

SESAME

Number 200: January 2016

Planning for the future: *decisions to make now* / Caring – *a note from Elders & Overseers* / Reports: *Sufferings; Edinburgh Meeting House Management Cttee* / Relief work: *Refugees; Mary's Meals* / Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre – *a volunteer wanted* / Northern Friends Peace Board report / Prison – *response to a Scottish Government Consultation* / AM November Minutes



A Slovenian army BOV armoured personnel carrier in front of the Church of the Holy Name at Dobova, Styria, and the railway line from Croatia.

See Miranda Barty-Taylor's report, p. 10

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SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Our next Area Meeting will be at The Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 5HY (the home of South Edinburgh LM) at 2 pm on Sunday 10 January 2016.

The agenda will include reports on the work Margaret Mortimer does on our behalf as prison minister, and on that of the Northern Friends Peace Board; and reflections on our sharing on the lives of our nine local meetings, and (prompted by thoughts from a Woodbrooke course) on ministry. We will also, in response to a concern from one of our local meetings, be exploring our attitude to Earl Haig Fund red poppies; and we need to find representatives to attend General Meeting for Scotland in St Andrews on 5 March, one of whom is asked to report for *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friends' Newsletter*.

Please plan to come if you are able, and please inform those you know who do not receive emails. A full agenda will be available after Hogmanay.

The following meeting, at Edinburgh Meeting House on 27 February, will be mainly devoted to two items: in the morning, a consideration of the Quaker concept of concern, and the part Local and Area Meetings play in processing concerns through corporate discernment; and, in the afternoon, receiving the final report of the STIR group, and starting to discern our way forward as an Area Meeting in the light of it.

Phil Lucas, clerk

EDITORIAL

Varieties of Service

45 years ago, **John Helliwell** was a 'QOV' (Quaker Overseas Volunteer for Service), based near the offices of East Africa YM at Kaimosi, just 80 miles from Eldoret: not then the place of slums of which he writes. His link to Africa now is through Mary's Meals, whose work he describes for us [p. 13]. In November, **Miranda Barty-Taylor** went to Slovenia to help refugees, not with an organisation but on her own initiative, and she recounts her experiences [p.10]. Not all service is overseas, of course: as noted above, **Margaret Mortimer** will be reporting as QPM at Area Meeting, in preparation for which we have a summary of a recent QPSW paper on sentencing policy in Scotland [p.18]; and we are reminded of what we as individuals can (and should?) do, for Peace [p. 15] for our meetings [p. 6] and for our families [p. 3]. Along with other reports, we have a **change of clerk** to write in your Bk of Members [p. 8 – *do it now*]; a **task for the month** [p. 6]; a **flippant quotation** [p. 15] ... but, this time, no Voltaire.

Planning for the future: health and welfare decisions

Approach old age with courage and hope. As far as possible, make arrangements for your care in good time, so that an undue burden does not fall on others. Advice & Queries, 29.

In a previous article for *Sesame* I looked at using powers of attorney to appoint someone to take financial, welfare or health decisions should we become unable to take some or all of these decisions in the future.

When some of us met to discuss this, it was clear that the most controversial and difficult areas of decision-making are often not about financial and property matters, but about our health and welfare. Many people have strong feelings about what they would like to happen should they have a life-threatening illness or be unable to care for themselves, for example. Planning for the future can mean it is more likely that our wishes will be taken into account, even if we are no longer able to express them.

In Scotland there are various ways we can try to ensure that our wishes are carried into effect if we are no longer able to take health or welfare decisions. (N.B. *The law is different in England and Wales, so read any information from there with caution.*)

It should happen anyway

The law is absolutely clear that if I am unable to take medical decisions, those having to decide on my behalf **must** take into account my wishes and feelings, past and present. In considering, for example, whether a treatment would benefit me, they should try to find out whether I had expressed any views on the subject.

They should also take into account the wishes of my nearest relative and main carer, but only so far as is reasonable.

So if, for example, I have strong views about the use of antibiotics and my doctor knows this, she should respect this if I later become unable to take the decision myself.

Power of attorney

If I appoint someone as my health and welfare attorney I can, if I wish,

make clear to her what my views are about medical interventions, end of life care, resuscitation and so on. Hopefully, even though the attorney herself may not share my opinions, she will agree to pass my views on to healthcare workers.

Advantage of power of attorney

Flexibility: the attorney can react to whatever situation arises and try to make sure that any decision is what I would have wanted. (Or I may just decide to leave decisions to her, on the basis that she is a sensible person and will act in my best interests.)

Disadvantages

A slight problem with Scottish law is that an attorney does not have an **absolute** legal right to refuse treatment on a patient's behalf. In theory, if an attorney did refuse treatment, the doctors could seek a second opinion to authorise it. However this very rarely happens in practice.

Living will

(Sometimes called an advance directive.) This is a document in which you try to set out what treatments you might or might not want in certain circumstances, for example if you had a life-threatening illness or a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. There are many examples on the Internet.

Sheila Kitzinger, the good birth campaigner, also planned for a good death. She wrote a very simple living will, which can be read online: <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/jun/19/how-to-plan-for-a-good-death-sheila-kitzinger>

Advantages of a living will

This is the closest you can get to ensuring that you are not given treatment you do not wish. In theory an advance refusal of treatment should be as effective as a refusal given at the time.

Disadvantages

Inflexibility: It is hard to envisage what might happen in the future *and* what you may feel about it. Your living will might not cover the actual situation you find yourself in, or it may not accurately reflect your feelings when a situation develops. For example, even if I have a diagnosis

of dementia, I may still have quite a good quality of life and might have wanted to continue medical treatment for other conditions.

Effectiveness: While doctors should treat an advance directive with respect, it is not totally clear whether Scots law *compels* them to follow it. (In England and Wales doctors *must* respect an advance directive. Most commentators think that the same is likely to be true in Scotland.)

Statement of wishes, values and beliefs

Some people do not wish to make a formal living will and instead write something in general terms setting out their wishes, values and beliefs. This can be very helpful to those who are having to make decisions on their behalf.

It might say, for example, that I do not believe in prolonging life unnecessarily, or that I would prefer to die at home, and it could include practical information, such as information about my diet or my attitude to residential care.

Advantages

Such a statement can help those planning my care and treatment to make difficult decisions on my behalf.

Talking to health care professionals

If you have strong views about certain treatments or procedures, you could ask for a note of your concerns to be placed on your medical records. This should alert future health professionals to your views.

Publicising our views

These are some of the ways in which we can attempt to ensure that our views are respected. However there is still a big problem: how will health professionals treating us know that we have signed a power of attorney, living will *etc.*?

There are no easy answers. Give a copy of a living will to your doctor. Wear a Medical Alert bracelet. Carry a note in your wallet. Give copies of documents to your attorney and/or to family members. Talk to family members about your views.

Some people think there should be central register of living wills so that

doctors could have easy access to them. This is work in progress. In the meantime anyone who has strong wishes will have to do the best she can to make sure that those who should know, do know.

Please email me on hilaryjpatrick@gmail.com if you have any comments or questions.

Hilary Patrick

CARING AND FRIENDSHIP

At present, Elders and Overseers are very short in numbers. Elders are expected to be mindful of the spiritual needs in our Meetings for Worship, while Overseers try to ensure that those who are in ill health or living under stress have their needs attended to. While these can be daunting tasks for those who have accepted to serve our Meeting in these capacities, we are doing what we can. Overseers are attempting to keep track of those who worship with us and to offer support where it might make a difference, but inevitably they cannot manage everything by themselves. Indeed, we may well not be aware of what is happening in a particular person's life, so we actually depend on your letting one of us know what may be needed.

As we all know through talking with friends and through the media, loneliness is widespread. Older people in particular, as well as those living with illness can become very isolated and might appreciate a visit or a phone call. We are all encouraged to act as overseers and elders for each other – so please look around you when you are attending Meeting for Worship. Is there someone who you have not seen in Meeting for some time? Could you visit someone who is more or less housebound?

Please do let any Overseer or Elder know of concerns you may have, so that we can together become more aware of the needs of all our Friends.

Cathy Bell & Kerstin Phillips
Elders

December 2015

A Task for January

In preparation for the possible revision of *Quaker Faith & Practice*, we are urged to read Chapter 2, 'Approaches to God – Worship and Prayer'.

Meeting for Sufferings

Meeting for Sufferings was held at Woodbrooke, from the evening of Friday 4 December through to lunchtime on Sunday 6 December. The main focus was on 'Our Area Meetings today', but other matters were also considered:

- Concerns were expressed about TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership), and the question was raised of what BYM could do to mobilise opposition. The response was that it was unlikely that this would receive much effort from central committees, as too much else is going on.
- As part of BYM Trustees' report the BYM Treasurer reminded us that "More action requires more money", while noting that there had been good legacy income, as well as the best-ever income from the hospitality company (which manages Friends House and, as of this year, Swarthmore Hall).
- The "Vibrancy" project will receive £675,000 pilot funding over the next three and a half years, with three or four regional officers being appointed, managed from Woodbrooke.
- Following on from BYM 2015's focus on equality, we heard from the Housing Threshing event, which happened at Woodbrooke in September, that our Friend Alastair Cameron is helping to take the lead in establishing an ethical landlords association.
- BYM 2015 had referred back to Sufferings one proposed change to our Book of Discipline, paragraphs 3.27 (revised) and 3.28 (new), which give guidelines for Friends speaking publicly. We reviewed and threshed a redraft of these, and now ask Friends to please consider them carefully in advance of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2016 where they will be presented for approval.

About half our time together was spent reflecting on the status and state of our Area Meetings. Perhaps not surprisingly, many other AMs are reacting to 'challenges and opportunities' similar to those which lead to the creation of South East Scotland AM's STIR group. We had several discussion sessions in a 'Home' group of all the representatives from AMs in Scotland and Wales, followed by a plenary session.

There will be a more extensive summary of the results coming from the centre in due course. In the meantime, here are a few high (– and low –) points:

- There is a sense of weariness/sadness around the issue of AM (the event);
- “The business method is not working quite right”;
- We are suffering from many weighty Friends having been ‘creamed off’ as AM Trustees;
- Many AMs have launched some form of review process;
- We need to re-understand AM’s relationships (up; down; side-ways)
- A number of people mentioned the “Northumbria model”, about which material will be made available [and will appear in *Sesame*];
- There's value in trying harder to make the ‘business’ aspects of AM (the event) as focussed and efficient as possible;
- Gatherings for Fellowship, centred on food, hospitality, socialising, have been very successful, and need not, indeed perhaps should not, happen on the same day as AM for business;
- More effort needs to go into ‘job descriptions’ that make the jobs feel possible;
- We should ask ourselves, if AM (the event) didn't exist, why would we have to invent it? – or *would* we have to invent it?

Henry Thompson

Change of Clerk – Tweeddale LM

After serving for a long time, John and Daphne Foster have been released from the clerkship of Tweeddale Local Meeting. The new clerking team is **Anna Lawrence** (Clerk) and **Alison Moore** (Assistant Clerk). Their contact details can be found in the Book of Members; all emails to the Meeting should be sent to tweeddalequakers@gmail.com.

Edinburgh Meeting House Management Committee

Background

The Terms of Reference for the Management Committee were agreed by Area Meeting in summer 2011. The committee was set up to replace the previous Fabric & Maintenance and Staffing Committees. It was to be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the day-to-day running of the Meeting House, in the hope that this would enable Trustees to spend more time looking at the bigger picture. The Committee would also provide support and line management for the Meeting House managers.

The plan was to appoint members of the committee who had expertise in relevant areas (*e.g.* staffing) and to maintain close links with Central Edinburgh and with Trustees. This has worked to some extent; links with Trustees are maintained by exchange of minutes.

Current committee

Janet Grimwade (*Clerk*); Martin Burnell; Evelyn Graham; Ken Jobling; Brian Mayes; and David Sterratt. Anthony Buxton as Meeting House manager and Madeleine Harding as Staff Link also attend the meetings.

Work over the last four years

Our work tends to fall into three areas. Firstly fabric and maintenance. The committee can authorise any work up to £2,000 – larger projects have to be referred to Trustees. The needs of a Listed Building, in a World Heritage Site, which is used by the public so has to comply with a variety of health & safety legislation, are complex. Various major projects have been carried out such as replacement of the windows, refurbishment of the toilets, and roof repairs. Smaller repairs and redecoration are on-going, such as the recent agreement to sand and re-seal the hall floor. We are responsible for ensuring there is appropriate equipment (*e.g.* the photocopier), and that such things as the lift, the loop system and fire extinguishers are regularly maintained and serviced. We also consider the services required and are currently investigating improving the broadband provision. In addition we look after the manager's and assistant manager's flats including any communal repairs to the tenement.

The next area is lettings and marketing. We set the lettings charges and try to review them every two years, generally following comparison with other similar venues. This includes reviewing the contribution made by

Central Edinburgh Local Meeting. In an attempt to increase lets we joined the Edinburgh Convention Bureau, but this was not a success. David Sterratt has worked to improve the 'equaker' website which has resulted in increased use of the enquiry form. There is also a walk-through and the correct address available on Google. Word of mouth, particularly by Friends, is often the best advertising and while the building is often fully occupied in an evening, there are fewer lets during the day. Catering can also be offered to groups and we have discussed how to ensure correct food hygiene standards are observed by all users of the Meeting House.

The third area is staffing. We employ a manager (currently a job share), assistant manager, and several part-time staff (not on any fixed hours). Over the past four years we have reviewed job descriptions and terms and conditions for all staff. Annual performance appraisals are carried for the full-time staff and we ensure that appropriate training is taking place for all. Salaries are reviewed annually and staff are now paid the Living Wage. The managers are responsible for recruiting part-time staff and the committee is responsible for recruiting the manager and assistant manager. In September 2012 we appointed Majk Stokes as assistant manager, following Tom Nisbet's retirement, and in September this year we appointed Sue Proudlove and Tony Wilkes as joint managers, starting in January 2016, following Anthony and Sue Buxton's retirement.

I have found learning about the running of the Meeting House very rewarding and have a much better idea of the range of skills that our managers require. I rely heavily on the expertise of other members of the committee and on the Clerk of Trustees (John Phillips) and the AM Treasurer (Mark Hutcheson) as we try to be good Quaker employers and to maintain the Quaker ethos so that it is evident to all who use the building.

Janet Grimwade

The Trip – Part II

In our last issue, Miranda Barty-Taylor wrote of her plan to take a vanload of essential supplies to refugees arriving in Serbia; but, by the time her team (and two vans) departed, their destination had changed; and, by the time they arrived, the group they were working with was also different . . . as she describes:

It took two and a half days to get to the Slovenian/Croatian border. The team from *Humanitas* we planned to meet there had gone to Greece, to help with

the crisis at the Idomeni border crossing; instead we went to Dobova, a settlement (pop. 719 in 2002) whose station on the main Ljubljana-Zagreb railway has made it a focus for refugees. The military and police presence is strong; Karitas, the local arm of the international Catholic agency, is also there.

We delivered donations to the central warehouse in Dobova, to the Family Tent at the station – which is being run by a Hungarian couple who have just set things up themselves, and who try to distribute supplies specifically for women and children – and to Dobova camp itself. We were not allowed into the camp – no volunteers are – and the Red Cross limited what we were allowed to give; mostly shoes and boots. It is a transit camp; people arriving there stay for up to 12 hours before being shuttled back to the train station. Our contact, Petra, talked of the numbness that comes with long-term aid provision, a numbness that she has noticed in the officials who are dealing with the refugees on a daily basis.

We heard that some women, children, and pregnant women were arriving on foot at a crossing further south, and were being let through. Three of us drove one of the vans loaded up with just children's and women's things. We stopped next to a newly-erected barbed wire fence and were interrogated by the border police. They told us nobody had arrived on foot for weeks and that we should head back to the camp.

To help the Karitas team we had signed up to do a night shift, working with them at the train station overnight. We got there at 8 pm, just in time to meet the first train. It was absolutely manic. The train pulled in, and, one carriage at a time, the people disembarked, queued up for registration, received their food pack, and then got onto the empty train waiting on the other side. They had come from Macedonia. Most of them didn't know where they were.

We were told not to *ask* them what they needed, but to assess what their most desperate need was (a hat, gloves, a jacket) and go to the store room and find it. In theory this should have worked. We all quickly learned to mime clothing articles. But each time you walked back to the store, three more people would clutch your sleeve and ask for items. "Sister, sister – please, he needs a hat." Then by the time you got back with those items, they'd moved further down the line, or out of the carriage onto the platform, and you had to find them again.

The police and military personnel were brusque and sharp, but, for the most part, reasonably humane. On the one hand, we saw a policeman shouting at a young man proffering his papers who clearly didn't understand him: "Why

are you here? You're a man! You should be fighting for peace in your country!" On the other hand, one of the soldiers beckoned me over at one point and indicated a group of shivering men, gruffly saying: "They need blankets. There's the pile. Go and give them some blankets."

The refugees themselves were exhausted. They were shuttled from place to place and did so with nothing but compliance. They were polite (parents told their children to say thank you to us) and considerate (moving each other out of the way when we were trying to rush past with clothing). Some were good humoured, rolling their eyes when we had to give them a wholly inappropriate article of clothing ("What is THIS? It's made for a woman!") while others didn't make eye contact, and simply took whatever we were giving them without even looking at it.

The thousand people from that first train boarded the empty carriages on the other side, but the train did not leave till 4.30 am. Some of them were waiting for eight hours on the unheated train.

The second train came in at 1 am. It too carried a thousand people. We began the process again, but this time were told we could not give clothing to those waiting for registration, only to those who had been processed. But that took four hours. So some of us defied the order; people were standing or sitting huddled together in bitter winds in the early hours, on a freezing platform with no shelter, and no warm clothing.

We handed out scarves, hats, gloves, blankets, jackets and shoes. Men who had refused pink hats three hours before now took whatever we offered. The children either cried or were utterly silent. Two of us were handed babies, and had to give them back.

They smiled at us, and we took our facemasks off completely, and smiled back at them. It was the least – and the most – we could do.

This was one night, in one station, in one country. The people keep coming, and they will continue to come. The need is overwhelming. What we did may seem like a big deal in some ways – but it was a drop in the ocean. I feel we as Quakers must exert pressure and galvanise action to provide better, and do more. We must organise, persuade and fund-raise to make more of a difference. We must challenge politicians. We must live out our faith actively.

If you would like to see pictures and read more, please find us on Facebook under *Team Humanity Van*.

Miranda Barty-Taylor

Mary's Meals – a Simple Solution to World Hunger

Muski was 8 when he was orphaned. His uncles took the house he had lived in, at Kibera, a slum district of Nairobi; in desperation he stowed away on a tomato truck, ending up in Eldoret, a city of 300,000 in Western Kenya. There he was struggling to survive on a rubbish tip, home to glue sniffers and other homeless children, when, in 2012, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow visited with the film crew making the documentary *Child 31* about Mary's Meals, the charity he directs (formerly Scottish International Relief). Muski followed the crew round carrying his only possessions, the old sack he used to cover himself at night stuffed into a satchel with a broken strap, and kept saying, "I want to go to school".

Mary's Meals works with partner charities in Kenya, and Magnus asked their local representative how to help Muski. First he needed somewhere to live. Perhaps a children's home on the other side of the city might have a place? When Magnus introduced himself there, the staff were really excited to meet someone from Mary's Meals, the charity which fed all their children at school, and they were delighted to offer Muski a place. Muski smiled for the first time that day. He had somewhere to live, Mary's Meals to eat, education and hope for the future.

The idea of Mary's Meals is simple. Provide a child with a meal *at school* and s/he will not only have nourishment, but that key thing, an education. Many children don't go to school. How can they when they don't know where their next meal is coming from? Many who do go find it difficult, on an empty stomach, to concentrate, and are often too unwell to attend regularly. In Malawi (where, in 2002, Mary's Meals began), these learners, as they are called, often *don't* learn enough to pass the end-of-year exams and have to repeat classes. Class sizes for the youngest get very big, and not many children complete all eight years of primary education.

Recent independent research found that 64 % of the learners in Malawi sometimes went a whole day without food before Mary's Meals, and 85 % of children were hungry at school. Only 12 % were hungry after the food came; and school rolls increased by 36 %, on average, just because of the food. Less than half the children considered themselves happy at school before they had food there. A mug of porridge at school changed all that, with over 90 % saying they were happy afterwards.

One such was Gilbert, whom I met in 2012 when I went to Malawi with our granddaughter Martha Payne and her family, accompanied by a BBC Scot-

land crew. Martha was there to open the kitchen funded by donors to Mary's Meals through her blog about the dinners at her own school in Lochgilphead. Gilbert's school, Lirangwe Primary, was one of eight where feeding had begun five months previously. (It is usual to start several schools at once, lest children move to the one with the food.) Until that time, cooking had been done in a temporary thatched kitchen built by the community. Local people take a big role from the start, inviting Mary's Meals to help them feed their children. There are 68,000 volunteers in Malawi who make the *Likuni Phala*, maize porridge with soya and vitamins. A mugful (*phala* means 'porridge' in Chichewa, Likuni is the place it was first made) is enough to keep a child healthy, even if it is all they have to eat that day. For Gilbert it usually *was* all he had to eat. His widowed fisherman father had been killed by a crocodile. Gilbert was all alone. He had to support himself. He slept in the market at the village near the school, and worked for anyone who could give him a little food. We asked him what he wanted to do when he left school: to be president, he said, so he could make sure no child had to go for days without food as he'd often had to. Mary's Meals gives children hope for the future and dreams of a life much better than they have today.

Mary's Meals has staff in Malawi, feeding over 800,000 children, and in Liberia, where people were fed in their villages when Ebola closed the schools last year. Now they are open, and 130,000 children receive a meal every day. We are expanding rapidly in these countries as well as elsewhere in east and central Africa and in Haiti, as well as smaller projects in India, Ecuador, and Thailand, where we work with partner organisations.

Mary's Meals is not a flashy charity. There are no big salaries and the headquarters is an old shed in Dalmally, Argyll. At least 93p of every £1 donated goes to the projects. It costs just £12.20 to feed a child for a year. We now feed over a million every day, in schools and under-6 centres. It is a start; but 59 million school-age children are not in school. There is so much more to do.

We are grateful for Friends' support. If any *Sesame* reader knows of a group who would like a speaker, please do contact me.

John Helliwell

helliwells@gmail.com or 01506 844498

For more information, see: www.marysmeals.org.uk

Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre – a vision in practice

At Area Meeting in November, we heard that for the first time in its 35-year history, there is no Quaker on the management committee of Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre. We are looking for a volunteer who can set that right by joining the committee.

The centre is based at Edinburgh Methodist Church at Nicolson Square. It has a significant and active website <http://peaceandjustice.org.uk/>, and is run by a team of volunteers, with a paid part-time co-ordinator, Brian Larkin. It is open five days a week (Tues to Sat) from 10.00 to 4.00, providing a shop, library and a focal point for volunteers. Most of its work, however, is through the web, and by networking with a huge range of interests in non-violence, alternatives to war, human rights, conflict resolution and ecological responsibility.

So you can see why it's something that Quakers want to support, and why we as the local AM have supported it in many ways throughout the years.

The Management Committee has overall responsibility for the work of the Centre, helps to raise the funds needed to keep it going and sets the strategic direction. It meets roughly six times a year, and there will be opportunities for anyone on the management committee to get more involved in the practical work of the centre – but no obligation to do so.

If you are interested, have a look at the website, and contact Brian Larkin on 07541 023022 for a more detailed chat about what's involved. If you want to take things any further, please let me know, and we will consider the appointment at a future Area Meeting.

Alastair Cameron,
Assistant AM Clerk

mandolin.alastair@gmail.com or 07900 044577

“Quakers will stoop to anything in order to thwart the nuclear holocaust: honesty, decency, even prayer.”

(Wg Cdr Skelton in *Hullo Russia, Goodbye England* by Derek Robinson, 2008)

NORTHERN FRIENDS PEACE BOARD

Before starting on the over-full agenda of our November meeting at Lancaster – various items had to be held over – we heard from local Friends about their current concerns. Ann Morgan described Lancaster LM's work on the Living Wage, and Tim Nicholls of Brigflatts spoke of what has been called "conscious cruelty" in the UK government's so-called austerity, which academic research has associated with 279,000 cases of mental ill-health, 725,000 more prescriptions for antidepressants, and 590 suicides between 2010 and 2013. A declaration, 'Not in our name', arising from a Quaker youth camp, has been issued. (See <http://lancsquakers.org.uk/livingwagecampaign.php> and <http://www.quakerweb.org.uk/blog/uncategorized/not-in-our-name/>)

After reports from the Executive (who are the Board's trustees) and the Treasurer, we heard from Jetta Howard about the Peace & Service consultation 'Who is My Neighbour?' which had taken place in Brussels under the auspices of European & Middle East Section (EMES) of Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), 20-22 November. It had been overshadowed by the previous week's atrocity in Paris, and the barely-reported attack, also by ISIS, in Beirut. The EMES consultation had issued a statement calling for an end to the cycle of violence; we considered this, and the statement 'Responding to terrorism' issued in the name of British Friends. (See <http://www.fwccemes.org/news/european-quakers-call-for-an-end-to-the-cycle-of-violence> and <http://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/quakers-responding-to-terrorism>; there is also a statement by the American Friends Service Committee at <http://afsc.org/friends/paris-and-our-fear>.) At the time, it was not known how MPs would vote and we were reminded of the urgency of lobbying; one Friend told us how his own MP, a rightwing Tory, had nevertheless been persuaded to oppose bombing in Syria. (Others, however, expressed concern that some on the Labour benches seemed to view the vote primarily as a chance to undermine their own leader, regardless of its consequences for the peace of the region or the world.) It was pointed out that rather than referring to "ISIS" [Islamic State in Iraq & Syria], some Muslims urge the use of the name *Dash* (Arabic: 'wreckers') reflecting the group's stated wish to destroy the 'grey zone' where Muslims and others live peacefully together and foster the view that Islam is under attack from a 'crusader west'. The welcoming of refugees and asylum seekers is thus all the more vital, as is working to-

gether with other faiths, so as to rebut this charge. Our minute concluded:

We uphold those Friends and others taking part today in vigils and demonstrations for peace, and have been reminded that political support for peace can come from unexpected places.

We feel pain that the west continues to impose its world view on others. We ask: 'Who is *not* our neighbour?'

Next, we discussed various issues relating to Trident and its proposed renewal. Chris Butler, a Board member from Bradford, is keen that we should be campaigning at Barrow-in-Furness (where the boats are built) to raise awareness of the possibilities for alternatives to arms production; older members recalled that reports on conversion were produced in the '70s for Lucas, Vickers and other firms, where the unions disputed the contentions that weapons-making and unemployment were either/or choices, and that armaments guaranteed the future of these (all now defunct) companies. Chris is to take this forward with local Friends. Quaker Peace & Social Witness and Young Friends General Meeting are both planning campaigns for 2016: Sam Walton of QPSW outlined how it is intended to influence the political parties, and Lawrence Hall spoke of YFGM's outreach to other youth organisations both to gather support for an open letter against Trident, and to raise awareness of the likely effects of the use of nuclear weapons – a generation having grown up untroubled by talk of EMPs, fallout, and nuclear winter.

Brian Larkin attended our meeting to speak of the work of the Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre, much of which will be familiar to Friends in South East Scotland: news to me was the conflict resolution pack for use in schools they have produced.

We were updated on the Board's continuing concern regarding militarisation: jointly with QPSW we will be running workshops in Scotland and the north of England on how Friends can respond.

Jim Paris spoke to us about work of the Richardson Institute, a peace studies centre within the University of Lancaster which offers an MA course in Peace Studies, as well as modules to students in other disciplines. It hosts a Critical Thinking Group, which, through links with local organisations, aims to promote peaceful communities.

The Board next meets in Nottingham on 5 March 2016.

Alan Frith

Imprisonment

Since 2010, Scottish courts have been prohibited from jailing people for three months or less unless there is no other way of dealing with them; short sentences were held to be ineffectual, with 60 % of those sentenced being re-convicted within a year. The (then minority) SNP government abandoned a plan to make the limit *six* months, in the expectation that opposition parties would unite to vote it down, but have recently held a consultation (now closed) on reviving that proposal. On behalf of Friends, the QPSW Crime, Community & Justice Sub-committee submitted a response, which is a good exposition of informed Quaker thinking on some of the issues in penal policy but unfortunately too long to include here. (Nor is it yet available online; although material relating to the consultation is to be found at https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/community-justice/short-periods-of-imprisonment/consult_view.)

The Response urges that the presumption against short periods of imprisonment should be extended, since it has had a negligible effect on prisoner numbers. [In Scotland, according to the University of London's Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 143 people per 100,000 of the population are in prison; in England & Wales, it is 148, and in Northern Ireland, 87. These figures compare to 100 in France, 80 in Ireland, and 76 in Germany. Of the Scandinavian countries, in contrast, Norway has the highest figure, at 71 per 100,000; it is fewer than 70 in Denmark, Sweden and Finland, and also in the Netherlands.] A trend against sentences of under three months was discernible *before* the presumption was established; thus a “stronger intervention” is called for: the Response suggests *twelve* months as the appropriate length of sentence below which an alternative to imprisonment should be normal. A shorter term, it argues, would not affect prisoner numbers, nor provide the necessary incentive to developing viable forms of community sentence which courts would be willing to use (or, as it says, “at least have no justification for *not* using” – the reluctance of sheriffs to impose them having been the main reason for the non-use of alternative forms of sentence). The Response agrees with the Minister for Justice that increased and more integrated use of electronic monitoring (EM) could help: EM can be tailored to individual cases to support rehabilitative programmes as well as to enforce curfews, and its versatility widens as the technology advances. It is, nevertheless, “no substitute for supportive,

therapeutic and restorative interventions which help offenders and their families deal with the many, often complex problems underlying criminal behaviour” and the Response counsels against “over-enthusiasm” for it. A use of EM it *does* commend is to enhance Community Payback Orders, the principal alternative to custody: “Should [a] CPO be breached, consideration should be given to extra hours of curfew – or a period of GPS tracking – as a penalty. There is no need or justification for sentencers to use imprisonment for breach as often – or as inconsistently – as they do.”

Creating a presumption against under-12-month sentences “demands a sea-change in Scottish thinking” on Community Payback Orders, which, the Response agrees, are not always an adequate alternative, for all that they are under-used. It also notes that the welcome relief to offenders’ neighbours (and, possibly, families) currently brought by their being jailed would need an equivalent, suggesting that processes derived from restorative justice (“a form of practice too little used in Scotland”) might help. On the attitude of sheriffs, “it needs to be made clearer whether *robust* means ‘capable of addressing the causes of a person’s offending’, or simply ‘being prison-like’ in the intensity of punishment and control it imposes”.

It is acknowledged that banning short custodial sentences is not *politically* possible at present, but the Response is clear that it is desirable:

[They] have a less positive impact on recidivism than structured community sanctions – because they are less likely to address the needs and problems that underlie criminal behaviour [– and they] may also do more harm than good to an offender: by straining family ties, by disrupting employment and forcing the loss of rented accommodation, all of which may leave an offender in a worse position upon release than s/he was upon entering prison. Doing more harm than good – when one has a choice – is never right, and the avoidance of this is the main ethical argument for not using short sentences at all.

The Response cites the work of Sacro (formerly SACRO [Scottish Association for the Care & Rehabilitation of Offenders]) the community justice organisation which “promotes safe and cohesive communities across Scotland by reducing conflict and offending” (see <http://www.sacro.org.uk>). Twice it invokes the “forward-looking” McLeish Report, 2008, (available online at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/230180/0062359.pdf>).

Work done on our behalf in H.M.P. Edinburgh is to be reported at next AM.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 28 November 2015 at Portobello Old Parish Church

2015/11/01 Worship

During worship, extracts from a statement issued in 1987 by QCEA, the Quaker Council for European Affairs, (*Q.F. & P.* 24.47) have been read to us. This shares a vision of Europe as a peaceful, compassionate, open and just society, which is committed to the non-violent resolution of conflict, which has an alternative economic strategy driven by need and not greed and which does not sell arms to others.

We have been reminded that, as we meet, a climate change rally is meeting in Edinburgh in the lead up to the climate summit in Paris.

We have also remembered Rachel Darlington, previously a member of Kelso Meeting, who has died in Birmingham since our last meeting.

2015/11/02 Introductions

Alastair Cameron has welcomed us to our first Area Meeting hosted by Portobello & Musselburgh Local Meeting. We have ensured those present know each other's names and meetings. The attendance will be recorded in the concluding minute.

2015/11/03 The minutes of our last meeting, held on 24 October 2015 at Edinburgh Meeting House, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

2015/11/04 Matters arising: Militarisation in Society (Minutes 2014/10/06, 2014/11/04a, 2015/01/4a, 2015/02/06, 2015/04/04, 2015/05/04a, 2015/08/04a and 2015/10/05a refer)

a) Our clerk has circulated by email further information about the proposed 'Taxes for Peace Bill' and encouraged Friends to find out more and to support the bill. Those not on email may obtain the information by post from Quaker Peace & Social Witness.

b) Central Edinburgh Meeting report that a message sent to individual members of the City of Edinburgh Council Education, Children and Families Committee has received three direct responses. They have subsequently been informed that the Peace Education Network has been added to the list of resources within the Time for Reflection guide-

lines for head teachers and that the link will be brought to the attention of head teachers. They have also been encouraged to contact Education Scotland to achieve similar actions at a national level and will be taking this up with General Meeting for Scotland.

2015/11/05 Meeting for Sufferings

Henry Thompson, who was appointed to serve on Meeting for Sufferings from Yearly Meeting this year as our representative, has shared with us his experience of the work of that Meeting. He and Kate Arnot, our alternate representative, both attended, in July, an inaugural meeting for the new triennium.

Henry has drawn our attention to the replacement for the 'Long Term Framework', a brief document which records our principles and the way we do business. The committee established to consider whether and how we take forward the revision of our Book of Discipline is active and has proposed a method for Friends to get to know our present 'red book' better. Friends seem to have engaged well with this.

Henry has the impression that Meeting for Sufferings is still working on its role and its relationship with Yearly Meeting trustees. A concern has been raised that Area Meetings sending minutes to Meeting for Sufferings should be clear about how they expect Meeting for Sufferings to respond to them. Henry has also been asked to sound out, before a residential meeting of Sufferings in early December, AM clerks, Quaker Life Council Representatives and those reviewing our Area Meeting, with regard to the issues being faced by area meetings.

2015/11/06 Report on the work of Edinburgh Meeting House Management Committee [See pp. 9-10]

Janet Grimwade, who convenes this committee, has reported to us on its work, which falls into three areas:

- Fabric and maintenance, which entails responsibility for looking after the needs of this listed building situated in a World Heritage Site, ensuring compliance with complex health and safety legislation and maintaining and improving the buildings (including managers' flats) and their equipment.
- Lettings and marketing, where it is a constant challenge to maintain full use of the building, especially for daytime lets. Occasionally organisations are permitted use of rooms free of charge.

- Staffing. We currently employ a manager (at present a job share), an assistant manager, and several part time staff, who do not work fixed hours. Salaries are reviewed annually and the living wage is now paid. Majk Stokes was appointed assistant manager in September 2012. Anthony and Sue Buxton, the current managers, retire at the end of 2015; Sue Proudlove and Tony Wilkes have been appointed as joint managers to succeed them.

Janet has found working on the committee rewarding and is very grateful for the support of the other committee members, the clerk of Area Meeting Trustees and the AM Treasurer in undertaking her challenging role.

We thank Janet for this report and for all the work she and her committee do on our behalf.

2015/11/07 Area Meeting dates for 2016

The following dates and venues for meetings in 2016 are now agreed:

Sunday	10 January	2 pm	South Edinburgh
Saturday	27 February	11 am	Central Edinburgh
Saturday	9 April	2 pm	Central Edinburgh
Saturday	4 June	11 am	Kelso
Saturday	23 July	2 pm	Tweeddale
Sunday	18 September	2 pm	South Edinburgh
Saturday	19 November	11 am	Central Edinburgh

2015/11/08 Quakers and inter-faith relations

Lynne Barty represented us at a day conference about interfaith peace-building held in London on 26 September. The event was organized by the Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations, and Lynne, who was disappointed to find she was the only representative present from Scotland, has provided a most interesting written report for the November issue of *Sesame*. Lynne urges particularly that we should read *Uncivil War* by Keith Kahn Harris, which explores and suggests ways through the tensions within Judaism and relationships between Jewish and other traditions. Pope Francis recently said that ecumenical and interfaith dialogue is not a luxury but is essential.

Lynne feels that we Quakers are guilty of not engaging sufficiently in this dialogue, a feeling echoed by Jim Pym, who recommends strongly that we should affiliate to the Edinburgh Interfaith Association. We

agree to do this and ask Friends interested in representing us to tell the Area Meeting Nominations Committee. [*Interested Friends are asked to contact Don Stubbings.*]

2015/11/09 Sharing the life of Portobello & Musselburgh Local Meeting

There has been a worshipping group based in Portobello for about fifteen years, which has met at various times and in various places in Portobello and Musselburgh over this period. With an increase in numbers and the need for provision for children, a larger space was sought and recently the Bellfield Street building, where we are meeting today, became available. Some two years ago, the group became a recognized Local Meeting, a welcome development, though it has raised some tensions because of the desire to maintain Quaker simplicity. The meeting has continued to grow, which is very encouraging, and has organized some witness events in the local community.

'Becoming Friends' groups have been very helpful for those finding their way more deeply into the Quaker way. There have also been meetings for learning after meeting for worship, and all-age meetings for worship have been held. It has been a very welcoming and supportive meeting.

The meeting is considering moving towards meeting weekly. It has a strong family constituency and is aware that a meeting which attracts and is successful with children may do this to the detriment of nearby meetings, which may lose their families as a result. The children and young people are an integral part of this meeting and contribute greatly to it.

We thank Portobello & Musselburgh friends for sharing the life of their meeting with us.

2015/11/10 Report on our work with children and young people

Mary Jane Elton, our children & young people's advocate, has reported on the work we do with children and young people in our Area Meeting, reminding us what a valuable part of the life of our meetings they are.

Two children were welcomed at the start of the year at the annual welcoming meeting and Rachel Fitzgerald, convener for children & young people's activity at Central Edinburgh, has organized several social events during the year. Four meetings which include children partici-

pated in a weekend at Wiston Lodge in September, a very enjoyable all age community event which included sporting activities and a very powerful all age meeting for worship.

This year's family weekend, arranged by Madeleine Harding and supported by General Meeting for Scotland, took place at Pitlochry Youth Hostel in October. This provides not only the opportunity for those who may be taking part in Summer Shindig for the first time to get to know each other but is also community building, drawing families from different meetings together in relaxing shared activity and worship.

All age worship is happening more frequently in local meetings where there are children and takes different forms. There has been no Link weekend in 2015, but one is planned for February 2016.

Callum Booth Lewis has told us about his experience of Summer Shindig, the annual gathering for young people from Scotland and the north of England, plus some from Wales and Palestine. He described this as being a huge part of his life. It provides a lovely balance between serious engagement with important issues, fun activities and free time. Link weekends provide opportunities for Scottish young people to meet up, sustain these relationships and meet others and are also very enjoyable.

We are reminded of the importance of ensuring that the names of young people are recorded in the members and attenders lists, currently being updated.

2015/11/11 Memorial minute regarding Jeanne Walmesley

A memorial minute for Jeanne Walmesley, prepared by Central Edinburgh Meeting, has been read to us. Jeanne was a member, with her husband Gerard, of this Area Meeting and died in December 2014, not long after they moved to Sussex to be nearer Gerard's daughter. They had married in the Edinburgh Meeting House and shared their skills in working together on the conversion of the Victoria Terrace building after its purchase by Friends in the 1980s.

Jeanne, who was also a talented musician, had a life-long concern for social issues and expressed this in her work, often done quietly and on an individual basis, with those disadvantaged by health issues and poverty. She served the Meeting in a variety of ways and provided a warm and welcoming presence.

This memorial minute will be preserved with our record of deceased Friends.

2015/11/12 Membership matters

a) We have received a request from **Jennifer Wilson**, of Central Fife LM, to transfer her membership to Notts & Derby Area Meeting. We agree to this and ask our assistant clerk (membership) to send the necessary certificate.

b) John Phillips has reported on a meeting he and Rosemary Hartill had with **Alison Moore**, attender at Tweeddale LM, following her application for membership, received at our meeting on 29 August.

Alison's interest in the Quaker way began when she was 17, at the same time as her interest in Buddhist practice was awakened. She participated in many of the lay activities at the Buddhist monastery near her home in Hertfordshire, and observes that Buddhist practice there was informed by that of Quakers. Alison attended Watford Meeting for a while until that was interrupted by family duties. After moving with her husband Peter to Innerleithen, she resumed contact with Friends and has been an attender at Tweeddale Meeting for over three years, where she feels she has found her spiritual home. She has just recently been appointed the meeting's assistant clerk (correspondence).

Alison is ready to move from being an outsider to commitment to the life and practice of Quakers. She finds ministry in meeting has spoken to her condition, is attracted by our way of doing business and has signed up for the online *Becoming Friends* course.

We welcome Alison into membership. We ask Jane Kelly to welcome her on our behalf, and our clerk to inform the clerk of Tweeddale LM.

2015/11/13 Appointments and requests for support

a) Appointments to office

Our nominations committee has brought us the following names for consideration —

To serve from January 2016 to end of December 2018, for a second triennium:

1. Elder – **Kerstin Phillips** (Central Edinburgh)
2. Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Susie Reade** (South Edinburgh)
3. Pastoral Care & Oversight – **David Hume** (Tweeddale)
4. Festival Committee – **John Fitzgerald** (Central Edinburgh)

To serve from January 2016 to end of December 2018:

5. Trustee – **John Harris** (Kelso)
6. Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Evelyn Graham** (*attender*,
Central Edinburgh)

To serve from April 2016 to end of March 2018:

7. Clerk of Area Meeting – **Elizabeth Allen** (East Lothian)

These names being acceptable, we appoint them accordingly.

b) Appointment of representatives

1. *Our Sustainability Commitment: Being a transformational community* —
18-20 March 2016, Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire
We appoint **Philip Revell** (*attender*, East Lothian) and **Don Stubbings**
(Central Edinburgh) to represent us at this conference.

2. *Militarisation in our Society* — 12-14 February 2016, Woodbrooke
We appoint **Jane Pearn** (Kelso), **Laurie Naumann** (Central Fife) and
Simon Jackson (Central Edinburgh) to represent us at this conference.

3. *Quaker Peace & Social Witness Annual Spring Conference* —
1-3 April 2016, Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire
We appoint **Norman Latimer** (*attender*, Kelso) and **Derek Morrison**
(*attender*, Central Fife) to represent us at this conference.

4. *Eldership & Oversight Conference* — 4-6 March 2016, Woodbrooke
We appoint **Mary Woodward** (Portobello & Musselburgh) to represent
us at this conference.

5. *Junior Yearly Meeting, 2016* — 2-6 April, Northampton
We have been unable to find any Young Friends in the appropriate age
category to represent us and ask our clerk to inform the organizers.

(** **Callum Booth Lewis** offered his name just after the meeting and has been
nominated to attend JYM by our between meetings procedure)

2015/11/14 Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre

We have received a request that we find a representative of Area Meeting to join the management committee of the Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre. A similar request has been received by General Meeting for Scotland. Geoffrey and Elizabeth Carnall were founder members of the Centre and involved in its management for many years. Since its 2014 AGM, and for the first time, there are no Friends on the management committee. The Centre was based for many years on the terrace below St John's Church in Princes Street but has recently lost its home there and is hoping shortly to move into 5 Upper Bow, adjacent to Edinburgh

Quaker Meeting House.

The role involves approximately six committee meetings a year.

We have heard that General Meeting has a name in mind; and ask our Assistant Clerk to write a piece for *Sesame*, seeking a further volunteer.

2015/11/15 Annual donation to Northern Friends Youth Events Trust

We are one of the supporting Area Meetings for this trust, which runs the annual Summer Shindig for Young Friends. In 2014, we donated £3.10 per member for 279 members, making a total of £864.90 and have received a request that we increase our donation to £4.10 per member for 2015. Our clerk of trustees is puzzled by the 2014 calculation; the tabular statements give our membership as 232 in 2013, and 236 in 2014. Based on the 2014 figure, our donation for 2015 would, at £4.10 per member, rise to £967.60.

We greatly value what Summer Shindig offers to young people from Scotland and the north of England, agree to continue supporting the Trust, and ask our treasurer to make a payment of £967.60 for this year. We ask him to continue making annual donations, but to refer the matter back to Area Meeting if the sum requested is a substantial increase per member on that requested the previous year.

2015/11/16 Correspondence and notices

We have been given notice of a 'Don't Bomb Syria' rally to be held from 5 - 7 pm on Monday 30 November at the east end of Princes Street.

2015/11/17 Closing minute

31 members and attenders, representing seven Local Meetings, have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 8 + 1 A	Central Fife 2 + 1 As	East Lothian 2	Kelso 1	Penicuik 1
Polmont -	Portobello & Musselburgh 9 + 2 As	South Edinburgh 3	Tweeddale -	<i>Other Area Mtg</i> 1

(Signed)

Phil Lucas, Clerk

[We next meet at The Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 5HY (the home of South Edinburgh LM) at 2 pm on Sunday 10 January 2016.]

Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland**Every Sunday**

Central Edinburgh: 7 Victoria Terrace	9.30 am & 11.00 am
South Edinburgh: Open Door, 420 Morningside Road	10.30 am
Polmont: Greenpark Community Centre	10.45 am
Kelso: Quaker Meeting House, Kelso	10.30 am

Every Wednesday

Mid-Week Meeting: 7 Victoria Terrace	12.30 – 1 pm
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First Sunday in the Month

Penicuik: Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik <i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch</i>	11.00 am
Portobello & Musselburgh: Old Parish Church, Bellfield St. EH15	7.30 pm

First and Third Tuesdays in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms (opposite Weir Buildings) at Kings Buildings: contact Sarah Martin 07818050853 or sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk for details	1 – 1.30 pm
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Second Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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Second and Fourth Sundays in the Month

Portobello & Musselburgh: Old Parish Church, Bellfield St. Portobello	11.00 am
Tweeddale: Nomad Beat, 10-11 Cavalry Park, Peebles <i>All welcome, but please phone to confirm 01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389</i>	10.30 am
Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am

Fourth Sunday in the Month

N. Edinburgh Meeting: Broughton St Mary's Church, Edinburgh	7.00 pm
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Fifth Sunday in the Month

Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am
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Last Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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Distribution of Sesame and Scottish Friends Newsletter

The current practice (*now under review*) is to distribute one copy of *Sesame* and the *Scottish Friends Newsletter* to every Member and Attender household. Contributions to the costs of *Sesame* are always warmly welcomed by the Area Meeting Treasurer, Mark Hutcheson. An email version of *Sesame* is more ecological and is free! A large print version is available on request. Published by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, South East Scotland Area Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. Scottish Charity No. SC019165. Printed by Footeprint UK, Riverside Works, Edinburgh Road, Jedburgh TD8 6EE.