

# Tayside Quaker

Vol 43 No 4 November 2019



*Friends walking the labyrinth in St Andrews at  
Area Meeting in August  
(Photo Pam Apted)*

## Contents

The Visitor	Page 3
Michael Gilderdale remembered	Page 4
Èistibh / Listen	Page 7
Dennis Murray	Page 8
Clerk's invitation to Area Meeting	Page 10
Book of Discipline Review Committee update	Page 11
Area Meeting report, August 2019	Page 12
Living sustainably – what does this mean?	Page 16
None of it is perfect, but a lot of it is hopeful	Page 18
Meeting for Sufferings, October 2019	Page 22
Online Meeting for Worship	Page 23
Northern Friends Peace Board, September 2019	Page 24
Quaker Friendly Introduction Day	Page 27
Hope in a Darkening Universe	Page 28
Quaker Mental Health Forum	Page 30
News from local Meetings	Page 31

**Tayside Quaker** is available by email and on paper. If you would like to be added to the email list, please contact the editor at [\*\*felicitybryers@virginmedia.com\*\*](mailto:felicitybryers@virginmedia.com)

If you get Tayside Quaker by email, you have the advantages of receiving it earlier and seeing the pictures in colour. It also saves the AM money.

**Closing date for the next edition is Saturday 18 January 2020**

**Please send copy to the editor, Felicity Bryers**

**[felicitybryers@virginmedia.com](mailto:felicitybryers@virginmedia.com)**

East Scotland Area Meeting

Scottish charity number SC0020698

All opinions in Tayside Quaker are those of the individual writers and not necessarily of The Religious Society of Friends.

## THE VISITOR

The Visitor sat in the high-backed chair  
The Boy thought he was sleeping there,  
Mum in the kitchen baking bread  
For the Family, she said  
“Here child, take this glass of wine  
To the Visitor before we dine.”  
The Boy did, but on searching round  
Said the Visitor could not be found.  
Mum smiled. “He's gone for a breath of air  
On the bench, perhaps you'll find him there.”  
The Boy obeyed. To his surprise  
He scarcely could believe his eyes ---  
The Visitor had starfish on the sand  
And stooping with each one to hand  
He threw them swiftly one by one  
Into the waves till all were gone..

The tide was low. The sun's hot rays  
Would there have ended their starry days  
But in the sea they would survive  
Their watery world and stay alive.

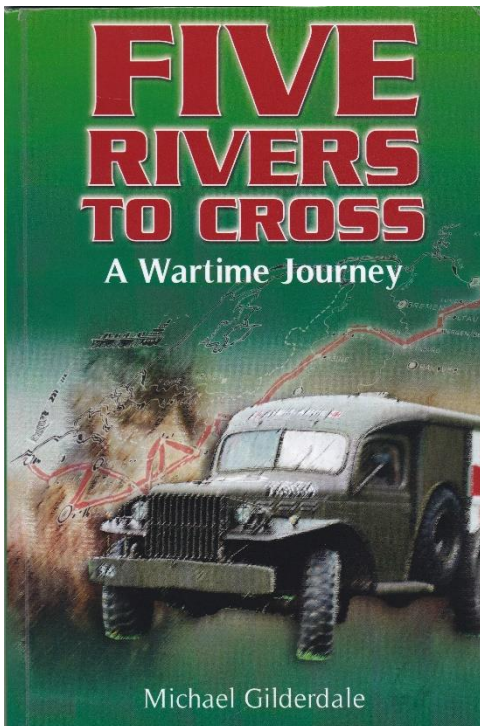
Questions? Of course the Boy would ask  
The Visitor about his task,  
But then again as the young lad feared  
The Visitor had disappeared.  
A shadowy form across the bay.  
And in his footprint by the brine  
A slice of bread. A cup of wine.

*Michael Gilderdale*

## Michael Gilderdale remembered

Our Friend Michael Gilderdale died on 25<sup>th</sup> September age 97 after a long eventful and rewarding life. Michael was a treasured member of our St Andrews meeting and is remembered oh so fondly. A service celebrating his life was held at Elie Church on 11<sup>th</sup> October.

He was born to a Quaker family in York, the second of four sons; they all went to boarding schools and Michael attended both Bootham and then Ackworth Quaker schools. At Ackworth both boys and girls attended although never the twain did meet - much to Michael's disappointment! All kinds of sports were played every day at school and Michael, a talented tennis player, would have played as a junior at Wimbledon but for the outbreak of war.



Before he was allowed to join the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU), Michael, as a conscientious objector, was sent to work as a farm hand in Cumbria. In 1945 with FAU Section 8 he was in North West Europe where he worked alongside the British Army of the Rhine. The Unit had been trained as paramedics and taken driving courses on heavy vehicles. A diary he wrote at the time, lost and then rediscovered 68 years later, tells us the Unit became woven into the fabric of their lives; the diary was published as “Five Rivers to Cross – a

Wartime Journey”. His wartime experiences with refugees and displaced persons left an indelible imprint for the rest of his life.

After training as a journalist, cutting his teeth first on a local newspaper in Swindon, he joined a national newspaper, the News Chronicle, and became a well-known Features writer. When the paper closed in 1960



*Michael Gilderdale*

Michael was in shock. His creativity moved to the advertising sector as a 'creative' in the world's largest agency at the time travelling far and wide around the world.

In 1969 Michael moved back to London and met Jenny. They were married 2 years later, and he said he was the luckiest man on earth. Edinburgh was home for the next 27 years until they finally moved to Elie.

Michael was blessed with such creativity in many and varied forms. He authored 15 books, wrote over 200 poems and verses, was an artist and played the drums in two bands. In his final years pen and paper were not far from his side. His mantra was Care, Prayer and Hope. He remained deeply affected by his wartime experiences, the slaughter of innocents and man's inhumanity to man. How happy we were that Michael came to our meeting where his thoughtfulness and his renowned sense of humour made us smile and could not fail to lighten our lives.

Barbara Davey, at his Service of Celebration, recalled that in March this year when he could no longer come to our meeting, he was asked if he had anything to say to meeting? He responded,

“YES... just one word called CONNECT...

It is not important where or when you listen and connect, JUST DO IT.

A kiss, a handshake, a hug, a quiet word of sympathy.”

Earlier this year while in St Andrews Hospital he wrote a brief card, “True Friendship shines like the sun”. Yes, Michael we shall continue to feel your warmth.

*Jill Marshall*

Do you respect that of God in everyone though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or be difficult to discern? Each of us has a particular experience of God and each must find the way to be true to it. When words are strange or disturbing to you, try to sense where they come from and what has nourished the lives of others...

Avoid hurtful criticism and provocative language... Think it possible that you may be mistaken.

Respect the wide diversity among us in our lives and relationships... Do you foster the spirit of mutual understanding and forgiveness which our discipleship asks of us?

Remember that each one of us is unique, precious, a child of God.

*From Advices and Queries, spoken at Michael's funeral service*

## **Èistibh**

Mura h-urrainn dhuinn earbsa a chur anns na naidheachdan  
a leughas sinn  
no a chluinneas sinn  
no a chì sinn

nach biodh e cho math dhuinn  
gach inneal a chur dheth  
agus èisteachd ri buille  
ar cridhe fhèin?

Feuch an tigeadh guth  
tron t-sàmhchair.

## **Listen**

If we can't trust the news  
that we read  
or hear  
or watch

are we not as well  
to switch off the devices  
and listen to the beat  
of our own hearts?

Maybe a voice will come  
out of the silence.

*Anna Frater*

*From Cridhe Creige / Rock Heart, Acair: 2017.*

Chosen for National Poetry Day 2019, with the theme 'In Poetry, truth'.

## **Dennis Murray**

**1925 - 2019**

Our Friend Dennis Murray died at the age of 94 on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019. He was a member of Dundee Meeting and previously of Angus Meeting where he and his wife Cynthia were faithful attenders over many years.

Dennis was a Cockney, born in Leytonstone, but went to Lincoln College aged 17 to study engineering where he met Cynthia at a college dance. They married in 1946 and went on to have 5 children, including twins, and 11 grandchildren.

After a period in the army, Dennis joined Glaxo in London first, the start of a long career with the firm, spending 2-3 years in Lahore, Pakistan, to help set up a new Glaxo and ending up in Montrose in 1951. It was in Montrose where he found Quakers after meeting our late Friends, Lorna and Arnold Warren.

Dennis served our meetings as Assistant Clerk to Monthly Meeting (now Area Meeting) when I was clerk, and his quirky sense of humour and ways could be challenging at times! But he was diligent and supportive and gave much time to Quaker business.

He also served as editor of Tayside Quaker for several years in the 80s when we struggled to find Friends to keep it going. He was a reliable and thoughtful editor who encouraged others to contribute.

In retirement Dennis took up woodworking and metalwork, joined Probus with Arnold, loved listening to opera and classical music and continued as an avid reader – at least 6 books every week.

Ill health and frailty saw him in a care home in Monifeith for the last couple of years of his life where Cynthia, despite her own failing health, visited him every day.



The funeral service for Dennis was held at Parkgrove Crematorium, Friockheim on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October where a good number of family, Friends and friends gathered to celebrate his long life.

He left a wish that a collection in his memory should be taken on behalf of Médecins Sans Frontière. The family invited us all to join them at the Colliston Inn where memories were shared, lots of family photos were projected and admired nostalgically and there was much sharing of laughter of the early days of family life over cups of tea and coffee.

A celebration of a long and happy life.

*Pamala McDougall*



*Dennis Murray*

## East Scotland Area Meeting, Dundee, 30 November 2019

Dear Friends,

The next Area Meeting will take place in Dundee at 11 am on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November, with refreshments available from 10.30 am. The venue is the Central Baptist Church Halls, 9a Ward Road, Dundee DD1 1LP. It is about 5 mins walk from the High Street or 10 minutes from the rail station. See the map on the next page.

Quaker Life (QL) works to support Meetings across Britain Yearly Meeting in many ways and employs a range of staff and locally based workers to assist with this. In the morning session, Anneke Kraakman, a member of QL Representative Council, will help us to understand this work. She will lead reflections on what it means for us and how it might develop over time.

In the afternoon our business session will include a report from our Nominations Committee, a report on a preliminary consideration by Meeting for Sufferings on Assisted Dying, and further sharing of thoughts on living sustainably and the climate crisis.

Please come, and do encourage others who may not be regular participants at Area Meeting. All are welcome, members and attenders alike.

In friendship,

*Robin Waterston*

*Clerk*



## Book of Discipline Revision Committee update

Here are the key messages from the meeting of the Book of Discipline Revision Committee in October:

As part of clarifying our process, we have been thinking about the purpose of the book of discipline. Part of our minute reads: “Our understanding now is that the purpose of the book of discipline is to reflect who we are as a community and where we might be going. It shares our Quaker story of where we have come from, in order to explain why we have reached where we are. It gives guidance on what it means to be Quakers in Britain Yearly Meeting, reflecting, expressing and nurturing our spiritual life and our Quaker way.” This is the start of a process and leads in to our Woodbrooke conference in November.

Accessibility and inclusion have been themes throughout our work so far. We are aware of the diversity within the Yearly Meeting and want the revision process to be a journey that we take together.

*Mary Woodward*

## **East of Scotland Area Meeting (AM), 17 August 2019**

### **St Andrews**

With thoughts of an afternoon walk to a nearby labyrinth, we were grateful for a bright if blustery day as twenty-five Friends gathered in St Andrews for Area Meeting.

Our morning business included a report from Genevieve Orr about her role as Children and Young Person's (CYP) Advocate. Genevieve and her family have been attending family events for a number of years with Genevieve becoming increasingly involved with the organisation, working alongside Madeleine Harding and Joanna Quinney. Genevieve explained that the family weekends were initially a means of preparing 10 and 11 year olds for 'Summer Shindig'; however, as time has progressed, it has become apparent that the weekend has become a source of support for the wider needs of the Quaker family. The Link weekends are an opportunity for young people aged 13+ to gather, maintain contact and reinforce the experience of Shindig. Madeleine Harding is now stepping down from the administration of these events and Genevieve will be taking over.

Last year Genevieve attended the triennial conference for CYP work advocates; the main aim being to explore their position and role within local and area meetings and in Scotland within General Meeting. It was satisfying to hear that under Madeleine's comprehensive guidance, Scotland has been fulfilling its duties well. Genevieve learnt of the charity 'Mermaids' which provides useful information about transgender issues.

Genevieve continues to support local meetings in their provision of CYP events as well as promoting All Age Worship, aided by the useful CYP resource 'Journeys in the Spirit'.

Genevieve thanked Area Meeting for her attendance at the conference. She reminded us that the role is fluid and one that responds to the needs

of the Area Meeting, and encouraged Friends to get in touch with her if assistance is required. We are grateful to Genevieve for her ongoing involvement with such important work.



*Daniel Orr reported to AM on Summer Shindig*

Having heard of Genevieve's work, it was good to hear from Daniel Orr about his time at Summer Shindig, the annual residential camp for 11-16 year olds held at Ackworth School in Yorkshire. Daniel explained that the theme was 'Allies' and included interesting talks about Faslane Naval base, prisons, and Israel-occupied Palestine. Daniel described the evening activities, the various groups and accommodation

arrangements; for him the best bits were the discussions and evening epilogues, but best of all were the people.

When reporting on Meeting for Sufferings, Alyson Buchan focussed on the Vibrancy in Meetings project. This project has come about due to a concern about declining numbers and the resultant difficulty in finding people to fill roles. Alyson explained that the decision to fund the extension of the project was not an easy one, or taken lightly, but decentralisation from Friends House and Woodbrooke is seen as essential for moving forward. The plan is to have local development workers within reach of every meeting, with the development of hubs or clusters to provide support, facilitated by the development of IT systems. Although Scotland was not part of the pilot, it is considered in some ways to be

‘ahead of the game’ and there will be an impact on Scotland as the project develops.

We heard an interesting report from Jill Marshall on this year’s Quaker Universalist Group conference, see also Jill’s report in the Friend (21 June). The theme was forgiveness, a topic that touched them all, the discussions at times being challenging but also rewarding. They learnt also of restorative work, how it involves sharing meaningful stories, making connections and building empathy, trying to involve everyone affected in finding a way forward.

Improving our ways of working was addressed at General Meeting in March 2019 and will be discussed further at General Meeting in November. We considered that our priority is the need to focus on our core purposes, our spirit-led community, based on the document ‘Our Faith in the Future’. Other suggestions included the development of ‘buddies’ to support role holders, the standardisation of accounting systems, the development of IT systems and making the nominations process more transparent.

In the afternoon we heard an interesting introduction to labyrinths from Liz Baker. Liz, from Perth Meeting, is a Quaker and an Episcopal priest who has had an interest in labyrinths going back many years, training as a Facilitator.

Liz explained the history of the labyrinth. It is an ancient pattern found in many cultures around the world. Labyrinths are being used worldwide as a way to encourage meditation, insight and self-reflection. They are open to all, walked by people of all faiths and none and can be found in many settings. Liz advised that there is no right way to walk a labyrinth.



*Liz Baker spoke to AM about  
labyrinths*

However she encouraged us to take our time, if practical to walk with bare feet, spend time at the centre and allow time for reflection afterwards.

Following Liz's introduction, those able visited the labyrinth at Kinburn Park, which was created as a joint venture between St Andrews Friends and Fife council. The labyrinth is in a beautiful setting surrounded by trees, with two benches in the centre on one of which are written the words of George Fox 'Be still and cool in thy own mind and spirit'. There was a gentle breeze rustling the leaves with the sun flickering through the trees. I was reminded of our opening reading from Advices and Queries:

*'Do you try to set aside times of quiet for openness to the Holy Spirit? All of us need to find a way into silence which allows us to deepen our awareness of the divine and to find the inward source of our strength...'*

*Pam Apted  
Assistant clerk*

## Living sustainably – what does this mean?

At the last Area Meeting, Robin Waterstone introduced a discussion on "Living sustainably - what does this mean?". He quoted Quaker Public statements from 2009 and 2011. These are reproduced below.

### **A Quaker response to the crisis of climate change, 2009 (extracts)**

The crisis of global climate change represents a supreme test of humanity's collective wisdom and courage. Our immoderate use of the Earth's resources violates the entire biosphere, threatening the lives of millions of people and the habitats of thousands of species. Many of the poorest people are already suffering a changed climate; they are asking us all to act.

.....

The Earth is God's work and not ours to do with as we please. We recall Gandhi's saying, often quoted by Quakers: 'Live simply that others may simply live'. As a Quaker community, we do try to live what we believe, guided by the values of simplicity, truth, equality and peace. Too often we fall short of honouring them. Climate change is challenging us to ask anew what our faith leads us to do.

.....

We gladly take up our responsibility and call for unprecedented international cooperation to enable the large cuts in global emissions which are required. This will be a difficult road to travel but we are prepared to support decision-makers in taking the radical steps necessary. We appreciate progress made and uphold decision-makers as they navigate conflicting priorities, yet we challenge them to hold faith with the goal and not bend to short-term expediency.

.....



Where we see crisis, we also see opportunity to remake society as a communion of people living sustainably as part of the natural world. By leading the simpler lives of a low-carbon society, we draw nearer to the abundance of peace, freedom and true community. Our faith in common humanity gives hope; love, rather than fear, can still lead us through this crisis.

*Agreed by Meeting for Sufferings, June 2009*

### **Extract from Minute 36, Our Canterbury Commitment (2011)**

We ask Area Meetings to consider how truth prospers with regard to sustainability, taking care to relate this to all our testimonies – peace, truth, simplicity, equality and care for the environment.

We encourage Local and Area Meetings to practise speaking truth to power at local level by establishing relationships with all sections of local communities, including politicians, businesses and schools, to encourage positive attitudes to sustainability.

To individual Friends we issue a clear call to action to consider the effect of their lives on the world's limited resources and in particular on their carbon usage. We ask Friends to keep informed about the work being done locally, centrally and throughout the Quaker world and to educate themselves.

*Britain Yearly Meeting, Canterbury, August 2011*



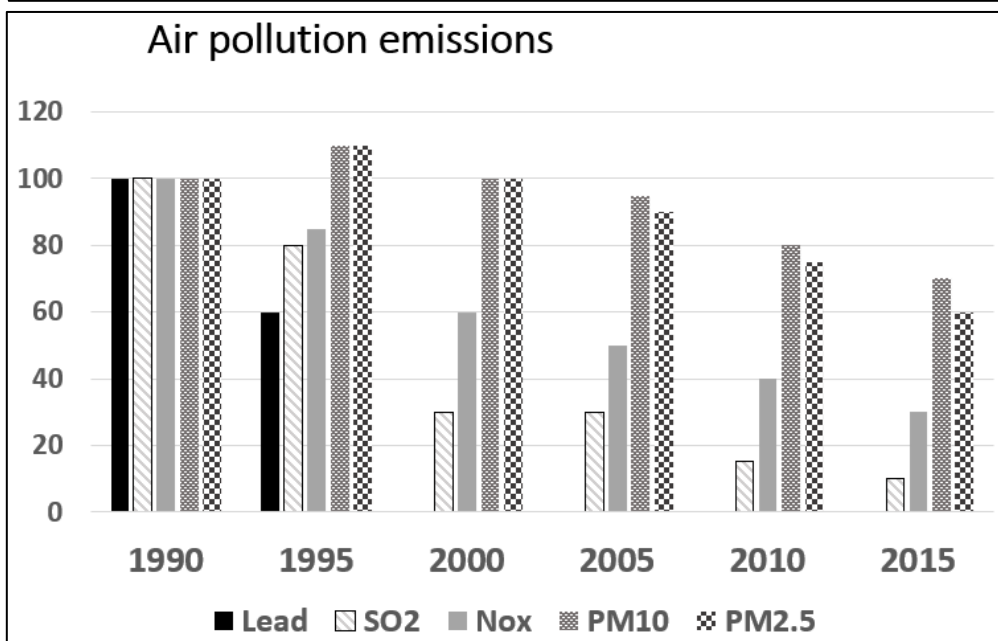
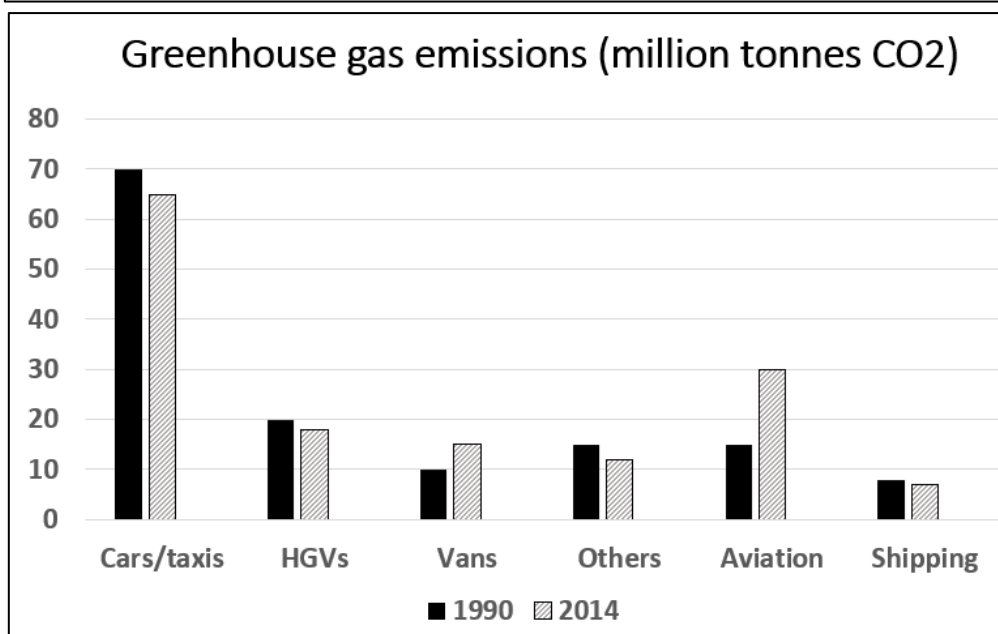
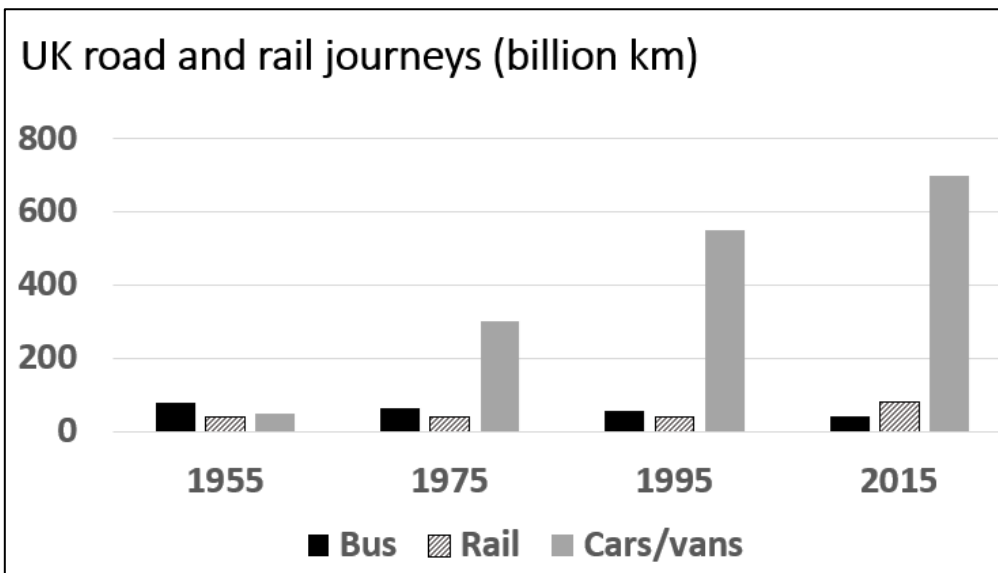
## **None of it is perfect, but a lot of it is hopeful:**

### **An evening about energy justice, St Andrews**

During 2019 St Andrews Friends have been taking part in discussion evenings under the heading 'Towards Economic Justice', based (loosely) on the 'New Economy' booklets published by Friends House. In October we took Booklet 3, 'Energy in the New Economy, as our starting point for an evening on 'Energy Justice', led by guest speaker, Iain Todd. Iain is currently writing his St Andrews PhD on solar energy in Africa, after a 40 year career as an engineer and policy maker in the renewable energy field, including project management of the Aberdeen offshore wind farm. He helped us see how, from the personal to the national to the global, changes in energy generation and use are key to making vital reductions in carbon emissions.

This is a matter of survival, but also a matter of justice – as we know, global climate heating is affecting and will affect most severely, countries and communities that have done least to create it, who have benefited least from the energy splurge we have all enjoyed, and who are least able to defend themselves from the effects. Even within our own privileged countries, we have energy injustice in the form of fuel poverty and misdirected subsidies.

**Personal and local:** we looked at heating options; electricity options, and transport options. The steps we can take were partly familiar (e.g. solar panels, checking your electricity is from a fully renewable supplier such as Good Energy; avoiding flights) but also, we heard a bit about community heating schemes. Cupar, for example, have planning permission for such a scheme, and we heard that in Denmark it would be considered mad to have a heating boiler per household! For transport, Iain gave us a memorable '6 Ps' principle, in order of best first: pedestrian, pedalling, public transport, pool car, plug-in (i.e. EVs, electric vehicles), petrol.



**National and global:** Scotland can produce 100% of its electricity needs from renewables, and in fact produces 200% of its own energy use, the surplus being sent south of the border. But we learned that – broadly - only 25% of Scotland’s energy use is electricity. 25% is transport and 50% is heating (I guess electric heating and EV use are still too small to affect this broad breakdown).

Looking at the UK as a whole: car use is massively significant, as you can see from the graphs Iain showed us (all figures are for the UK). But look again at the period 1990s- 2014/15. The number of miles we drive has gone up significantly, but nevertheless, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from that driving has slightly reduced, while lead has disappeared from car emissions. Good change can happen!

Iain worked on the Aberdeen windfarm for nearly 10 years. Government consent was given in 2013 and although legal delays held things up till 2018 it was then built in a summer. The largest wind turbines in the world (8.8MW) supply 70% of domestic electricity of Aberdeen. This multimillion £ project was helped by an EU grant of 40m Euros. This needs no comment perhaps, though it is tempting to add that the EU also provided £8m of the £20m cost of Aberdeen’s hydrogen bus fleet. (Hydrogen-powered vehicles – a great low-carbon option so long as the hydrogen is produced using renewable energy!).

Iain’s current research is on why solar power is not more widespread in Africa, when the potential is huge. He has found that in South Africa mining interests (shareholders but also unions fearing job-losses) seem to be the principal reason.

In our lively discussion we noticed that we had a tendency to focus on the imperfection of ‘solutions’: how sustainable are biofuels? – how ‘green’ are electric cars? how realistic is it to think of community heating schemes? what about China? (NB Chinese per capita emissions are lower than ours!). It’s good that we are vigilant and careful – greenwashing does

happen! –but it’s also easy to feel daunted (and maybe even wish we had excuses for not doing much?). It’s also easy to forget positive changes that have happened – lead gone from petrol, CFCs gone from our fridges, coal power generation gone from Scotland – and Ireland has recently pledged to disinvest from fossil fuels. We can’t wait for perfect solutions. We can act on a personal and local level, and lobby on a national and global level, for the wonderful mix of imperfect solutions that is out there, from LED lightbulbs to large-scale disinvestment in fossil fuels. It’s strange how the scale and urgency of the emergency can work on our worried brains to make us feel less ‘energised’ for change. But here are some recent headlines (OK, I admit, they are all from the Guardian!) to show that tipping points are worth striving for:

*Offshore windfarms 'can provide more electricity than the world needs'*  
(International Energy Agency report) [25 October 2019]

*Australian business leaders say cost to taxpayers will spiral unless new policies introduced* [30 October 2019]

*Mark Carney tells global banks they cannot ignore climate change danger*  
[17 April 2019]; here’s a link to the open letter:

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/news/2019/april/open-letter-on-climate-related-financial-risks>

And maybe this one is the most hopeful about a change in public attitudes:

*Climate crisis affects how majority will vote in UK election – poll* [30 October 2019]

To channel Ian Dury, there are many ‘reasons to be hopeful’. Can we find ways to cherish and share some contagious hopefulness?

*Carolyn Burch*

## Meeting for Sufferings, 4 – 6 October 2019

Unfortunately, Robert Thompson and I were both prevented from attending this year's residential Meeting for Sufferings which was held at Woodbrooke. This is a brief report based on the documents and minutes which are available on the BYM website. <https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes>

There was a discussion about the purposes of recording an entry in the Court and Prison Register and as a result of action taken against Quakers protesting against the Arms Fair and with Extinction Rebellion this year, a sentence has been added: 'To serve as a record of the actions of the State in restricting our freedom to worship and witness'.

We are asked to encourage our Area Meetings to explore the issues of assisted dying, and dying and death more generally, knowing that there are differing and deeply-held views. We considered this in our Area Meeting three years ago, but it may be time to revisit the subject.

There was also a discussion of Woodbrooke's new approach to learning, as fewer Friends are going to Woodbrooke for residential courses. There is a need for more opportunities to bring learning to Quaker communities.

The Quaker Stewardship Committee explained that part of their role is to support trustees and treasurers. The need for stewardship work to be rooted in its spiritual basis, and the importance of keeping to Quaker business methods were highlighted and Area meetings are being encouraged to consider radical ways to reduce the burden of trusteeship.

There was a long session on Sustainability. Area meetings are asked to provide opportunities for worship-based explorations where Friends can share how sustainability is part of their faith, and how that shapes their lives, relationships and actions and links to traditional Quaker concerns for peace and justice. We are reminded that the UN Climate Summit will be held in Glasgow next year and plans are already being made in preparation for this.

*Alyson Buchan*

## Online Meeting for Worship

We live almost a two-hour drive from Perth and cannot get to Meeting for Worship as often as we would like, especially in winter. Imagine therefore, how intrigued I was to hear about on-line Meeting for Worship offered by Woodbrooke. Now, six months later, the twice-weekly on-line Meetings have become an important part of my Quaker life. I look forward to them and enjoy the experience of sharing the silence with Friends not only from the UK, but also from some other European countries and further afield, such as Australia and the USA. Normally there are about 20 of us and when we enter 'the meeting room' we introduce ourselves by typing a brief greetings message saying where we are from and perhaps a local weather report! We are welcomed by the Host for the meeting, who is a member of the Woodbrooke team; this role seems to be an amalgamation of the roles of Elder, Clerk and Doorkeeper. Sometimes the Host is not in Woodbrooke but at home in Sweden or Slovenia.

I know nothing about the other people present at the Meeting apart from where they are from - I do not know if they are Friends but they are people with whom I am sharing the experience and some are now like old friends. Yes, we can see each other if we switch on our web cameras and it is encouraged that we do so. For the first few occasions, being too shy and self-aware, I didn't switch on my camera and simply looked in at the Meeting. When I did switch on my camera my image joined the others and that was a bit of a shock as I had forgotten that I am an old man. Anyway, having got over that realisation I now barely examine the images except to recognise friends.

So, what do I feel about online MfW? It is not for me a substitute for MfW at Perth with my Perth Friends, but it is something different and a valid addition to my Quaker life. It is relaxed and we appear to be in our homes; some drink coffee or knit, cats can appear and recently a baby attended its first MfW cradled in its father's arms. Most sit quietly looking at the screen

and my feeling is that we are a closely gathered group with a sense of togetherness and of each other. I also have the feeling of looking outward beyond my local community to the wider world and am quite happy with that prospect.

There is an opportunity for ministry and occasionally this is offered by typing it to appear in the message box. I can only remember one occasion when ministry was spoken. The end of the half-hour session is signified by the image of two hands shaking. The Host bids us adieu but the site remains open for awhile so people can chat before they go.

If you are intrigued, full details of the Woodbrooke on-line MfW provision can be obtained from: [woodbrooke.org.uk/onlinemfw](http://woodbrooke.org.uk/onlinemfw)

*Keith Harding*

## **Northern Friends Peace Board Meeting, 29 September 2019**

Northern Friends Peace Board met on a day of perfect sunny weather at the end of September. We began as usual with introductions, going round the room with board members saying who they were and which Quaker meeting they were from. Unusually we were also asked to add one thing that gave us hope in these uncertain times. Most of these involved working with young people or other groups and taking part in the Roots of Resistance protests against the Defence and Security International arms fair earlier in the month; my own contribution was inspired by looking out of the window at the autumn sunshine... I know that the weather will change and the long, dark winter nights are not far off but mornings like that one lift the spirit.

Janet Fenton gave us an update on the progress of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons through the United Nations, a treaty that outlaws nuclear weapons in the same way as chemical and biological weapons have been outlawed. To date seventy-nine states have signed



the treaty and thirty-two have ratified it. The treaty needs fifty states to ratify it before coming into force and becoming binding on all states that have ratified it.

Janet went on to tell us about the founding of Secure Scotland, a coalition of groups who want to promote alternative ways of thinking about security that go beyond the traditional military and foreign policy dominated security paradigm. The separate legal, parliamentary and educational systems in Scotland give unique opportunities to promote the 'rethinking security' agenda (look at [www.rethinkingsecurity.org.uk](http://www.rethinkingsecurity.org.uk)) 'We wanted to provide a clear alternative way of thinking and talking. This is urgently needed to allow decision makers to develop policies and plan actions that contribute to understanding and defining the real security needed in Scotland.' Initial support came from a variety of sources and following a retreat / workshop /seminar at the Allanton World Peace Centre earlier this year Secure Scotland has obtained funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

A feature of this year has been the world-wide protests calling for action to prevent catastrophic climate change, protests in which many individual Quakers have taken part. Many people have realised that catastrophic climate change is linked in many ways to concerns about security and peace, not least as states and displaced people have to respond to ecological stresses. Northern Friends Peace Board has been asked to join a coalition of peace organisations and individuals called XR Peace to make these links more widely known and have a 'peace blockade' area in the autumn campaign by the climate change activist group Extinction Rebellion. NFPB decided not to formally join XR Peace despite recognising the urgency of taking action to combat climate change and recognising that many Quakers will choose to be involved.

*Peter Cheer*

## **Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre**

### **Opposing War Memorial Embroidery workshops:**

#### **Create your own peace handkerchief**

Create a peace handkerchief of your own design. Kate Ive, lead artist for the construction of an Opposing War Memorial in Edinburgh, will share information about the upcoming memorial and help you with your design. You will create a simple emblem, image or text design which Kate will then help you embroider onto fabric. In 2018, Kate was chosen to design an Opposing War Memorial to be installed in Princes Street Gardens. The memorial will include a reflection space with a bronze peace tree sculpture, inspired by the *Davidia involucreata*, 'The Handkerchief Tree'. The tree will be covered in bronze embroidered handkerchiefs, each showing a different aspect of conscientious objection, opposition to war, and peace building.

**Thursday, November 14, 2019, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**

MILK Cafe, 452 Victoria Rd, **Glasgow** G42 8YU

**Saturday, November 30, 2019 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

**Dundee** Central Library.

**Wednesday, November 27, 2019 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**

Quad Teaching Room G.158, University of **Edinburgh** School of Law, Old College, South Bridge EH8 9YL.

To book your space email Kate Ive directly: [mail@kateive.co.uk](mailto:mail@kateive.co.uk)



## **Quaker Friendly Introduction Day, Stirling Baptist Church, 13 October 2019**

I went to this day as someone who has been attending Quaker meetings for the past 18 months.

The three leaders (Henry, Mariot, Rici) made sure that each of the 15 attenders were personally welcomed and offered refreshments.

We began (after a brief time of silent worship) with a worship sharing, centred on how and why each of us came to attend Quaker meetings. The range was very wide - from people dissatisfied with other forms of worship, to people looking for something but not knowing what, to people who knew someone who was a Quaker and not quite sure what to expect!

We were then invited to go into small groups to talk about our experiences and understanding of the Meetings that we went to – including the structure and essential elements.

Following that we were invited to think of an Inspirational Quaker that we had known or read about, and this became another whole group worship sharing which led into the final part, entitled 'At the core of Quakerism: Living a Quaker Life'. Unfortunately, I found this the least satisfying part of the day – a bit more clarity from the Leaders would have suited me better.

I thank Perth Meeting for providing me with funding for this day, although in its present form it's perhaps more suitable for very new attenders.

*Stella Cranwell*



## Hope in a Darkening Universe

Who would have thought attending the latest Margaret Harris Lecture on Religion at Dundee University would have given me greater appreciation (chuckles) and actual comprehension (understanding) of random cartoon strips? Question time at the end gave Professor Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell, present Dundee University Chancellor, world renowned Physicist, Philanthropist and much more, the opportunity to mention latest research ideas such as emerging wacky theories of how we might unfurl cigar like corridors to our adjoining universes.

The first cartoon I chanced on, showed a learner 'Student Driver' amongst random planets and stars being chastised by his driving instructor alongside him in the car saying, "For future reference, when I say parallel park, I actually mean in our universe." Really these corridors would have the intention of helping to solve the mystery of, and maybe supplement our earth's weak gravity rather than just to find a car parking space with plenty of room for manoeuvre!

But first, the crash course in Quantum Physics to confirm our darkening universe. Yes, now, along with the huge audience overfilling the large lecture theatre, I can confidently state - it all started with the Big Bang, Einstein's equation  $E = mc^2$  still holds good, our universe is one of too many to count. Everything we are and we know of has evolved from the dust that was catapulted out to space from (and will collapse back to) an aptly named black hole when our energy source (our dying sun) is extinguished. Thus we were reminded that the long, long term outlook is POOR ! (her exclamation mark). '....ashes to ashes, dust to dust.....'

So, the suggestion of hope. From her personal and Quaker perspective, Jocelyn spent time recognising the pathos and beauty and more importantly the sustaining heart/truth which she found connected in the poetry of: Anne Lamott, Emily Brontë, Walt Whitman, Vaclav Havel amongst others. Also, during question time, she confirmed that of God

gave her no conflicting interest with the quantifiable theories of her profession, although she noted there were very few Quaker theologians.

I hadn't taken notes, so I will be devoting years to research everything I mention here. In the meantime, I came across another cartoon strip showing a portly, haloed, benign gentleman in a white cassock with a couple of winged and haloed companions on their

generous, immaculate fluffy cloud, pointing bemusedly at our bright

'honey' planet. He is sighing and says "That bad huh? Should we try turning it off and then putting it back on?" [*Cartoons 'Odd Streak' by Tony Lopez*]

And how about disposing of our waste from skips into black holes, where the skips return fully charged with energy? This suggestion has apparently, we learned, already been proved to have potential! I can also now confidently say, though, that we actually know very little about black holes.....

Which brings me to a last thought, and to quote GP Rita Issa, who co-founded Doctors for Extinction Rebellion, "Doctors tend to meet people at the head level, but the only real way to connect to this is straight from the heart." [*The Sunday Times, Style Report, 6 Oct 2019*]

*Jill Tutton*



*Jocelyn Bell Burnell*

## **Quaker Mental Health Forum**

**The Priory Rooms, Birmingham, 19 October 2019**

The day revolved around the testimony of three men and their struggles with mental health, the way society has treated them, and how they have found a spiritual voice. Their names are:

Jason (Brighton Meeting), David (Stoke Meeting) and Robert (Orkney Meeting).

At the start we heard the three testimonies. At the end there was a question and answer session.

The thing that came through was the lack of understanding towards them as humans struggling to find a way to live without the pain and also non-acceptance of mental health. It was not till they found a foot in a spiritual life that they started to gain trust and find their way in life. Now all three have found a balance that keeps them from tipping over.

For the second half of the day we split into different groups in other parts of the building. My choice was to find out more about Community Chaplaincy with Emma Wells in the main meeting room. I found Emma's group educational and Emma herself inspiring. I am so glad I chose to sit in on it as it is maybe a direction I will look to in the future.

At the end the two listeners summed up what they had made of the day. My overview is one of inclusiveness - a feeling of community, working on the same page. Some were there to expand on their medical experience, others to find answers to help them live their lives as a sufferer in a more spiritual way. Then there were the teachers - passionate and full of compassion for their fellow humans.

Jasper, my dog, came with me to the meeting and at the end I was asked to talk about the day from Jasper's perspective, very much in a Quaker tradition.

I can't talk much about mental health issues in a medical way as I have no qualifications, but I can understand the distress and suffering others face daily with their struggle to make sense of life. The talk and discussions were looking

at these issues from a different perspective with an overall humanitarian approach that was for me both imaginative and wonderful.

Alison Mitchell and her team organised and conducted a day of learning and understanding; I'm sure everyone left with feelings of hope, that the treatment of mental health, as far as Quakers are concerned, is a book that will never be closed.

*Keith C Scott*

## News from Local Meetings

### *Perth*

#### **Perth Peace Pole walk**

Perth Quakers and others joined in a Peace Pole walk to remember the lives lost when an atomic bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima at the end of the Second World War, seventy-four years ago and show our hope that no more atomic bombs will ever be used.

A Peace Pole is a hand-crafted monument that displays the message and prayer May Peace Prevail on Earth on each of its four or six sides, usually in different languages.

There are tens of thousands of Peace Poles in 180 countries all over the world dedicated as monuments to peace. They serve as constant reminders for us to visualize and pray for world peace.

Perth hosts two Peace Poles, one is outside the St Ninian's Episcopal Cathedral, the second is across the river Tay in the gardens outside the Rodney Pavilion. The Rodney Gardens Peace Pole was erected by Perth Buddhists to mark a visit by the Dalai Lama to Scotland.

On 6 August 1945, the US dropped an atomic bomb called "Little Boy" on Hiroshima in Japan. Three days later a second atomic bomb ("Fat Man") was dropped on the city of Nagasaki. These are the only times nuclear weapons have been used in war.

The firestorm in Hiroshima ultimately destroyed 13 square kilometres (5 square miles) of the city. Almost 63% of the buildings in Hiroshima were completely destroyed after the bombing and nearly 92% of the structures in the city had been either destroyed or damaged by blast and fire.

Estimates of total deaths in Hiroshima have generally ranged between 100,000 and 180,000, out of a population of 350,000. Casualties from Nagasaki are thought to be between 50,000 and 100,000.

*Peter Cheer*

### **Meeting with Gill Coombs at the home of Dorothy Aitken in Crieff**

There were 15 people there to hear Gill Coombs talk about her journey from working in organisational development to becoming a writer and activist. There were five of us associated with Perth Meeting, two or three from Dunblane Meeting and others from Dorothy's local writers' group.

Gill read several passages from her latest book, *The trembling warrior*, and we had a stimulating exchange of ideas about the political setting we are living through and the different ways of responding. Gill emphasised that we each have to find a niche for ourselves – there is no one 'activist' model which fits all, and, having found what suits us, we should not feel guilty about all the things we are not doing.

Gill's description of her role in Extinction Rebellion left us feeling excited that significant changes are taking place and a strong movement – featuring young people (who are the future) prominently – is taking shape. Gill spoke about her dilemma as to whether to plead guilty when she appears in court, and whether there is a 'higher imperative' to act outwith the law which trumps the charge of 'obstructing the highway'. Mention was made of the Trident Three, who were found not guilty in Greenock some years ago, of damage to MOD property. It is worrying that the shadowy forces behind the scenes which exercise power are applying pressure to treat those arrested punitively. Watch for the next actions of Extinction Rebellion in October, and read Gill's book, a copy of which is in the Perth Meeting library.

*Philip Bryers*



## Highland Perthshire Group

It seemed appropriate that, after a gap of about two years, the first gathering of the resurrected Highland Perthshire group of friends from the Perth Quaker Meeting should take place in a properly highland setting. Appropriate too that our relatively early Saturday morning journey to the head of Loch Rannoch should be blessed with typical Perthshire autumnal day: Bright sunshine, blue skies, no wind, no rain.

Arriving at our hosts' lovely home in Bridge of Gaur we were given a warm welcome with teas, coffees and biscuits. Once we had all arrived, we chose our seats in the lounge.

Our purpose is to meet as friends in every sense of the word, not for worship but to explore our faith in the light of our being Quakers. We will set a topic each time we meet. For this first meeting we asked ourselves to come prepared to speak (or not) about our spiritual journey.

As it happens all seven group members had something to say, and the sharing of sometimes quite personal stories was much appreciated by us all. We found after everyone had made their contributions that there were some insights that other group members wanted to explore, so allowed ourselves some further discussion.

As we spoke or listened, the extraordinary autumn sunlight trespassed through the window and moved slowly across the fascinating symbolic patterns in the large rug around which we sat. I like to think that George Fox might have had a hand in that.

We have determined to meet in this way every other month, and at the end of one meeting to set a subject for the next. As someone returning to the Quaker family after decades away, it has quickly become clear to me why we are indeed the Society of Friends.

*Richard Chadburn*

## ***St Andrews***

### **Discoveries evenings ...and more**

On September 13, Joyce Taylor spoke on the subject of Promptings of Love and truth – a conversation about the spiritual roots of activism. Unfortunately, Jill Anderson, a Friend who leads the work of the parliamentary Engagement Group (Holyrood) and a member of St Andrews Episcopal Church in St Andrews was unable to join in the conversation.

Beginning with a quote from Quaker Faith and Practice 2.10 Barbara Davey introduced the direction of the evening's exploration.

What a fascinating journey for all of us it was! Joyce recalled that at a very early age her life was imbued with her father's socialism, Quakerism and activism. Not all her reflections were serious. At home, there was much conversation about Quakerism which she gave her own interpretation to as a young child. Advice & Queries became to her mind, two people whose names were Advices and Queries!

Her father was summoned to the Headmistress's office to learn that Joyce had drawn an anti-nuclear symbol on the underside of her desk top, failing the tidy desk inspection. Joyce received the full support of her father, of course!

Joyce gave a moving account of how her experiences in activism and Quaker Meeting influenced her leadership in her professional life. Many quietly pondered how their own parenting influenced their children's lives in relation to activism.

### *Ellen Colingsworth*

At the end of August, we hosted Paul Baker, an environmentalist/singer-songwriter from Nicaragua in concert on his UK/Ireland tour. "I'd like to teach the World to sing." It was a moving testimony stressing the need to examine the part we all can play in reducing our carbon footprint. The

music was well received, and we were encouraged to join in.

Our yearly picnic had an autumnal tinge this year held at the home of Barbara and Nicholas Davey in Ceres. The weather was kind with young people and all present exploring their ever-developing garden. For a special treat a campfire which allowed us to toast marshmallows.

Our monthly table on the first Saturday of the month held in Church Square continues on Peace, Justice and Sustainability with growing opportunities for conversations with the public – some quite revealing and demonstrating a growing concern for issues around the arms trade.

In October we focused on sustainability and promoted various local and national initiatives concerning climate change and related issues.

What is now an annual visit to the Labyrinth in Kinburn Park before Meeting for Worship took place on Sunday 27th October. The extra hour proved a welcome incentive to participate!

*Buša Cochrane-Muir*

### ***Living Peace***

We all want peace – but peace begins with us – it begins with individuals finding their own inner peace and living it outwardly.

We can learn to be active in bringing peace to our sometimes troubled inner lives – which helps us bring peace into our relationships – which in turn permeates our families, our communities - spreading out into the wider world.

A series of sessions led by Alice Fateah Saunders will start on Saturday 23 November in Stirling. They will be experiential and somewhat developmental, using chanting of sacred sounds and phrases, body prayers, dancing, meditation (silent and guided) and walking meditations and will draw on teachings and spiritual practices from the Universal Sufism brought by Hazrat Inayat Khan to the west.

More information from Martin McCrae: [rosmartin27@gmail.com](mailto:rosmartin27@gmail.com)

## **Meetings for Worship**

**Dundee:** Wederburn Room, The Steeple Church, Nethergate, Dundee DD1 4DG  
(adjacent to the Overgate Centre).

Sundays 11.00 am

The Meeting House, 7 Whitehall Crescent, Dundee DD1 4AR

Thursdays 12.30 – 1.00 pm (followed by social time)

**St Andrews** Meeting House, 2 Howard Place, St Andrews KY16 9HL

Sundays 10.30 am

Children's Meeting - each Sunday during school terms

Enquiries: Genevieve Orr (01333 360396)

Midweek Meeting, Thursdays 1.15 – 1.45pm

**Perth:** The Subud Centre, 7 St Leonard's Bank, Perth PH2 8EB

Second and last Sundays of each month 11.00 am

Children's Meeting usually last Sunday of each month

Children's contact: Anneke Kraakman (07746 117 762)

### **East of Scotland Area Meeting**

Saturday 30 November 2019, *Dundee*

Saturday 15 February 2020, *Perth*

Saturday 9 May 2020, *Dundee*

Saturday 22 August 2020, *St Andrews*

Saturday 21 November 2020, *Perth*

### **General Meeting for Scotland**

16 November 2019, *East Scotland (Perth)*

7 March 2020, *South East Scotland*

13 June 2020, *North Scotland (Elgin)*

12 September 2020, *East Scotland (Dundee)*

14 November 2020, *West Scotland (Glasgow)*

6 March 2021, *North Scotland*