Meeting of Friends in Wales and beyond.

By Lynda and Martin's departure at the end of January 2015, we feel it is essential that a Pales holding position is established by the creation of teams competent in four areas: the property, the garden, finance and hospitality. Once this has been firmly established, we hope that the work on the longer-term vision can be started.

## **The Property**

### **Short-term Needs**

The existing Llandrindod and Pales Premises Committee (The Committee) hopes to enlist the assistance of the Pales architect Nick Salt.

The Steering Group suggests The Committee familiarises itself with those property management issues such as water purification, electrical system, domestic appliances and heating. We advise that a manual be created for use by future occupants, wardens or interim tenants.

We suggest The Committee liaises with the responsible trustees on identification of suitable occupants, bearing in mind the possible short-term upheaval for repair, upgrading and thermal insulation of the cottage (straw-bale 'tea-cosy'? solar panels? Heat pump? Wood-pellet burner central heating?).

We also advise that The Committee liaises with the trustees (who by law are responsible for our property), architect and builder on the cottage repair, upgrading and insulation, and improving meeting house and site access for the disabled. (Some of these activities should be considered as long-term.)

### **Longer-term needs**

The Steering Group suggests that In the longer term The Committee (the property committee in liaison with Trustees) or the committee's successor will assess the possibility of providing accommodation for CYP activities and a yurt, camping barn, bunkhouse or similar overnight accommodation for CYP's and for visitors. A parking area with recharging point for electric cars may be feasible. We have identified the need whether short-term or long-term for the complete overhaul of the accommodation facilities.

## **The Garden**

### **Short-term needs**

The existing Garden Committee will take on the management of the garden, with volunteer help from the team of probation workers. There will be little to do until the spring, when grass will need cutting and vegetable beds covering with sheeting unless the tenant is able to use them.

## **Finance**

### **Short-term needs**

We suggest that local treasurer takes over handling of hirings, currently the Peace Choir, and payment of utility and other bills. Donations will be collected.

## **Hospitality**

### **Short-term needs**

We suggest the establishment of a local hospitality committee, possibly including members of the Peace Choir and an archivist, Jill Oakley, shortly moving to our Area from Leeds. Display and publicity literature will need updating with new names and contact telephone numbers, and re-stocking.

Arrangements for marriages and funerals will be maintained, and the possibility of 'green' burials could be investigated.

## **Longer-term vision**

We suggest that in the longer term The Pales could be further developed as a spiritual centre, offering more retreat days and weekends: possibly labyrinth workshops, retreat and accommodation, pilgrimage information, and a museum (The Fox?) building on the work of Trevor Macpherson, Lynda and Martin.

## **The above plans are consistent with:**

- The statement in Minute AM14/46 Area Meeting Residential Weekend that 'We agree to consider how best to encourage our spiritual development using the suggestions made during the weekend at a future Area Meeting and ask Es & Os to consider possible events for our future discernment';
- Canterbury Commitment Minute 36 says that 'Sustainability is an urgent matter for our Quaker witness. It is rooted in Quaker testimony and must be integral to all we do corporately and individually'.
- By emphasising the sustainability aspects of the vision and appealing for support and financial aid on this basis to BYM, CAT, and through the MP and AM to the EU, it is hoped that cost to Area Meeting will be kept to a minimum.

We are inspired by the vision of the Pales and note the proposed closure of Llandrindod Meeting House, bravely taken in spiritual worship by local Friends but welcome the opportunities that this provides for Outreach more generally and for our vision for SMAQM. In answer to the first question posed by Trustees, we accept the proposals, of the steering group for the oversight of the Pales in the short-term and the pragmatic solutions to the issues that arise from the departure of the current wardens. Friends from other local meetings may wish to help and should contact John Senior (subject to consent) in the first instance.

In answer to the second question, there is a visionary response in which our whole community and others wider afield can be involved in turning the vision into reality. We have an opportunity here to develop a centre of spiritual worship, for enrichment of the spirit and of sustainability building on the work, dedication and love of Lynda and Martin Williams.

We accept the general direction of the vision proposed by the Steering Group. The tasks ahead are enormous, but the vision is achievable.

The Pales situated in Wales, can attract money from different sources than any currently proposed developments, such as Ludlow, in England. Our Minute AM14/64 strongly recommends supports for a Ludlow re-build and we re-affirm our support for this project.

We ask that Trustees consider a strategy for implementing the vision for The Pales, Ludlow and the future of Llandrindod Meeting House with possible time lines and bring these matters before AM in session as soon as possible.