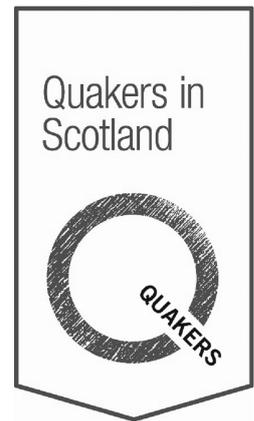


GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

7th March, 2020

Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh



20/03/01 Worship

We have spent time in worship together during which Quaker Faith and Practice 25.02 was read. We were reminded of our responsibility to love, care for and respect God's creation, our planet, which is seriously damaged by our human greed and ignorance. We recognise that it is our spiritual duty to act as good stewards and to support one another in this task. The power to act is God's power and it is mediated through us.

20/03/02 Welcome to all present

We welcome all Friends who are with us today, to General Meeting for Scotland in Edinburgh.

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

East Scotland	11
South East Scotland	28
North Scotland	5
West Scotland	17

Total: 61, including 3 attenders and 2 Young Friends

20/03/03 General Meeting Administrator

We note that Sue Proudlove of Central Edinburgh Local Meeting has been appointed as General Meeting for Scotland Administrator. We welcome Sue to her new post and are pleased that she is with us today.

20/03/04 Elders and overseers for this meeting

We are grateful to Friends present who have offered to serve as Elders or Overseers 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.

20/03/05 Reporter of this Meeting

We appoint Stella Cranwell from East Scotland Area Meeting to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask South East Scotland Area Meeting to report on General Meeting in Elgin, in June.

20/03/06 New members, transfers and deaths

From Area Meeting minutes since General Meeting on 14th September, we record the following transfers of membership:

West Scotland Area Meeting

Transfers in:

Rachael Milling, from Kingston & Wandsworth AM (now Ayrshire LM)

Paul Milling, from Kingston & Wandsworth AM (now Ayrshire LM)

Doreen Osborne, from Mid-Thames AM (now Glasgow LM)

Michael Taylor, from Manchester & Warrington AM (now Dunblane LM)

Transfer out:

Jill Halpin (Lanark LM) to Sussex East AM

From Area Meeting minutes since General Meeting on 19th November, we record the following new members:

North Scotland Area Meeting:

Chris MacGregor (Inverness LM)

Angela Nunn (Shetland LM)

From Area Meeting minutes since General Meeting on 19th November, we record the following deaths:

East Scotland Area Meeting:

Dennis Murray (Dundee LM), on 23rd September, 2019

Michael Gilderdale (St Andrews LM), on 25th September, 2019

West Scotland Area Meeting:

Joyce Minnis (Glasgow LM), on 24th December, 2019

2020/03/07 Proposed dates and host Area Meetings for 2021/22

We suggest the following dates and host Area Meetings for GM in 2021/22

6 th March 2021	North (already agreed)
12 th June 2021	East
11 th September 2021	West
20 th November 2021	South East
5 th March 2022	East

We ask each Area Meeting to confirm the acceptability of their proposed date and to inform our clerk of the venue for GM and the local contact responsible for practical arrangements.

20/03/08 Update on Local Development Worker in Scotland

Further to minute 19/11/11, our clerk has informed us that a meeting took place in Edinburgh, on 18th February, to explore interest in a Local Development Worker in Scotland. Attending the meeting were: Rachel Matthews, BYM Head of Local Development; Simon Best, Head of Learning for Woodbrooke; the clerks of the 4 Scottish Area Meetings; and the clerk and assistant clerk of General Meeting for Scotland. Rachel and Simon spoke about what a Local Development Worker might do, including creating opportunities for learning. Each Area Meeting clerk gave an overview of their Area Meeting and its needs and the General Meeting clerks spoke about the needs and perspective of Quakers in Scotland.

We have heard that four Local Development Workers will be recruited to start in four 'patches' in September 2020. A 'patch' is roughly 3-4 Area Meetings, approximately 30 to 35 local meetings. A final decision on the location of these patches will be made in mid to late March.

In giving guidance to the decision making group, Quaker Life Central Committee, which is the body with responsibility for local development work, minuted that they felt it was important "to ensure geographical coverage away from London (and Birmingham) and at least one LDW in each of the three nations".

A decision will be made at the same time about where to locate the pilot 'hub' to be used as a base for staff.

20/03/09 Action on Climate Emergency

Our clerk has reminded us of the work we have already done on this issue, noted in minute 7 of GM on 14th September, 2019. Paper A, which gives a partial picture of actions taken by Friends in Scotland, faced with the climate emergency, has been circulated in advance. Individually and together we are doing a lot and we celebrate our collective effort and commitment.

We have considered each of the suggestions for further action by General Meeting, presented as a table on the final page of Paper A and have agreed to take forward the following:

1. To maintain the big picture of what Quakers are doing and who we are working with, we agree to set up a page on the GM website for AMs, LMs and individual Friends to share what they are doing about

the climate emergency. We have been assured by David Sterratt, our GM website manager, that this is feasible and that the mechanisms for LMs and AMs to post news exist. David has offered to help AMs and LMs with this task.

2. To facilitate conversations and sharing of information, we agree to set up a forum, which would help Friends to be more effective in their campaigning. We will consider how this might be done in our session on GM communications, later today,
3. To inspire and encourage, we will spotlight what a Local Meeting, Area Meeting or individual is doing to combat the climate emergency. This is best done at GM in session.
4. In preparation for COP 26 and beyond:
We have heard that the West Scotland Hub Group is best placed to arrange for Chris Walker, QPSW Sustainability Programme Manager, to lead one or more training workshops in Scotland, to help Friends engage with decision makers.
We encourage Friends to participate in events on climate justice co-ordinated by Interfaith Scotland, rather than ask GM to arrange separate events.
We suggest Area Meetings might consider having a banner printed, using the QPSW template 'Quakers for Climate Justice'.
5. We encourage Friends to open conversations with those who are least likely to agree with them, as we need to change hearts and minds.

We ask our clerk to make sure that actions 1, 2, and 3 above are taken forward. While arranging for these actions to be taken, we are aware that the biggest contribution of GM on the climate emergency is our parliamentary engagement work.

We had expected that one of our Young Friends would have joined us this morning to talk about their action on the climate emergency but sadly she was prevented because of illness. We acknowledge the considerable commitment of our Young Friends to witness on the climate emergency, especially with the school strikes.

Friends have been invited to write further suggestions for GM action on post-it notes. These will be collated by the clerk and circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

20/03/10 GM November 2020, new arrangements

The date and venue set for the November General Meeting, 14th November, 2020 in Glasgow, is now impractical because of COP 26. However, 14th November is expected to be the date of the public march in Glasgow on climate change and it is anticipated that many Friends will want to be part of this. With this in mind, the following new arrangements have been made.

General Meeting will take place on Saturday, 31st October, 2020 from 2.00 pm to 4.30 pm in Cathedral Halls, Dunblane. Friends are invited to gather at 1.00 pm for a packed lunch. Tea and coffee will be available.

On Saturday, 14th November, 2020 Friends are encouraged to meet at Glasgow Meeting House for a period of worship, in preparation for joining the public march as a group of Quakers in Scotland.

Please note these new arrangements.

Minute 20/03/11 Nominations

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

Northern Friends Youth Events Charitable Trust (Shindig)

James McLeod (Dumfries LM), March 2020 to December 2022
(1st Triennium)

Parliamentary Engagement Working Group

Carolyn Burch (St. Andrews LM), March 2020 to December 2022
(1st Triennium)

Richard Raggett (St. Andrews LM) March 2020 to December 2022
(1st Triennium)

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

20/03/12 GM Communications Group Report

Further to minute 19/11/08, the GM Communications Group has produced a written report, which was circulated in advance of this meeting, as Paper B. The group has made recommendations on the next steps we might take to improve our communications and we have been asked for our feedback on some suggestions and our decision on others. For the purpose of this session, recommendations have been grouped under four broad headings: consider systems for information sharing; audit tasks; resources; external communication. Joyce Taylor, convenor of the Communications Group, explained our task today.

In small groups, according to our Area Meeting, we have considered the systems we use or might use for information sharing. A member of each group has acted as a scribe.

The small groups have reported back briefly, in a plenary session. We ask our clerk to collate the groups' flipchart sheets and insert this summary in this minute.

Summary of Groups' flipchart notes

General Meeting for Scotland website

Use of the website follows a similar pattern across the Scottish Area Meetings: a small proportion of Friends use it frequently; most use it occasionally and a few make no use of it. Within this pattern, some information is more sought than others: more Friends search for dates and events than search for minutes, yet the groups have suggested that minutes are posted on the site, for ease of reference. Friends want GM documents, including reports, accounts and papers for meetings to be posted on the GM website. This could also include updates on COP 26. Making the GM website the go-to place for GM documents, would encourage more Friends to use the website and reduce the number of times we are sent the same document from different sources. Friends mentioned accessing The Scottish Friend and AM Newsletters via the website.

Some LMs regularly post on the website and have a named person who attends to this: others don't, as they need help with the process and advice about what to post. Some Friends would like the website to be more visual, with less use of text. The question was raised about what use enquirers make of the website.

If we are going to make more use of the GM website, it will need to be checked regularly and ease of finding information, will be critical to its success.

Facebook

Limited use is made of the Quakers in Scotland Facebook Group and a significant proportion of Friends don't use it at all. Some of them feel excluded and it was suggested that differences might be generational. There is a range of views on the use of Facebook, including ethical objections.

However, Friends did think that Facebook does have some place in our communications but we should develop it with caution but it should not be a primary communication tool. It might be useful for forum groups.

Glasgow and Edinburgh LMs have Facebook groups and young people in Glasgow LM have their own Facebook group. When people are searching for Quakers in a town, the Facebook page is useful.

Alerts about events

Friends suggested using email and texts alerts for forthcoming events, with some meetings making good use of Facebook for this. Whats App, telephone and letters are also considered useful for alerts.

Young People

One group discussed whether young people are more likely to use an App, than texting: Whats App, Instagram and Snapchat were mentioned. Do we need an area on the GM website for young people or do we leave it to them to decide how they communicate?

Video Conferencing

Video and telephone conferencing are fairly widely used by Friends in Scotland: Glasgow LM uses ZOOM for some committees; West Scotland Area Meeting uses telephone conferencing and ZOOM for some area meetings; East Scotland Area Meeting has provided training in ZOOM; some Friends in South East Scotland Area Meeting are using ZOOM. These tools facilitate inclusion of Friends in more remote areas and reduce travel and time spent attending committee meetings, even local ones.

Friends are positive about the potential use of more video conferencing but have flagged up a few issues: some older Friends are not comfortable with it; the quality of the connection is vital; training/practice in using the system might be needed; there is difficulty for groups sharing one screen; there is a qualitative difference between virtual and with face-to-face communication.

Other

Friends also mentioned their use of AM websites; distance learning through Woodbrooke and the BYM website for links to resources.

We have considered the recommendations grouped as 'Audit Tasks' and those grouped as 'Resources'. We agree to carry out the audit tasks as follows:

1. Establish a definitive list of how General Meeting, local and area meetings communicate.
2. Establish what content is covered; if there is overlap; whether some content might usefully be communicated to a wider audience.
3. Establish the effectiveness of communications by speaking to Quakers and finding out what works (or doesn't) for them.

4. Consider the adequacy of the distribution list of *Scottish Friend*.

Looking at recommendations grouped as 'Resources' we agree to:

1. A GM communications budget. We ask the Communications Group to draw up a detailed budget, establishing the present cost of print and what a new communications policy might require.
2. Look at what resources are needed in terms of time and people to make increased digital communications effective.
3. Identify a system for setting up forums which are accessible to all ages, including the forum requested in GM minute 20/03/09 Action on Climate Emergency.
4. Should there be a Local Development Worker in Scotland, we ask our clerk to suggest communications within GM might be one of their tasks.

We think this work is best taken forward by a small group and ask the GM Communications Group to undertake it, co-opting whatever extra help they need. The current Communications Group are: Joyce Taylor, Ann Kerr, Rosemary Hartill, Clive Potter, David Sterratt. We ask the group to report back, when the time is right.

We thank the Communications Group for producing this report and facilitating our group discussions today.

20/03/13 COP 26, update

Further to minute 16 of GM on 14th September, 2019 and minute 19/11/19, Martin Mansell has updated us on COP 26, the United Nations Climate Change Summit in Glasgow, on 9th to 19th November, 2020.

COP 26 is a massive once-in-a-lifetime event for Glasgow: around 30,000 delegates are expected, plus up to 100,000 people from civil society groups. A West Scotland Area Meeting Hub Group has been set up to act as a liaison group and to co-ordinate Scottish Quaker activity before, during and after the event. It is part of a coalition of about 54 groups involved in the COP, organised by Stop Climate Chaos. Martin is the Hub Group's convenor.

Within the coalition is the Faith Working Group, which Martin attends. They are looking at what they might provide, including:

- a sanctuary space
- an exhibition within COP 26
- a Hope Garden, a space for reflection and planting trees

Martin has informed us that there are many ways in which Quakers will be involved, including:

- Glasgow Meeting House will be block-booked for the duration of the COP. Volunteers (Quakers and those sympathetic to Quaker values and spirituality) will be needed at the Meeting House to offer pastoral care and orientation. The Meeting House will host meetings, which may also be live-streamed worldwide through video links. These meetings may be organised by Quakers or other organisations. It is hoped there will be a young people's day.
- Many activists, especially those from indigenous communities who are usually most directly impacted by climate change, are not supported by their governments and are often unable to pay for their travel. The Hub Group is investigating ways to support people who otherwise would not be able to come. Hopefully, these people would be available to speak to Local Quaker Meetings around Scotland.
- The Hub Group is preparing a register of people who are prepared to offer accommodation for an attendee from a developing country, or a volunteer, or visitor.
- The Hub Group will also need volunteers to act as translators for Spanish and other languages, and to help in other areas such as publicity, logistics and communications etc.
- Quaker United Nations Office will be arranging its 'Quiet Diplomacy' events as well as attending the COP as a delegate. Friends World Committee for Consultation also has delegate status and Britain Yearly Meeting has also applied for this.

Friends who want to help in any way or would like to keep in touch with developments, are asked to contact West Scotland Hub Group by email: WestScotlandQuakersCOP26@gmail.com

We thank Martin for his update and West Scotland Hub Group for its work.

20/03/14 Tabular Statement 2019

We have received the tabular statement for 2019 and note the corrected figures for North Scotland Area Meeting. We note the following numbers of Members, Attenders and Children at 31st December 2019.

	2019			2018	2017	2016	2015
	Members	Attenders	Children	Members	Members	Members	Members
East	83	50	10	86	88	89	94
North	135	85	17	135	134	129	129
South East	250	204	52	257	243	255	254
West	199	165	24	209	220	212	216
Total	667	504	103	687	665	685	693

20/03/15 Engaging with the revision of the Book of Discipline

Mary Woodward has given us a glimpse of what it is like to serve on the Book of Discipline Revision Committee. Mary asked us to share with our neighbour, and to take it in turn to answer the following two questions:

What section do you most love in Quaker Faith and Practice?

Which one do you have the most problems with?

Friends who wish to engage further with the revision process, can use the Britain Yearly Meeting on-line collection tool <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/qfp-idea/>

Friends can also email or write to Michael Booth at Friends House.

Mary told us that at Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020 there will be three revising Quaker Faith and Practice special interest groups: 'Boldly', 'Prayerfully' and 'Joyfully'. There will also be a revision committee community art and podcast project, 'Our Book – Bath 2020: a creative Book of Discipline revision'.

We thank Mary for keeping us in touch with the work being done by the Book of Discipline Revision Committee.

20/03/16 GM Trustees Annual report 2019

Martin Burnell, Clerk of General Meeting for Scotland Trustees, has presented the GM Trustees Annual Report 2019, which was approved by Trustees, at their meeting on 25th February, 2020. Presentation of the report at GM in March instead of June, is in accord with Minute 13 of GM on 14^h September, 2019. The report was circulated in advance of this meeting. Minutes of Trustees meetings are on the GM website.

We note the following:

The Parliamentary Engagement Officer's job has now been advertised, as a permanent contract for 24.5 hours per week. There are ongoing discussions between General Meeting Trustees and Britain Yearly Meeting regarding changes in funding arrangements for the post.

Trustees have been involved in detailed work looking at the new constitution of the Scottish Christian Forum, with a view to watching that small churches have a sufficient voice.

Trustees expressed their gratitude to Marion Sharkey for the work she has done over the years as GM Administrator.

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.

20/03/17 Parliamentary Engagement Working Group report

Joyce Taylor, Convenor of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group, has updated us on her report, which was circulated in advance of this meeting, as Paper E.

We note that the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office (SCPO) will meet with the First Minister on 23rd April.

Joyce has suggested that Friends who want to respond to the Sepa consultation on disposal of radioactive waste from Faslane and Coulport, in the Clyde might do so through Greenpeace and CND.

We have heard that Britain Yearly Meeting is drafting a communication to the Minister of Defence regarding the renewal of Trident nuclear warheads.

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

20/03/18 Quaker prison visiting and community justice matters

Further to minute 10 of GM on 9th September, 2017, we have returned to community justice matters. Jenny Copsey, our representative on the Joint Faiths Board on Community Justice has informed us that the Board has been laid down, and that this leaves a gap. There is no opportunity for Quakers in Scotland involved in criminal and community justice to support each other.

Jenny has asked if it is time to see if there is interest in resurrecting the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network. This was a forum, under the auspices of GM, for Friends involved in community justice and those with an interest in it to exchange news and explore criminal/ community justice issues. We ask our clerk to email Friends in Scotland to gauge interest in this.

We thank Jenny for speaking to us today.

20/03//19 Meeting for Sufferings report

Reports of Meeting for Sufferings held in December and February were circulated as Paper F, in advance of this meeting. Ann Kerr has spoken to the reports.

Ann has drawn our attention to the work of Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) in Brussels and reminded us that they are dependent on donations. We are encouraged to look at the QCEA reports and to consider our giving.

We note that BYM Trustees have agreed a deficit budget for the next three years, to allow investment in the future. To address falling income, BYM has recently appointed a funding and communications manager. Friends might ask themselves whether they are making sufficient contributions to Britain Yearly Meeting.

We thank Ann for her report and for attending Meeting for Sufferings on our behalf.

20/03/20 Journeymen Theatre update

Further to minute 11 of GM on 14h September, 2019, Journeymen Theatre will perform 'Over the Top in Our Schools', a play about militarisation. The performance will be in Elgin, on Saturday, 13th June, after the close of General Meeting, starting about 3.30 pm and finishing about 4.35 pm.

20/03/21 Correspondence and other business

Central European Gathering of Friends

General Meeting for Scotland has been invited to send a representative to this event, which will take place in Litomyšl, Czech Republic, from Thursday, 7th to Sunday, 10th May, 2020. The theme is, 'Let your lives speak' and the Gathering will start by exploring our role as Quakers during this time of living in the climate and ecological crisis.

We agree to send a representative to the Central European Gathering of Friends, this time, and ask GM Nominations Committee to bring forward the name of a Friend to represent GM.

20/03/22 Closing Minute

We record our thanks to South East Scotland Friends for being our hosts at this GM.

There being no further business to bring before General Meeting, we conclude, intending to meet next in Elgin on 13th June 2020, if nothing occur to prevent.

Elizabeth Allen,
Clerk