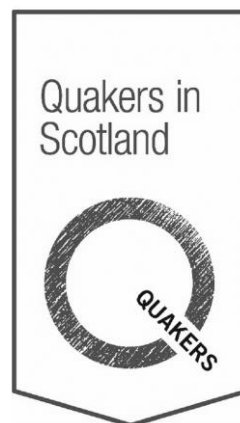


GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

12th June, 2021
Held by Zoom



21/06/01 Worship

We have spent time together in worship, during which we heard read an extract from Quaker Faith and Practice 29.02. We are reminded that our work needs to be grounded in the Spirit, and our leadings tested in a gathered meeting. As we let God change us through our faithful waiting and listening, we prepare ourselves to go forward in humility and obedience to work with others who have also heard the call. Changing the world starts with being open to personal transformation.

21/06/02 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 East Scotland Area Meeting.

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

East Scotland	13
South East Scotland	21
North Scotland	10
West Scotland	13
Member of another AM	1

Total: 58 including 5 attenders

21/06/03 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.

21/06/04 Reporter of this Meeting

We appoint Piers Voysey from North Scotland Area Meeting to report on this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask East Scotland Area Meeting to report on GM on 11th September 2021.

21/06/05 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:

Assistant Clerk

Michael Hutchinson (Glasgow LM)

To serve from 13th June 2021 to 31st December 2022

The Scottish Quaker Community Justice Working Group

Kate Philbrick as Clerk (Glasgow LM)

Jenny Copsey (Kelso LM)

Anneke Kraakman (Perth LM)

Bob Mandeville (Milngavie LM)

Trish Rogers (Skye Worshipping Group)

To serve with immediate effect until 31st May 2024

Facebook Moderator

Martin McCaffery (St Andrews LM)

To serve from 1st June 2021 to 31st May 2022

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

Meeting for Sufferings Representatives for triennium - Yearly Meeting 2021 to Yearly Meeting 2024

Ann Kerr (Glasgow LM)

Mike Shilson as Alternate (Mull and Iona LM)

We pass these nominations to BYM for appointment.

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

Nicola J. Maharg, Assistant Clerk

Adwoa Bittle, Assistant Clerk

4th May 2021

21/06/06 New members, transfers and deaths

From Area Meeting minutes since General Meeting on 6th March, we record the following:

TRANSFERS OF MEMBERSHIP - IN

Ed Bruce from Hardshaw & Mann AM to WSAM

NEW MEMBERS

Brenda Dalton (WSAM)

Margery Toller (WSAM)

DEATHS

Katherine Downing (WSAM) on 6th March 2021

Andrew Hajducki (SESAM) on 25th April 2021

21/06/07 Confirmed dates and host Area Meetings for GM in 2022/ 23

The following dates have been confirmed:

12th March 2022 East (please note change of date)

11th June 2022 West

10th September 2022 South East

19th November 2022 North

11th March 2023 West

We hope that by 2022 we will be able to meet in person and that where possible these will be blended meetings.

21/06/08 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 working group to identify options for change in the way we work which would benefit Quakers in Scotland

Brian Ashley, (Shetland LM) - Convenor

Phyllida Sayles, (Inverness LM)

Alyson Buchan, (Perth LM)

Robin Waterston, (St. Andrews LM)

Kate Gulliver, (Ayrshire LM)

Jay Wilkinson, (Argyll LM)

These name being acceptable, we appoint the Friends named to serve from now until March 2022.

We await the nomination of Friends from South East Scotland Area Meeting, to serve on this working group. When the names are brought forward, we ask that the appointments be made by between-meetings procedure.

Release from service

Nicola Maharg has asked to be released as our assistant clerk. We agree to this request with immediate effect. We thank Nicola for her service, and for her prayerful and thoughtful support of General Meeting and its work.

Sila Collins-Walden has asked to be released from service as Editor of the Scottish Friend. She is serving in her second triennium. We are grateful to Sila for the time and effort she has put into this work and we thank her for being willing to continue as editor until the end of this year. We agree to Sila's request.

We ask our nominations committee to bring forward the name of a Friend to replace Sila as Editor of the Scottish Friend, and the name of a Friend to serve as assistant editor. It would be helpful to appoint the assistant editor before Sila finishes her service, see GM minute 20/09/12.

Central European Gathering of Friends 2021

Buša Cochrane-Muir was appointed by minute 20/06/08 to attend this event in 2020. It was cancelled because of Covid19. We re-appoint Buša to attend the 2021 Gathering, from 10th to 13th September, in Litomysl, Czech Republic.

21/06/09 GM Annual Report and Accounts 2020

The General Meeting for Scotland Annual Report and examined Accounts for 2020 have been circulated with the papers for this meeting. They were approved by GM trustees at their meeting on 21st May 2021.

Nigel Dower, our treasurer, has presented the report and accounts, drawing out particular details and answering our questions.

We are grateful that much of the work on our concerns has continued online during the pandemic.

This is an unusual year - the figures are not entirely indicative of the state of our accounts. In 2020, as there was going to be an underspend because of the pandemic, trustees decided to return a percentage of the £10,000 AM quota to the AMs but 2 AMs transferred their rebates, totaling £1723.98, to offset their 2021 quota.

The vacant Parliamentary Engagement Officer's post was not filled until autumn 2020, because of the pandemic. Of the total £10,000, set aside for the Scottish AMs and GM contribution to the cost of the post, only £2500 was required in 2020. The remainder was vired across to 2021.

Total income for 2020 from area meeting quotas, grants and donations was £25,662.67 and payments amounted to £18,805.18, giving a surplus for the year of £6857.49, and a balance of £42,984.48. However, if the figures were adjusted to account for the money transferred to 2021, there would be a deficit of £2366.49, which is less than the budgeted deficit of £4000.

We receive and accept the General Meeting Report and Accounts 2020 and ask our clerk to sign them on our behalf.

We thank our trustees for their work and Nigel for his preparation and presentation of these documents.

21/06/10 General Meeting for Scotland Governing Document

Further to minute 21/03/15, local meetings in Scotland have been notified of the proposed updates and amendments to the GM Governing Document and no objection to these was raised.

We now agree the revised document.

21/06/11 Introducing Zoe Prosser, Local Development Worker in Scotland

Zoe has told us a little about herself and of how she intends to approach Quaker local development work in Scotland.

Before taking up this post, she worked for Britain Yearly Meeting, in various roles.

Zoe has spent her first six weeks joining in with some local meetings and getting to know our Quaker community in Scotland.

She is here to help us achieve our aims as Quakers in Scotland, and can help us build our skills, further our networks, and connect with people and resources. Her early plans are to offer elders support and

training and to work with Quaker activists involved in COP 26, connecting them to available help.

We welcome Zoe to her new post and thank her for speaking to us today. Zoe can be contacted by email at Zoep@quaker.org.uk

21/06/12 Parliamentary Engagement Working Group report

The report of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG) was circulated in advance of this meeting. Joyce Taylor has updated the report.

Our Parliamentary Engagement Officer, Andrew Tomlinson, has encouraged Friends and local meetings to send postcards to their new MSPs congratulating them on their election, sharing Quaker hopes for the future, and offering to support them in their work. Some Friends shared their positive replies. Local and area meetings will be asked to inform Richard Raggett of responses they receive.

The PEWG continues to make links with MSPs and Cabinet Secretaries and to raise issues of concern to Friends, including Scotland's role in weapons manufacture, and the planned firing range near Samye Ling Monastery, Eskdalemuir.

Collaborative work on COP26 continues.

We are pleased to hear that new work on peace education in Scottish schools is being explored with QPSW.

We are reminded that information about the parliamentary engagement work can be found on the Quakers in Scotland website:
<https://www.quakerscotland.org/our-work>

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

21/06/13 Parliamentary Engagement Officer post, future funding

We have received a paper explaining the need for transitional funding arrangements for this post, as it moves from joint funding by AMs and GM in Scotland and BYM, to a permanent BYM funded post.

We have heard that the contribution of the Parliamentary Engagement Officer is essential to looking after Quaker priorities, and that this work is much appreciated by other Scottish churches.

To allow BYM to give an undertaking now that the post will be made permanent at the end of this year, AMs and GM are asked to underwrite a total of £10000 per year for three years, of which GM would underwrite £4000 per year. We have been given an assurance by our treasurer and trustees, that GM is financially able to give this undertaking. We give this commitment.

21/06/14 Meeting for Sufferings Report

We thank Ann Kerr for her written report of Meeting for Sufferings held on 10th April 2021, which was circulated with the papers for this meeting.

Ann also provided a brief written report of the Threshing Meeting held on 6th April 2021, in response to minute 21/03/16. The conclusion of the Threshing Meeting was that it was not appropriate to take any further action at this time. However, MfS representatives felt that it was valuable to meet together in advance of each Meeting for Sufferings.

21/06/15 Enquirers' Day 2021 – Exploring the Quaker Life

We thank Mariot Dallas for her written report of this event, which was circulated with the papers for this meeting. This year it was organised by South East Scotland Area Meeting and it took place by Zoom on 24th April. Twenty-one participants attended and feedback was positive. Organisers hope to hold a follow-up event.

21/06/16 Scottish Churches Housing Action

As one of the churches supporting Scottish Churches Housing Action (SCHA), we have received a letter from the Board asking if we wish SCHA to continue as an ecumenical voice on the issue of homelessness and if we do, what does our commitment involve. This enquiry was prompted by SCHA's current financial difficulties, including the discontinuation of a Scottish Government grant of £57000, from March 2022.

In General Meeting for Scotland's 2021 budget, we committed to contribute £500 to SCHA but to date we have not found a Friend willing to serve on the Board.

We discussed our future commitment to SCHA.

We agree that there is a need to tackle homelessness and in the past SCHA was an important organisation, which allowed the churches to respond to this issue. However, given SCHA's current financial struggle, and the difficulties churches are having in finding members to serve as

trustees on the Board of SCHA, we doubt if it is still a viable organisation.

We think our concern for homelessness and poverty would be better channeled through our Scottish parliamentary engagement work, although this would require us to give it further support. Perhaps other churches could do likewise through their own parliamentary advocacy. From time to time, churches could gather together to explore issues around homelessness.

It is with a very heavy heart that we intimate our intention to terminate our membership of SCHA in March 2022.

We ask our clerk to write to the SCHA Board to inform them of our discussion and decision.

21/06/17 Hearing from GM representatives on bodies focused on social witness

General Meeting for Scotland extends its social witness through linking with organisations focused on specific issues. In preparation for this meeting we have received written reports from our representatives on the following bodies:

Faith in Community Scotland (FiCS)

This predominantly Christian body supports and works alongside those living in poverty. Along with other funders, it set up a Rapid Response Project during the pandemic, to provide food and essentials for people in greatest need. Cuts to the funding of one part of the organisation, FiCS Action Fund (now Small Grants Committee), have led to its major grants programme being scaled back: it is now only offering small grants.

Interfaith Group on Domestic Abuse

The Group raises awareness of the existence of domestic abuse in all parts of society, including the churches. Statistically, two women are killed each week in the UK, by their current or ex-partner. This is also a faith issue, as abuse in the home creates damage in the family, the community and society, violating God's wish for humanity. In 2011, GM endorsed the Scottish Interfaith statement on domestic abuse.

Scottish Faith Action for Refugees (SFAR)

SFAR advocates on behalf of refugees and asylum seekers and encourages supportive action and a spiritual response from the churches to these issues. It provides good resources and assistance for those involved in refugee issues.

ACTS Group on Human trafficking

This Group raises awareness of the extent of human trafficking within Scotland and globally, by giving talks, arranging seminars and conferences. In Scotland, the known number of victims of human trafficking in 2018 was 232, with some living in every local authority.

Together Scotland

Together Scotland is a coalition of Scottish charities that work to improve the awareness, understanding and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The organisation supported our petition to the Scottish Parliament about military visits to schools and it continues to take up opportunities to raise this issue. As a member of this alliance, we have been working on their Incorporation Strategy Group on the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill.

Joyce Taylor has reported that our involvement in Together Scotland is through the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group, with Grace Da Costa (BYM staff) and now Andrew Tomlinson, our Parliamentary Engagement Officer, engaging with the organisation. For a wide-ranging group made up of many participants with differing viewpoints, they have managed to keep Quakers informed, and our views and beliefs are often sought after and always respected.

Today, we have heard both enthusiasm, and worry over finances from our Friends giving service on social witness concerns.

We heard from Lynne Barty, newly replaced by Kate Arnot, on Faith in Community Small Grants Committee that there is concern over future finances. We are grateful for Lynne's written report and hope that Kate will find a place going forward within this group, and that funds improve.

Kate then spoke to us of her involvement with the Interfaith Group on Domestic Abuse. She is enthusiastic about working on this group. It has clear aims and is not hindered by the strains of needing to manage property or staff. The Church of Scotland has (pre Covid19) organised a stall on the Sunday of the General Assembly and Kate is always enthused by the interest that the volunteers at the stall receive from the general public. We are reminded that domestic abuse touches people in all walks of life. For further details, please consult ifgoda.org.uk

Kate has also been involved in work on human trafficking for many years. Her work on the ACTS Group on Human Trafficking has been continuing but has reduced due to the transition of ACTS to the Scottish Christian Forum (SCF). Kate is hopeful that this group will begin

meeting again when the SCF is fully set up. Kate is passionate about this work and her role on the group, which is mostly to listen. She is clear that church involvement is important, as it provides an instant community for those who manage to be freed or escape from slavery.

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

21/06/18 Notices

Community Sponsorship of Refugees

Several members from Central and South Edinburgh Meetings and one from East Lothian are interested in creating a core group to take responsibility for resettling a refugee family through the Government Community Sponsorship Programme. They need committed volunteers who can offer time and help at different stages of the process. Anyone from anywhere in Scotland, who is interested in helping should get in touch with Esther Shreeve (South Edinburgh LM) or Lynne Barty (Central Edinburgh LM).

'Life on the Breadline' conference - 24th -25th June, by Zoom

This conference, organised by Church Action on Poverty, is the culmination of three years' research on the Christian response to poverty in the UK. If you would like to attend this event, please contact the GM clerk.

You can read about the work of 'Life on the Breadline' in Marilyn Higgins' report in the May edition of the Scottish Friend.

21/06/19 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 11th September, 2021, if nothing occurs to prevent.

Elizabeth Allen,
Clerk