

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

6th March, 2021
Held by Zoom



21/03/01 Worship

We have spent time together in worship, during which we heard read an extract from the testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of Andrew Kinnaird.

21/03/02 Welcome to all present

We welcome all Friends who are with us today, to General Meeting for Scotland, held by Zoom.

We regret that to comply with Covid19 restrictions, we were prevented from being together in person at a meeting hosted by North Scotland Area Meeting.

The total numbers of those present will be added to these minutes.

East Scotland	17
South East Scotland	28
North Scotland	9
West Scotland	29

Total: 83 including 3 attenders.

21/03/03 Elders for this meeting

We are grateful to Friends present who have offered to serve as Elders for this meeting. Their duties are listed on the back of the agenda. Names of those serving for today have been noted. We remind Friends that all of us share the duties of oversight and spiritual care of our Meetings, not just those appointed to carry them out.

21/03/04 Reporter of this Meeting

We appoint Jane Mitchell from West Scotland Area Meeting to report on this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask North Scotland Area Meeting to report on GM on 12th June, 2021.

21/03/05 Recording between-meetings decisions

We note that the following appointments were made by between-meetings procedure:

Nominations

GM nominations committee has brought forward the following names:

GM Trustee

Jacqueline Noltingk (Central Edinburgh LM)

To serve from January 2021 to March 2021

Parliamentary Engagement Working Group

Joyce Taylor (St. Andrews LM)

To serve from January 2021 to December 2021

Cath Dyer (Polmont LM)

To serve from January 2021 to December 2023 (1sttriennium)

GM Advisory Group (set up by General Meeting minute 20/10/15)

To serve with immediate effect until March 2021

Phil Lucas (East Lothian LM)

Carolyn Burch (St. Andrews LM)

Kate Philbrick (Glasgow LM)

These names being acceptable, we appoint the Friends named accordingly, by between-meetings procedure.

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

Nicola J. Maharg, Assistant Clerk

16th November, 2020

Nomination

Further to minute 20/06/14 GM Communications, GM nominations committee has brought forward the following name:

Quakers in Scotland Facebook Page Administrator

Jane Booth (Banchory LM)

To serve from January 2021 to December 2023

This name being acceptable, we appoint Jane by between-meetings procedure.

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

Nicola J. Maharg, Assistant Clerk

4th January, 2021

21/03/06 New members, transfers and deaths

From Area Meeting minutes since General Meeting on 31st October, we record the following:

General Meeting for Scotland, 6th March, 2021

TRANSFERS OF MEMBERSHIP - IN

Carolyn Burch from ESAM to NSAM
Richard Raggett from ESAM to NSAM
Mark Smith from London West AM to NSAM
Alexander Alan Parker from NSAM to SESAM
Brian Ian Collins-McDougal from Cambridgeshire AM to SESAM
Derek McLean from NSAM to WSAM

NEW MEMBERS

Alex Orr (ESAM)
Andrew Hajducki (SESAM)
Su Nuttgens (SESAM)
Mairi Breslin (WSAM)
Christopher Owen (WSAM)

DEATHS

Roger Kelly (SESAM) on 27th November 2020
Jim Pym (SESAM) on 20th October 2020
Ann Barrett (SESAM) on 11th October 2020
John Foster (SESAM) on 29th October 2020
Mike Richardson (WSAM) on 9th November 2020

21/03/07 Testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of Andrew Kinnaird, Monica Jackson and Gerard Walmesley

South East Scotland Area Meeting has sent us testimonies to the grace of God as shown in the lives of Andrew Kinnaird, Monica Jackson and Gerard Walmesley. To share these testimonies with Friends in Scotland, they were circulated with the papers for this meeting.

We receive and note these testimonies and ask that they are posted on the Quakers in Scotland website.

21/03/08 Nominations

Please see minute 21/03/05 for appointments by between-meetings procedure.

We are grateful for the work of our GM nominations committee. They have brought us the following names:

GM Trustee

Margaret Mortimer (Central Edinburgh LM)

(1st Triennium) To serve from March 2021 to December 2023

GM Second Assistant Clerk

Adwoa Bittle (Perth LM)

To serve from March 2021 to December 2022

These name being acceptable, we appoint the Friends named accordingly.

Release from service

Lynne Barty has asked to be released as our representative on Faith in Community Scotland. She has served on their Small Grants Committee since late 2012. We release Lynne from this service with immediate effect and thank her for the work she has done on our behalf.

As the work of this committee is currently in abeyance, we are not seeking a new representative at the moment.

21/03/09 Parliamentary Engagement Working Group report

The report of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG) was circulated in advance of this meeting, as Paper B. Joyce Taylor has updated the report. She directed us to an article in the current edition of the Scottish Friend, which gives details of the work.

We are pleased to hear of the significant work of our Parliamentary Engagement Officer, Andrew Tomlinson, including: submissions to the Scottish Parliament; linking with MSPs; and on the forthcoming Scottish Parliamentary Elections. Andrew is keen to speak to area meetings and has already spoken to two. We hope he will speak to GM in September.

We are encouraged to make more use of the Quakers in Scotland website: <https://www.quakerscotland.org/our-work>

This is where we can find:

- A new area still under construction, on COP26
- News of parliamentary engagement work
- Information about current climate action
- Our Quaker guide to engagement with candidates for the Scottish Parliamentary Elections in May
- The text of our submissions: to the Scottish Government's All our Rights in Law consultation; and to the 3rd Scottish Land Use Survey
- The PEWG's positional paper to guide their work

We thank Joyce for her report and the group for its work.

21/03/10 Tabular Statement 2020

We have received the tabular statement for 2020 and note the following numbers of Members, Attenders and Children at 31st December, 2020.

	2020			2019	2018	2017	2016
	Members *	Attenders: adults	Attenders: children	Members	Members	Members	Members
East	81	52	11	83	86	88	89
North	136	101	18	135	135	134	129
South East	235	200	70	250	257	243	255
West	226	197	20	199	209	220	212
Total	678	550	119	667	687	665	685

*All members shown in the 2020 column are adults.

21/03/11 Scottish Quaker Community Justice Matters

Further to minute 20/10/15 we have received a written report from the advisory group, which was circulated in advance of this meeting.

We accept the report from the group.

We agree that GM should establish a Scottish Quaker Community Justice Working Group composed of five members, appointed by General Meeting:

- a convener nominated from the membership of the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network (SQCJN)
- and four members, one each from the four Scottish Area Meetings, where possible from members of the SQCJN within their area.

This Working Group will be appointed for one triennium. Towards the end of this period GM will carry out an evaluation of the group's work, and recommendations will then be brought about its future.

We ask GM nominations committee to bring forward the names of Friends to serve on the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Working Group.

The advisory group suggests that the respective roles of the new Working Group and the existing Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network should be defined to make clear their value and relationship with each other and with General Meeting. They propose the following:

Objectives of the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Working Group

- (i) to facilitate the work of the SQCJN as a body linked to GM;
- (ii) to provide initial input and regular (at least annual) feedback to GM on the work of the SQCJN, keeping Scottish Quakers informed on community justice issues;
- (iii) to represent GM in communicating discerned Quaker views on community justice issues to other bodies and to the Scottish public;
- (iv) to work closely with the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group where community justice matters arise in the Scottish Parliament, always ensuring that such advocacy reflects Quaker positions and priorities which have been appropriately discerned by GM. This will require regular communication between the convenors of the 2 groups to inform each other of advocacy opportunities which arise and agree possible actions which may involve work by the Parliamentary Engagement Officer, depending on priorities and capacity.

We accept these objectives.

We understand that the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network is content with the suggested objectives for the Network and we note them as follows:

Objectives of the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network

- (i) to provide a meeting place and support for Quakers working in and interested in the community and criminal justice system in Scotland, particularly those working as lone Quakers;
- (ii) to liaise with others who share this involvement and interest and especially those of other faith traditions, bringing a Quaker perspective into the discussions and taking action, working with others where appropriate;
- (iii) to identify issues relating to community justice which may be of concern to Friends and to propose ways of addressing these;
- (iv) to provide learning opportunities for those involved in and those interested in community justice.

We thank Caroline Burch, Phil Lucas and Kate Philbrick for their work in preparing this report.

The SQCJN has shared with us their statement on a Scottish approach to crime and punishment, which was circulated with the papers for this meeting.

**Statement from Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network
on a Scottish Quaker Approach to Crime and Punishment
agreed at their meeting on 16.2.21**

Within the devolved Scottish context and given the evolving situations in prisons and community justice it is important that General Meeting for Scotland has discerned the principles on which advocacy can take place on its behalf, requiring systemic change and moving towards Criminal and Community Justice Systems more engaged with rehabilitation and restorative justice. We are concerned to seek growing points to bring about a just and compassionate society, where extremes of societal inequality do not contribute to people committing, being accused, convicted and punished for offences.

Friends, partly through their own experiences in the prisons of the seventeenth century, became concerned about the treatment of the accused or convicted. Friends witnessed to their concern for the Divine Spirit in humans by seeing prisons as an alternative to corporal or capital punishment. Subsequently, they worked for reform of these prisons.

Today, Friends are becoming aware that overuse of prisons is a destructive and expensive failure as a response to crime. We include efforts to replace prisons with non-punitive, life-affirming and reconciling responses, alongside efforts to reform or ameliorate them. The prison system is both a cause and a result of violence and social injustice.

Throughout history, the majority of prisoners have been the powerless and the oppressed. We recognise the inherent dangers in the imprisonment of human beings, which like their enslavement, often is as destructive to those involved in their imprisonment and to society as to those imprisoned.

The challenge before us is to use alternatives based on economic and social justice and on the fulfilment of human needs. Some alternatives to prisons have already been developed and more are needed to bring about reconciliation and healing within the community. Friends need to seek out, develop and support such programmes.

At the same time, we need to foster awareness in ourselves and others of the roots of crime and violence in society to ensure that our lives do not unintentionally reinforce these evils.

There is a great need for Friends to reach out to and to support all those affected: all those within the Criminal and Community Justice systems, including those accused and convicted of crimes, staff, victims and families.

We recognize a need for restraint of those few who are exhibiting dangerous behaviour. The kind of restraint used and the help offered must reflect our concern for that of God in every person.

We hold the testimonies to peace and equality close in this endeavour and recognise the express need to speak truth to power to reduce 'social harm' and bring peace to our communities.

Reference Quaker Faith and Practice, 1.02.33, 23.94

Kate Aspinwall, Margaret Boland, Pete Clarke, Ren Clark, Jennifer Cosey, Mary Kennedy, Peter Kennedy, Anneke Kraakman, Bob Mandeville, Martin Mansell, Jenny Meade, Mike Nellis, Kate Philbrick

We endorse this statement and thank the Network for sharing it with us.

21/03/12 Enquirers' Day 2021 – Exploring the Quaker life

The 2021 Enquirers' Day will be held by Zoom on Saturday, 24th April from 10.30 am to 1.00 pm. It is being organised by South East Scotland Area Meeting. For further information about the event please contact Mariot Dallas, dallasfalkirk@btinternet.com

21/03/13 Funding of Enquirers' Day and other GM events

Further to minute 20/10/10, GM Trustees have recommended that General Meeting fund our one-day enquirers' events, as they are part of our extension work. We ask GM Trustees to set a budget for Enquirers' Days.

Trustees recommend no change to GM's funding of residential events, including the Family Weekend and Teenagers' Weekend: GM will pay a 30% subsidy towards these events. Participants will be charged. Trustees assume that area meetings will continue to provide bursary assistance for Friends attending.

We accept GM Trustees' recommendation for the future funding of both the Enquirers' Day and other GM events.

21/03/14 GM Trustees Annual Report 2020

Martin Burnell, clerk to GM Trustees has presented their annual report 2020, which was approved by Trustees on 23rd February, 2021. The report was circulated in advance of this meeting.

We note that GM Trustees have held two online events for AM Trustees in 2020. One was a training event and the other was a liaison meeting of trustees. Further meetings will be held in 2021. We heard that at national level there is a new liaison group for clerks to trustees.

Jacqueline Noltingk has finished just over seven years as a GM Trustee. We thank her for her service and in particular for the work she has done on data security.

We thank Martin for presenting the report and GM Trustees for the work they do on our behalf. We accept the report and ask our clerk to sign it on our behalf.

21/03/15 General Meeting for Scotland Governing Document

A copy of the GM Governing Document agreed in 2007, with trustees' proposed amendments to update it, was circulated with the papers for this meeting. Most amendments are factual updates of terminology. Two changes reflect our actual practice: the first covers publication of the Book of Members, which GM does on behalf of AMs; the second is taken directly from Quaker faith and practice.

We agree that the changes be notified to local meetings in Scotland, with a view to GM giving formal agreement to the revised document in June.

21/03/16 Meeting for Sufferings report and Discussion Paper

Ann Kerr has written a report of the last two Meeting for Sufferings, which were held on 5th December, 2020 and 6th February, 2021. This was circulated with the papers for this meeting. In the same paper, Ann shared her perceptions of Meeting for Sufferings, her reflections on the current situation, and laid her concerns before General Meeting.

Ann is concerned about a lack of consistency of representation at Meeting for Sufferings. The change from having two representatives per area meeting to the present system of a representative and an alternate has resulted in the body of representatives varying from meeting to meeting, which Ann believes has a negative effect of the cohesion of the group. A strong worshipping community is the bedrock of good discernment and Meeting for Sufferings has measures in place to help build this, such as residential meetings, Ann asks if there needs to be further support to help MfS representatives form a worshipping body.

Since the creation of BYM Trustees in 2008, roles and relationships between Meeting for Sufferings and Trustees have evolved and some of

the boundaries between church governance and the wider role of Meeting for Sufferings might have become blurred. This lack of clarity impacts the ability of MfS to fulfil all its functions, as laid out in Quaker Faith and Practice 7.02. Ann has asked us to consider whether there is a need for the responsibilities of BYM Trustees and Meeting for Sufferings to be clarified.

We have reflected on these concerns. We are wary of suggesting radical change while Meeting for Sufferings is having to meet on-line. These matters need to be carefully discerned.

We ask our GM clerk to set up a Threshing Meeting to consider the experiences of past and present Meeting for Sufferings representatives in Scotland: what is working, what is not; what the group of Meeting for Sufferings representatives can do to help themselves; what we would like Meeting for Sufferings to change. We recognise that although the Threshing Meeting will focus on our experience of the Scottish dimension, our difficulties are also shared by Friends from other parts of Britain. We suggest that a starting point for the Threshing Meeting should be Ann Kerr's paper for GM.

We thank Ann for her report and for raising these matters with us today.

We send this minute to the clerk of Meeting for Sufferings.

21/03/17 Proposed dates and host area meetings for GM in 2022/23

We suggest the following:

- 5th March 2022 East (already agreed)
- 11th June 2022 West
- 10th September 2022 South East
- 12th or 19th November 2022 North
- 4th or 11th March 2023 West

We hope that by next year we will be able to meet in person and that these will be blended meetings. We ask each area meeting to confirm the acceptability of their proposed date and to find a local venue equipped for a blended GM.

21/03/18 Hearing from GM representatives on our ecumenical and interfaith bodies

Quakers in Scotland are active participants in the faith community and we link in at a national and local level. In preparation for this meeting we have received written reports from our representatives on the following ecumenical and interfaith bodies:

Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS)

Adwoa Bittle represents GM on ACTS. In her report she updated us on the progress of the transition to the Scottish Christian Forum (SCF), which is being set up as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. A copy of the constitution is available from Adwoa.

During the past year Adwoa has served on the Church Leaders Forum, set up under the new structure. She has made friends, built bridges and found her service a joy.

If anyone is interested in ecumenical work and would like to support Adwoa, they are asked to contact her.

Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR)

General Meeting for Scotland nominates a representative to serve on QCCIR: the appointment is made by Meeting for Sufferings. Clayton Cameron is our representative. In his report Clayton explained that QCCIR is a standing committee of Britain Yearly Meeting, involved in inter-church and interfaith work in Britain through Churches Together in England, ACTS and Cytun in Wales. It helps Friends create mutual understanding and bonds of friendship with other faith groups.

Iona Community Board

Bob Dixon represents GM on the Iona Community Board. His report updates us on their work and provides an insight into some practices of the Iona Community, and its relationship with the Church of Scotland. Quakers have an easy affinity with the Iona Community, as we have shared values and priorities. We note that our Friend Ruth Harvey has been appointed as the new Leader of the Iona Community.

Bob has reported that the refurbishment of the Iona Abbey has now been completed, although the building is currently closed.

World Day of Prayer, Scottish Committee

Margaret Roy is GM representative on Scottish Committee of the World Day of Prayer (Formerly the Women's World day of Prayer). Margaret's report explains how churches in 90 countries worldwide come together annually to focus their prayers on one country. This requires a great deal of work. Margaret is involved in organising an international meeting of delegates in Edinburgh, next summer.

Margaret's interest in this work overlaps with her concern about violence against women.

Interfaith Scotland

Barbara Potter is GM representative on Interfaith Scotland. Her report focuses on the activities of that group in 2020, most of which took place

on-line. In addition to these activities, support to local interfaith groups around the country has continued and Interfaith Scotland distributed a share of £25,000 from the Scottish Government to 66 projects working on local interfaith resilience.

Adwoa Bittle, Clayton Cameron and Margaret Roy have spoken personally about their service as our representatives. As Clayton is at the start of his service on QCCIR, he arranged for committee members Claire Bowman and Stephanie Grant to share their experience by video.

We have shared some of our local experience of ecumenical and interfaith work.

We thank our representatives for the work they do on our behalf, for their written reports, and for speaking to us today.

21/03/19 North Scotland Area Meeting minute and AM responses

The following minutes apply: 5, Nov. 17; 9, June 18; 5, Sept. 18; 12 and 15, March, 19; 12 June, 19; 7 and 8 Nov., 19; 20/03/12, 20/10/07.

Piers Voysey, clerk of NSAM, has introduced their minute 53/20. It originates from: a very real concern in North Scotland about finding Friends to serve as Trustees; their efforts towards creating simpler Meetings; and ensuring their limited time and energy are focused on spiritual nourishment of Friends and the Meeting as a whole, rather than administrative burdens.

At their meeting on 19th October, 2020, Friends in NSAM united in accepting two proposals made at a Meeting for Clearness, set up at the request of Robert Wilson. These are:

- NSAM welcomes the co-operation of the four Area Meetings and General Meeting for Scotland to date, and they hope it will increase in the future, resulting in further efficiencies.
- They suggest that a single legal body for Quakers in Scotland, amalgamating the current four Area Meeting charities and that of General Meeting for Scotland, might be an option to be considered, with the proviso that any new structure must recognise local and regional expertise regarding organising social and spiritual events.

In raising this concern at General Meeting, North Scotland Area Meeting wishes to encourage GM to be prepared for change, should the time come when one or more area meetings cannot meet their legal requirements with regard to trusteeship, including financial accountability.

After receipt of NSAM minute 53/20, and further to minute 20/10/07, our General Meeting clerk invited East, West, and South East Scotland Area Meetings to consider North Scotland Area Meeting's proposals. Their responses were circulated in advance of this meeting, as part of Paper G. To inform our discernment on this matter, Paper G also includes: a summary of the work already done by GM on NSAM's concern about the lack of active membership and its effect on finding Friends to serve in essential roles, like trustees; the minutes of Inverness LM referred to in NSAM minute 53/20; and briefing papers produced by ESAM and WSAM.

We thank the area meetings for their consideration of NSAM minute 53/20. Our clerk has summarised their responses to the two proposals.

Each area meeting has embraced the suggestion for greater co-operation, closer working and mutual support between the Scottish Area Meetings and General Meeting. They felt that the sharing of experience and expertise will simplify and reduce the workload.

At this time area meetings are not in unity over the proposal for a single legal body for Quakers in Scotland. Each area meeting consulted expressed reservations about the proposal. There was an understanding that a move in that direction would have a profound effect on area meetings and would need detailed and complex oversight by AM and GM trustees. At the same time there was a willingness to remain open to new ways of working.

Two area meetings suggested that the way forward was for GM to set up a working group. The remit of the group might be to reflect further and more deeply on a range of solutions and models, which would assist us in developing Quakers in Scotland.

GM Trustees "feel that the fundamental issue is building a flourishing Quaker community in Scotland and that a process of discernment is needed before moving to any particular change in organisational arrangements."

We agree to take what steps we can within our current structures, to improve the functioning of our Scottish Quaker community.

We encourage GM in partnership with AMs to arrange more opportunities for role holders to meet and support one another and to explore other ways of working together.

We ask GM to set up a working group, with the following remit:

1. To reflect further and more deeply on a range of solutions and models which would assist us in developing Quakers in Scotland
2. To identify options for GM and AMs to consider, including organisational changes we can make within our current structures which would benefit us all. Work already done will be considered along with new thinking. We hope the group will be creative in generating and exploring further options.
3. To set out the pros and cons of each option
4. To write a paper on their findings for the consideration of GM and AMs

The working group should include members of each of the four Area Meetings and GM, not necessarily existing role holders. The number of Friends serving on the group should be no less than 8 and no more than 10.

We are aware that the details of this working group might benefit from further scrutiny and send this outline remit and setup to AM clerks for comment, before asking GM nominations committee to bring forward names of Friends to serve on the group.

21/03/20 Notices

1. We have received the following notice from Christian Aid Scotland. *Applications for Christian Aid's 2021 Prophetic Activist scheme are open until the 14th of March. Together with the support of Christian Aid and inspiring guests, a community of 18-30 year-old Christians from across the UK will explore the relationship between faith and global social justice as part of a 9-month initiative - complete with residentials, webinars, workshops and much more. With the climate-focused COP coming to Glasgow next November, there's never been a more important time for young adults in Scotland to make their voices heard. Prophetic Activist spaces are limited - for more information and how to apply, visit:*

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/propheticactivist>
or contact David at drpaterson@christian-aid.org

2. Refugees in Scotland

A Zoom meeting will take place on Monday 12 April at 5.00pm to learn about the work of Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees SFAR. We will be hearing from Sabine Chalmers, SFAR Co-ordinator, who will outline the needs and experience of refugees in Scotland and the work of SFAR. We hope it will be an opportunity to hear about what Quakers are

already doing at a local level to engage with and support refugees, and to consider what further action - if any - might be taken. Quakers is one of 13 bodies working in partnership through SFAR, and we are represented by Hilary Patrick of Central Edinburgh Local Meeting.

This event is organised for General Meeting for Scotland by South East Scotland Area Meeting, and we welcome participation by all. Please pass on word to others who may be interested.

For further details, contact Alastair Cameron, Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting, clerk.sesam@outlook.com

21/03/21 Closing Minute

We record our thanks to the Friends who set up and hosted this GM by Zoom.

There being no further business to bring before General Meeting, we conclude, intending to meet next on 12th June, 2021, if nothing occurs to prevent.

Elizabeth Allen,
Clerk