

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Quaker Meeting Trustees
Annual Report and Accounts 2022



Charity Number 1175399
Clerk to Trustees,
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1. Officers during 2022

Clerking Team:

Lynda Prescott	Worcester Local Meeting
Martin Layton	Bewdley Local Meeting

Assistant Clerk for Membership and Data Protection:

Colin Billett	Bewdley Local Meeting
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Treasurer:

Rachael Swancott Boon	Shrewsbury Local Meeting
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Area Meeting Trustees who served during 2022:

Marilyn Foxall (Clerk)	Bewdley Local Meeting
Rachael Swancott Boon (Treasurer)	Shrewsbury Local Meeting
Peter Bevan	Malvern Local Meeting
Rae Evans	Telford Local Meeting
Paul Mountain	Worcester Local Meeting

Custodian Trustee:

Friends Trusts Ltd., Registered Charity 237698
173-177 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ

Bankers to the Area Meeting held accounts:

TSB, Church Stretton Branch.

COIF Charity Funds, CCLA Investment Management Ltd. 80 Cheapside, London, EC2V 6DZ

In addition, each of the local constituent meetings of the Area Meeting has one or more bank accounts that they manage.

2. Information and Governance:

Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Quaker Meeting began operating as a Registered Charity from 1st January 2014 as Charity number 1155482. With effect from 26th October 2017, it re-registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1175399.

The Charity was established for the advancement of religious and other charitable purposes that derive from, or bear witness to, the principles and practices of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), within Worcestershire and Shropshire.

Quaker Faith & Practice, the book of discipline of Britain Yearly Meeting, governs the Area Meeting's affairs.

The Area Meeting appoints the Trustees of the charity following nominations from the Nominations Committee. These appointments are without financial remuneration.

The Annual Report recognises the requirement of Britain Yearly Meeting and the Charity Commission to outline the Public Benefit of the charity as indicated in Charity Commission publication April 2017 '*Telling your story well: public benefit reporting by charities*'.

The template offered by *Quaker Faith & Practice* (5th Edition), Chapter 14, is used to compile this report.

2.1 Trustees normally meet at least four times a year. All meetings are conducted according to Quaker business method. In 2022 trustees had seven meetings and the following items of business were considered, details are available in the minutes of these meetings:

Trustees met on the following dates:

11th January 2022, 22nd January 2022, 8th March 2022, 26th April 2022, 24th May 2022, 12th July 2022 and 22nd November 2022.

Matters considered at Trustees' Meetings included: new and revised Policy Documents, Record Keeping, Repairs to Coalbrookdale Burial Ground, AM and LM accounts and annual reports to Friends' House and the Charity Commission.

3. Public Benefit Achievements and Activities within the Area Meeting in 2022

3.1 Membership information for 2022

Tabular Statement

Applications for membership had been very much reduced during 2022, with just one very welcome addition to Bewdley.

There was no movement into the Area Meeting. We had one resignation from Worcester, and a similar number of deaths as in previous years, one in Worcester, two in Telford and two in Malvern. There were two transfers out, both from Bewdley and no transfers in. There was one 'movement within Area Meeting', which was a Bewdley Friend who is now 'unattached', perhaps something to ponder for the future.

Name of Local Meeting	Adults
BEWDLEY	29
CHURCH STRETTON	11
MALVERN	28
SHREWSBURY	34
TELFORD	31
WORCESTER	34
UNATTACHED	2
Area Meeting Total	169

3.2 Strengthening the life and witness of Quaker Meetings

During 2022 all Local Meetings gradually returned to holding Meetings for Worship in the manner of Friends, with growing numbers of individuals gathering in person to worship together. During 2022, some Local Meetings experienced a drop in the numbers of Friends attending their Meetings for Worship. All Meetings did their best to be inclusive, support absent Friends, and stay in touch with each other.

Whilst most Friends welcomed the opportunity to return to in person gatherings, for some it was more challenging and they welcomed the opportunity of continuing to worship online, particularly during blended Meetings at Bewdley, Telford and Worcester. Shrewsbury Local Meeting moved to a pattern of alternating in person worship with online zoom meetings, to facilitate Friends' differing needs. Malvern and Church Stretton continued to meet in person for worship.

Church Stretton Friends held a number of meetings relating to inclusion, sharing their experiences, helped by Mary Martin who has worked on issues of inclusion elsewhere in Britain Yearly Meeting.

In addition to their Sunday Worship, Telford Friends held Thursday Meetings for Worship and monthly Meetings for Worship in Bridgnorth. They had a meeting for learning exploring Friends' individual gifts and, also created a book they call 'Quaker Lives Looking Back' recording the lives of Telford Friends who have died.

To lay a good foundation for their Meeting's health, Malvern Meeting held a residential weekend at Holland House in March 2022. Shrewsbury Meeting held monthly 'Discussions with Friends' and hosted a performance of 'Lover of Souls', written and performed by Lynn Morris of the Journeyman Theatre Company, a 'dramatic evocation of the life of Elizabeth Hooten: the first woman Quaker'.

The Area Meeting (mid-week) Meeting for Worship continued to be held online, each week.

Elders and Pastoral Care Friends ensured that regular readings from *Advices and Queries*, and *Quaker Faith & Practice* were shared during worship and Area Meeting for Worship for Business.

Bewdley, Church Stretton and Telford Friends regularly involved their Childrens' Meetings in worship. Malvern's 'Little Friends' Meeting for young children continued to be held in the afternoon of the first Sunday of the month. Telford's Children and Young People's committee were pleased to see their children's group meeting more frequently, with activities focused on the BYM commitment to sustainability. In September 2022, Area Meeting's Advocate for Children and Young People organised an all age walk and picnic at Bewdley Meeting House.

For details of these events see Local Meeting reports in appendix 1.

3.3 Spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Society

In June, Area Meeting organised a meeting for learning on 'Death and Dying' led by Hugh McMichael, a Pastoral Care Friend.

During 2022 all Local Meetings gradually returned to their normal variety of activities.

Bewdley Friends held an exhibition of art and craft they had created during lockdown. In September they also hosted a performance of 'Breeding Grounds', a play about sustainability written and performed by Journeymen Theatre.

Church Stretton Friends contributed a regular monthly article to the 'Church Stretton Focus' and joined in ecumenical activities with other churches.

Malvern Friends continued to fund and deliver their 'Active Peace Education Programme' working in seven local schools. One Malvern Friend was interviewed twice by local radio talking about 'opening their meeting house to Ukrainians' and the second time talking about 'White Poppies'.

Shrewsbury Local Meeting held an Experiment with Light group in most months during 2022.

Telford Friends appointed a working group to look at publicising their local meeting. They also hosted a performance of *Lover of Souls*, by Journeyman's theatre, raising money for their chosen charity. Telford Friends' book club were busy reading a variety of books, including several that explored the themes of equality, diversity and integrity. A Worcester Friend was involved in Worcester 'Churches Together'.

For details of all these events and more, see Local Meeting reports, in Appendix.

3.4 Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad

During 2022 Local Meetings were more able to return to activities undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering. Some of these activities are given as examples below.

Some Bewdley Friends and their families were active in their local Refugee Support Group. In April, Malvern Friends raised over £900 by hosting a Ukrainian Supper. They regularly opened the Meeting House for refugees to meet socially and learn English, with a creche provided. They have also maintained a link with Long Lartin high security prison. Telford Local Meeting continued to support and work with the local charity STAY, which provides homes for homeless young people and helps them to prepare to live independently. Telford Friends continued to help run the food bank in Broseley and gave to other local food banks. Their fellowship of Healing group supported a Friend working at the Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary cooking group. Shrewsbury Friends extensively supported and welcomed their local Syrian refugees. They also allowed groups such as Sea Change Trust and Sapphire self-harm support group free use of their Meeting House. Worcester Friends became involved in helping and teaching English to Ukrainian refugees who had been moved to Worcester.

In January, Area Meeting held a talk on 'Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture' led by Jane Laxton and Barbara Forbes, two Q-CAT trustees.

Following the July Area Meeting for Business, a group of Area Meeting Friends met to suggest ways of taking forward actions on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Anti-Racism.

Wider participation is also evidenced by Local Meeting Friends being appointed to central Quaker work at Britain Yearly Meeting.

For full details of the work being carried out by Local Meetings see Appendix.

3.5 Funding our Concerns

In 2022 Local Meetings contributed their quota of financial support to Britain Yearly Meeting.

Most Local Meetings made some donations or grants to their chosen concerns. Malvern Friends funded their Active Peace Education Project in local schools, Bewdley Friends gave money to their local Asylum Seekers Support Group and Telford Friends gave individually to the Afghanistan crisis, Woodbrooke and Favela Brass. Church Stretton have donated to several appeals and charities, such as Ukraine Appeal, Sea Change Trust and Shrewsbury Ark.

Local Friends continued to make individual donations to Quaker led charities and other charities of particular interest to Friends, including the support of asylum seekers and refugees and foodbanks.

Bewdley, Malvern, Shrewsbury and Worcester Local Meetings have returned to letting out their meeting houses as venues to local support groups and those whose activities are aligned to our Quaker concerns.

3.6 Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance for those in need and for education.

Elders, Pastoral Care Friends, and other Friends actively shared in the care of vulnerable Friends and endeavoured to involve everyone in Worship and social activities.

A variety of methods were used to support Friends including those with financial need, by assisting individuals with financial aid, helping those applying for grants or signposting to other sources of funding such as charitable bequests.

Local Meetings also created a variety of opportunities for social contact, such as shared lunches, a film or drama production. Telford Friends had local walks, a 'cuppa and chat' after the last Thursday meeting in each month and Church Stretton Friends encouraged all Friends of their meeting to be involved in arranging activities for their monthly Childrens' meeting.

Fellowship of Healing groups continued to meet in person and kept contact with the people on their lists.

Specific ongoing assistance to Local Meetings continues to be provided by Area Meeting hardship fund.

3.7 Maintaining and developing Quaker meeting houses as places of public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world.

Church Stretton and Telford Friends do not have their own meeting houses.

Church Stretton Friends continue to rent appropriate rooms in Church Stretton.

Telford Friends hold a licence to worship in Meeting Point House (an ecumenical building). This licence is due for renewal in 2025 and following negotiations it has been agreed to renew it. The intention is to move Telford meetings for worship to the 'Old Chapel' now renamed 'The Octagon'.

Bewdley, Malvern, Shrewsbury and Worcester Friends have meeting houses which continue to be well maintained with regular reviews of their condition being made. All our meeting houses are let or offered as places for groups to meet and Worcester Friends recently made their meeting house available during Worcester Pride as a quiet space.

3.8 Administering and maintaining our organisation and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting

Area Meeting met eight times during 2022. Six Meetings for Worship for Business were held online on Zoom, on in person and one blended in person and online. Representatives from each Local Meeting attended all the Area Meeting's Meetings for Worship for Business.

All Local Meetings held their own regular Meetings for Worship for Business.

Local Meetings had representatives on Area Meeting and Britain Yearly Meeting committees. A Church Stretton Friend has continued working with Friends from Wales (Symud Ymlaen), Southern Marches and Scotland.

In November, Hilary Topp was appointed as local Development Worker for the West Midlands and Northwest England (South), covering our Area Meeting and four others.

Area Meeting held a meeting for learning in November, on the Book of Discipline Revision led by Rosie Carnall, Mary Woodward and Sally Kikaya, three members of the Book of Discipline revision committee.

3.9 Safeguarding and Health and Safety Policies

Trustees were satisfied that Area Meeting and constituent Local Meetings complied with their responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in accordance with Area Meeting's Safeguarding Policy, health and safety legislation.

3.10 Sustainability Considerations

Friends in Local Meetings were encouraged to act on the growing concern for the welfare of Planet Earth and to adopt sustainable practices where possible both collectively and individually.

Bewdley Friends continued to monitor their meeting house for fuel efficiency and were helped by the intelligent heating system.

Malvern Friends continued to use entirely green electricity and the destratification fans were used regularly before meeting for worship.

Shrewsbury Friends have solar PV panels on the roof of their meeting house that generated electricity throughout the year.

Worcester Friends replaced the heating system in their meeting house with a new boiler which is energy efficient. They continued to be involved in the Worcester Grassroots Alliance, which is a coalition of local organisations promoting low and/or zero-carbon development throughout the city.

4. Financial Review

Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Meeting
Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2022

	NOTES	1 Unrestricted AM Central Funds	2 3 Unrestricted Local Funds	4 Total Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
Incoming Resources								
Donations, legacies, and similar		200	43,310		413		43,923	37,963
Income from activities to generate funds			33,213				33,213	8,400
Investment income		21	3,502				3,523	3,260
Quaker Activities			1,060				1,060	0
Other Income			21,534				21,534	3,092
Total incoming resources		221	102,619	102,840	413		103,253	52,715
Resources expended								
Costs of Quaker activities		1,702	27,178				28,880	17,084
Grants and donations		129	15,600				15,729	11,172
Costs of generating funds			13,876		950		14,826	9,948
Support Costs		2,999	1,655				4,654	19,398
Governance			25,383				25,383	6,702
Total resources expended		4,830	83,691	88,521	950		89,471	64,303
Net incoming resources before transfers		-4,609	18,928	14,319	-537		13,782	-11,587
Transfers								
Transfers between funds (Quota)		6,960	-6,960				0	0
Other Transfers between Meetings								
Other transfers			-8				-8	
Net incoming resources before revaluations		2,351	11,960	14,311	-537		13,774	-11,587
Gains (losses) on investments			-10,374				-10,374	10,618
Net movement in funds		2,351	1,586	3,937	-537		3,400	-970
Revaluation of Property								
Total funds brought forward, 1 January	6	811,576	259,049		653		1,071,278	1,072,248
Prior year adjustment								1
Total funds carried forward, 31 December		813,927	260,635	1,074,562	116		1,074,678	1,071,279
These balances are held as:								
Total fixed assets		800,000	74,936				874,936	895,311
Net current assets		13,928	185,698		116		199,742	175,969
Net assets		813,928	260,635	1,074,563	116		1,074,679	1,071,279
Acting as agent								
B/Fwd			839				839	1,573
In	5		4,487				4,487	6,657
Out			5,149				5,149	7,391
C/Fwd		0	176	176	0		176	839

Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Meeting
Balance Sheet Summary as at 31st December 2022

		Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	Total 2022	Total 2021
		Central	Local	Special		
	Notes	1	2 3	4		
Fixed assets						
Land and buildings	6	800,000.00			800,000.00	800,000.00
Fixtures and fittings					0.00	0.00
Investments			74,936.24		74,936.24	95,310.68
Total fixed assets		800,000.00	74,936.24	0.00	874,936.24	895,310.68
Current assets						
Debtors			3,380.00		3,380.00	1,853.00
Short term deposits		1,380.00	137,825.97		139,205.97	117,830.26
Cash at bank and in hand		12,547.00	44,688.79	116.00	57,351.79	56,827.80
Total current assets		13,927.00	185,894.76	116.00	199,937.76	176,511.06
Current liabilities						
Creditors within one year			196.00		196.00	542.00
Creditors after one year			0.00		0.00	0.00
Net current assets		13,927.00	185,698.76	116.00	199,741.76	175,969.06
Net assets		813,927.00	260,635.00	116.00	1,074,678.00	1,071,279.74

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Note 1. Unrestricted funds, the centrally managed accounts
Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended December 31 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted General	Designated Extension	Total 2022	Total 2021
Incoming Resources					
Contributions (and tax reclaimed)				0.00	1305.00
Bank interest on deposits					
Dividends on shares, etc.		21.14		21.14	0.26
Total Incoming Resources before transfers		21.14	0.00	21.14	1305.26
Total Incoming Resources		21.14	0.00	21.14	1305.26
Resources Expended					
Costs of Quaker activities					
Children and young people	1	650.00		650.00	900.00
Committees and conferences				0.00	345.00
BYM Gathering					
Refund of expenses to Trustees	2a	217.00		217.00	0.00
Refund of expenses to Officers, etc.	2b	335.00		335.00	22.45
Quaker Quest					
Child Protection					
Other costs of Quaker activities	3	500.00		500.00	179.99
Total costs of Quaker activities		1702.00	0.00	1702.00	1447.44
Grants, subscriptions, donations					
.... to BYM					
.... to ecumenical and interfaith bodies					
.... Woodbrooke					
.... CCPAS/Thirty One Eight	4	129.00		129.00	129.00
.... To Individuals					
YFGM				0.00	75.00
Total costs of grants, etc		129.00	0.00	129.00	204.00
Governance and Support costs					
Insurance excess paid					
Insurance - AM wide		2477.65		2477.65	1983.48
Professional fees		325.00		325.00	3258.00
Trustee meetings					
General support costs		195.89		195.89	418.99
Total costs of support and governance		2998.54	0.00	2998.54	5660.47
Total Resources Expended before transfers		4829.54	0.00	4829.54	7311.91
Transfers to and from Local Meetings					
Receipt of Quotas from Local Meetings		-6960.00		-6960.00	-7000.00
Donations from LM's		-200.00		-200.00	
Total Transfers to Local Meetings		-7160.00	0.00	-7160.00	-7000.00
Prior Year Adjustments					
Total resources expended		-2330.46	0.00	-2330.46	311.91
Revaluation of Property					
Net movement in funds		2351.60	0.00	2351.60	993.35
Total funds brought forward 1 January		804912.70	6663.00	811575.70	810582.35
Total funds carried forward 31 December		807264.30	6663.00	813927.30	811575.70
These funds were held as follows:					
Fixed Assets					
Property				800000.00	800000.00
Current Assets					
COIF deposit account				1380.00	1380.00
Lloyds TSB current account				12547.30	10195.70
				13927.30	11575.70
less Current Liabilities					
Creditor					
Net current assets				13927.30	11575.70
Total Assets				813927.30	811575.70

Note 2. Local Unrestricted Funds (designated)
Statement of Financial Activities for the Year ended 31st December 2022

								Total	Total
	Notes	Bewdley	Church Stretton	Malvern	Shrews'y	Telford	Worcester	2022	2021
Incoming Resources									
Donations, legacies, and similar		4,746	1,175	13,697	4,244	6,076	13,371	43,310	36,325
Income from activities to generate funds		6,694		4,085	4,200		18,235	33,213	8,400
Investment income		212		2,296	704	28	261	3,502	3,260
Quaker Activities				1,060				1,060	0
Other income		1,611		10,180	9,733	10		21,534	3,092
Total incoming resources		13,264	1,175	31,319	18,880	6,114	31,867	102,619	51,077
Resources expended									
Costs of Quaker activities		586	30	16,443	248	305	9,567	27,178	15,065
Grants and donations		4,000	259	6,265	1,976	3,100		15,600	10,968
Premises and paid employees		9,021		5,276	10,286	800		25,383	18,979
Costs of generating funds				0			13,876	13,876	9,948
Management and administration			1,023	632				1,655	1,461
Total resources expended		13,607	1,312	28,616	12,510	4,205	23,443	83,691	56,420
Net incoming resources before transfers		(343)	(137)	2,703	6,370	1,910	8,424	18,928	(5,343)
Transfers									
Transfers to AM (quota)		(1,200)	(440)	(1,200)	(1,360)	(1,320)	(1,440)	(6,960)	(7,000)
Transfers from Restricted Funds									
Other transfers							(8)	(8)	
Net incoming resources before revaluations		(1,543)	(577)	1,503	5,010	590	6,976	11,960	(12,343)
Gains (losses) on investments				(10,374)				(10,374)	10,618
Net movement in funds		(1,543)	(577)	(8,872)	5,010	590	6,976	1,585	(1,725)
Total funds brought forward, 1 Jan		33,929	12,889	103,240	61,624	12,535	34,832	259,049	260,774
Prior year adjustment								0	0
								0	1
Total funds carried forward, 31 Dec		32,387	12,313	94,369	66,634	13,125	41,808	260,635	259,050
These balances are held as:									
Total fixed assets				74,936				74,936	95,311
Net current assets		32,387	12,313	19,432	66,634	13,125	41,808	185,698	163,740
Net assets		32,387	12,313	94,369	66,634	13,125	41,808	260,635	259,051

Note 3. Local Unrestricted Funds (designated)
Balance Sheet Summary as at 31st December 2022

								Total	
	Notes	Bewdley	Church Stretton	Malvern	Shrews'y	Telford	Worcester	2022	2021
Total fixed assets									
Land and Buildings								0	0
Fixtures and Fittings								0	0
Investments				74,936				74,936	95,311
Total Fixed Assets		0	0	74,936	0	0	0	74,936	95,311
Current Assets									
Debtors		128			226		3,026	3,380	1,853
Short term deposits		26,367		18,273	56,167		37,019	137,826	116,450
Cash at bank and in hand		5,892	12,313	1,159	10,398	13,145	1,783	44,689	45,979
Total Current Assets		32,387	12,313	19,432	66,790	13,145	41,828	185,895	164,282
Current Liabilities									
Creditors within one year					156	20	20	196	542
Creditors after one year								0	0
Total Current Liabilities		0	0	0	156	20	20	196	542
Net Current Assets		32,387	12,313	19,432	66,634	13,125	41,808	185,699	163,740
Net Assets		32,387	12,313	94,369	66,634	13,125	41,808	260,635	259,051

Note 4. Restricted Funds
Statement of Financial Affairs for the Year ended 31st December
2022

	Notes	Stay startup packs	Total 2022	Total 2021
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary Income				
Contributions (and tax reclaimed)		413	413	333
Total voluntary income		413	413	333
Activities for generating funds				
Book and card sales				
Total from generating funds		0	0	0
Investment income				
Bank interest on deposits				
Total from investments		0	0	0
Other incoming resources				
Total other incoming resources		0	0	0
Total incoming resources		413	413	333
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Grants, subscriptions, donations				
... to other bodies				
Total costs of grants, etc		0	0	0
Costs of Quaker Activities		950	950	571
Costs of generating funds		0	0	0
Support costs				
Building improvements				
Bank charges				
Other support costs - professional fees				
Total direct support costs		0	0	0
Total resources expended		950	950	571
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		(537)	(537)	(238)
Designated Transfers:				
From AM			0	0
To another fund of the managing LM			0	0
		0	0	0
Net incoming/outgoing resources after transfers		(537)	(537)	(238)
Gains/losses on investments		0	0	0
Net movement in funds		(537)	(537)	(238)
Total funds brought forward, 1 January		653	653	892
Prior Year's adjustment				
Total funds carried forward, 31 December		116	116	653
These funds are held as:				
Fixed assets: Investments				
Total fixed assets		0	0	0
Current assets: Debtors		0	0	0
Short-term deposits (e.g. COIF)				
Cash at bank and in hand				
Total current assets		0	0	0
<i>Less creditors</i>				
Net current assets		0	0	0
Net assets		0	0	0

Note 5 - Acting as agent

	Central	Bewdley	Ch Stretton	Malvern	Shrewsbury	Telford	Worcester	Total 2022	Total 2021
Received									
Held over previously				607.79		231.00		838.79	1,572.79
Collections					4,486.63			4,486.63	6,656.75
	0.00	0.00	0.00	607.79	4,486.63	231.00	0.00	5,325.42	8,229.54
Paid Over				607.79	4,330.63	211.00		5,149.42	7,390.75
Net Held	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	156.00	20.00	0.00	176.00	838.79

The table above shows money collected by local meetings Acting as Agents. Bewdley, Church Stretton and Worcester meetings keep any special collections completely separate from their normal finances and do not act as agents

Note 6. Land and Buildings

The Value of Worcester Friends Meeting House appears in the accounts of Worcestershire Friends Charity.

The values of Bewdley, Malvern and Shrewsbury Meeting Houses appear in the accounts of the Area Meeting. The Area Meeting Trustees act as Managing Trustees for these properties, with Friends Trusts Ltd. as custodian trustees. Local Meetings have been asked to update the insurance valuation with an actual valuation once every 5 years as part of their quinquennial survey, but all properties were professionally valued at the end of 2019 as follows:

Valuation of Property

Market values:	£
Bewdley FMH	150,000
Malvern FMH	350,000
Shrewsbury FMH	<u>300,000</u>
Total	<u>800,000</u>

Insurance (rebuild) values:	£
Bewdley FMH	217,000
Malvern FMH	308,000
Shrewsbury FMH	<u>350,000</u>
Total	<u>875,000</u>

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

The Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for accounting by Charities has been followed in so far as it is applicable to these accounts.

Income and expenditure

Accruals and prepayments have been included in the income and expenditure where the amounts are significant and their inclusion will give greater clarity to the financial statements.

Contributions and grants

Contributions and grants are treated as income in the year in which they are received.

Transfers

Movements of money between funds are shown as transfers, and consist of the Quota payable by local meetings to the area meeting, and any other voluntary transfers between meetings.

Interest, dividends, rents, and legacies

These are all taken into account when received and treated as income in the year.

Direct taxation

All the activities of the Area Meeting are charitable and therefore exempt from income tax, capital gains and inheritance tax. There are no trading profits.

Fund accounting

In order to differentiate how Funds can be used, they are categorized according to the following definitions:

Unrestricted: Funds which are freely available for any purpose of the Area Meeting. Designated Funds are a subcategory of these. They have been set aside for specific purposes, but they remain at the discretion of the Area Meeting which can change this purpose at any time.

Restricted: Funds which have been earmarked by the donor or testator for certain specific purposes.

Land and buildings

These consist of the meeting houses which are held for the furtherance of the Area Meeting's charitable objects. **See Note 9**

Investments

Investments are included at their market or estimated realizable value at 31 December.

Trustees remuneration

No Trustee received any remuneration in respect of service given during the year.

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Members of
Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Meeting**

I report on the accounts of the Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Meeting for the year ended 31st December 2022, which are set out on pages 1 to 10.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and independent examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act;
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records; and
- to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:  FCA

Date: 03/10/23

Appendix

Local Meetings - Annual Review

ANNUAL REPORTS 2022

Quaker Local Meeting Annual Report 2022 for Bewdley Local Meeting

(1) Strengthening the life and witness of our Meeting

Friends were thankful to join and connect via online blended meetings for worship which reduced some of the isolation for some and gave opportunity for Friends less able or in caring roles to meet together. We continued with blending meetings throughout 2022, with always a few people joining online.

Attendance for MFW is down from pre covid numbers and some members expressed deep concern about the state of the meeting following lockdown. Elders tried to bring healing for all of the members and attenders by circulating a survey in November 2021. The results were looked at in depth in January 2022. There seemed to be some divide between those worshipping on zoom and those in the meeting house. Our community and Elders all suffered during lockdown. Elders have been exploring ways to build our community and are in the process of setting up regular monthly extended periods of worship during 2023.

(2) Spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Society.

An exhibition was held at MH of creative work undertaken by members and attenders during lockdown. The exhibition was well attended and there was a further presentation in April as a contribution to Wyre Forest Susfest.

In September we organised a performance of 'Breeding Grounds' by Journeymen Theatre, a very well attended event at St George's Hall in Bewdley.

Two young people joined in the National Program & BYM, some online and in person and attended regularly.

(3) Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad

Some members and their families are active in the Refugee Support Group and shared time together at the MH over the Christmas period. Bewdley Friends are currently small in number and unable to actively engage, but we were able to give significant financial support to Wyre Forest Supports Asylum Seekers for their work with young men in local hotels.

(4) Funding our concerns.

Bewdley Friends continue to give on a regular basis, and our efforts to maintain our meeting house in good order have produced significant income from lettings.

(5) Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance for those in need and for education.

The lack of active pastoral carers during the year has been a difficulty, but Elders have been keen to keep in touch with members not regular attending, as have a number of Friends. We endeavour to be aware of any in financial need.

(6a) Maintaining and developing Quaker Meeting Houses as places of public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world.

Premises committee has met regularly throughout the year and have kept the building in good repair and ensured the garden is well looked after. Regular safety checks have been conducted.

We have had a defibrillator installed in the meeting house. Blinds have been installed in the main meeting room.

(6b) How are we acting sustainably?

We continue to monitor our building for fuel efficiency, and are helped by our intelligent heating system. A number of Friends are engaged with local groups concerned with sustainability.

(7) Administering and maintaining our organisation and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting

Bewdley has found it difficult to fill posts this year, in particular a treasurer, and whilst all the required administration has been completed, it has meant drawing on the help of another Friend in the area meeting. It is hoped that Friends in Bewdley will be able to undertake the necessary roles in the future.

Bewdley Local Meeting continues to make an annual contribution to Britain Yearly Meeting.

In addition, trustees need to be satisfied that we are complying with our responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in accordance with Area Meeting's Safeguarding Policy and fulfilling our duties under health and safety legislation. Could you answer the following questions.

Bewdley meeting has one young member attending regularly, and this member joins the main meeting for worship. Should any new children arrive we hopefully have capacity to restore previous practices – the clerk for instance to do the CRB checks.

8. Are all those working with children appointed in accordance with our policy by:

Procedure	Yes or No + comments
Asking them to complete a helper's form	Yes
Obtaining references where appropriate	Yes

completing a criminal records disclosure	Yes
Providing induction into health and safety and their role	Yes

9. Are there any arrangements in place for supporting and training those working with children?

No formal process at this time.

10. For those with a building: Worcester, Malvern, Shrewsbury, and Bewdley

Have you got the following in place?

	Yes or no	Comments
Accident book	Yes	
Fire Safety signs Fire Evacuation procedure Fire extinguisher/s maintained and up to date.	Yes	Equipment tested weekly, and evacuation tested regularly.
Portable electrical appliance testing	Yes	Regularly.
Health and safety policy reviewed.	Yes	Regularly by Premises Committee.
Warning signs in place.	Yes	
Conditions of use for hirers	Yes	Circulated at least once a year.

ANNUAL REPORTS 2022

Please complete your report letting us know what your Meeting has done in the past year using the following headings from Quaker Faith and Practice 14.04.

These will be consolidated to produce an Annual Report for the Area Meeting as a whole. We don't want a list under each heading but one or two good examples as well as areas for improvement.

Quaker Local Meeting Annual Report 2022

Annual Report for Church Stretton Local Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends: a Local Meeting within Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Meeting.

(1) Strengthening the life and witness of our Meeting

Believing that worship is absolutely vital to the life of our Meeting we have met to worship every Sunday; and all we do flows from the Spirit we discover in worship. We have held a number of meetings relating to inclusion, sharing our experiences, we were helped by the presence of Mary Martin who has worked on issues of inclusion elsewhere in BYM.

(2) Spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Society.

Every month we contribute an article to the 'Church Stretton Focus' which is widely distributed around the town. It is a common experience for non-Quakers you meet, to comment on what you have written. For our December article, we each (including the children) wrote a few sentences about what Christmas meant to us. Several members have affiliations with other churches and we have contributed to joint ecumenical activities.

One of our members has been working with Friends in Wales and the Marches amalgamate their charities into a single CIO to release more energy for Quaker worship, work and witness. The Symud Ymlaen – Moving Forward committee has worked on producing sufficient details, a draft governing document, a draft general MOU and a property MOU to enable the Area Meetings to discern whether they should commit to this. They have now formally committed to join a single charity. She is working on a similar project with General Meeting for Scotland.

(3) Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad

Friends serve often generously and sometimes sacrificially in a number of ways but not always 'wearing a Quaker badge'

(4) Funding our concerns.

We have covered the cost of our regular meetings.

(5) Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance for those in need and for education

We have been active in visiting and supporting those Friends who are not always able to come to meeting for worship.

In addition to often coming to some or all of our regular meetings for worship, on third Sunday of the month we hold children's meeting. Every member of our meeting is involved in this, taking turns to work in pairs to arrange an activity for our two resident children who are often joined by a visiting child. Themes have included posters, plants and people. Being responsible for children's meeting is an enriching experience for the adults as well as the children.

(6a) Maintaining and developing Quaker Meeting Houses as places of public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world.

n/a

(6b) How are we acting sustainably?

We serve fair trade coffee. By using rented accommodation we keep to a minimum our meeting's direct carbon footprint. Our individual members strive to reduce energy use and to recycle.

(7) Administering and maintaining our organisation and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting

Our meeting is represented at almost all Area Meetings and members have accepted Area Meeting responsibilities.

Our meeting made a direct financial contribution to BYM funds, and also contributed indirectly through our contribution to the Area Meeting.

One of our members is on GRYM, the group to review Yearly Meetings and Yearly Meeting Gatherings which has also been asked to review Meeting for Sufferings. Their report was considered by Meeting for Sufferings in November and part of that report was forwarding for the consideration of Yearly Meeting in 2023. (See also second paragraph of 2. above.)

In addition, trustees need to be satisfied that we are complying with our responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in accordance with Area Meeting's Safeguarding Policy and fulfilling our duties under health and safety legislation. Could you answer the following questions.

8. Are all those working with children appointed in accordance with our policy by:

Our decision that our children are part of our meeting, not some separate add on, but fully a part of it, makes the idea of appointing a separate group of Friends to work with them seem artificial, it is the whole meeting's responsibility. This is, perhaps, not

a usual model it makes the helpers form seem odd, the meeting doesn't give Friends much opportunity not to get involved, it's just a part of the life of the meeting.

Procedure	Yes or No + comments
Asking them to complete a helper's form	This had not been done in 2022 but has been done since.
Obtaining references where appropriate	We are such a tight-knit community that references would seldom be appropriate, but we do need to keep this in mind.
completing a criminal records disclosure	Yes
Providing induction into health and safety and their role	No, it's not clear who might induct us as we are all involved.

9. Are there any arrangements in place for supporting and training those working with children?

The whole meeting is involved in working with the children, those who are more confident tend to take the lead, but often the best ideas come from those who are less confident. We learn from each other. There is a children's committee that arranges the rota and encourages Friends to participate.

10. For those with a building: Worcester, Malvern, Shrewsbury, and Bewdley

Have you got the following in place?

	Yes or no	Comments
Accident book		
Fire Safety signs Fire Evacuation procedure Fire extinguisher/s maintained and up to date.		
Portable electrical appliance testing		
Health and safety policy reviewed.		

Warning signs in place.		
Conditions of use for hirers		

ANNUAL REPORTS 2022

Please complete your report letting us know what your Meeting has done in the past year using the following headings from Quaker Faith and Practice 14.04.

We don't want a list under each heading but one or two good examples as well as areas for improvement.

Annual Report for Malvern Quaker Meeting

(1) Strengthening the life and witness of our Meeting

We held a successful residential weekend at Holland House in March. 21 Friends (15 resident) took part. It was a greatly valued and enjoyable event that achieved its aim of helping to know one another better and laying a good foundation for the meeting's health.

Over the year the numbers coming to Meeting for Worship has grown and is now similar to that in the pre-pandemic times. The possibility of holding Blended Meetings has been considered. The meeting house was subsequently connected to the internet but there has been little energy to pursue blended meetings. Occasional shared lunches after Meeting for Worship resumed in July.

There have been no study sessions this year, but we have now had the first of a planned series in 2023 focusing on anti-racism.

'Little Friends' meetings for young children continues to be held in the afternoon of the first Sunday of each month.

(2) Spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Society.

One of our Members has been interviewed twice on the local radio. The first time was about how we were opening up the Meeting House to Ukrainians, following the letter she had printed in the Friend and the second time about White Poppies.

A white poppy wreath was laid during the annual Remembrance ceremonies in Great Malvern as in previous years and, for the first time, at Malvern Wells war memorial.

Our “Active Peace Education” Programme continues to grow, funded by our Meeting. Seven local schools are now involved.

We are comfortable with the overall level at which the Meeting House is being used by hirers, being a compromise between having the building used by the community and gaining reasonable income while not having the premises over-burdened.

(3) Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad

In April we hosted a very successful Ukrainian Supper at the Meeting house which raised over £900. From April through to September we opened the Meeting House for refugees as a social meeting place, and provided a creche while English was taught to Refugees.

We continue to support the relief of suffering through grants and our Special Collections.

Our link with Long Lartin high security prison continues.

(4) Funding our concerns.

Our income and outgoings are balanced disregarding the Active Peace Education (APE) project which is funded from our legacy fund. We received additional funding through the lettings income insurance claim progressed through Area Meeting.

(5) Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance for those in need and for education

The resignation of one Pastoral Care Friend and the illness of another has impacted on the workload of the PCFs given to individual friends. It is their intention to arrange gatherings of their ‘flock’ groups in 2023.

We have continued the practice of sending emails out most Fridays, titled *Malvern Meeting Matters*. These are then used by the presiding Elder for notices (none of the Clerking Team are able to get to Meeting regularly). This keeps friends who are not able to get to Meeting informed about what is going on.

(6a) Maintaining and developing Quaker Meeting Houses as places of public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world.

The Quinquennial Meeting House Survey was carried out in October. This was a very thorough report and it identified a number of building maintenance works. These are being progressed, and include testing the electrics, installing more fire extinguishers, roofing work, professional restoration of the front gate and investigating the installation of a fire alarm that can be remotely monitored.

(6b) How are we acting sustainably?

We have given much consideration in the past about how to make our Meeting House more sustainable and have implemented the measures we feel are appropriate. The latest improvement installed in 2021 was destratification fans, and these are now being used regularly, before Meeting for Worship. We continue to use entirely green electricity.

(7) Administering and maintaining our organisation and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting

The Meeting has a Clerking Team, who share the roles of internal and external communications, and Clerking Meetings for Worship for Business. These have been held on Zoom throughout 2022.

We donate regularly to BYM. These contributions were increased in 2022.

8. Are all those working with children appointed in accordance with our policy by:

Procedure	Yes or No + comments
Asking them to complete a helper's form	N/A – see below
Obtaining references where appropriate	N/A – see below
completing a criminal records disclosure	N/A – see below
Providing induction into health and safety and their role	N/A – see below

At Little Friends the children are always accompanied by a parent or responsible adult and in school the class teacher is in overall responsibility. Therefore we are never responsible for the children's safety and wellbeing.

9. Are there any arrangements in place for supporting and training those working with children?

The leaders of Little Friends are both experienced teachers, Advanced DBS holders, food handlers certificates. Further training not required at present.

10. For those with a building: Worcester, Malvern, Shrewsbury, and Bewdley

Have you got the following in place?

	Yes or no	Comments
Accident book	Yes	
Fire Safety signs Fire Evacuation procedure Fire extinguisher/s maintained and up to date.	Yes	
Portable electrical appliance testing	Yes	
Health and safety policy reviewed.	Yes	
Warning signs in place.	Yes	
Conditions of use for hirers	Yes	

ANNUAL REPORTS 2022

Please complete your report letting us know what your Meeting has done in the past year using the following headings from Quaker Faith and Practice 14.04.

These will be consolidated to produce an Annual Report for the Area Meeting as a whole. We don't want a list under each heading but one or two good examples as well as areas for improvement.

Quaker Local Meeting Annual Report 2022

Annual Report for Shrewsbury Meeting

(1) Strengthening the life and witness of our Meeting

We held Meeting for Worship on Sunday every week, except on December 25th, with the option of joining by Zoom. Initially blended Meetings where Friends could either attend in person or online were held on each Sunday but during the year we moved to a pattern of blended Meetings on the first and third Sundays of the month, with in-person-only Meetings on other Sundays.

Instead of reading out Notices after Meeting, the Clerk sends out a weekly email to all those in the Meeting who wish to receive it, giving details of forthcoming events and other items that might be of interest to Quakers. This allows those who are unable or disinclined to attend Meeting for Worship on Sunday to keep in touch.

The number of Friends attending Meeting for Worship during the covid pandemic had dropped as low as three, but during 2022 they grew back with a typical attendance by the end of the year of twelve to sixteen Friends.

“Discussions with Friends” sessions have been held in most months during the year.

On 12st April we hosted a performance of *Lover of Souls*, written and performed by Lynn Morris – a dramatic evocation of the life of Elizabeth Hooten: the first woman Quaker.

(2) Spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Society.

This year we have focussed on rebuilding worship in our own Meeting and have not felt that we have the capacity for outreach.

An Experiment with Light group met in most months during 2022 and was much appreciated by Members and Attenders of Shrewsbury Quaker Meeting who participated.

(3) Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad

We have given free use of the MH to:

Sea Change Trust

Shropshire supports refugees

Sapphire self-harm support group.

In recent years we have invited Syrian refugees to use the Meeting House for storing clothes and other things and then dispersing them to those in need. The refugees also use the Meeting House for special events, such as a celebration of the birth of a child.

Cath Shaw (an Attender of Shrewsbury Meeting) was the first in Shropshire to offer a home to a family of Ukrainian refugees. The family continue to stay in the Shaw's flat in a converted barn - the arrangement has worked out very well.

Recently the Lion Hotel in Shrewsbury has started to be used to accommodate refugees after they have passed through the reception centre at Manston in Kent. Cath Shaw and her singing group went to sing to the refugees as a welcome. Marion Johnson and Judith Jefferson collected biscuits donated by Sainsbury's and gave them to the refugees as a bonus to enjoy.

At a recent Business Meeting, Shrewsbury Quaker Meeting agreed to collect donated clothes and household items in the Meeting House and deliver batches of them to a hub for refugees in the Riverside Shopping Centre. So far donations have included clothing for young men, new underwear for men and a travel cot.

(4) Funding our concerns.

We have held collections after Meeting for Worship each week, following the practice of collecting during four to six months for a group of three or four charities, selected at a Business Meeting.

We have also given one-off donations from Meeting funds in 2022 to

DEC Ukraine Appeal - £250

DEC Pakistan Appeal - £250 + £65 cash donations from Friends

A Meeting house repair appeal - £50

Sea Change Trust (Psychotherapy charity) - £200

Shrewsbury Ark (Homeless charity) - £200

Woodbrooke - £100

We also give £25 / month to Shrewsbury Food Hub

Friends' have contributed £3535 to BYM and £200 to AM in 2022 with our Meeting acting as agent.

(5) Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance for those in need and for education

Each member and attender in the Shrewsbury Meeting is assigned to a Pastoral Care Friend, who has kept in touch by phone and visits. The needs of those in the Meeting varied considerably with several having a particularly difficult year. We restarted social events after the covid pandemic had receded, including bring-and-share lunches, one of which was a pre-Christmas lunch held at the home of Alison and Andrew Allott. Ruth Anderson has held film showings in her home as another opportunity to meet socially.

(6a) Maintaining and developing Quaker Meeting Houses as places of public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world.

Premises Committee has carried out maintenance tasks on the Meeting House. We use the services of a cleaner each week and of two gardeners as needed.

We continue to rent out the Meeting House to a wide variety of local groups, with rents set at an affordable level. We have weekly jazz and singing groups. A weekly self-harm support group meets at the Meeting House. Many counselling/meditation/yoga sessions are held at the Meeting House. The local community uses MH for children's parties/wakes/environmental meetings. Shropshire Friends of Palestine meetings are held at the Meeting House.

(6b) How are we acting sustainably?

We have solar PV panels on the roof of the Meeting House and have been generating electricity throughout the year.

(7) Administering and maintaining our organisation and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting

Our support of Britain Yearly Meeting has been limited this year. We have contributed funds but have not provided support in terms of time spent in active involvement. This is perhaps something that we should have as a target for the future.

8. Are all those working with children appointed in accordance with our policy by:

We do not currently have children in the Meeting and although some members of the Meeting had CRB checks in the past, they are almost certainly out of date. There seems no prospect of activities for children starting again in the near or medium term so we do not regard the procedures listed in the table as a priority.

Procedure	Yes or No + comments
Asking them to complete a helper's form	N/A
Obtaining references where appropriate	N/A
completing a criminal records disclosure	N/A
Providing induction into health and safety and their role	N/A

9. Are there any arrangements in place for supporting and training those working with children?

We do have one young couple in the Meeting with a baby, but they have withdrawn from all Meeting activities since the baby's birth. So, as explained in the previous answer, we do not have children attending Meeting and our focus is on strengthening worship for adults. If the situation changes, we shall of course put arrangements in place for supporting and training those within the Meeting who are nominated for service with children.

Andrew Allott
(Clerk of Shrewsbury Meeting)

10. For those with a building: Worcester, Malvern, Shrewsbury, and Bewdley

Have you got the following in place?

	Yes or no	Comments
Accident book	Yes	
Fire Safety signs Fire Evacuation procedure Fire extinguisher/s maintained and up to date.	Yes	
Portable electrical appliance testing	Yes	
Health and safety policy reviewed.	Yes	
Warning signs in place.	Yes	
Conditions of use for hirers	Yes	

Quaker Local Meeting Annual Report 2022

Annual Report for Telford Meeting

(1) Strengthening the life and witness of our Meeting

During 2022, Telford Friends, just like those in other meetings, continued to return to more and more in-person activities. However, we continued (and still do) to blend our Sunday meeting for worship and our monthly Friends Fellowship of Healing meetings with those joining by Zoom. When Meeting Point House was closed for a fortnight at the end of the year, our Sunday meeting or worship continued on Zoom.

Our weekly Thursday meeting for worship is continuing. Small numbers of people attend but it is a valuable opportunity for a few who cannot come to meeting on Sundays. The monthly meeting for worship at Bridgnorth has recently moved to new premises.

We received an interesting report from our Children and Young People's committee and are pleased to see the group meeting more often again. Their activities have focussed on the BYM commitment to sustainability (including simplicity, COP26, recycling, endangered species, local and global wildlife). They also learned about Rosa Parks and thought about diversity.

We have continued to offer a suggested reading, usually from *Quaker faith and practice*, and now just once a week. This provides a link with those worshipping at home and those in person. The elders endeavour to give everyone in the meeting the opportunity to select these readings. Some people read their choice aloud during meeting for worship if they feel moved to do so.

Our librarians encouraged us to review our realistic use of the many books in our library. We decided to reduce the number of books to those most likely to be borrowed and the others have been donated to other libraries (where wanted) or charity shops.

We held one meeting for learning exploring our individual gifts.

In response to Area Meeting minute 20.23 *Records of deceased Friends and Testimonies* and the advice in *Quaker faith and practice* 4.29 'that local meetings should write a brief passage for their own records on every member who dies', we have created an ongoing record of our deceased Friends, which we call '*Quaker Lives Looking Back*'. This is in the form of an album in our library and also kept electronically.

Many Friends have commented that our community has remained strong following the pandemic, helped no doubt by individual contacts maintained between Friends as well as all those who serve the meeting in both appointed and informal roles. We are very pleased to have been joined by new attenders during the year.

(2) Spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Society.

During the year we appointed a working group to look at publicising our meeting. They have worked on better signage and our noticeboards at Meeting Point House, our website and local media.

In November, we hosted a powerful performance by Journeyman's Theatre of *Lover of Souls*, a one-woman dramatization of key moments in the life of Elizabeth Hooton, early Quaker and mentor to George Fox.¹ Despite efforts to publicise this event, there was a disappointing audience of only seventeen but the collection for their chosen charities raised £122.00. We were reminded that we will need to 'work harder' to publicise future outreach events.

On World Quaker Day, one Friend used Zoom to join a local meeting in another area in the morning plus a number of meetings in other Yearly Meetings throughout the day, successfully negotiating the time zones! A group of three other Friends visited another meeting in our area meeting in person.

Our book club meeting via Zoom and their choice of books included several that explored equality, diversity and integrity: Brit Bennett's *The Vanishing Half*,

Bernadine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* (both now on the AM resource list), V.S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr Biswas* (about the Trinidadian Indian Community), *The Round House* - Louise Erdrich (about Native American Indians) and Attica Locke's *Bluebird Bluebird* (about racial tensions in modern day rural East Texas)

(3) Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad

Telford Meeting continues to work with the local charity, STAY which provides homes for homeless young people and then helps them prepare to live independently. Telford Friends donate welcome packs, containing essentials including bedding, basic kitchen and dining equipment and toiletries, which the young people can then take with them when they move on to live independently. We are currently able to support ten to twelve young people per year, about 25% of the total found accommodation by STAY.

Friends in Broseley have continued to help run the food bank there and many Friends gave to their local food banks.

Our Friends Fellowship of Healing group has collected donations to support the work of one of our Friends at the Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary **cooking group, which started initially to cook and share dishes and tastes from the many countries represented at their weekly Drop-In. Since the pandemic and the increased number of people living in hotels and on very limited incomes, the offering has become more substantial providing reliably well-cooked and tasty meals.**

Friends in Wellington have supported the Telford and Wrekin Interfaith Council's work by delivering weekly food boxes and helping with the provision of festive meals on Christmas Day.

Our QPSW correspondent has kept us informed about their work.

Other Friends were active in a refugee group, Wellington Peace Garden and arranging Food for Thought talks (as members of Broseley Churches Together). One Friend who cannot get out and about as much as she'd like to now knits Trauma Teddies for Ukraine and refugee children in Britain, through the Women's Institute. The idea is that children who have nothing may find comfort in owning a teddy bear.

Some Friends (individually or in conjunction with national action groups) write letters to people in positions of power hoping to influence important decisions through this personal approach.

Responding to Advices and Queries 42, another Friend volunteers with the Wildlife Trust, helping to preserve and create habitats for plants and animals, and with local walking groups to maintain footpaths and arrange free guided walks for everyone in the local community.

(4) Funding our concerns.

Our special collections run for periods of three months, alternating a local charity with a Quaker one. In 2022 we collected for Quaker Social Action, Refugee Action's emergency fund for Afghanistan crisis, Woodbrooke and Favela Brass. Since the pandemic, we provide details of how to donate to these charities individually but the donations no longer go through our accounts.

We have continued to subscribe to Broseley Churches Together; whereas a reorganisation of the board of Telford Christians Together some years ago led to there being no opportunity for Quakers to be represented on the board. Additionally, our attempt to contact them was not replied to. With some sadness, we decided earlier this year not to renew our membership of this group.

(5) Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance for those in need and for education

During 2022, we were saddened to lose two of our members. One funeral was held in the manner of Friends and the other was a successful combination of Anglican and Quaker elements.

Our pastoral care team (of three Friends appointed by AM and a further three co-opted by Telford Meeting) endeavours to keep in contact with everyone in our meeting, provide assistance to those applying for grants and create opportunities for social contact, such as a local walk and a cuppa and chat after the last Thursday meeting in each month.

(6a) Maintaining and developing Quaker Meeting Houses as places of public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world.

During 2022 discussions took place relating to the continued use of Meeting Point House as our main place of worship. We agreed to continue using Meeting Point House for our Sunday and Thursday Meetings and following negotiations between ourselves and the managers, we will be renewing our licence with them. We agreed early in the year to move permanently to the 'old chapel' which has been renamed 'The Octagon'. A number of requests for fixtures and fittings were agreed by Meeting Point House.

We have remained in contact with Meeting Point trustees through our representative, who presented a brief report to us relating to the current work being carried out by the Meeting Point House Trustees.

Bridgnorth Meeting had to vacate their place of meeting but quickly found new premises, the Baptist Chapel creche.

We continue to contribute to appeals for other Meeting Houses' repairs and building costs.

(6b) How are we acting sustainably?

We continue to hold our meetings as 'blended' which undoubtedly saves some costs relating to travel. We see no change in this arrangement for the foreseeable future.

Individually and personally, we try to make further changes in our lifestyles to try to help the country to reach the COP 26 requirements and save the planet. These include the use of plastic free shops, which are becoming more common, recycling and reusing and being aware of how goods are manufactured and their impact on the carbon footprint of the earth.

As can be seen above, (Section 1) many of the themes included in the Children and Young People's Meetings are to encourage them to think about and act upon sustainability.

(7) Administering and maintaining our organisation and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting

Our Meeting made a contribution to BYM funds in addition to individual donations.

One member regularly hosts/elders the online Meeting for Worship held by Woodbrooke and one member is our Area Meeting representative on Meeting for Sufferings. Some Friends are active in a variety of Quaker registered bodies including: Experiment with Light network, Friends Fellowship of Healing, Quaker Gender and Sexual Diversity Community, Quaker Disability Equality Group and Quaker Music Network. Others give monetary support to a number of other Quaker groups.

In addition, trustees need to be satisfied that we are complying with our responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in accordance with Area Meeting's Safeguarding Policy and fulfilling our duties under health and safety legislation. Could you answer the following questions.

8. Are all those working with children appointed in accordance with our policy by:

Procedure	Yes or No + comments
Asking them to complete a helper's form	No. Only appointed members of our Children and Young People's Committee do this work.
Obtaining references where appropriate	No. Only appointed members of our Children and Young People's Committee do this work.
completing a criminal records disclosure	Yes
Providing induction into health and safety and their role	No

Each member of our Children and Young Peoples Committee has clearance from the DBS scheme. These Friends are appointed through the usual Quaker nomination process so application forms and references are not felt to be needed or appropriate. Health and Safety regulations are the responsibility of Meeting Point House.

9. Are there any arrangements in place for supporting and training those working with children?

We do not provide training but we encourage and support members of our CYP Committee to make use of materials provided by Britain Yearly Meeting and to attend relevant support meetings, courses and conferences.

Our overall programme is decided by the CYP Committee. It is modified as needed to be appropriate for whichever young people attend on any particular Sunday. Each session is planned by the pair of workers who will run the session. If a new worker joins the group, s/he will work initially with a more experienced person.

ANNUAL REPORTS 2022

Please complete your report letting us know what your Meeting has done in the past year using the following headings from Quaker Faith and Practice 14.04.

These will be consolidated to produce an Annual Report for the Area Meeting as a whole. We don't want a list under each heading but one or two good examples as well as areas for improvement.

Quaker Local Meeting Annual Report 2022

Annual Report for *Worcester Local Meeting*

- (1) Strengthening the life and witness of our Meeting:** As we have (hopefully!) finally come out of COVID-related lockdowns, it has been a joy to be sharing worship with Friends in person. We have continued to provide Blended Meetings, as some Friends are unable to join us, and having the Blended Meeting enables those who are unable to attend the Meeting in person the option to still be part of our worshipping community. Our Elders/Pastoral Care Friends are proactive in ensuring that we keep in contact with all Friends and Attenders, further enriching our Meeting.

(2) Spreading the message of Friends and interpreting and developing the thought and practice of the Society. As we have emerged from the pandemic, our Meeting is now once again starting to take a role in spreading our message. We have a Friend who is involved with our local “Churches Together” network, and also with local work on helping refugees from the Ukraine who have been moved to Worcester; another Friend is providing English lessons for some Ukrainian refugees on a weekly basis. Other Friends are involved in a number of organisations locally, including the Worcester Grassroots Alliance, and the local Amnesty International group.

(3) Undertaking Quaker service for the relief of suffering at home and abroad The Meeting nominates a charity each month, which could be a local, national, or international charity. In addition, the Meeting House has been used for a number of poetry events raising both funds for and awareness of several different issues , including the situation in the Ukraine, women’s rights, men’s mental health, and the local foodbank. We hope that this association with the local poetry community will continue.

(4) Funding our concerns. As with many organisations, funding has suffered during pandemic times, particularly lettings of the Meeting House. A small group of Friends have been proactive in marketing the Meeting House as a venue for meetings, training days, and the like, and our income is now starting to grow again.

(5) Providing for the pastoral care of individual members and attenders including assistance for those in need and for education Our Elders & Pastoral Care Friends are a very important part of our Meeting, and are very proactive in providing pastoral care for members and attenders. We do have funds available for relief of need and for education, and we are also able to signpost Friends to other sources of funding, such as charitable bequests.

(6a) Maintaining and developing Quaker Meeting Houses as places of public worship and from which to carry our witness into the world. We have a number of organisations using our Meeting House: information on Friends and what we do is available in the lobby of the building. We have also had open sessions, for instance at last year’s Worcester Pride, where the Meeting House was open for anyone who wanted a quiet space.

(6b) How are we acting sustainably? We continue to act sustainably and responsibly in our use of resources. We have recently replaced the heating

system in the Meeting House with a new boiler which is energy efficient. We continue to be involved with the Worcester Grassroots Alliance, which is a coalition of local organisations looking at promoting sustainability throughout the city.

(7) Administering and maintaining our organisation and contributing to the support of Britain Yearly Meeting

In addition, trustees need to be satisfied that we are complying with our responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in accordance with Area Meeting's Safeguarding Policy and fulfilling our duties under health and safety legislation. Could you answer the following questions.

8. Are all those working with children appointed in accordance with our policy by:

Procedure	Yes or No + comments
Asking them to complete a helper's form	Y
Obtaining references where appropriate	Y
completing a criminal records disclosure	Y
Providing induction into health and safety and their role	Y

9. Are there any arrangements in place for supporting and training those working with children? Support and training will be provided as necessary, including around Safeguarding. We do have a member (Ade Couper) who is responsible for DBS checks, and clerks and elders/pastoral care friends have a good knowledge of Safeguarding policies & procedures.

10. For those with a building: Worcester, Malvern, Shrewsbury, and Bewdley

Have you got the following in place?

	Yes or no	Comments
Accident book	Y	
Fire Safety signs Fire Evacuation procedure Fire extinguisher/s maintained and up to date.	Y	
Portable electrical appliance testing	Y	
Health and safety policy reviewed.	Y	
Warning signs in place.	Y	
Conditions of use for hirers	Y	

