

The Gloucestershire Area Quaker Meeting Charities



Trustees Report for Year Ended

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2. OBJECTIVES and ACTIVITIES

An area meeting is the primary meeting for church affairs in Britain Yearly Meeting. The objective of this area meeting is the furtherance of the general religious and charitable purposes of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, in the area of Gloucestershire Area Quaker Meeting Charities (GAQMC) and beyond.

The guide to the conduct of business continues to be Quaker Faith & Practice and the governing document, as amended and adopted by Area Meeting on 19 September 2009, registered with the Charity Commission on 9 February 2010 and amended on 26 November 2012.

The Area Meeting consists of eight local meetings.

Table 1. Local meeting names, membership, and changes of membership

Cheltenham Quaker Meeting.....	64	decrease of 1
Cirencester Quaker Meeting.....	22	decrease of 5
Forest of Dean Quaker Meeting.....	18	no change
Gloucester Quaker Meeting.....	23	decrease of 6
Nailsworth Quaker Meeting.....	71	decrease of 2
Painswick Quaker Meeting.....	30	increase of 2
Stroud Quaker Meeting.....	30	increase of 1
Wotton Quaker Meeting.....	11	no change
Members not attached to a local meeting.....	6	increase of 1
Total membership was 103 men and 171 women: total	274	decrease of 13

In addition there were approximately 262 attenders, including 49 children and young people. Attenders are Friends not in membership. In 2016 there were 202 attenders. Our assistant clerk, membership, has encouraged local meetings to review their lists of Members and Attenders, following the guidance given in chapter 11 of Quaker Faith and Practice. This, in part, is reflected in the reduction of members listed. The Q list is now being used to keep membership records and will be further developed in 2018.

There were 2 marriages according to Friends' usage in 2017.

Where Friends are more numerous, meetings for worship were held every Sunday and once midweek. Nailsworth Meeting introduced an additional meeting at 6.0 pm on the fourth Sunday each month. At smaller meetings, worship was held on at least two Sundays each month. A worship group is now established in Stonehouse, meeting at 3 pm each Friday at Stonehouse Community Centre. Friends met as an Area Meeting for business eight times during 2017: meetings were monthly, except for January, May, August and November. This practice will continue in 2018. Our representatives to

Meeting for Sufferings and other central meetings, have made their reports, which have been received with interest and sometimes with concern.

Every three years each local meeting presents a report to Area Meeting in answer to the question "How does the Truth prosper amongst you?" In Quaker parlance, this is a way of asking ourselves about our relationship with the Spirit. This provides an opportunity for a local meeting to review its activities, strengths, weaknesses and proposals for the way forward. This year the Area Meeting heard two reports, from Nailsworth Meeting in July and from Stroud Meeting in October. A summary of these presentations can be found in section 4.

TRUSTEES

The trustees are appointed by Area Meeting. They met seven times during 2017. Their business covered:

- Managing the property and finances of the Area Meeting
- Carrying out their responsibilities as the employers of staff in our meetings, including wardens
- Ensuring compliance by area and local meetings with all our agreed policies, for example for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, health and safety and data protection
- Upholding Area Meeting in carrying out its activities and meeting its objectives.

As reported in the Annual Report for 2016 a Sub Group of trustees plus an invited member met five times to seek the best way forward for the management of Gloucester Meeting House. They regularly reported to the trustee meetings. They were asked to consider the following.

1. The needs of Gloucester Meeting as a worshipping community
2. A continued Quaker presence in Gloucester. This includes the use of the Meeting House by community groups
3. The burden being placed on Gloucester Meeting Friends and Friends from other local meetings who are responsible for the management and upkeep of Gloucester Meeting House
4. The financial cost of services and maintenance of the Meeting House and the Lodge

Their recommendations were considered and accepted by the trustees on 24 July 2017. The final meeting of the Sub Group was on 16 November 2017. In brief, the decision was made to employ a company of surveyors to both market and manage the premises on our behalf. The Lodge would be let to provide income to offset the cost of this option. The posts of warden and cleaner would become redundant.

This was a difficult decision for the trustees and for those who attend Gloucester Meeting. The decision has been actioned and a healing process between the trustees and Gloucester Meeting has progressed and the trustees now feel supported by Gloucester Meeting and the Area Meeting in this difficult decision.

The trustees will now focus their energies on the Area Meeting finances.

Compliance by area and local meetings are within the agreed policies for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, premises, including health and safety, data protection. The Compliance forms were further amended to ask for greater evidence so that Trustees can be better assured there is good practice across the Area Meeting.

All our eight meetings have submitted completed Compliance Forms.

Data protection legislation. The trustees have been made aware of the changes that will come into force in May 2018 and have started to address the changes required in the compilation of data and the Data Consent Forms for Members, Attenders and Children and Young People.

Safeguarding. The trustees were pleased to receive a Revised Safeguarding Policy and Annual report from the Area Meeting Safeguarding Coordinators. Both were accepted at the trustees meeting of 20 March 2017 and passed to Area Meeting for acceptance at the AM on 9 April 2017.

Appointment of Warden's Links. The appointment and employment of wardens and cleaners is the responsibility of trustees, yet the appointment of warden's link had been responsibility of local meetings with wardens (Cirencester, Gloucester and Nailsworth). At the Area Meeting on 6 July 2017 it was agreed that trustees should be responsible for the appointment of the warden's link through the Area Meeting Nominations Committee, and in consultation with the nominations committee of the relevant local meeting. This will enable trustees to be assured that they act properly as employers and fully discharge their responsibilities.

In October 2017, the trustees completed the annual review of the level of payment to our wardens and other employees. The minute read: All our wardens and employees will receive an increase in pay in line with the minimum wage increase. We agree that the existing Wardens' Contracts of Employment and Occupancy Agreements should continue. Together they ensure that our wardens are paid above the living wage. All employees not in our accommodation will be paid the living wage or above.

Since the legislation to change the minimum wage to a government National Living Wage in 2016 our wardens have received this increase.

The trustees receive the Annual Wardenship Appraisals. This process is an opportunity for the warden and the local meeting to check that the warden is not overworked and is happy in her/his post; to clarify roles and responsibilities of the warden, if necessary, and to consider how the distinction between wardenship and being a Member of the meeting is working in practice.

An appraisal took place for the Nailsworth warden on 18 January 2017. The Appraisal for the warden at Cirencester was completed on 24 November 2017. The last Appraisal for the

warden at Gloucester was completed in April 2016. Gloucester ceased to have a warden in November 2017.

We are grateful to our wardens for their service.

As with our other properties, there are planned annual landlord's inspections of the properties occupied by our wardens. An inspection of 1 and 2 Quaker Close, Nailsworth was carried out on 5 April 2017; The Lodge at Gloucester on 26 April 2017 and the Cirencester Warden's house on 12 June 2017.

The Memorandum of Understanding between Area Meeting, Local Meetings and the Trustees continued, and the list of office holders has been updated and approved by Area Meeting in June 2015. Post holders were updated on 27 January 2017 and 10 December 2017.

We welcomed Val Kirby as the Clerk to Trustees beginning on 1 January 2018 and thanked Colin Gerard who had been our clerk since 2009. Val has been shadowing Colin's role as clerk for more than a year, in order to ensure a smooth handover.

Trustees are responsible for the management of the Area Meeting's properties. A report is included at the end of this trustees' report, in section 7.

FINANCIAL POLICY

Local meetings control their own funds. These are the only funds not under the full control of Area Meeting. Apart from the general fund there are three designated funds, one for property, one for bursaries, grants and other purposes, as decided by Area Meeting and one for Quaker camp.

There are no restricted or endowment funds.

The trustees, including the treasurer and assistant treasurer, are responsible for the financial running and oversight of The Gloucestershire Area Quaker Meeting Charities (GAQMC) and the upkeep of the meeting houses and associated property. These are held in trust by Friends Trusts Limited. Our accounts and statements are prepared by separating all transfers between local meetings and the Area Meeting from income and expenditure. Gift aid tax refunds are recorded in the year of receipt except where such receipts are overdue by more than one year. Apart from this exception we include debtors and creditors on the balance sheet. We are aware that we must comply with the latest Charity Commission Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) especially as regards reporting. This calls for our adherence, as closely as possible, to the guidance contained in the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT) Handbook, whilst allowing comparison with figures from the previous years' annual financial reports. We apply consistent treatment of the accounts in each accounting period subject to the above statutory requirements. Britain Yearly Meeting Treasurers' Handbook has been phased out

and we now have access to the online ACAT Treasurers Handbook from our membership of ACAT.

Each set of accounting records deals with a specific part of GAQMC activities, covering all financial transactions, facts and events relating to them. All of the local and area accounts are examined by an accountant, who also prepares the annual financial report for consideration by the trustee body. In accordance with the governing document, the report is then presented to Area Meeting for acceptance.

The Area Meeting in session sets a recommended contribution for each of the local meetings, after advice from the trustee body. This is to allow the transfer of funds, contributed by Friends, to GAQMC. This accounts for more than 75% of Area Meeting's total income.

Our wasting assets are depreciated with the object of writing off the cost (less residual value) over their useful life. No depreciation reserve is set aside.

RESERVES POLICY

The General Fund bank account has £7,300 - approximately 12 months' expenditure.

The Property Fund bank account holds approximately £26,300, with just over £8,100 in one of the reserve bank accounts. This allows the treasurer access to approximately 6 months' expenditure. The other account holds £25,750 as a contingency reserve, which is not under the treasurer's control. There is also £23,900 in this account belonging to one of the Local Meetings. Equities to the value of £99,100, say, at the year-end, might be regarded as further reserves should area meeting so decide. See next section.

The Bursary Fund's equity investments are valued at £99,100. The Bursary fund bank accounts hold just under £37,000. This sum includes £4,750 held on behalf of two local meetings.

Just under £22,000 of this has been re-invested in a One Year Bond to give us more interest income. Our investments have increased in value this year.

INVESTMENT POLICY

Equity investments have long been held. Nowadays, advice is that they should be held in ethical funds lodged with Friends Trusts Ltd in order to save trustees from making frequent investment decisions. Cirencester Meeting transferred its Investments in 2017.

REVIEWS OF RISKS

Insurance of buildings has been reviewed (see Table 2). Valuations of contents continue to be under review.

The vulnerability of the meeting funds to embezzlement, fraud and error is kept under review. Over forty percent of current assets are currently beyond the treasurer's control in a TRIODOS account. Checks on the bank balances are carried out by the treasurers. The

treasurer makes a financial report to trustees at each meeting (usually six weekly) at which time the bank balances are compared with the cashbooks. Electronic copies of the current financial records are checked against the bank balances by the treasurer.

GRANT MAKING POLICY

Grants from the Bursary Fund have been decided in accordance with the established policy, by those appointed as Overseers/Pastoral Friends in consultation with the treasurer. This year 4 young Friends were supported to attend the Southern Friends Summer Events. The general fund was able to support Friends attending training courses at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre and elsewhere.

As in previous years, many of our members and attenders are active and involved. Some activities are the result of personal concerns, some the result of area meeting and/or local meeting appointments and others result from our ability to make our meeting houses available to others.

During 2017 our meeting houses continued to be hired or made available on a regular basis for individual counselling, Alcoholics Anonymous, Bipolar Support Group, Friendship Group (for older people), Parent Line Plus (support for families), Fair Trade, Tanzania Link, University of the 3rd Age and many others. Gloucester Meeting House is becoming more widely used by hirers whose work we wish to support. The Independence Trust and Inclusion Gloucestershire are using the meeting house for much of the week.

Other faith groups also use our meeting houses including Unitarians, Buddhists, Sufis, Sathya Sai, Baha'i and Liberal Jewish women. These occasions help those using the meeting houses and enable quiet outreach of our Quaker values through personal contact and published information. Three of our meeting houses, Cirencester, Gloucester and Nailsworth, opened for Heritage Open Days in September - a national scheme to celebrate England's architecture and culture. These days offer the opportunity for the public to view the buildings without the prospect of commitment to a Quaker meeting, yet many welcome the opportunity to enquire. Some who visited have subsequently become regular attenders at our meetings for worship.

We are grateful to our wardens who are frequently the point of contact at our meeting houses.

CONCERN FOR CRIMINALS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

In keeping with Quaker concern for criminals and criminal justice, dating back to the time of Elizabeth Fry, the Area Meeting supports our Quaker chaplain in Leyhill prison. As well as working with chaplains of all faiths in a pastoral way, they organise weekly silent meetings for worship for prisoners. A prisoner from Leyhill worshipped regularly at Nailsworth until his release on parole.

The Area Meeting also supports a member of Cheltenham meeting as a prison chaplain at Long Lartin prison in Worcestershire, who now clerks the Quaker Life Prison Chaplains Committee. Gloucestershire Quakers continue to support actively Positive Justice Gloucestershire (www.pjglos.org), a group seeking to encourage the use of restorative and therapeutic practices within the criminal justice system, to redress the balance of negative representations in the media, and to raise public awareness of, and support for, positive initiatives within the criminal justice system, particularly alternatives to imprisonment where appropriate.

4. REPORTS FROM SOME OF OUR LOCAL MEETINGS

CHELTENHAM MEETING

Over the last year Cheltenham LM has seen a small reduction in the number of members and attenders, as dear long-standing Friends have passed on. However, we have welcomed new Friends, and accept change as inevitable in any Meeting.

We see an important role for Meeting in supporting individual Friends in their witness to our testimonies. These include the following:

- Restorative justice: working as facilitators with victims and offenders with the aim of reducing crime and working in and supporting prison chaplaincy at Long Lartin and Leyhill
- Green issues, for example The Footpaths initiative to reduce our carbon footprint
- Care of people with dementia, hospice and hospital visiting
- The Global Footsteps cafe, the Little Footsteps playgroup: a supportive space for international families and Cheltenham welcomes refugees
- Peace activism, affordable housing, counselling, supervision of counselling, Palestinian solidarity, art therapy and creative activities.

Through our lettings we support religious groups and organisations which provide support to addicts and those at suicide risk. In December 2017 we began to meet on Thursdays twice a month for an evening midweek meeting. Our Legacy Project Team is seeking to use additional funds to allow more daylight into the Meeting Room, to improve access for ambulant disabled people and to create reliable car parking spaces.

We are seeking to meet the needs of the Meeting with fewer nominated posts and we are exploring a set of three hubs covering key areas of Pastoral and Spiritual care, Administration, and Communications. An important opportunity for outreach has been our white poppy commemoration. We have explored Quaker spirituality in a monthly group reading Faith and Practice.

CIRENCESTER MEETING

The town of Cirencester had a rewarding 2017, celebrating 900 years since the building of its Abbey as an Augustine monastery. The festival celebrated the history of the abbey and its impact on the cultural and economic life of the town.

The Abbey became powerful and, by imposing taxes on local businesses developed a longstanding feud between it and the townsfolk. After its dissolution in 1539 the abbey church and cloisters were demolished. It is suggested that the bad feeling may have emerged later as significant non-conformism in the town. The Quaker Meeting House, the first Baptist Church and the Unitarian Chapel are thought to have been built within 2 years of each other, suggesting notable non-conformist leanings and wealth.

Against this background, Cirencester Meeting was the subject of considerable interest in its own right during 2017. We had 150 visitors over Heritage Weekend. This was followed by visits from the Gloucestershire Federation of Women's Institutes on three separate Saturdays. We offered them three dates to choose from and they opted for all three. More than 70 arrived the first time, nearly 40 on the second and 60 plus on the last date. We were overwhelmed!

Following talks about Quakers and the history of the Meeting House, they experienced a time of Quaker worship and silence, followed by questions - very interesting and pertinent ones. The gatherings were of course supplied with tea and biscuits, so body, mind and spirit were fully served.

Finally, we had a visit from the Kemble Scout Troup – about 30 scouts and their leaders. One really positive outcome was that at least one of the scouts went home and told his parents all about what he'd learned. Later in the week, his mother reported on his enthusiasm, together with the fact that his parents had also learned a lot from him.

Having to respond to so many questions from so many visitors has done the Meeting much good – we have had to think deeply about our beliefs and have we had to explain them.

We have been filled with enthusiasm and are more enquiring ourselves.

NAILSWORTH MEETING

Nailsworth Friends presented their assessment of how the truth prospers with the help of a coloured parachute and plastic balls, enacting aspects of their life as a Meeting and reading out the following minute.

As we consider how the Truth prospers amongst us, we have a sense of sometimes being overwhelmed by events nationally and globally and are uncertain how best to respond and engage.

We see the importance and commitment of the work of many in our community and would like more time and opportunities to share in this, educate ourselves and support one another.

We want to be able to connect more with the wider Quaker community and find concrete opportunities to re- focus and re-energise ourselves in the way we reach out and engage with an increasingly challenging world. We ask our Elders to consider this and propose ways in which we can do this.

We recognise that we have difficulty in filling all the roles necessary to keep our Meeting strong and vibrant but appreciate all that so many are able to offer.

We are reminded of the value of simplicity and small acts of kindness and the need to nurture each other, in order to engage fully with what is demanded of us. Our Meetings for Worship and spiritual life are the essential bedrock underlying our ability to go out and act, as we can, in the world in the living out of our testimonies.

RED AND WHITE POPPIES

Friends from Nailsworth wrote and distributed this article in local media and the AM website September 2017. Friends from Cheltenham provided the photograph.

Most of us probably think we know what the red poppy stands for: but what's all this about the *white* poppy? As summer turns to autumn and the month we give to 'remembrance' in this country, it's a question that continues to need an answer. As it happens, white poppies go back nearly as long ago as red ones; but the two have somewhat different origins. The 'poppy appeal' launched in 1921 by the Royal British Legion aimed to help military veterans with employment and housing. Its focus was on the veterans - the surviving soldiers returning home, trying to rebuild lives shattered by war. When in 1933 the Cooperative Women's Guild began to sell the white poppy, on the other hand, they wanted to give a slightly different message. After the 'war to end all wars' and the years of public victory parades and private hardship, they felt there was a widespread wish to have a symbol of something else: the determination to work for peace. Taken up later by the Peace Pledge Union, the idea was to express the urgent need for international peacebuilding.

While they differ in origin, there is something the two have in common. Both poppies are about remembering: both triggered by Remembrance Day – originally set to mark the date (11th November 1918) of the signing of the armistice between warring countries in Europe. Wearing the red poppy shows a commitment to remember and honour the British servicemen and women who died in both world wars and the many others in conflicts since. The white poppy asks us to remember these, but also a much wider range of war victims, not only from the British armed services, but also the many others, all over the world - civilians as well as military - for whom armed conflict has meant death, disaster and despair.

Perhaps there is now a need for both poppies. Global warfare has dramatically changed. During the first world war, 80% of the victims were military personnel, and just 20% civilian. In the world we live in today, the figures of those harmed or killed by war are reversed: 90% of the victims are civilian; just 10% are those in the armed forces. Throughout the world, war brings slaughtered victims, survivors wounded for life in mind and body, millions made



Figure 1 Photograph courtesy Cheltenham Local Meeting

sick or homeless, families and communities torn apart - and many killed or imprisoned for refusing to fight.

Wars begin with 'us' and them'. History teaches us that they do not bring peace. Armistice Day gives us a chance to reconnect with our energies to prevent them. It's a reminder to grieve for all victims, combatants and non-combatants alike. It's also a day to remember, support and honour the courageous work of peacebuilding: nonviolent resistance, negotiation, reconciliation.

Both red and white poppies have messages we can listen to.

STROUD

Stroud Meeting has about 34 members (though a significant proportion of these are not active). The number of active attenders is around 10.

We hold Meeting for Worship every Sunday. For the last year, our meeting place has been Stroud Library. Previously we met at the Exchange on Brick Row.

Typical attendance at Sunday Meeting for Worship is between 10 and 20. This is rather lower than when we met at the Exchange.

In addition, we hold mid-week Meetings for Worship roughly once a month at the homes of Friends. Roughly once every three months we hold a Meeting for Worship at Wisma Mulia care home in Frampton on Severn. We support a worship group that meets monthly at Whiteway.

We have made arrangements for the regular reading of Advices and Queries in Meeting for Worship.

We have run a number of study and discussion groups, including one based on the Woodbrooke/Lancaster University online course on Early Quaker Spirituality. At present, we are running some short sessions on Meeting for Worship.

We have run a number of outreach activities, including shop-window poster displays. Two years ago, we sponsored a public performance of a play about militarisation in schools. We have recently rejoined Churches Together in Stroud.

The meeting has at present two elders. We have an Oversight Support Group, but everyone in the meeting shares responsibility for oversight.

The fact that we do not have a meeting house frees us from the financial and organisational problems that some other meetings face. On the other hand, having a meeting house would give us a more visible presence in the community and provide a base for outreach. We have mixed feelings about our present meeting place. Some Friends find the children's library a joyful place to meet, but others find it off-putting. One or two Friends have ceased coming to meeting or have moved to other meetings because they do not like meeting in the Library. We have also had problems with the Library's locks and alarms, but now seem to have overcome these!

We have a meeting library, but we can only keep a few books at the Library where we meet; the rest are in our Librarian's attic. Because of the difficulties of storage and access, we have added only a few books to the library in recent years.

Looking forward, our main challenge is that our numbers are few and many of our members are elderly. It is not easy for us to find Friends able to take all of the responsibilities of running and sustaining the meeting. On the other hand, we have been very pleased to welcome a number of new attenders to our meeting in the last year and look forward to growing with them in friendship. We are pleased too that some Friends who have moved into the Stroud area have chosen Stroud as their new meeting. We are aware of families with children who would like to come to meeting. A number of us are obtaining DBS clearance so that we can offer a children's meeting on a regular basis. We go forward in faith!

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Link group enables young people in the Area Meeting, usually in the 10 to 16 age group, to come together for day or week-end events where they can explore more about what being a Quaker means, while also socialising together. This is particularly valuable for those young people in meetings where there are few or no others in that age group.

In 207 we were delighted to have Alice and Aidan Fallon, who have experience of working with young people in BYM, joining with Stephanie Robertson in running our Link Group activities, with back-up from Mary Penny and Liz Whiteside. One Link Group event took place in 2017: the minute is below.

Link Group at Painswick Meeting House on May 6th 2017

Four young people with supporting adults met at Painswick to think about Mental Health, a topic chosen at our last Link Group Meeting. Co-operative juggling in the garden confirmed the way we would work together during the day.

We talked about mental health problems which may lead to an illness or disorder. We drew pictures and took photographs to illustrate a booklet called 'Well-being – how to look after my Mental health and how I can support my friends'. Walking across the valley to the Quaker Burial ground we 'Time travelled' in story, to the site of the original Quaker Meeting House. We made collages of Our Feelings, which we shared in Epilogue with our families.

6. AREA MEETING CAMP

Martin Quick from Stroud Local Meeting, who has been involved in Quaker camp since it started some fifty years ago, reported to September's Area Meeting on this year's camp. It was again held from 5th to 13th August at Ringstead Bay on the Dorset coast, with about 35 campers. Onsite activities took place in the large marquee, there was bathing and beach time, coastal walks, daily Meetings for Worship and a camp concert on the last evening. Children shared in the preparation of meals; young adults volunteered for routine tasks; all participated in the three discussions based on Advices and Queries. For many people the camp's simplicity is part of its ethos.

7. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The maintenance and improvement of the fabric and sustainability of our Meeting Houses continues to be a major concern of our Trustees and a call upon our funds.

Table 3. Meeting Houses and Burial Grounds

Date	Meeting Houses
1985	Cheltenham
1673	Cirencester, including 51 Thomas St. (Listed grade 2*)
1834	Gloucester (Listed grade 2)
1680	Nailsworth (Listed grade 2)
1706	Painswick (Listed grade 2)
	Other Properties
	49 Thomas Street, Cirencester (Listed grade 2)
	The Lodge, Greyfriars, Gloucester (Listed grade 2)
	Quaker Close, Nailsworth (Listed grade 2)
	Burial Grounds
	Siddington near Cirencester
	Shortwood near Nailsworth

	The Dell near Painswick
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The trustees have continued to analyse the expenditure on our meeting houses, wardens' accommodation and the let properties. We continued to have particular concerns about the cost and supervision of maintenance of Gloucester Meeting House and Lodge.

Comprehensive refurbishment to Flat 1, 49, Thomas Street, Cirencester was scheduled and completed.

Details are noted under each Local Meeting with property.

We have five Meeting Houses, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Cirencester, Nailsworth and Painswick, with the exception of Cheltenham, our Meeting Houses are Grade 2 listed, Cirencester meeting House is Grade 2*. We are also responsible for wardens' houses at Gloucester, Cirencester and Nailsworth and three properties that are let, two in Cirencester, one in Nailsworth. Another responsibility is the oversight and maintenance of three burial grounds that are not attached to our meeting houses. They are at Siddington (Cirencester), Dell Farm (Painswick) and Shortwood (Nailsworth). The Shortwood burial ground is the only one open for burials.

We have a programme of Quinquennial surveys that are carried out by a professional surveyor in order to identify replacement and maintenance requirements and provide a maintenance schedule. A Quinquennial survey of Painswick Meeting House was carried out in January 2017.

SUMMARY OF WORK TO PROPERTIES COMPLETED in 2017.

Cheltenham.

Cheltenham Meeting has had the benefit of recent legacy money. The meeting has prepared a list of priorities to improve the interior of the Meeting House, improve both the access steps and the car parking. An architect has been selected and estimates have been obtained. Trustees have been fully appraised, and they have approved the work. The work will begin in early 2018.

Cirencester.

The Quinquennial Report on the Meeting House, 49 and 51 Thomas Street was received in January 2016. All the work required has now been completed, including the Cotswold stone roof maintenance.

An area on the first floor of 51 Thomas Street, the Warden's House, has been lined with plywood to prevent damage from falling plaster.

The comprehensive refurbishment of Flat 1, 49 Thomas Street was managed by the Cirencester Housing Society and completed with the exception of items requiring Listed Building Consent. These items are the replacement of the sitting room and bathroom windows, secondary glazing in the kitchen and bedroom, and the fitting of an extractor fan in the bathroom window. The cost of the refurbishment of Flat, the common areas for Flats 1 and 2 and work to the garden cost approx. £26,000.

In the 2016 Annual Report we noted that we had agreed to enter into an agreement with Cirencester Housing Society to manage the flats and to manage the refurbishment of Flat 1. This agreement was agreed and signed on 28 April 2017 and the Cirencester Housing Society took over the management of Flats 1 and 2 on 1 June 2017.

We will continue to be involved with the selection of the tenants for this affordable housing. This arrangement should relieve the premises committee of Cirencester Meeting and the Area Meeting trustees of the day-to-day responsibility of the letting and maintenance of these properties. Trustees will still have ultimate responsibility.

Siddington Burial Ground. Plans for development on land near to the Burial Ground were received by Cotswold District Council (CDC) in November 2017. Cirencester Meeting and the trustees have written to the Planning Department of CDC asking for assurance that the proposed building would do nothing to impair the historic link between early Quakerism in Gloucestershire, Roberts House and the Quaker Burial Ground. The application has subsequently been withdrawn.

Gloucester Meeting House

As reported in 2016, Gloucester Meeting is small and unable to appoint a convenor of the Premises Committee. A trustee from another Local Meeting agreed to be the convenor of the Premises Committee for that year. This arrangement continued for 2017. For the same reason the Warden's Link (the warden's line manager), was appointed from another local meeting.

This difficulty has now been resolved by appointing a company of surveyors to both market and manage the premises on behalf of the trustees. In 2018 The Lodge will be let to provide income to offset the cost of this option. The posts of warden and cleaner have become redundant. This change has now been implemented. (January 2018). More information is in section 1 of this report.

The nineteenth century mechanical wooden screen between the two main rooms, has vertical sliding deal panelling occupying the full height within arched openings, the central

one wider and with a depressed arch and containing shutters which slide down as well as up. The mechanism has been faulty for some years. This has been repaired with the aid of generous grant funding.

The central heating boiler and heating controls have required repair.

The Lodge

Little work has been required to the Lodge in 2017. The gas boiler required maintenance and a maintenance contract has been agreed.

Due to the posts of warden and cleaner having become redundant, the Lodge will be let to a private tenant once essential redecoration and repairs have been carried out.

Nailsworth.

The plan to demolish a redundant outbuilding in need of repair and replace it with a wooden building that can be used by both our young people and adults was finally agreed with the local District Council. Conditions were imposed to ensure the health of a mature Beech tree. This proved difficult, but the major building work was completed in December 2017. The building has subsequently been named as The Beech Hut.

There was a burst water main to 2, Quaker Close. This has been repaired.

The Landlord's Report stated that the bathroom of 1 Quaker Close, the warden's house, had mould on the ceiling, leaking around the shower screen. There was also a draft coming up from the cellar into the living room.

Painswick.

A Quinquennial survey and report were provided in January 2017. The Quinquennial work was completed in November 2017. It included replacement roof lights above the first-floor kitchen and toilet, insulation of the roof voids, insulation and plastering of the first-floor kitchen, cleaning all gulleys and down pipes and overhaul the main entrance doors. This work was funded by Area Meeting.

Painswick Meeting funded improvements to the first-floor kitchen. This included new kitchen units, sink, improved plumbing and electrical services, flooring and decorating.

The secondary glazing in the library was installed. This was an outstanding item from 2014-15.

APPROVED by the trustees on

SIGNED by
Val Kirby, Clerk to the Trustees

Sarah Eilbeck
Treasurer

John Geale.....
Assistant Treasurer