

North Scotland Area Quaker Meeting

From 10am,
Saturday 5th February 2022

26 Friends in attendance, from Skye, Aberdeen, Forres, Lochaber & Lorn, Orkney, Shetland, Inverness
and Zoe Prosser (Local Development Worker, Scotland)

Area Meeting today has focussed on worship and fellowship and sharing reflections led by Lynden Easterbrook and Zoe Prosser reporting back from Quaker Life Representative Council.

Business items included receiving the minutes from AM Planning Committee (10th January 2022). These had been circulated in advance and only the key Nomination minutes were read out by the Clerk.

The following minutes have been recorded from the Meeting today:

1/22 Edmund Holt is released from service as Assistant Clerk (ref AM Minute 48/21) and is appointed Assistant Clerk for Trustees, and Area Meeting Trustee to serve from January 2022 to 31 December 2024.

2/22 With reference to the Planning Committee minute (c) (10 January 2022) we add the role of Children and Young People's Advocate to the list of AM Planning Committee members.

Piers Voysey
Clerk

Quaker Life Representative Council

In this varied workshop Lynden and Zoe enabled us to explore Quaker Life's October focus on reflecting on the impacts of the last 2 years and how we move ahead with our commitments from Yearly Meeting 2021, using the RESTORE framework.

Within a little more than an hour, we were sharing in small groups, pairs, as a whole Meeting and reflecting individually.

We were given guidance on reflecting effectively: using a caring tone in conversation, listening, speaking one voice at a time, openness to share within the space, sensitive sharing beyond the space.

The RESTORE framework has evolved from a tool used in schools, to understand what we have lived through, what we are facing now and how we might go forward.

There is acknowledgement that for many of us we face underlying stresses from the pandemic, as well as from racism, sexism, economic factors and more.

We find ways to relieve stress; by being outdoors, going to Meeting for Worship, physical contact with others, laughter, crying, sharing, deep breathing and exercise.

In our final worship sharing on the question: what inspires us from the YM minute, and what would be helpful for our Meetings I noted the following sentiments:

- It gives us a sense of purpose, a motivation to engage with the issues;
- In our response, are we solutions focussed or listening with empathy – do we want to hear

of fix?

- The struggle to fully empathise with suffering when we live a privileged existence.
- How can we do more, if we already treat each other as equals? How do we cut our carbon consumption if we have already cut to a minimum? Do we give it all away?
- Living remotely it is easy not to be aware of what's going on elsewhere. We can live in silos of limited information, unaware of the prevalence of hate crime.
- The text from the YM epistle provides a sense of opportunity, expansiveness, an invitation to do something, an invitation to spread our vision.
- It is also daunting. How do we reach out? Do we intervene as individuals, with others in our community, with others in our Meetings?
- It would be helpful to have examples, especially examples of working in small circles that ripple out, of being active bystanders and working in community.