

**North Scotland Area Quaker Meeting,  
Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
Minutes**

Meeting held online, 3pm, aiming to finish by 4.30pm, but with a short break finishing at 5.50pm

**Prevented**

Ann Millar, Jesse Clark, Mavis Jones, Mary Barnes  
Mary Dower (attending Meeting for Sufferings)

**Present:**

26 Attending, from Shetland, Orkney, Aberdeen, Inverness, Lochaber & Lorn, Forres

The Meeting gathered in silence before recording the following minutes:

**Trustees**

**01/21** David James (Clerk of Trustees) has reminded us of the priorities for Trustees:

- a) to receive and consider fabric survey reports on the Crown Street properties,
- b) commission and consider a survey of the trees at Kinmuck burial ground,
- c) In the light of these, to draw up a budget for the NSQT Fund and revise the reserves policy accordingly.

The report for the Quaker Meeting House is that it is generally in good condition and well maintained, so a particular thanks to Aberdeen Premises Committee. The report includes a list of maintenance requirements & a review of reinstatement costs for insurance purposes, which is much higher than previously estimated.

Trustees have yet to receive a report for 100 Crown St & Kinmuck Burial Ground

**02/21** Tom Sayles and Oriole Hall have now come to the end of their terms in office as Trustees. The Meeting acknowledges their significant contributions to the Trustee team up until the end of 2020.

Tom was a trustee for 10 years first for NSQT and then for AM, a task he performed with great diligence. He was instrumental in resolving the legal difficulties surrounding the laying down of the NSQT.

Oriole was invaluable in helping to resolve the difficulties that we experienced last year.

Our Trustees team now comprises: David James (Clerk of Trustees), Anthea Mason, Jane Booth, William McEwen, Anthony Buxton (Treasurer), Peter Heald (Assistant Treasurer).

**Treasurer**

**03/21** It is agreed that this year Area Meeting will pay for the 2021 Book of Members and their distribution to Friends. The individual cost of this will be made known to Friends so that, if they wish, they can increase their donation to AM accordingly. We thank those who have offered to assist with distribution where this is practical and possible under Covid restrictions.

**04/21** Our Treasurer advised us that this year we have some surplus funds to put to Quaker work, but that donations to AM have dropped off in the last year. The schedule for funding this year has not yet been received from Yearly Meeting and this informs the AM request for funding that goes out to Friends each year. We will wait until Trustees have considered the AM budget in more detail before asking Friends to think of how the surplus in the AM General Fund might best be spent.

**Membership**

**05/21** We agree to transfer of Membership of Mark Smith from Westminster Meeting to North Scotland. Mark lives on Orkney. Peter Heald will send the transfer certificate to Westminster

Meeting.

**06/21** Fabien Camus, Inverness (Dingwall) is applying for membership to the Society of Friends. Our Friends Chris McGregor (Inverness) and William Purser (Forres) will arrange to meet Fabien online or as appropriate with respect to Covid-19 restrictions and produce a report to present to Area Meeting when the time is right.

### **Parliamentary Engagement**

**07/21** William Purser, our representative on the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG), has reported on their work, which is wide ranging, varied and often fluid. We refer Friends to the report that he and Joyce Taylor have written for the Scottish Friend.

PEWG is disappointed that Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) has only created a temporary, part-time Parliamentary Engagement Officer (PEO) post, which is now filled by Andrew Tomlinson. GM would like a permanent, ideally full-time post and this will be considered by BYM. GM trustees continue to consider how a full-time & permanent post can be funded.

### **Pastoral & Spiritual Care**

**08/21** We have received these minutes from Elders/Overseers with respect to the future of Pastoral and Spiritual Care in our Meeting:

*“We have met together and had a wide-ranging discussion about where we are with E & O and where we feel the future lies for us with this responsibility as an AM. We recognise that the traditional model of appointed Friends no longer serves us except perhaps in Aberdeen Meeting, and that many Friends provide informal care and spiritual guidance outside an appointed role. This is a responsibility laid on all of us as part of our membership. We need to build on this and raise a new minimal structure in our local communities to bring this together. At a minimum there needs to be a named Friend who will act as a contact and a conduit. At AM level we need a small group to direct and guide our right ordering and our organisation of this task. Perhaps we need a standing item on AM agendas so that issues can be brought to us all. As a meeting we need to consider replacing the terms Eldership and Oversight with the term Pastoral and Spiritual Care. We have agreed to postpone the ‘Woodbrooke-on-the-Road’ workshop at least until we are clearer about the road ahead.*

*We ask Oriole, Penny, Phyllida and David to form the small group to take this forward.” (December 14<sup>th</sup> 2020)*

*“We have received via email, ideas from AM's across the UK about how to organise pastoral and spiritual care. We have looked at these and had some discussions amongst ourselves. We suggest that a small group of friends whether members or attenders, is appointed by NSAM annually to share the tasks of pastoral and spiritual care. We would like those undertaking this care to find ways of establishing strong links with all MfWs in their remit. This group would report annually to AM but meet every 6 – 8 weeks to share experience and give support to one another.*

*The group would appoint its own convenor.”*

Phyllida Sayles, Oriole Hall, David James, Penny Selbie (January 11 2021)

Area Meeting agrees to changing the terms Elders and Overseers and to use the term Pastoral and Spiritual Care team, which would apply to existing Elders/Overseers who will continue in their roles. We welcome the opportunity for attenders as well as members to be included in the Pastoral and Spiritual Care team. There are some loose ends to resolve, but we thank the working group for initiating this change.

### **Nominations**

**09/21** The following Friends are appointed to the Pastoral and Spiritual Care team, to serve for

the rest of this year until 31 December 2021 .

- Brian Ashley (Shetland)
- Anthony Buxton (Forres)
- Fabien Camus (Inverness – Dingwall)
- Sila Collins-Walden (Inverness)
- Mary Dower (Aberdeen)
- Roger Ellis (Inverness – Caithness)
- Phyllida Sayles (Inverness – Caithness)
- David James (Lochaber & Lorn)
- Kath Maciver (Inverness)
- Sandy McEwen (Westray)
- Chris MacGregor (Inverness)

They will be supported by E/O's already in service, all now referred to as the Pastoral and Spiritual Care team.

Penny Selbie (Aberdeen) and Sila Colins-Walden (Inverness) will act as convenor and co-convenor to arrange a meeting of the team before the end of February 2021.

**10/21** John Hitchen (Inverness) is appointed to serve as Assistant Clerk, supporting Piers Voysey (Clerk), Andrew Collins (Assistant clerk), Peter Heald (Assistant clerk – membership). John is also appointed as ex-officio Trustee to provide the link between Trustees and the clerking team.

#### **General Meeting – Area Meeting futures**

**11/21** Area Meetings across Scotland have had the opportunity to consider our concern presented to General Meeting (AM Minute 53/20 and subsequent GM Minute 20/10/07)

The relevant Area Meetings' minutes, that followed a request from GM Clerk to consider the matter, were circulated to AM Friends prior to this Meeting.

North Scotland Area Quaker Meeting emphasises its expectation that on-going efforts are made by General Meeting to consider alternative ways of working that will help Area Meetings across Scotland to thrive. We refer to the experience of Friends in Wales and would welcome serious consideration of a single trustee body for Scotland. We ask GM to establish a Scotland-wide working group to maintain the momentum on this matter.

**12/21** The following Friends expect to be able to join General Meeting on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2021: Piers Voysey, Sila Collins-Walden, Anthony Buxton, Robert Wilson.

We ask them to report back via the Clerk to Local Meetings.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

**13/21** Date of next Meeting: 8th May 2021. The Planning Committee will next meet on Monday April 12, at 7pm.

Area Meeting has been asked to host a Meeting with Mary Woodward to learn more about the review of the Book of Discipline (Quaker Faith and Practice).

The clerk will set a date with Mary to hold an Area Meeting one Saturday in early March.

Signed

Piers Voysey (Clerk)

Cluny Conochie (assistant clerk for this Meeting)

**Agenda items carried forward:**

Between Meetings Procedure terms. The Clerk will provide information of other AM procedures in this respect.

Receiving the Tabular Statement.