

## **Report of a zoom meeting held by the Pales Management Group on 5th May 2021**

The remit of the Pales Management Group (PMG) includes engaging with the local community. A zoom meeting for local people was held on May 5<sup>th</sup>, to explain the present situation at the Pales and invite their comments.

Around 30 were present, including: 6 members of PMG; members from two groups who regularly use the building - the Peace choir and the Buddhist group ; several members of the local community council; other local residents; Christine Moore from Addoldai Cymru ( Welsh Chapels Trust).

The present situation was outlined, with the options of 1) major expenditure on improved facilities (rejected by Area Meeting), 2) sale of all or part of the site, 3) gifting to Addoldai Cymru. The costs of both maintaining the site and bringing the cottage up to standard were explained, and the need to free the Area Meeting from further expenditure on the Pales. Area Meeting used the building infrequently, and there was not a local worshipping group able to support it.

Comments and questions

**1.** The special interest and historic significance of the Pales were much appreciated and valued by local people. The Community council had already expressed its wish that the Pales should continue in a form similar to the present. The special cultural events arranged at the Pales over the past few years were appreciated and it was hoped they could continue. The potential of the Pales as a focus for heritage trails was noted, and the opportunity for simple camping. In answer to a question, while a major commercial enterprise was not thought to be appropriate, there was no objection to an income from camping and other activities.

**2.** Christine Moore answered many questions as to how Addoldai Cymru functioned. Addoldai Cymru currently owns 8 chapels in Wales, including three in the Llandrindod area. A first stage is a conservation plan, to prioritise urgent work. The aim is to preserve the buildings and make them available to the local community, in cooperation with their previous owners. Religious services are welcome, and use by other groups such as local choirs. The chapels are managed by informal groups of local people working together with Addoldai Cymru. Creating 'universal access' is an ideal, but depends on funds available.

**3.** Fund raising. It was stressed that this needed relevant expertise and that progress could be made gradually. Suggestions included: further exploration of historic Quaker links with USA; the potential of film to arouse interest; crowd funding (for small sums); possible links with Llandrindod should a community renewal fund application be progressed. Christine Moore explained that she acted as a fundraiser for Addoldai Cymru, and has lots of experience in this field, but that they could also help with applications for grants, should AM wish to retain the site. In answer to an enquiry Christine explained that the National Churches Trust gave grants but only worked with existing worshipping groups. They would not fund the money needed for the cottage.

**4.** Christine Moore considered that the Pales site needed to be treated as a whole. Separate ownership of Meeting House and cottage would not be viable.

**5.** The cost of updating the cottage was discussed. It was explained that the figure of £100,000 was only a rough estimate, but that substantial improvements were needed.

**6.** It was asked how local people could be kept in touch with developments. It was explained that the Pales would be discussed at an Area Meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup> and that it would then be up to the Trustees to decide how to take things forward. If the AM wishes to forward the involvement of Addoldai Cymru, the matter could be raised at a meeting of Addoldai Cymru trustees at the end of May.

The meeting welcomed the suggestion that Chris Robertson would create an email group from those at the meeting, which would be kept in touch with further developments.

Bridget Cherry - Clerk to Pales Management Group