

**Portobello and Musselburgh Local Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business,
Bellfield, 28 May 2023**

MINUTES

2023/05/01 Attendance, worship, reading, minutes of the last meeting

Friends attending: Lynn Mayer, Ross Campbell, Tessa Thomas-Pyne, Robin Liebmann, Marian Willoner, Alastair Cameron, Cathy Holman, Chris Holman, Fabien Camus, Josie Fawcett, Mark Ballard, Joan Hermann, Lesley Reid, Duncan Wallace, Kerry Oliver, Chris Booth, Sarah Martin

Prevented: Wade Robertson

Opening reading: In the opening silence, Josie Fawcett read a piece from a radio transcript of an orchestral performance transcript broadcast live on the radio by Helen Keller (who is profoundly deaf and blind)

Fabien has agreed to be our Elder for the Meeting.

Minutes of our meeting on Sunday, 26 March 2023, have been circulated, signed, and placed in the minutes book.

2023/05/02 Matters arising

- a. Hearing loops at Bellfield. We have written to Bellfield but awaiting a response.

2023/05/03 Subscribing to The Friend

Our free trial has come to an end, shall we continue to subscribe as a Meeting? Yes, we'd like to try it for one year, keeping back copies and bringing them out on the table each week. We would like to make it more accessible and publicise it better. Could a digital shared resource be also possible. We ask Lesley to contact The Friend about a community subscription. We ask Chris H to make subscription of £98/year.

2023/05/04 Children and Young People - volunteers, rooms and events

Proposal for children to meet in the celebration foyer on every fourth Sunday, and continue in the garden/large hall on the second Sunday. The teenagers would then meet in the the large hall on the fourth Sundays. We could also look at using the stage. We propose doing this until next business meeting.

2023/05/05 Spiritual review - gathering a group to help discern the process

The basis of the proposed review has come from Quaker Faith & Practice (12.16) encouraging Meetings to regularly review their spiritual practise.

Iola Wallace, Heather Stacey, and Josie have come forward, and Lynn would also be interested in joining a small group to plan how to carry out our spiritual review. There will also hopefully be an elder, pastoral friend, and clerk involved.

We ask Iola, Josie, Lynn, Heather and members of the PEC team to discern how we take forward the planning for our spiritual review.

2023/05/06 Options for Scotland group update/views

Options for Scotland is looking at how we organise as Quakers in Scotland. It looks like an option to combine the four area meetings to make one charitable body for whole of Scotland. Potentially employing people for some financial and other services. A way forward will be discerned at General Meeting for Scotland on Saturday 10 June at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House and online. All are welcome to attend and participate... <https://www.quakerscotland.org/general-meeting>

2023/05/07 How can our Quaker Meeting become ever more accessible?

Chris Holman spoke to the latest Swarthmoor lecture which was presented by a disability activist called Esther Loukin who is also a wheelchair user (see full lecture here: <https://www.youtube.com/live/wD3nelB0n-A?feature=share>). She is encouraging us all to be more activist. Chris feels she was being very kind to us all in her activism but asking us to wake up to all types of disability and disadvantages which stop people able to take part in our own Quaker Meetings. She feels that disadvantages get institutionalised. She sees disability activism as an act of love.

Wade has been talking informally with a few different people who have physical or hearing issues in accessing Meeting. Accessibility can be broadened out beyond disability. Can we talk about the Meeting becoming more inclusive instead of accessibility? We we ask PEC team to consider creating an access statement for the Meeting. The way we speak affects the way people can hear. How does the Meeting exclude and disable people? What can we do about it? These questions and more can feed into ongoing discussions.

We propose having a Conversations with Friends meeting to discuss the above and the social model of disability. Sarah, Mark and Josie agreed to take this forward. Jane Lewis will also be approached for input.

2023/05/08 Quaker Wiston Weekend

Quaker Wiston Weekend is a fully catered multi-generational community-building and sharing weekend of activities and reflective time for Quakers and their families, primarily across south east Scotland. We are booked in again for Saturday 8-10th September with bookings opening soon. The organisers are very conscious that participation fees continue to rise at the same time as the cost of living crisis means many of us are finding it more difficult to afford to attend.

The Meeting is willing to support local members who are struggling to afford the Quaker Wiston Weekend fees. We ask the PEC team to discuss the process.

2023/03/09 Financial update

Chris Holman has submitted a summary showing our Meeting is in robust financial health. The Accounts show an excess of income over expenditure so far this year: the Meeting has plenty of funds to support its activities.

Meeting has money available for activities or items which support the spiritual life of the Meeting. Friends are encouraged to speak with a Pastoral Friend, Elder or Clerk with proposals for any such use of our funds, which would then be taken to the PECs group, so they can bring options for further discernment at our next business meeting.

2023/06/12 Date of next Meeting and closing worship

Next Meeting is **Sunday 27th August**, 12.45pm at Bellfield.

We closed with silent worship.