



SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

December 2025



MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

We meet on **Sundays 10.30-11.30 am** at the Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, and remotely by Zoom (hybrid). **As usual on 28 Dec and 4 Jan. There will be a meeting at Edinburgh Meeting House at 11 am on Christmas Day.**

Recent notices and late changes are sent by weekly email. Join the email list by clicking the link at <https://quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh>

On the **First Thursday** of each month we meet for **30 min at 7.30 pm** by Zoom, followed by chat.

Children are welcome anytime. For details of planned activities, see online.

Other local meetings

Central Edinburgh and Portobello-Musselburgh are closest. Times are listed in SESAME, but for full info and a map, see <https://quakerscotland.org>

Several South Edinburgh Friends also attend **Midweek Meeting on Wednesdays**, 12.30 for 30 mins at Victoria Terrace meeting house. Tea and coffee available, you can eat your packed lunch. **Not being held 24 or 31 Dec.**

SPECIAL COLLECTION

Our collection in December is for **The Open Door** – the place we have met each week since 1982. Carol Jennings is on the management board and will speak to this. See page 3 and **volunteering opportunities** on page 4. There's a big orange donate button at www.theopendoor.org.uk

QUAKER EVENTS

Latest updates at <https://bit.ly/SEdQuakEvents>

Book Group on *Island of the Missing Trees* by Elif Shafak **Thur 4 Dec** at 2 pm, Ian and Rosamond Robertson hosting.

Quakers in Scotland meet ONLINE at 8 pm on **Mon 15 Dec**. 'A short meeting to receive certain nominations'. Details by email.

Open for Transformation 3 – Third of five sessions, *Living the Quaker Way*. Two opportunities, 7.30-9 pm on **Mon 8 Dec** (Alison Chalmers hosting) or 2pm on **Thur 11 Dec** (Ian and Rosamond).

We changed the sequence: the title is listed as the fifth topic in the book *Open for Transformation* (details in Nov issue).

Session 4 will be on **Mon 5** and **Thur 8 Jan**. Dates for the final session will be confirmed later.

From Rachel Frith of Edinburgh Central:

Coffee at Rachel's house usually on first and third Thursdays. *Changed for January only to second and fourth*. 10.15 am: please confirm with Rachel.

Central Book Group – no meeting in December., but you could start reading the long book for January: *Night Falls on the City* by Sarah Gainham (there's a 99p e-version).



A house for elves

Monthly charities from January 2026

Agreed at Meeting for Business on 23 Nov 2025. We particularly favour smaller or local/regional charities, but also expect a proportion each year to be wider Quaker charities or concerns.

Proposed Charity	Advocate	Type	Month
Open Door [where we meet]	Carol J	Local	Dec 2025
Quaker Tapestry [Challenged by funding shortfall]	Alison B	Quaker	Jan 2026
Corrymeela [Ecumenical peace centre, N Ireland]	Alison B	Peace	Feb 2026
Israeli Committee against House Demolitions (ICAHD)	Ian R	Small-Peace	Mar 2026
Living Rent [supporting renters]	Deirdre A	Small-Local	Apr 2026
Quaker Housing Trust [small grants making a difference]	David S	Quaker	May 2026
Northern Friends Peace Bd [Philip Austin retiring]	David S	Quaker	June 2026
Refuser Solidarity Network [Israeli COs]	Ian R	Peace	July 2026
Refugee Sanctuary Scotland [was Refugee Survival Trust]	Deirdre A	Small Local	Aug 2026
Wiston Lodge [Longstanding agreed each September]	David S	Small Local	Sep 2026
Quaker Peace and Social Witness		Quaker BYM	Oct 2026
Edinburgh Direct Aid International [All volunteer run]	Deirdre A	Small-Local	Nov 2026
Human Rights Protection Fund [Prisoners of Conscience]	Deirdre A	Small	Dec 2026



The Japanese Garden at Cowden

Notes from Local Meeting for Business of 23 Nov 2025

20 Friends met at the Open Door, plus one more online, after a shared lunch. Full minutes have been circulated by email. Key items of business were:

- **Christmas meetings** – we plan to meet as usual on 28 Dec and 4 Jan.
- **Quakers in Scotland (QiS)**. Most Friends have already moved their General Meeting membership to QiS. The 3 other Area Meetings in Scotland have gone further and are fully merging with QiS. We were asked to send a minute recording our views on our Area Meeting dissolving itself to merge in the same way. The agreed minute strongly supported that SESAM should join as soon as practicable.
- **AM funds**: It was noted that AM trustees invited thoughts on how best to use the residue of two generous legacies. It was recognized that a large part may be allocated to maintenance and upgrading Edinburgh Meeting House, but other ideas are invited.
- **Charities**: A list till December 2026 was approved, shown on page 2.
- **Funeral wishes** – attention was drawn to the Funeral Preferences document on the QiS website (<https://bit.ly/4a1qEDx>). There was discussion on sources of information about writing a will with donations to Friends, and mention of the importance of advance power of attorney documents.

The Open Door – this month's charity

The Open Door was founded in 1982 by a nurse and five local churches, with a mission to provide a welcoming space in the community. South Edinburgh Quakers held their first meeting there on 7 February of the same year. It provides day care sessions for older people, especially for those experiencing isolation or difficulty with their memory or mobility. Transport and a hot meal are part each session – the charity now has its own accessible electric minibus.

There have been 50 places available each week, 19 council-funded, but a current expansion of services Monday-Friday will provide places for 70 people weekly, which it is hoped will make the service self-sustaining. The charity has been running at a loss, despite the enormous contribution of volunteers of all ages. Any donations to ease the financial crunch during the transition through spring of 2026 would have an outsized impact. Regular (monthly or annual) donations would be even more helpful. Spreading the word about newly available places would also help. Some subsidies are available where there is obvious potential benefit but inadequate funding.

Carol Jennings is on the Board of the Open Door.

History corner: Marchmont



Homeroyal House on the corner of Chalmers Crescent and Sciennes Rd is home to two members of our meeting. It replaced Argyle Place Church, which was built in 1877 but burned down during renovations in 1974.

Across the road is the German Speaking Congregation, which in 1953 had opened in the converted former Glendinnings Dance School in a villa at 1 Chalmers Crescent. In 1967 it moved into its new Laudate House on the site of the old villa – window shown above right. Excellent photos come from, and much more detail available, at <https://bit.ly/4rfuQWj> (Local historian Andy Arthur – even more from him on page 4).

Other news and future events

Hosting Ukrainian families Fiona Paterson (Portobello and Musselburgh) has Ukrainian friends who are looking for host families in Scotland for relatives still in Ukraine — a young man (22), and a mother (46) with her daughter (17). You should be able to offer a spare room or home for at least 6 months, and would be eligible for a tax-free “thank you” of £350 per month. If you’re interested please email fiona@fionapaterson.co.uk or call Fiona (landline in book or Neil T has mobile).

THE OPEN DOOR (this month’s charity, and p3) is offering Christmas wreath-making with mulled wine and mince pies on **Sat 6 Dec**, 2-4 pm.

It’s also looking for **Volunteers** – particularly for **drivers** for their minibus, needed soon, but also for helpers at the Open Door. Contact Lynnette or Simon on 0131 447 9757, or drop in during the week to find out more.



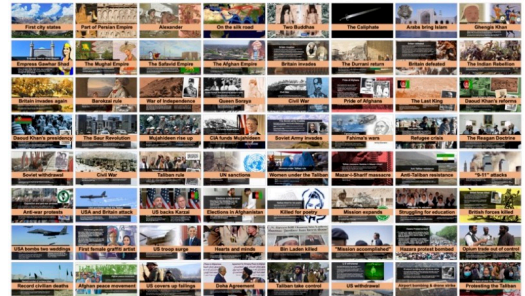
Coffee and Cake days – On the second Wednesday of each month at the Open Door, 10.30-4.00. Donations in aid of the charity.

Woodbrooke 2026 (no Jedi). Woodbrooke’s 2026 brochure is out. Many good things, though disappointingly it lacks any of last year’s attention-arresting Star Wars themed courses, expositions on worship by dance, or Quakers in film. www.woobrooke.or.uk/our-courses

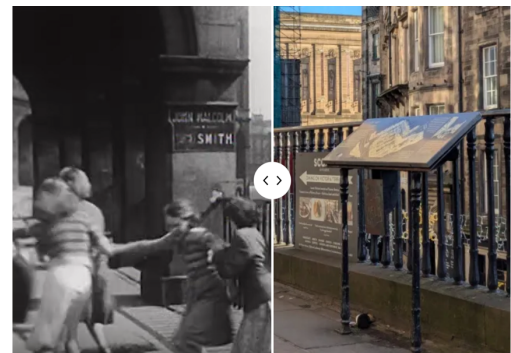
*Our newsletter is published near the last Sunday of each month. Send your Hogmanay horrors to neilturn@gmail.com
Find this edition, plus archives of previous, at www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh*

History Web

Peace Education – history resources There have been nearly 40,000 downloads of the Quaker Peace resources from tes.com, and they average 5 star ratings. <https://bit.ly/44ug83J> Create a free login to download.



The **Interactive timeline of 4,000 years of Afghanistan history** gives a sobering perspective. 1-minute overview <https://youtu.be/dAkdmsCw-h0> For Scottish info www.quaker.org.uk/blog/peace-platform-scotland



Move the slider to compare. Still © NLS Moving Image Archive

Edinburgh history – a testament to the power of a fascinated person to create great things is Andy Arthur’s **Threadinburgh** <https://threadinburgh.scot> He presents a real Christmas treat for his 300th post with a 75th anniversary tribute to **The Singing Street**, a 1951/2 short amateur film from Norton Park School. It was driven by the enthusiasm of a self-effacing maths teacher, Jim Ritchie, working with pupils and colleagues. He became a collector of rhymes to which he added street games.

It’s a long post with links to the film itself and its predecessor, goes step by step through the film, and is lavishly illustrated with then-and-now scenes like the one above. He also links to a fragment of Ritchie’s likeable interview by the renowned American folk song collector Alan Lomax.

At the time it was remarkable, ‘the first film explicitly dedicated to depicting children’s song and games’; ‘a minor miracle’ (The Scotsman); and a quote from John Grierson that applies much more widely – ‘The reason for it being wonderful was quite simple. Somebody loved something and conveyed it.’