

SESAME

Number 222: March 2019

Area Meeting at Kinghorn / Edinburgh Interfaith Association / Meeting for Sufferings / 'Conscience Matters' exhibition / CYP Advocates Conference / Extinction Rebellion / General Meeting / AM January Minutes / *etc.*

Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one.¹

We long to build a peaceful world and to be a
peaceful people
May we be restored and made whole
For peace in the world, for peace among all
nations and people²

*May all beings in the entire universe be happy
and free*³

**Help us remember we are just one family,
North and South. Help us rekindle our com-
passion and brotherhood, and transform our
separate interests into loving acceptance for all.**⁴

Prayers from the service for the International Day of Peace, 2018 – see page 4

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SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Area Meeting will be held on Saturday 23 March 2019, at Kinghorn Community Centre, Rossland Place, Kinghorn, Fife KY3 9SS. The venue is near rail and bus connections, and has good disability access.

From 11.00 am coffee will be available from the community centre café. We will start all-age worship at 11.30 am, followed by a session on how we welcome children and young people at our worship in local meetings.

Lunch will be at 1.00 pm. We are grateful to local Friends for providing soup and bread; participants are encouraged to bring other food to share.

Our business meeting will start at 2.00 pm. The agenda is below. We expect to finish with a cup of tea, and to be departing at around 4.30 pm.

Friends – members and attenders – are invited to come to all or any part of the day. There will be a programme for children and young people. It is helpful if you can let the Clerk, Alastair Cameron, know of children and young people intending to come– clerk.sesam@outlook.com.

Please also notify Alastair of any correspondence to be shared at Area Meeting or of urgent business not included in the draft agenda.

DRAFT AGENDA FOR BUSINESS:

1. Worship and introductions
2. Minutes of the meeting of Monday 28 January 2019 in Edinburgh
3. Matters arising from the minutes
 - 3.1. *Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture*
 - 3.2. *Extinction Rebellion*
4. Membership matters
5. Tabular statement 2018
6. Local meetings –
 - 6.1. *Request from Polmont LM – financial contribution to Peace Pole bench*
 - 6.2. *Report from Central Fife LM – meeting in Dunfermline*
 - 6.3. *Receipt of a minute from Portobello & Musselburgh LM – support for the school strikes for climate and Extinction Rebellion*
 - 6.4. *Receipt of a minute from Central Edinburgh LM – Brian Mayes*
 - 6.5. *Memoranda of understanding – receipt of MoUs from South Edinburgh; Polmont; Portobello & Musselburgh; Central Fife.*
7. Appointments
8. Festival Committee
9. Receipt of the minute from the threshing meeting on finance, held on 16 February
10. Establishing review of STIR process as applied to Area Meeting since January 2017

11. Meeting for Sufferings report [*page 5*]
 12. General Meeting for Scotland
 - 12.1. *Hosting GM in Edinburgh on 8 June 2019*
 - 12.2. *Dates for 2020*
 13. Conferences and events
 14. Correspondence
 - 14.1. *Report on General Meeting for Scotland, 9 March 2019 [page 14]*
 15. Closing minute
-

Climate Emergency – Special Meeting

31 March 2019, 11.00 am

Glasgow Quaker Meeting House,

38 Elmbank Crescent, Glasgow, G2 4PS

John Finnie MSP, of the Scottish Green Party, will visit Glasgow Quaker Meeting on Sunday 31 March. He will attend Meeting for Worship and will lead a discussion on the Greens’ proposal for a **Climate Emergency Bill**. John is also the author of the proposed **Equal Protection from Assault Bill**, to remove the right of parents to use “reasonable chastisement” in punishing children physically.

Meetings for Worship at Faslane, 2019

The full list of dates of Meetings for Worship at the North Gate of HM Naval Base Clyde is as follows:

24 March

16 June

14 April

29 September

19 May

10 November

Remember to bring something to sit on and something to eat, and to wear appropriate clothing. For more information contact **Alison Burnley** (phone number in the Book of Members – no email).

Edinburgh Interfaith Association

The prayers on page 1 (details of the sources are below) were among the readings given at a Peace Service at St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh, on 20 September 2018. The service was organised by the Edinburgh Interfaith Association to celebrate International Day of Peace, and, following a brief welcome from Canon John McLuckie, Vice-Provost of the Cathedral, was led by Navinder Singh, representing members of the Sikh community.

The ongoing work of the Edinburgh Interfaith Association – “working with peoples of all faith and none to create a more respectful, peaceful world” – reflects values which Quakers also recognise: acceptance, non-violence and the recognition of ‘that of God in everyone.’ Its Mission is “to bring people together for the greater good, to provide expert services, to build meaningful and beneficial relationships and to represent the interests and needs of faith communities.” Recent events promoted by the E.I.A. have included **Holocaust Remembrance Day** – the annual evening for remembrance, which is held at a different school in Edinburgh each year, and in January took place at Liberton High School; in February, a **community meal and lecture by the Rev David Coleman**, Environmental Chaplain for Eco Congregation Scotland (a movement of church congregations committed to addressing environmental issues through their life and mission) which spoke of the importance of faith communities being advocates of environmental action; and, this month, **International Women’s Day**, on Saturday 6 March, marked by an event at the Methodist Church, Nicolson Square.

Later this year, Quakers will host an **Interfaith Community Meal**, at 7 Victoria Terrace on 7 October (*details nearer the time*); and in **Scottish Interfaith Week**, in November, interfaith groups, faith communities, schools, local organisations and communities across the nation hold over a hundred events to encourage interfaith dialogue, with E.I.F. playing an active role.

Lynne Barty

For more information see <https://www.edinburghinterfaith.com/>

SOURCES

1. *From a prayer by `Abdu'l-Bahá (1844-1921), leader of the Bahá'í faith from 1892. (`Abdu'l-Bahá visited Edinburgh in 1913.)*
2. *From “We Pray” by Nick Page, Unitarian Church.*
3. *From a Hindu Mantra which “encourages one to go beyond his own identity and his small world, to identify with the entire creation and all its beings, since the Being is the same in all creatures”.*
4. *A Prayer for Peace by the Buddhist Thich Nhat Hanh, written in 1965 during the Vietnam War (but still relevant today).*

Meeting for Sufferings: 2 February 2019

All the papers for the meeting are available online at

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-2019-02-agenda--papers-packagev4>

The minutes and other follow-up material are available from

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-2018-11-follow-up-packagev1>

[Yes, that link looks wrong, but at the time of writing it *does* produce the February meeting minutes.]

Sustainability

We agreed Terms of Reference for a new Meeting for Sufferings Sustainability Monitoring Group to be “responsible for monitoring the Yearly Meeting’s commitment to Sustainability”.

Post-truth world

In response to a concern about this matter from Southern Marches AM, Meeting for Sufferings had asked for input from Area Meetings, which was patchy and equivocal: not so much that this was a problem, and one that concerns us, but more that we have neither the capacity nor the insight necessary to intervene as a Society. A very useful list of organisations who *are* active in relevant ways was included as an appendix to the item (see link above).

“Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness. Indeed lying is the mother of violence.” (Gandhi)

Finding the courage to challenge lies is hard enough to do in person; it is even harder to do on social media, where the response may well be both manifold and obnoxious, the latter particularly in response to challenges from women.

Can we find ways to provide safe online spaces, perhaps taking EAPPI [*the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel*] as a model?

We agreed that we would not suggest any new “committee or programme of work” at this time.

Yearly Meeting

YM is in London, 24-27 May. Registration is open

<https://forms.quaker.org.uk/ym/>

(It is not required, but helps planning local arrangements.)

Clare Scott-Booth (the new YM Clerk) introduced the agenda; see

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/ym>

The theme this year is “Privilege and assumptions of privilege”.

Henry S. Thompson
South East Scotland AM representative

CONSCIENCE MATTERS

In November 2015, *Sesame* carried an appeal for “diaries letters and unpublished manuscripts written by Second World War conscientious objectors”. Researchers at Edinburgh University’s Department of Social Anthropology were embarking on a project entitled “A Comparative Anthropology of Ethics, Conscience and Human Rights”, which it was intended would be “fed into publications and a museum exhibition”. Three years later, under the rather snappier title *Conscience Matters*, the exhibition has opened; it is on at the National War Museum, Edinburgh Castle, until 26 January 2020; admission is free with entry to the Castle (to which admission is *not* free: the price of a standard adult ticket is £18.50, and it is due to increase on 1 April).

For Quakers, the experiences of conscientious objectors in World War II may not, perhaps, add up to a “little-known story”(as the Museum’s own publicity for the exhibition describes it), even if the more extreme sufferings of C.O.s in World War I are more vividly recalled, by us as by the public in general. *Conscience Matters* aims to redress the balance, drawing on

... the testimonies and experience of some of the 60,000 men and women who applied for exemption from military service in the name of conscience. The material on display illustrates the stories of those who objected by exploring their backgrounds, their moral dilemmas, and the difficult journeys they faced in trying to prove their convictions.

The exhibition features paintings, music, letters, diaries, poems and speeches made by conscientious objectors in Britain during the Second World War as they grappled with the meanings and implications of conscience in a time of war.

Following the stories of conscientious objectors including Scottish author Fred Urquhart and poet Edwin Morgan, the exhibition examines the application process, the reasons people had for opposing conscription, and what happened to them as a result.

If successful in their application, conscientious objectors could be exempted from national service altogether, or more commonly assigned to other non-combatant roles such as bomb disposal, hospital work or agricultural labour. Some of those whose applications were unsuccessful were ultimately imprisoned.

This exhibition draws on a major research project led by the University of Edinburgh to study British conscientious objectors in the Second World War. The project examines the motivations and dilemmas of conscientious objectors, and the ways in which a decision not to take up arms affected both their close relationships and their rights and obligations as British citizens. The research is funded by the European Research Council.

Tobias Kelly, Professor of Political and Legal Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh, said:

“Britain was one the first countries in the world to grant a legal right to

conscientious objection to military service during wartime. In the Second World War, over 60,000 people registered as conscientious objectors. Although now largely forgotten, many of these people went on to become significant cultural and political figures in post-war Britain, founding Amnesty International and Oxfam, amongst other things. Their fascinating stories will invite visitors to think about the wider nature and implications of conscience and to ask how we might go for a cause in which we believe.”

More information about the exhibition may be found on the website: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/national-war-museum/whats-on/conscience-matters/>

We hope to have a review of the exhibition in a future edition of Sesame. (Ed.)

Our young people are apt to feel that we do not sufficiently give them a reason for the faith that is in us. It may not be appropriate to do this in meeting for worship. Do we not need more diversity of method and a more experimental spirit both to meet the spiritual needs of the young and to educate in our own ways of thought attenders and newly-joined members of the Society?

W. Russell Brain

Man, society and religion – Swarthmore Lecture, 1944

Children’s & Young People’s Work Advocates Conference, Woodbrooke, 9-11 November 2018

A conference for children’s advocates is held every three years, so that everyone gets to attend one in their time – mine was about halfway through my triennium as a Childrens’ Advocate for South East Scotland Area Meeting. I am late in writing about it, but it was certainly a very valuable experience; this report focuses on three particular aspects.

Mermaids

The highlight of the weekend for me was finding out more about gender identity issues from a group called Mermaids – a charity supporting lesbian, gay, non-binary, and transgender teenagers. They showed how complex the issue is for teenagers, particularly those who feel doubtful about their gender or their sexuality. There is a high level of self-harming among this group and if we can provide a safe, uncritical, unprejudiced place for

even one young person who is struggling with these issues Mermaids showed how important it would be.

I was so glad that Quakers were offering us such a session – it feels very relevant at the moment and it is so much better not to play catch up with the important issues in young people's lives.

Credit goes to Mel Cook in her role as Children & Young People's Officer at Quaker Life for organising the elements of the conference, and for persisting in running it when she plainly had a terrible cold!

Training

Some sessions were combined with the Quaker Youth Work Conference which was happening at the same time, and a lot of the emphasis was on networking and meeting others across the country. There were discussions on data protection and how it relates to holding lists of young people and also about Journeys in the Spirit editions and other training materials.

We are aware of how important young people are to our Meetings right now and we want them to flourish but we need to support young people's initiatives to keep the flame burning, whether as parents, members of children's meetings or simply attenders of local meetings. We have our try to educate ourselves and help our all age communities, small as they are...

We had a helpful session on how to go about keeping in touch with parents and children in our meetings in the light of the General Data Protection Regulations.

Networking

We were well represented from Scotland – Genevieve Orr from East Scotland, Johanna Quinney from North and myself – at one time when we stood in our geographical areas there was a bit of a gap from us down to Yorkshire - we seemed to be missing the North East of England. Sadly I don't think there were any Newcastle or County Durham people there.

However, through Madeline Harding's very helpful support we had met up already in Scotland so were better networked with each other already even if geographically so spread!

Madeline has continued to support us by organising a meeting for us in January 2019 at which we discussed the Family Weekend in Pitlochry (31 May – 2 June), Link Weekends and Junior Link Meetings, as well as what we had learned at Woodbrooke..

Madeline's role as Children's Advocates' Support has been officially laid down at Yearly Meeting level, but thankfully she is continuing in Scotland. It feels like getting rid of that role is to throw away support from where it is most needed in trying to encourage our young people.

Deirdre Armstrong

South East Scotland AM Children's & Young People's Work Advocate

A Letter from America

Oh, remember us, for we cannot forget you:
 Many waters cannot quench our love,
 Nor distance wear out the deep remembrance
 of you in the heavenly Truth:

We pray God preserve you in faithfulness,
 That, discharging your places and stewardships,
 You may be honoured and crowned
 with the reward of them that endure to the end.

And though the Lord has been pleased
 to remove us far away from you,
 as to the other end of the earth,
 Yet are we present with you
 Your exercises are ours;
 Our hearts are dissolved
 in the remembrance of you,
 Dear brethren and sisters in this heavenly love.

And the Lord of heaven and earth
 who is the father of our family,
 Keep us in His love and power,
 and unite, comfort and build us all,
 More and more,
 To his eternal praise and our rejoicing.

From an "Epistle from a select meeting of elders and faithful brethren of Pennsylvania and Jersey, held at Philadelphia, 17 March 1683" written as prose and set out thus by W.C. Braithwaite in *The Second Period of Quakerism* (1919), p. 407; W. C Braithwaite comments: "I have set it out rhythmically, as, alas, few Church-letters could be printed."

The discussion at January's Area Meeting on Extinction Rebellion (XR) was informed by Friends' knowledge from news reports of what this group has been doing: the occupation of the debating chamber in the Scottish Parliament Building by about forty XR members had taken place the Friday before AM. Their aim in doing so – to urge stronger measures on CO₂ reduction – was one with which we sympathise, but there was, nevertheless, a certain wariness expressed by some about a body of which little was known. The following is XR in its own words. (Ed.)



FIGHT FOR LIFE

- **We are facing an unprecedented global emergency.**
- **The government has failed to protect us.**
- **To survive, it's going to take everything we've got.**

Our Demands

1. ***The Government must tell the truth about the climate and wider ecological emergency, reverse inconsistent policies and work alongside the media to communicate with citizens***
2. ***The Government must enact legally binding policy measures to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and to reduce consumption levels.***
3. ***A national Citizen's Assembly to oversee the changes, as part of creating a democracy fit for purpose.***

Principles & Values

1. **WE HAVE A SHARED VISION OF CHANGE**
Creating a world that is fit for generations to come.
2. **WE SET OUR MISSION ON WHAT IS NECESSARY**
Mobilising 3.5% of the population to achieve system change – using ideas such as “Momentum-driven organising” to achieve this.
3. **WE NEED A REGENERATIVE CULTURE**
Creating a culture which is healthy, resilient and adaptable.
4. **WE OPENLY CHALLENGE OURSELVES AND THIS TOXIC SYSTEM**
Leaving our comfort zones to take action for change.
5. **WE VALUE REFLECTING AND LEARNING**
Following a cycle of action, reflection, learning & planning more action. Learning from other movements and contexts and our own experiences.
6. **WE WELCOME EVERYONE AND EVERY PART OF EVERYONE**
Working actively to create safer and more accessible spaces.
7. **WE ACTIVELY MITIGATE FOR POWER**
Breaking down hierarchies of power for more equitable participation.
8. **WE AVOID BLAMING AND SHAMING**
We live in a toxic system, but no one individual is to blame.
9. **WE ARE A NONVIOLENT NETWORK**
Using nonviolent strategy and tactics as the most effective way to bring about change.
10. **WE ARE BASED ON AUTONOMY AND DECENTRALISATION**
We collectively create the structures we need to challenge power. Anyone who follows these core principles and values can take action in the name of Rising Up!

Rethinking Security

Some thoughts from NFPB meeting held in Sheffield on 1 December 2018

Rethinking Security is a network of organisations, academics and activists who “share a concern about the current approach to national security in the UK and beyond. We believe that this approach is a significant barrier to progress on a range of progressive agendas for peace, justice and ecological sustainability. We are committed to building a much richer understanding of what security really means, and of what is required to tackle insecurity and build a more just and peaceful world” (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/>)

There is a paid worker, Celia McKeon from York AM. The first national conference of Rethinking Security – “Time for Change: New Approaches to National Security” took place at Friends House on 15 June 2018. After this, NFPB became an affiliated organisation. There was a recommendation to organise a similar conference in Scotland at some stage.

At this London conference there were panellists talking on environmental justice; economic justice; ‘Prevent’¹ and antiracism; and human rights. Some points made during this conference were: that security has to be grounded in the well-being of people; that civil society is vital to building alternative approaches to security; and that the current narrative of national security is being used to maintain the power of the few rather than the rights of all.

At the Sheffield meeting there was a presentation by Celia McKeon. Priorities in the rethinking were :

- meeting basic needs,
- addressing systemic drives (e.g. that driving climate change),
- increasing gender and racial inclusion,
- respect for the rule of law and promotion of human rights, and
- peace building and diplomacy.

It was refreshing to hear a positive side to security for humans e.g. freedom from fear, hunger, common rights for all, where all can participate.

There were break out groups looking at Principles, Priority, Practical Actions and Dilemmas. In our group there was agreement on such areas as decreasing discrimination/racism which had quite an emphasis, safeguarding the Human Rights Act, and ending involvement in wars.

Pol Yates

1. *The Prevent strategy – part of the UK government’s Counter Terrorism plan – operates in schools in England & Wales with the stated aim of stopping the radicalisation of pupils, but has been criticised as Islamophobic and reactionary. (Ed.)*

Northern Friends Peace Board, Liverpool, 2 March 2019

About 22 Board members, including four from Scotland, were warmly welcomed at Liverpool Meeting House, in the bustling city-centre, for our first meeting of the year. Our meeting began and closed with worship.

NFPB membership chiefly comprises Representatives appointed by Area Meetings, who normally serve for one or two periods of three years. We used our introductory session in Liverpool to look at how Reps can undertake their role most effectively, both in terms of strengthening the links between the Board and their Meetings, and in becoming fully involved in our own work and activities. There were valuable ideas from this discussion that could be taken forward in different ways.

Since our last meeting, two new working groups have started, one dealing with our programme of workshops, the other with nuclear abolition; we heard reports from both. They are each developing priorities to involve and empower our own members and the wider community – Quaker and non-Quaker – in taking action. Recognising the value of working well in groups in the process of building peace, and the urgency for engagement on nuclear disarmament, the groups will be busy in the year ahead.

In the Treasurer's report, initial figures from the end of 2018 were presented. Levels of Quaker donations had met anticipations, though Trustees are keen to generate more from invested reserves. Sales of materials, regular individual giving, legacies, and grants from charitable trusts are all sources of income to be developed and promoted. In 2019 Trustees plan to draw on reserves for improvements to the office working environment.

As at all our meetings, we gave significant time to hearing reports of recent and planned peace-related activities of our members. We heard of nonviolent witness at the consulates of nuclear-weapons states in Edinburgh, preparations for involvement in the 'Roots of Resistance' Quaker action against the DSEI arms fair in , the progress of getting a peace champion established in one local authority, activities to support fair-trade fort-night, and the decision by one Meeting to change from wearing yellow fluorescent waistcoats at events to pink, to avoid confusion with the variety of groups now choosing to wear *gilets jaunes*. There was also a short report of our developing involvement with the Rethinking Security project.

Our final session began with small-group conversations responding to a discussion paper on some of the particular challenges of these 'turbulent times'. In the worship that followed, Friends reflected on current unsettled and unsettling trends, speaking both of distress but also of hopes of being able, together with others, to help build radical new alternatives.

Related Links:

<https://rootsofresistance.org.uk>

<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk>

<http://uk.icanw.org>

Adapted from notes by
Philip Austin
Co-ordinator, NFPB

General Meeting for Scotland

Glasgow, Saturday 9 March 2019

This was a very well attended General Meeting, with 76 Friends present from as far apart in Scotland as Shetland and Wigton, in addition to four visitors from down south: Paul Parker, BYM Recording Clerk plus an intern who is working with him, Sandra Berry, the Director of Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, and Jonathan Carmichael, who is facilitating BYM's Simpler Meetings Project.

We started with some routine business, recording two new members and four deaths, and being given suggested dates and venues for future GMs:

7 March 2020 in South East (*already agreed*); and to be agreed:

6 June 2020 in North

12 Sept 2020 in East

14 Nov 2020 in West and

6 March 2021 in North.

Several reports were circulated and added to the minutes, and we were told that at the request of General Meeting Hugh Lloyd Richards (East) is being coopted to the BYM Committee on Christian & Interfaith Relations.

Paul Parker then spoke on how Scottish Quakers might liberate ourselves, to focus on spiritual growth, community building and witness in the world.

Paul started by quoting Advices & Queries 27: "Live adventurously ...". He told us about his visits some time ago to two Quaker meetings, both with about 20 members and a dozen present at worship when he visited (an average size for Quaker meetings). One was dying and has since closed; the second was vibrant and has since grown. What makes the difference? The second was open to change. Change is necessary, change is possible, change is exciting.

We live in challenging times, with an increasingly secular society and considerable demographic changes; the proportion of lone Quakers in otherwise non-Quaker families has greatly increased. Maintaining connection with each other is very important. How good are we at identifying and building on what is really vital?

Paul used the image of forest management: we need the skill of coppicing, to cut out the old wood to let the light in and enable the heartwood to flourish and produce new shoots. He noted an increase in the number of groups of young adult Quakers around the country and told us that Meeting for Sufferings has minuted encouragement to Area and Local Meetings to engage in 'informed experiment'. We need to exercise 'cautious boldness'.

After Paul's inspiring talk, Sandra Berry told us how Woodbrooke is changing to meet the changing needs of Friends and Meetings around Britain and, indeed, the world. Rather than expecting those who need support for their learning necessarily to travel to Birmingham, Woodbrooke is increasingly moving out, either physically or through electronic means, to where people are.

Jonathan Carmichael told us he has been in post for six months and has been learning fast about how Meetings can adapt to ever developing reality.

We made some appointments and Joyce Taylor, convener of our Parliamentary Engagement Working Group, told us that climate change was now a priority for the work of the Group and we agreed that GM should join the Stop Climate Chaos movement.

After an excellent lunch provided by Glasgow Friends, we divided into groups to explore the 'Menu for Change' which Jonathan Carmichael has developed. From no less than 85 items, we were invited to select:

- a) five easy steps we could take and implement immediately;
- b) five more which look a bit more of a challenge but which would make our Quakerism more doable; and
- c) three things we are already doing that different from the traditional way of doing things; and then to consider:
- d) what could be better done by our Area Meetings working co-operatively rather than separately.

The group I was in tackled this daunting task quite efficiently but I picked up that some struggled with it.

In the closing session, it was clear that our clerk wanted us to reach some decisions as a result of this process but it also became clear that we needed more time than was available at the end of a tiring day. The main points emerging were that

- a) we should explore further ways of supporting each other and working together across our AM boundaries and
- b) we should explore with Woodbrooke how its learning resources could more effectively be delivered to Scottish Friends and Attenders.

The clerks agreed to work on a summary paper and to take things forward from there.

Phil Lucas

The next General Meeting for Scotland will be on 8 June 2019 in Edinburgh; the programme for the day is to be discussed at Area Meeting (see page 3.)

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Monday 28 January 2019, at
Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL

2019/01/01 Worship and introductions

During worship, we have heard a reading from *Quaker Faith & Practice* 29.15. This reminds us all of the need for active commitment to promoting diversity.

We have also heard of the death of our friend Brian Mayes, who died on 24 January.

We have ensured those present know each other's names and meetings. The attendance will be recorded in the concluding minute.

2019/01/02 Minutes of Meeting of Saturday 24 November 2018

The minutes of our last Area Meeting held on 24 November 2018 at Greenpark Community Centre, Polmont, have been signed by the Clerks and entered in the Minute Book.

2019/01/03 Matters arising from the minutes

1) *Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture – QCAT (minute 2018/11/04 refers)*

We have received the following minute from Central Edinburgh LM:

Further to [LM] minute 2018/11/14 we have sent letters raising our concern about the UK government's complicity in the use of torture to the MPs for Edinburgh North & Leith, Edinburgh West and Edinburgh South West.

Christine Jardine MP (Edinburgh West) has acknowledged our letter and Rhoda MacKenzie has met with her. Rhoda also asked about arms sales and the MP intimated that there will soon be discussion on action on arms sales. They also discussed how to make the general public aware of these concerns.

Deidre Brock MP's office (Edinburgh North & Leith) has replied to our letter, pointing out that "the SNP has continuously pressed for a full judicial inquiry into torture and rendition. During a recent [2 July 2018] urgent question in the House of Commons a number of SNP MPs reiterated those calls. Deidre, like the rest of the SNP, thinks that it is vital that a full judge led inquiry is established so that we can ensure the UK never becomes complicit in these abhorrent practices again.

Although Joanna Cherry MP (Edinburgh South West) has not yet replied, we note that she was one of the questioners in the 2 July debate.

Hilary Patrick plans to attend Deidre Brock's surgery on 18 January. Other Friends living in Edinburgh North & Leith Constituency would be welcome to join her.

We note that Area Meeting has agreed to become a supporting Area Meeting of Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture (AM minute 2018/11/04). We send this minute to Area Meeting and to the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group.

We have also heard that East Lothian Local Meeting will meet Martin Whitfield MP, and will raise this issue. Polmont Local Meeting has written to the four MPs covering their area, and a meeting with Stephen Kerr, MP for Stirling, is being arranged.

South East Scotland Area Meeting is now recognised as a supporting AM of QCAT, alongside the existing AMs, *i.e.* Central England, North Wales and Wirral & Chester. The minimum requirement is to appoint a correspondent. QCAT would appreciate if we are also able to provide someone to serve as a trustee on the national body: QCAT is an independent charity. Financial support is also welcome, though no subscription is charged. We agree:

- To appoint David Somervell (South Edinburgh) to serve as correspondent;
- To ask Nominations Committee to find someone willing to serve as QCAT trustee;
- To ask our treasurer team to advise on a suitable annual sum, taking into account our commitments to other bodies such as Northern Friends Peace Board.

2) *Payments to Venue 40 charities/Meeting House fund (2018/11/05 refers)*

We note that the appropriate payments have been made, and acknowledgement received from each of the three benefitting organisations.

3) *Quaker World Relations Committee (2018/11/10(3) refers)*

We have heard that arrangements are in place for the QWRC visit to Edinburgh on the weekend of 1-3 March. This will include the opportunity for local friends to meet members of QWRC for discussion about their work: we invite friends in the Area Meeting to contribute to these discussions. There will be a crafts and party games session, a shared (catered) meal and a ceilidh. All are encouraged to attend. We thank Central Edinburgh LM for their work in this.

2019/01/04 Decisions by between-meetings procedure

Two issues have required decision by the clerking team, in both cases on the advice of the treasurer team, and are presented to the Meeting:

1) *Annual payment to Northern Friends Peace Board (minute 2017/01/11 refers)*

We have received a request from Northern Friends Peace Board for our contribution to their funds for 2018. Our practice is to pay £8.50 per member, and the tabular statement shows our membership at 243 on 31 December 2017 (minute 018/03/07). On the advice of the AM treasury team, we agree to make immediate payment of £2,065.50 to cover the year 2018.

Agreed by between-meetings procedure, 12 December 2018.

Alastair Cameron, Clerk; Cath Dyer, Assistant Clerk

2) *Diversity and Inclusion National Gathering*

We appoint Ellie Harding (Central Edinburgh) and Rici Marshall Cross (South Edinburgh) to attend the diversity and inclusion national gather-

ing 'Answering that of God in everyone' at Woodbrooke from 18 to 20 January 2019, and ask the treasurer team to pay costs.

Agreed by between-meetings procedure, 7 January 2019.

Alastair Cameron, Clerk; Cath Dyer, Assistant Clerk

2019/01/05 Financial Matters

We bring the following matters from our treasury team:

1) Annual payments

Certain organisations are supported by Area Meeting through regular (annual) payments.

We hereby authorise the Area Meeting treasurer to make such payments without reporting details to Area Meeting in session, following the level of payment suggested by the organisation concerned.

The payments to which this applies include the following, and any such further bodies as may be agreed by AM in future:

- General Meeting for Scotland: annual quota payment.
- Northern Friends Peace Board: annual request from NFPB trustees.
- Northern Friends Youth Events Trust: annual request from NFYET trustees.

Annual payments to Britain Yearly Meeting will be agreed by AM each year, on the recommendation of AM Trustees.

We note that payments from Area Meeting funds that have been earmarked for particular recipients by donors will always be passed on, along with any applicable Gift Aid.

We agree that this list of payments may be reviewed on an occasional basis, normally at the request of the Area Meeting clerks, but also if requested by the treasurer or trustees.

2) Bursary Guidance

Following our minute 2018/11/11, clarifying the basis of meeting costs for conferences and training, our treasurer team proposes further adjustment. This has been shared with the clerking team. We agree to use this revised guidance, and ask that it be shared with Local Meeting clerks and pastoral care and oversight teams.

We ask our treasurer team to report annually to Area Meeting on the training and conferences attended on our behalf. The position from June 2018 to present is available from the Clerk.

2019/01/06 Tweeddale Local Meeting

We have received the following minute of a special meeting of Tweeddale Local Meeting, held on 10 January 2019:

We agree that an evening meeting for worship of Tweeddale Local Quaker Meeting should be held on the second Thursday of each month, starting in March 2019, at 7pm, probably in The House at Peebles Community Centre. Helen Holt has agreed to ensure that these meetings for worship are held according to Quaker discipline, to ensure appropriate literature is available for those attending who are new to Quakerism and to liaise with our clerk as necessary. We agree to

meet again at 7pm on Thursday, 23 May 2019 to review how the first three meetings have gone and to plan for the future. We send this minute to our Area Meeting. Signed: Alison Moore (Clerk); Phil Lucas (Elder)

We note that since this meeting, it has been decided for practical reasons to postpone the start until April. We wish Tweeddale LM well in this new venture.

2019/01/07 Diversity & Inclusion in the Life of Our Meeting

We have heard about the work done at the initial exploration meeting held on 1 December 2018, and a report has been published in *Sesame*.

We have heard a brief account from Rici Marshall Cross, who attended the national gathering earlier this month, and note that the BYM Co-ordinator is asking Friends to complete a questionnaire.

Rici has spoken of how privilege can lead to lack of diversity, as things can run in favour of those who are privileged. 'Whiteness' was described as the elephant in the room – as it is the baseline against which 'others' are given a label.

We note that our local Diversity & Inclusion Group will meet again on 29 January. We wish their work well, and await the outcome with interest and enthusiasm.

2019/01/08 Extinction Rebellion [see page 10]

We have become aware during the latter part of 2018, of the emergence of a new movement, Extinction Rebellion (XR), which recognises that the world faces an unprecedented global emergency of climate change and wider issues, from which governments are failing to protect us. Many Quakers and Quaker meetings find themselves in sympathy with this.

We have heard from a number of Friends about local action under the Extinction Rebellion banner. We have received a letter from members of Portobello & Musselburgh LM, expressing support for the aims of XR, and inviting Area Meeting to consider making lets at our meeting houses available on 'a free or by donation basis wherever possible' to XR.

We have heard a range of views about the way forward. While XR is one approach, it will not be the only one.

We ask our Clerks to arrange a meeting in the Meeting House, inviting members of XR to come into dialogue with us.

We recognise that aspects of XR's approach reflect Yearly Meeting decisions such as the Canterbury commitment, and wish to assure ourselves that action by XR will be such as we are able to support in this spirit.

Local meetings may decide to hold a special collection on behalf of XR.

2019/01/09 Wiston Lodge weekend, 6-8 September 2019

We have heard from Robin Naumann and Mark Ballard (both Portobello & Musselburgh LM) of the history of annual weekends at Wiston Lodge, near Biggar. These started during the 1990s as a community-building event for South Edinburgh LM. Over the years, participation extended to members of other LMs, and about four years ago, South Edinburgh handed the ad-

ministration on to a group of people from a number of LMs, including Polmont and Portobello & Musselburgh.

While children are enthusiastic participants, the event is not a 'family weekend' as such, and many single people value it highly. It has a role in bringing people together from across the Local Meetings, and in cementing relationships with Lanark Meeting (part of West of Scotland AM), who host the Sunday morning worship.

We recognise that the decades of Quaker weekends at Wiston have been invaluable in developing our local Quaker community for adults, children and families alike; living adventurously in community. These weekends also support, through our hire of their venue, the exceptional social work of Wiston Lodge, a charity that provides physical, mental and spiritual challenge in a safe and sheltered residential environment for groups of young people throughout the year.

Whilst not an AM event, we value these Wiston weekends. We agree to underwrite the cost of the 2019 event to a maximum of £500 to help enable access to those who can't afford the full-cost price through a series of concessionary prices. We agree to encourage promotion of the event through clerks' and internal communications to encourage interest among members and attenders, making clear that the event is supported by South East Scotland Area Meeting.

2019/01/10 Meeting for Sufferings report

Henry Thompson has reported on recent Meetings for Sufferings.

He notes that we now have a national co-ordinator for diversity and inclusion, Edwina Peart, who is establishing an information baseline.

He tells us that BYM Trustees have confirmed that Quakers hold no investments which make money out of the occupied territories in Palestine; and we will not do so in future.

He has drawn to our attention the work of Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations, which is holding a meeting on the Changing Face of Faith; to Quaker Peace & Social Witness, which has produced a new film, *War School*; to Quaker World Relations Council, which has also produced a film, *Quakers and Climate Change around the World*.

Henry has noted difficulties on the part of Meeting for Sufferings in overseeing BYM's efforts to carry through on the Canterbury commitment. He observes that this is an example of a wider problem, for Area Meetings as well as centrally: we need to ask what it means in concrete, practical terms for us to adopt or endorse a concern.

2019/01/11 Membership matters

1) Applications for membership

[Two applications were received. Visitors were appointed in respect of the first; a second visitor is still sought for the other.]

2) Transfers of membership (in)

We have had notice of the following transfers to South East Scotland AM:

- a. Jean Chettle from Northumbria Area Meeting;
- b. Steve Chettle from Northumbria Area Meeting;
- c. Rachel Howell from Mid-Wales Area Meeting.

We accept these membership transfers, and ask our Assistant Clerk (Membership) to send certificates of acceptance.

3) *Death*

We record the death of our Friend Brian Mayes, (born 30 August 1926), at home in Edinburgh on 24 January 2019. The family has made arrangements for his funeral at Warriston Crematorium, Edinburgh, on 1 February. Friends are welcome to attend.

2019/01/12 Appointments

1) Nominations Committee has put forward the following names for consideration:

a. *To organise, deliver and evaluate the Enquirer's Day; to serve from January 2019 until the work is complete:*

Henry Thompson (Central Edinburgh); Mariot Dallas (Polmont); and Rici Marshall Cross (South Edinburgh)

b. *To serve from January 2019 until the end of December 2021:*

Joan Mann (EL) Pastoral Care Team; Evelyn Graham (CE) Pastoral Care Team (Reappointment)

c. *To serve from January 2019 until the end of December 2019:*

Simon Jackson (CE) Elder (Reappointment)

d. *To serve from January 2019 until the end of June 2020:*

Judith Benton (CE) B&B co-ordinator (re-appointment)

e. *To continue to serve until the end of September 2019*

Janet Grimwade (CE) Festival Committee convener

f. *To continue to serve from October 2018 until the end of September 2021:*

Cathie Mc Currach (CE) Festival Committee

g. *To serve from 1 February 2019 to end January 2022:*

Jonathan Riddell (CE) Festival Committee

h. *To serve from April 2019 until the end of March 2022:*

Phil Lucas (EL) Elder Reappointment

These nominations being acceptable to us, we appoint all accordingly, with our thanks.

2) The following Friend has requested release from service.

Jane Angel (CE) Pastoral care team

We agree to this request, and thank Jane for her service.

2019/01/13 General Meeting for Scotland

1) *General Meeting, Glasgow, 9 March 2019*

We appoint Phil Lucas (EL) to attend and to report at our next meeting.

2) *Hosting GM in Edinburgh on 8 June 2019*

We note that South East Scotland AM is to host General Meeting for Scotland on Saturday 8 June. The meeting house at 7 Victoria Terrace has been booked.

2019/01/14 Conferences and events

- 1) We have received the following minute from Central Edinburgh PM:

2019/01/13 Hosting an Interfaith meal in October 2019

Iain Stewart of the Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA) has approached Lynne Barty, the Area Meeting rep to EIFA, to ask if we could host an interfaith meal in October 2019. It would involve giving a 20 minute talk on the key beliefs and values of Quakers and then inviting people to have soup and a sandwich. Iain Stewart suggests the evening of Monday 7 October and the library and hall are available at this time.

We would like this event to go ahead. We ask the meeting house managers to book the rooms. We ask Lynne Barty to organise the event, including finding volunteers to help with preparing soup and clearing up.

As Interfaith work happens at the level of Area Meeting, we ask AM to endorse and fund the event.

We agree to send this minute to Area Meeting.

We are happy to endorse this event, and ask our clerking team to liaise with Central Edinburgh LM to make arrangements. We agree to meet the costs of the event. [see also page 4]

- 2) We have received notice of the event *Patterns and examples* organised by BYM and Woodbrooke, at Glasgow Quaker Meeting House on 16 March 2019, and encourage people to attend.
- 3) We have heard from our Meeting House managers that they propose to have the Meeting House at 7 Victoria Terrace open until midnight on 29 March in the event that Britain leaves the European Union that day, to allow space for Friends who wish to offer mutual support, or have quiet reflection. We thank them for organising this.

2019/01/16 Correspondence

We have received the following:

- 1) Britain Yearly Meeting – notice that BYM will be held on 24-27 May 2019 at Friends House in London. Further information will be passed round.
- 2) Roots of Resistance – invitation to become involved in action against the DSEI arms fair in London in September 2019.
- 3) The Kindlers – notice of Kindler On-the-Road workshops for 2019.
- 4) Invitation from Ackworth School to Ackworth General Meeting, Saturday 11 May 2019.
- 5) Invitation to Leighton Park School General Meeting, Friday 15 March 2019.
- 6) Geneva Reporter, newsletter of Quaker United Nations Organisation, December 2018

2019/01/17 Closing minute

33 members and five attenders have been at all or part of this evening's meeting. Local meeting attendance is indicated [opposite]:

Central Edinburgh 17 + 1A	Central Fife 3	East Lothian 3	Kelso 1	Penicuik -
Polmont 2	Portobello & Musselburgh 3 + 3A	South Edinburgh 3	Tweeddale 1 + 1A	

We meet next on Saturday 23 March 2019, at the Community Centre, Kinghorn, Fife.

(Signed)
Alastair Cameron
Clerk
Cath Dyer
Assistant Clerk

East Lothian Friends have moved

From the beginning of March, East Lothian Local Meeting has moved its place of worship to Dunbar Town House.

We will be meeting at our usual time of 11 am on the second and last Sundays of the month. Dunbar Town House is very central, a sixteenth-century building with a tower and steeple situated in Dunbar High Street, and not far from the railway station and bus stops; its postcode, for sat-nav. users, is EH42 1ER. All are, of course, welcome!

Annie Miller's hefty *Basic Income Handbook* is soon to be augmented by her *Basic Income Pocketbook*; due to be published on 15 April, by Luath Press, at £7.99: ISBN: 978-1-91214762-5

Our Friends Jane Angel, Michelle Gunn and Simon Jackson have a joint exhibition, 'Lines of Enquiry' at Whitespace, 76 East Crosscauseway, Edinburgh EH8 9HQ, which opens on Friday 12 April and runs until Thursday 18 April, 10.00 am-6.00 pm. For more details, email the gallery, info@whitespace11.com, or call 07814 514771.

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: Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP <i>Half an hour – no children's meeting.</i>	7.30 pm

Second Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: Dunbar Town House – <i>see page 23</i>	11.00 am
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Second and Fourth Sundays in the Month

Portobello & Musselburgh: Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP. <i>Children welcome.</i>	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

North 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: Dunbar Town House, High Street, Dunbar	11.00 am
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So far as we know, there are no regular meetings for worship on University premises. **Mark Borthwick** is the named Quaker contact on the University of Edinburgh Chaplaincy website, and there is a Facebook Group at www.facebook.com/groups/EUQuakerSoc

Distribution of *Sesame* and *Scottish Friends Newsletter*

The current practice 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; if you would prefer to receive it this way, or to change the address to which a paper copy is sent, or if you would like to get one by post and currently do not, please contact **Joanna Swanson** at jmswanson69@gmail.com. A large print version is also 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 Footprint UK, Riverside Works, Edinburgh Road, Jedburgh TD8 6EE.