

Crynwyr



Quakers

Cyfarfod y Cyfeillion yng Nghymru

Meeting of Friends in Wales

Annual Report
2009
Adroddiad Blynyddol

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Cyd clerc gohebiaeth
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1. Object

The object of Meeting of Friends in Wales is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain within Wales, and beyond.

2. Officers of the meeting in 2009

Co- Clerks: Catherine James, Deborah Rowlands

Assistant Clerk: David Utting (until February), Lynn Moseley

Treasurer: Jonathan Bell

Examiner of accounts: Alan Butterworth

3. Governance

Meeting of Friends in Wales (MFW) is part of Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) and has national responsibilities on behalf of the yearly meeting within Wales. It consists of all Friends who are members in Wales. Its responsibilities are defined in 5.04/05 of *Quaker faith and practice*: -

- i Promoting the spiritual life and witness in Wales, facilitating contact between Friends of all ages, and opportunities for mutual support for those with special responsibilities;
- ii Representing Britain Yearly Meeting in Wales
- iii Communication with associated area meetings in Wales
- iv Responding to issues on living in a bilingual society and outreach in Wales;
- v Representing Wales to Britain Yearly Meeting

The work of the Meeting is carried out by Friends appointed to do so and our employed administrator. Day meetings are normally held three times a year in locations throughout Wales, giving occasions for nurture, witness and fellowship as well as a time to make decisions together according to the Quaker business method as described in *Quaker faith and practice*. Dates and times of these meetings are published in the Book of Meetings and are circulated to all local and area meetings within Wales and the borders. MFW also holds regular residential weekend gatherings and one-day events with specific focus.

4. Report of work carried out in 2009

A. Days for spiritual nurture and business

After a year of looking at structures in 2008, 2009 was a year for looking out.

We spent part of our February 2009 meeting looking at the theme for the Yearly Meeting gathering: **creating community, creating connections**. This helped us all to feel part of the event whether or not we could be there.

In June we addressed the issue of **same sex partnerships**, one of the main topics of the gathering.

The year finished with a deeply gathered discussion with the policy officer for Cytûn on the topic of **Gospel Principles and Society**.

A **one-day retreat** was held at Dolwyddelan, a valuable opportunity to worship together and to renew acquaintances across our scattered meetings.

We have engaged with **A Framework for Action** by sending an initial response and gathering together responses sent by meetings throughout Wales to see where we might, as an all-Wales body, support further action by sharing information. We have had some response from Mid-Wales area meeting suggesting a focus on **sustainability**, which will be our theme for 2010, whilst we continue to **network with meetings on other aspects of the framework**.

B. Outreach in Wales

- Last year we agreed that our priority in this field was a **radical redesign of the Website** (www.quakersinwales.com), **undertaken by our administrator, so that it can be used both for Outreach and for communication amongst Friends.** This has been completed. Further opportunities for development have been identified including an area of the website to share information about Welsh Quaker history. Updating the Welsh language site to complement the English site has started and is an identified priority for 2010.
- **Publications committee has been busy** with a new bilingual introductory 'Invitation' leaflet and a short pamphlet about Quakers in Meirionnydd: these both went like hot cakes during the Eisteddfod at Bala. Translations of the standard leaflets on Quaker weddings and Quaker funerals were produced.
- Following our regular cooperation with other churches in the **Cytûn tent at the Eisteddfod**, questions were raised about whether our witness might be more visible and effective by also joining with other partners on the Maes. **We will be looking at this during 2010.**
- Friends throughout Wales made extensive use of the **outreach resources available from the administrator**, especially during outreach week. We decided not to continue with the planned new pull-up exhibition stands as Friends reported that lightweight material which could more easily be displayed would be more useful. **We plan to review our outreach resources in Welsh during 2010, in conjunction with the new strategy for Outreach resources of Quaker Life Outreach section.**
- Our co-clerk Catherine James decided to **walk to York** for the Yearly Meeting Gathering as a form of Outreach. As well as talking to people on the way about the journey, she attracted media reports through Television, Radio and Newspapers

C. Business affairs

- During our regular day meetings, through consultation with subcommittees, and a gathering of clerks, and clerks of trustees of area meetings held at The Pales Meeting House, we have agreed a **memorandum of understanding /minute of agreement to clarify the relationship between MFW and area meetings**, which has now been sent to area meetings within Wales.
- We have also reviewed the way in which subgroups are working, laid down some and agreed new terms of reference for those which are continuing.
- We learnt during the year that **Meeting of Friends in Wales is required to register with the Charity Commission** as an independent charity with an income of more than £5000. Work was therefore started on drawing up a governing document based upon the already approved area meeting template, together with terms of reference for trustees. **We expect to complete this work in 2010 in order to register as required.**
- **Calon was 're-launched'**, with a new editor and using the layout skills of the administrator. Its production was adjusted to follow the existing mailings to meetings to save postage. An increasing amount of information (including minutes and papers for meetings) is now available via the Website in order to make it more available to any who wish to have it and save on paper resources, although it can still be sent to those who wish a paper copy.
- Our nominations convenor attended a **training weekend on nominations**, which she found inspiring and helpful.
- The **children and young people's work advocates group** continues to provide support and focus for those appointed by their area meetings to work with meetings in Wales.
- The **finance policy** agreed last year was reviewed.

D. Working with Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) and representing BYM within Wales

- i. We have nominated Friends to serve on the following **BYM Committees**
 - Meeting for Sufferings
 - Committee for Christian and Interfaith relations (CIR)
 - Governing Body of 'The Retreat'
- **Christian and Interfaith:** Some of our members met with CIR during its meeting in North Wales and also convened a meeting for the new clerk of CIR to be briefed on Cytûn affairs by the Chief Executive of Cytûn
- We joined other organisations in Wales in promoting a **Welsh Peace Institute**
- We are sending a representative to **Quaker Life Representative Council** for a trial period, as well as a representative to the Quaker Peace and Social Witness Annual Conference for the first time.

5. Financial Review – 2009

At the end of the year, the **general fund** had a balance of £9896.77 , an increase of £299.93 . In addition we designated £1000 from general funds, being a legacy in 2008, as a reserve for future expenditure. With the £391 designated bursary fund, this makes a total of £11287.77 in unrestricted funds.

Three small **restricted funds** are held: -

- Literature Fund: balance of £986.16, unchanged from 2008.
- Spiritual Hospitality Project: balance of £17.15 , down by £189.07 .
- Bursary Fund: (for residential events), at £8, unchanged from 2008.

MFW holds no **investments**; its balances are held in an interest-bearing current account. (CAF Bank currently does not offer an ethical option.)

Reserves Policy: Adequate funds are needed to cover the period from the end of the previous year, until money is received from Area Meetings - see below.

Principal Funding Sources: Almost all the funding is raised by MFW agreeing a per (adult) capita amount at its first meeting in the year, which is paid by the four Area Meetings that cover Wales. MFW Treasurer passes this request to the AM Treasurers, and monies are usually received from April onwards.

Generating Funds: No significant other funds are raised, although residential events are expected to raise sufficient funds to cover their costs.

We were in receipt of a **grant** of £6350 from Britain Yearly Meeting towards administrative costs, being the second year of a three year grant. We are using this to support the employment of our part time administrator. The costs of employing the administrator amounted to £4678.93

Besides the amount spent on paid administrative support, major items of **expenditure** have been on publications £969.10 on production of the newsletter *Calon*, £432.82 on translation and £370 supporting the attendance of MFW representatives at Quaker conferences and similar events.

Examiner: The independent examiner, Alan Butterworth is an attender at Wrexham Meeting.

Risk assessment: Meeting of Friends in Wales owns no premises; when holding our regular meetings in hired premises or Quaker meeting houses we will take reasonable care on Health and safety matters. Residentials are held in places which have their own insurance cover. The contract of employment covers the health and safety of the employee. Insurance has been taken out through the BYM policy, as advised by our examiner in 2006. For the annual residential event we ask that all volunteers working with children and young people have CRB checks in their local meetings, according to their area meeting policy.

Date:

Signed: Catherine James, Co- Clerk

..... Deborah Rowlands (co-clerk)

..... Jonathan Bell (Treasurer)

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Date: 27.02.2010

Signed: Catherine James Catherine James, Co- Clerk

Deborah Rowlands Deborah Rowlands (co-clerk)

J Bell Jonathan Bell (Treasurer)