

Portobello and Musselburgh Local Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Meeting for Worship with attention to business.

Bellfield Celebration Hall, 23 February 2025 12:45 – 14:15

MINUTES

2025/02/01 Attendance worship, reading, minutes of the last meeting

Friends attending: Sarah Martin (co-clerk), Robin Liebmann (co-clerk), Cathy Holman (elder), Marian Willoner (co-clerk), Mark Ballard, Wade Robertson, Duncan Wallace, Katrina McCrae, Alastair Cameron, Chris Holman, Eoin Rutter, Fabien Camus, Jacob Frankau, Izzie Middleton, Tali Brown and Mary Jane Elton

Prevented: Ian Edwards, Chris Booth and Heather Stacey

Cathy is the appointed elder for this meeting for business.

In the opening silence Wade read Advices and Queries 33.

Robin Liebmann spoke reminding us of Quaker business method.

Minutes of our meeting on Sunday 24 November 2024 have been circulated, signed and placed in the minute book.

2025/02/02 Matters arising

(A) Becoming Friends (2024/08/02)

Chris Booth and Alastair Cameron ran a Becoming Friends (BF) course for 10 weeks between October and December with positive feedback. We thank them for this.

New materials are being developed by Woodbrooke. We will consider offering another course at Business Meeting in May.

(B) Causes to support (2024/11/02)

We have collected around £250 towards a charitable cause in Palestine, but had been unable to identify a recipient who we are able to transfer the funds to. Today, we heard several proposals, including one to support "Children not Numbers", a small scale, high impact project that supports ill and injured children and young people on the ground in Gaza, and can receive money in Britain. We agree not to divide our money into smaller pieces, in order to send our accumulated funds to "Children not Numbers" with the intention of establishing a relationship and engaging with this cause.

(C) Developing a relationship with Chris Murray (2024/11/02).

Our constituency's Member of Parliament in Westminster, Chris Murray, will be visiting our Meeting on 9 March 2025 to meet us over refreshments after Meeting for Worship. All are welcome to attend.

(D) Meeting for Worship on 1st Sundays (2024/11/04)

At our last Meeting we decided to move the start time of our Meeting on 1st Sundays to 7pm and the location to the Celebration Foyer. Friends deem this new start time and location to be agreeable and set to continue.

We heard requests from Friends living further away to meet for longer on 1st Sundays and propose that Mary Jane asks about Friends' needs at the Evening Meeting, and Chris and Marian host the conversation with Friends in March to explore feelings about shorter or longer meetings.

(E) Meeting for Worship on 3rd Sundays (2024/08/02)

At our Business Meeting in August we decided to trial Meeting on 3rd Sundays in Musselburgh for one hour at 7 pm, until Christmas. We thank Tessa for organising this and agree that the existing practical arrangements are now set to continue on a permanent basis. We will seek a venue with wheelchair accessibility.

2025/02/03 Financial Review

Our Treasurer, Chris Holman, has provided the attached financial update. We thank Chris for his work.

2025/02/04 Photo Board for Pastoral Care Group

Following our Spiritual Review's action to improve communication in and accessibility of our Meeting, our Clerk, Robin, has developed a photo board with portraits of Elders, Pastoral Friends and Clerks to help newer Friends identify those who currently hold these roles. We agree to display this at the coffee hatch over refreshments to help new Friends and enquirers identify role holders.

2025/02/05 Nominations

Local Meeting Clerks are appointed at our Local Business Meeting for three years, with one possible re-appointment for a further three. Co-clerk Robin Liebman will have served three years in May. We agree to re-appoint Robin for a further three years. We thank Robin for this work over the last three years.

Marian Willoner and Sarah Martin's first term of three years ends in November.

2025/02/06 Our Resources for Building Peace

Friends have for many years individually and collectively participated in and/or organised actions to promote and build peace.

We heard of concerns about an increasing normalisation of military violence and the shift of far right movements into the mainstream across Europe and Americas in the last year, noting the German elections taking place today. We can see that "the world is on fire" with a rise in fascism, assaults on human rights and wars over the world. Friends in our meeting are feeling the world's pain.

We are aware that here is a group of Friends locally meeting online offering spiritual solidarity in silence focusing on the war in Gaza and we are grateful for this. We also have available Quaker spiritual Friendship groups, meditation and study groups to support and strengthen one another: this is so important.

We ask our Friends Sarah Martin and Mark Ballard to begin to think together and ask other Friends within our Meeting to join them to review Quaker resources for peace builders and identify suitable ways for our Meeting to engage with these and deepen our response to violence and pervasive threats to peace. We hope we can extend this offer to our wider community.

We are grateful that Sarah brought this to us today prompted by Claire Chalmers' request. We will send this to SESAM.

2025/02/07 Date of next meeting

Sunday 25 May 2025, at Bellfield 12.45-2pm.

2025/02/08 Closing worship

Signed

Robin Liebmann (co-clerk)

Sarah Martin (co-clerk)

Marian Willoner (co-clerk)