

**Portobello and Musselburgh Local Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business,
Zoom, Sunday, 21 November 2021**

Minutes

2021/11/01 Attendance, worship, reading, minutes of the last meeting, use of chat function

Friends attending: Mary Jane Elton, Fiona Paterson, Mark Ballard, Cathy Holman, Chris Holman, Robin Liebmann, Ross Campbell, Alastair Cameron, Katrina McCrea, Marian Willoner, Ian Edwards, Duncan Wallace, Mark Ballard

Prevented: Sarah Martin, Jen Shepherd, Lynn Mayer

Opening reading: In the opening silence, Mary Jane Elton read a sentence from QFP 3.06: "As a worshipping community, particularly in our local and area meetings, we have a continuing responsibility to nurture the soil in which unity may be found."

Minutes of our meeting on Sunday, 15 August 2021, have been circulated, signed and placed in the minutes book.

Mary Jane Elton has asked Friends not to use the chat function in Zoom, unless they are more comfortable with contributing in writing rather than speech. In this case, Friends who wish to contribute should raise their hand as usual. When addressed by the clerking team, they should indicate in some way that they wish to write rather than speak, then send a message to everyone.

2021/11/02 Matters arising

(1) Instructions for after-meeting refreshments

Robin Liebmann has drafted instructions and is in the process of amending them now that we have had refreshments once outdoors and three times indoors. He will send them out later today.

(2) Meeting for Learning on Enabling Ministry

This will be covered in our agenda item on meetings for learning.

2021/11/03 Finance update

Chris Holman has presented a financial update for the last three months (appended). Over all, the meeting remains in a positive balance and has a good reserve available: our outgoings this year are about level with our income.

Those incurring costs for small items purchased on behalf of the meeting such as stores for refreshments or stationery for use by young people are encouraged to request refunds, for which they will require a receipt.

SESAM treasury team remind us that they have designated funds to offer bursary support to individuals who may require it so they can attend Quaker business or educational meetings. The intention is that everyone in a meeting, regardless of their personal circumstances, can take an active part in the life of Quakers across the UK. The application for funding would generally be supported by an overseer or elder of this meeting and is made by contacting the SESAM treasurer: there is a form, but emails and texts are also accepted.

SESAM treasury team also remind us that there is a one-off sum of money currently available to support access to meetings by those wishing to attend. There is a suggestion this could be well used to ensure the meeting has suitable technology to allow people to take part either in person or through Zoom. Any application to this fund needs to be submitted quickly.

Duncan Wallace has reminded us that SESAM's annual appeal for funds will be taking place early next year, by which Friends can contribute by using CAF vouchers, one-off donations, standing orders etc. He tells us that the Treasury Team have noticed that fewer people are coming forward for bursaries for education at the moment as so much education is taking place online. The Team would welcome approaches for funding initiatives such as lunches to help build community, which is one of the benefits that going to Woodbrooke would usually bring.

2021/11/04 Representatives for Area Meeting

We appoint Mary Jane Elton, Cathy Holman and Chris Holman to represent us at Area Meeting on Saturday, 27 November and to submit a short report for inclusion in the notices.

2021/11/05 Appointments

(1) We note that Mary Jane Elton finishes her three-year term as clerk in December 2021 and does not wish to be re-appointed. We warmly thank Mary Jane for her work, much of which was during the Covid lockdown and restrictions.

(2) We appoint Robin Liebmann and Fiona Paterson as co-clerks from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024.

(3) We release Fiona as one of our two representatives on Area Meeting Nominations Committee and thank her for her service.

(4) We appoint Mary Jane as representative on Area Meeting Nominations Committee with effect from April 2022.

2021/11/06 Future meetings for learning: proposal from elders, clerks and overseers (ECO)

As large in-person meetings for learning are not possible at the moment, ECO suggests that small-group “over coffee discussions” could take place on fourth Sundays, as an extension of after-meeting refreshments. Friends could bring additional snacks if they wished. Topics could include matters such as “the use of international sanctions”. The topic of “enabling ministry” could be included as the first topic, perhaps using the notes drawn up by Fiona Paterson and Jen Shepherd after a previous meeting for business as a prompt. These discussions will be held as worship-sharing way. One person will introduce the idea of worship-sharing and the topic before the conversations begin. These meetings will start in January, and arrangements will be reviewed in the spring. We will take steps to encourage and enable young people to take part. We ask Mark Ballard to organise, early in the New Year, a meeting with young people to discuss this further and possible topics. (This meeting need not necessarily take place on a Sunday.) We ask Friends to consider, in the spirit of care and love, taking a lateral flow test before they attend this and any other in-person meeting for worship.

Becoming Friends: Katrina McCrea has said she is willing to work with Alastair Cameron in re-starting the Becoming Friends course that was interrupted by the pandemic.

2021/11/07 Future of the Wiston Weekend: proposed meeting in January

Mark Ballard has outlined some of the 30-year history of Quakers gathering at Wiston Lodge in South Lanarkshire in September for a weekend of community building, sharing and worship. He has explained that the event has now grown to become one of the largest gatherings of Quakers in Scotland, with participants from meetings across south and central Scotland. However, as the event has grown the logistical and organisational challenges have grown. The event has also now started to receive financial support from South East Scotland Area Meeting. Mark has explained that current organising team from Polmont and Portobello & Musselburgh would like to lay down the responsibility for organising the Wiston weekend, and given the closer relationship with AM, would like to explore options for the future of the event.

Ian Edwards adds that Wiston has new management and is keen to strengthen links with existing supportive groups and to become a partner for social outreach in the local community.

We ask Robin Liebmann and Ian, on behalf of ECO, to facilitate a meeting for anyone who wishes to attend, from SESAM and beyond, to discuss these issues on 24 January. We ask Mark and Jessica Paterson (from Polmont meeting, subject to consent) to

present their thoughts on potential next steps for the weekend. We ask Mary Jane Elton to forward this minute to Area Meeting.

2021/11/08 Arrangements for business meeting

We agree to carry on holding meetings for business on third Sundays by Zoom until we can meet face-to-face without masks.

2021/11/09 Arrangements for meeting for worship, including refreshments and Zoom

Friends are generally happy to be meeting face to face, even with masks. Duncan Wallace has said that it is our duty to be accessible and that we should look again at blended meetings. We ask ECO to consider this issue again, and we ask Friends to try out other blended meetings, such as Central Edinburgh, Polmont and Glasgow.

Friends are also glad to be having refreshments again. It has been pointed out that staying seated in small groups reduces COVID risk. Robin Liebmann will update the coffee instructions accordingly.

2021/11/010 Arrangements for our next meeting for worship with attention to business

Our next business meeting will be held at 11 am on 20 February 2022 by Zoom. We ask Robin Liebmann and Fiona Paterson to clerk.

Signed:

Mary Jane Elton
Clerk

Fiona Paterson
Assistant Clerk

PORTOBELLO AND MUSSELBURGH QUAKER MEETING

Statement of accounts 10th August – 9th November 2021

Opening balance 10th August 2021: £5367.43

Income 10th August – 9th November:

Meeting Collections	£119.50
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Total Income for this period	<u>£119.50</u>
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Expenditure 10th August – 9th November

Room Rental ¹ Aug – Oct	£435.75
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Charitable Donations ²	£800
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Financial support ³	£100
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Expenses for catering	£12.26
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Bank Charge	£18
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Total Expenditure for this period	<u>£1366.01</u>
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<u>Excess of Expenditure over Income</u>	<u>£1246.51</u>
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Closing Balance 9th November 2021: £4120.92

¹ Monthly room rental: Aug £153.75; Sept £141; Oct £141

² As agreed at LM 30 May 21

³ As agreed by E&O's 10 Sept 21