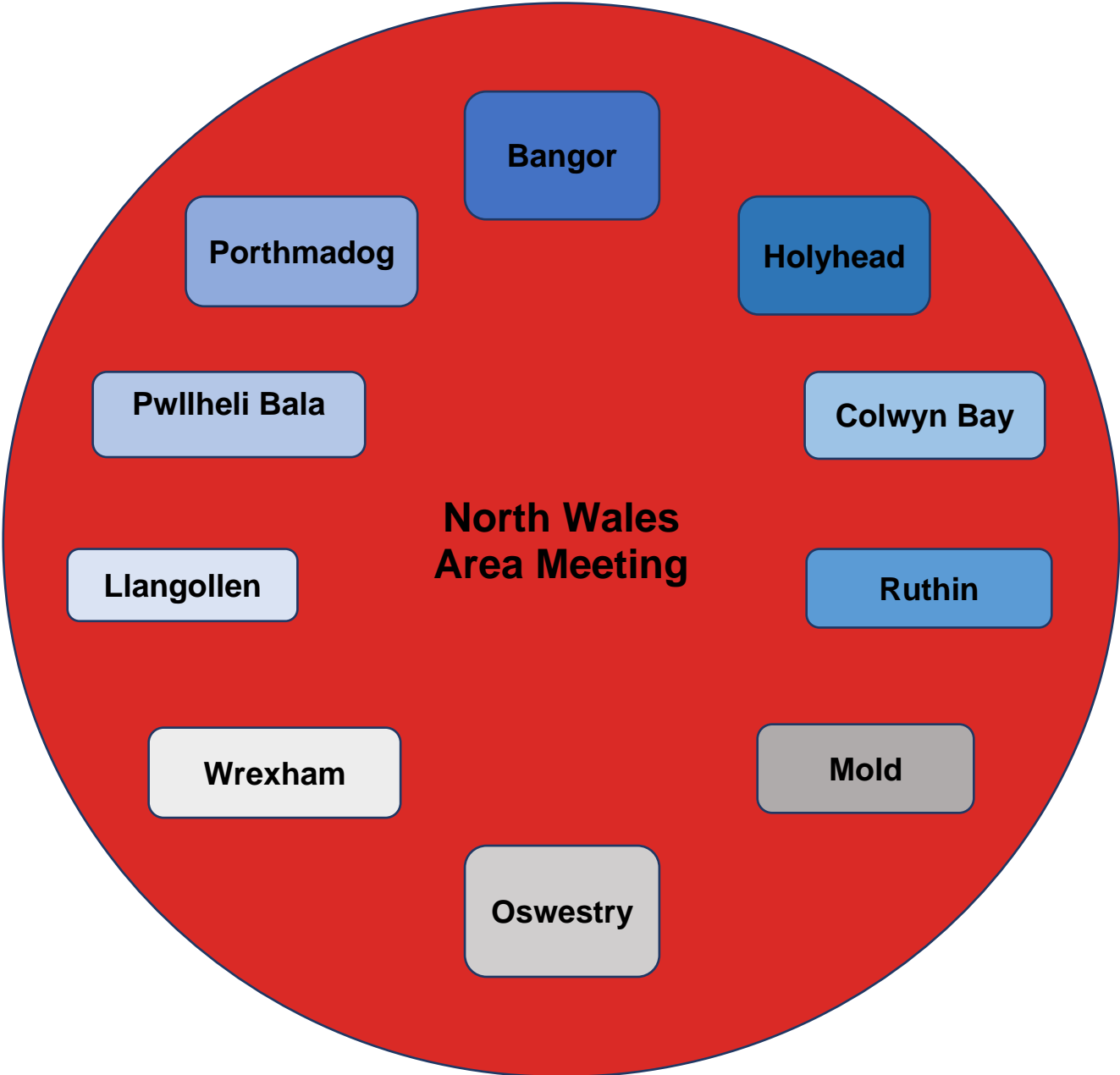


The



Keep It Simple
Instruction Manual
for Handy Friends



Bangor

Porthmadog

Holyhead

Pwllheli Bala

Colwyn Bay

Llangollen

Ruthin

Wrexham

Mold

Oswestry

North Wales
Area Meeting

This DIY manual is merely a guide to working through the Keep It Simple document and its appendices.

Each Area and Local Meeting has its own individual priorities.

The following pages are a suggestion of how the document could be worked through, bit by bit, by a meeting.

The order of the steps can be changed of course, however, Steps 1 & 2 do seem to be the ones to look at to really dig down into how to help ease the busy-ness of meetings.

This guide is offered as a way through the busy-ness to find the path to becoming a community focussed on what matters most.

A quote from page 5 of the Keep It Simple document.

The deep spirituality of worship, silence and stillness and being together as a community of Friends and a social community of friends are what matters the most to us.

Any discernments gained by local meetings after exploring this manual, may also prove valuable to inform area meeting in its own discernment of the Keep It Simple documents.

Step 1

What matters most to your meeting?

Look at the first 3 sections of page 5 of the Keep It Simple document.

The Friends involved were very clear as to what mattered most in our Quaker way of life.

‘The deep spirituality of worship, silence and stillness and being together as a community of Friends and a social community of friends are what matters the most.’

Does your meeting agree?

Pages 8 to 12 will also help with your discussions.

Many of us feel a calling to focus on those things that truly matter but find so much busy-ness gets in the way.

Page 5 asks and answers,

Is anything is set in stone?

‘Not very much as far as procedure goes and even stone can be carved in different ways.’

Can your meeting start with a clean sheet of paper in order to minimise busy-ness?

Can it start carving a blank stone?

By working through the questions raised in section 3 of page 5, to really dig down into the busy-ness of your meeting, you could discover what is essential, what is valued and what can be let go, either temporarily or permanently.

Step 2

Can any roles be shared?

Look at the last section on Page 5 and also pages 15 to 17.

Appendices 1 and 2 will also be helpful and Appendix 3 is possibly the way forward for finance in the future.

Appendix 1 for ideas for a different structure

Appendix 2 for ideas about roles in Area and Local Meetings

Appendix 3 Being a Treasurer – a different way

To help decrease our busy-ness and allow us to focus on what matters most, your meeting could consider sharing some roles with a meeting or meetings near you.

Read through the pages suggested and consider what roles could be shared with another meeting or meetings. If the idea is appealing which meeting would you approach to begin this?

Maybe working through the questions on page 15 will help your discussion.

Appendix 8 – What is a viable meeting? And

Appendix 10 – Resources

may also be useful reading before discussions.

Step 3

Thoughts and Ideas about Spiritual and Pastoral Care and What is Ministry?

The 18 Friends shared the ways spiritual and pastoral care are dealt with in our meetings.

The pooling of ideas brought forth some valuable suggestions.

Pages 23 & 24 set out the ideas and pose some questions to start a discussion.

Some meetings practising shared eldership and pastoral care found that while shared pastoral care worked, the following question needed answering.

How can we make shared eldership work?

Appendices 5 gives an illustrated example of a method of shared pastoral care.

Appendices 6 was the result of worship sharing after a silence when we thought about the question **What is Ministry?**

Could your meeting do this too?

Are we too rigid in our thinking about Ministry?

Are we not rigid enough?

Does everyone feel 'enabled' to minister in your meeting?

Step 4

How do we communicate?

On page 18 the words very specific to Quaker ways are discussed and also other words that were once considered quite acceptable but are now not acceptable to us and society at large.

There is much food for thought in this page. Are we alienating new Friends or potential Friends with our language? It is an interesting starting point for discussion.

In pages 19 & 20 and Appendix 4 the ways we communicate are explored.

In a digital age how can we best make use of up to the minute technology while not leaving anyone left out?

How does your meeting communicate?
Is anyone left out?

Does your meeting engage with

- North Wales Area Meeting
- Crynwyr Cymru/Quakers in Wales
- Britain Yearly Meeting?

Good communication is key to a caring community.
There is much to think about in these pages

Step 5

Building an All-age Meeting

These pages seem to flow naturally on from Step 4.

Look at pages 21 & 22 and Appendix 9 - **How do we build an inclusive meeting?**

Perhaps begin a discussion by asking the first question.
Are we aware of what is going on in the different age groups in Wales and the UK?

How could that knowledge be useful to us?

Interesting and important questions to ask are:
How do younger people communicate?
Have you asked them?

Can a local meeting do all of this alone? Does it need a wider initiative?

Is the following, at the bottom of page 22 true?
If we could just communicate our goings-on to each other somehow, could we not see that we are in fact already an all-age meeting, learn from each other and build on that?

At the end of Appendix 9 a Friend pondered if, in trying to make our meetings larger and more diverse, we were in danger of becoming too caught up in the idea of increasing our numbers. How does your meeting react to this?

Further Steps

The following 3 steps can be explored if your meeting has an appetite for more.

Step 6 Page25 Afterword

Let us reflect upon what we have spoken of
Quotations from Friends in our last session

Is a period of reflection such as the Keep It Simple sessions an important part of the yearly calendar of area and local meetings?

Step 7 Appendix 7

Questions and Thoughts About Owning Property

Is a Meeting House a gift? A valuable resource?

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

Step 8 Appendix 11

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

Does your meeting agree with any of these points?