MGW questions and JR's responses (in red), as copied round Trustees on 7/10/25

On 23 Sep 2025, at 09:30, Martin Ward <martin@york56.myzen.co.uk> wrote:

Dear John,

Thank you for all of the documents which you sent through on 29th August. While we were able to discuss these briefly at the meeting on 2nd September our trustees understandably wanted more time to consider them before making substantive decisions. We have a further meeting planned for 8th October, and if you were able to answer the following questions before then it would be appreciated.

The QS's estimate of £90k for the courtyard work is far higher than the indicative £22,750 in the QR. Does it cover additional work which is not in the QR figure? Assuming the higher figure is the more reliable trustees may be inclined to focus on weatherproofing work around the courtyard and be more selective about replacement of windows. Would you have a view on which windows should be a priority (in addition to those to the creche area which you flagged as urgent in the QR)? Within the weatherproofing work would you be able to advise on what proportion might reasonably be requested from the owners of the other properties which would benefit?

The budget cost prepared by Gus Simpson of Ralph Ogg & Partners chartered quantity surveyors includes more extensive work than is covered by the QFR and also won't include inflation since the draft report was issued. Also apologies for not making it clearer - this cost also includes repairs and re-decoration of the neighbours windows c. £9k. There is also a contingency sum of £11,740 which isn't included in the QFR budget cost and the budget costs don't include a full allowance for preliminaries. I assume that the adjoining proprietors will have a shared responsibility for the repairs to the external fabric of the tenement. I assume that the works would be carried out in a similar way to the external repairs to the front elevation of Upper Bow undertaken in 2021 when the condition of the windows was checked when safe full external access was available, costs confirmed and repairs carried out once each proprietor confirmed that they wanted to proceed.

We are interested in moving to improve the Bow Room, possibly as a separate project which might attract funding and would rather not delay that work by tying it in with the courtyard. How much synergy there would be in practice between the two in terms of possible contractors and access? We assume that work on the Bow Room would be carried out from Upper Bow, whereas the scaffolding in the courtyard might be approached (by agreement) from Riddle's Court.

I had assumed that the scaffolding would need to be taken through the common door to the flats rather than down from the Lawnmarket/Riddle's Court. Do you have contact details of who needs to be asked if this is acceptable as it may change the preliminary costs for the erection and removal of the scaffolding? I am then happy to contact them. My assumption was that the main contractors for the external fabric repairs could also manage the internal works and it would be more efficient in terms of contractors overheads to carry out the work at the same time. Please let me know how you want to proceed.

Because of the possible uses of the Bow Room we feel that accessibility from Upper Bow is more of an issue than access to the rest of the meeting house. Would it be possible to cut a ramp into the

floor within the building to achieve level access to the existing pavement? How would this work with an inward opening door? Rising hinges?

I think that the best solutions would either be to set the door back and form a triangular ramp within the thickness of the external wall or to discuss the possibility of altering the levels of the pavement with the Council to form a level platt of Caithness stone outside the entrance door which then slope downward to the south and west to meet the existing pavement levels. I guess the cheapest option would be to obtain and temporary triangular ramp which could be put in place when needed. We designed a similar temporary ramp for a shop on the South Bridge which was fixed to the side of the stall riser and then folded down when needed. This is likely to require LBC which would likely delay a start to the external repairs although we could commit to applying for this before the end of October if you want us to proceed.

We would like to agree a finalised version of the quinquennial report now, but the plans for the two flats should be added in, page and section numbering checked (for example there seems to be a gap in the summary between point (d) and point (g)), and the estimate of costs may need to be adjusted in the light of the QS assessment.

I am finalising this at the moment with the additional information to include the plans of the two flats and their condition.

Best regards,

Martin Ward
Clerk to Trustees
SE Scotland Area Meeting
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)