

## Harvesting and sowing seeds

### Your Local Development Worker's Wrap up of her work in the third Quarter of 2022



*Jerusalem artichokes growing in the garden*

Hello, my name is Zoe Prosser. I am the Local Development Worker for Quakers in Scotland.

Autumn is here and with it a time for reflection and harvest. My family has a tiny veg patch we share with my mum and dad (full disclosure, I am rarely the one tending the veg, I leave that to others). This year has been an experiment, some has been successful – courgettes, and some not at all – the squashes. Some of the last vegetables we will harvest are Jerusalem artichokes, kindly gifted by Friends in Aberdeen.

We are harvesting ideas too. Friends across Scotland were asked what my priorities (as Local Development Worker) should be. Answers came in from local and area meetings and the question will come to General Meeting for Scotland on 19 November to discern the way forward. Even if some ideas or priorities are not taken forwards, I can contact the Friends directly in many cases and see if I can help

I have a request from Young Friends General Meeting at the end of this newsletter.

#### **Current Opportunities for Your Meeting:**

My ongoing work for Quakers and Meetings includes:

- RESTORE
- Quaker networks for roleholders, including Elders and Pastoral Care Friends and Friends involved in nominations.
- Support for Quakers – whether those are as individuals, groups, local and area meetings or General Meeting.

If you would like to know more about this work, I have put information up on the Quakers in Scotland website – please check here [\[https://www.quakerscotland.org/our-work/support-for-meetings\]](https://www.quakerscotland.org/our-work/support-for-meetings)

There is also the opportunity to get involved in a new project I am developing:

#### **Gifts work**

Until we know ourselves and each other, how can we organise ourselves effectively, appoint Friends to roles and build our community?

In this workshop I plan to take the meeting through an exploration of gifts and service, considering what you want to achieve as a community and the skills that you have within.

This can cover a concern of your meeting, but it has been conceived as a way to support the meeting's inner growth, encouraging Friends to understand each other's skills and build them into the community of Friends.

I hope by the end of the workshop Friends will feel more confident knowing what their skills are and what they bring to their meeting, and accepting (and turning down) service. I also hope that the course will help meetings start to think about how to make the roles fit the skills of the Friends within their meeting (rather than the risk of the other way round).

This is a new piece of work, and the workshop can be shaped to the needs of the meeting who is interested in trying it. I hope that this will be available as an in person, online and blended session.

## What else have I been doing in the last 3 months?

### Wiston Weekend



*Saturday afternoon at the Wiston Weekend*

My husband (Gary), daughters (Ella and Suzy) and I were lucky enough to go to the Wiston Weekend in early September. The weather behaved itself and the weekend was full of Quakers of all ages enjoying their time together.

Suzy and Ella were among some of the youngest participants allowed to take part in activities and I was so grateful for the kindness of the young and older Friends in including them.

I ran a prototype workshop on Gifts, Gary organised games of Frisbee monsters (a game we invented to exhaust the kids during lockdown) and otherwise we participated in workshops, crafts, bonfires and a

ceilidh and enjoyed the genuinely all-age atmosphere.

The Wiston Weekend is run by Friends in South East Scotland Area Meeting, but it is open to Friends across General Meeting for Scotland. The next Wiston Weekend will run from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th of September 2023.

### Options for Scotland

I have been supporting the Options for Scotland Group in their consideration of possible ways in which our organisations (at local, area and General Meeting levels) might work more closely together. The group includes representatives from all four of Scotland's Area Meetings and from GM.

The group aims to produce a report and recommendation for Friends to consider in the first half of New Year.



*Picture of the façade of Dundee Meeting House*

### Dundee Meeting House

I was lucky enough to go to the opening of the Meeting House after it had undergone a stunning renovation.

The huge amount of work and passion that went into the renovation of the Meeting House is so impressive. The meeting also upholds their witness by providing flats above the Meeting House to people on low incomes and asylum seekers.

The Meeting House is in the heart of Dundee and I recommend it to all Friends who happens to be in the area. Information about booking a variety of room/s for meetings can be requested from [letting@dfptrust.co.uk](mailto:letting@dfptrust.co.uk)

### Themes arising

Conversations and workshops with Friends this quarter has left me with these themes

- There is a word I have come to see as a red flashing warning sign when I hear it. The word "**should**". It can be used in two ways and both are very familiar and deeply problematic. I hear it both from the approach "someone **should** do something" and "I **should** be doing more".

**Someone should do something** - the faceless group "someone" (or "the elders" or "pastoral care friends") lets us off the hook. It becomes someone else's problem. If you care enough about the problem, it is worth considering how best you can help to contribute towards solving it. This does not have to be by taking on an appointed role, it can be by looking at your own skills and interests and seeing what you can bring.

**I should be doing more** – this is often said to me by people who are already doing an incredible amount both within and outside Quakers. I have had a younger Friend say she has stopped coming to meeting because of the expectation to take on more. People are putting so much pressure on themselves – and with that comes shame and guilt. What you are doing, right now, is amazing.

I remember an elder telling me about a Friend who has never been able to take on a role, but she brings joy and connection to the meeting. Like her, you are welcome and celebrated in our community. The role you took on, the hand you shook, the event you helped to organize, the Friend that you supported, the time you ministered, the food you brought or the accounts you checked had enriched and blessed us. Thank you for everything you do.

- Covid 19 – I was reminded that many people continue to live with either the results of ill-health following covid or a fear of what will happen to them if they catch covid. A moving RESTORE workshop with South East Scotland Edinburgh Meeting reinforced my belief that there is a lot of value in continuing to listen to each other with love when this subject comes up, rather than assuming everyone has moved on.
- Nominations – This one ties in closely with the insidious “should” one. Nominations committees and groups are struggling throughout Scotland. Some of that is caused by expectations surrounding our structures. Our structures tend to be shaped by the historic larger meetings that needed complex structures to work and ensure that no one was left out. Steps are being taken to make our structures work for all (Options for Scotland is one of the groups working on this). In the meanwhile, if you can see a way to support the vital work of the nominations committee (whether that is suggesting a name, a new way of doing things or acting as a sounding board) please do so.



Picture of Zoe Prosser

**Meet your Local Development Worker**

I have drop in sessions (via Zoom) where you can pop in, have a chat or ask me questions. There are drop in sessions in the morning, afternoon and evening. Please go to the end of the document for drop in times and zoom details. You can always invite me to attend your meetings in person as well, I really appreciate worshipping with Friends across Scotland. Or you could invite me to a particular event your meeting is holding.

If you are interested in finding out more about me I have a webpage and interview video on our Quakers in Scotland website. These reports will also be available online. To visit the page, please go to <https://quakerscotland.org/our-work/support-for-meetings>

**Please pass this on to any young adult Quakers (or the Quaker curious) you know**

Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) is a national community of young adult Quakers in Britain. In this context “young adult” is from 18-35. They welcome Friends from across Britain and would love more young adult Quakers in Scotland to get involved. YFGM holds three weekend gatherings each year, in February, May (including a bank holiday), and October. To find out more, please go to <https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/>

**Zoom Meeting Details:**

	Dates	Zoom details
<b>Scotland Drop Ins - Morning</b>		
<b>Scotland Drop Ins - Afternoon</b>	Nov 16, 2022 14:30 Feb 15, 2023 14:30	Join Zoom Meeting <a href="https://quaker.zoom.us/j/82907091250">https://quaker.zoom.us/j/82907091250</a> Meeting ID: 829 0709 1250
<b>Scotland Drop Ins - Evening</b>	Dec 13, 2022 18:30 Mar 14, 2023 18:30	Join Zoom Meeting <a href="https://quaker.zoom.us/j/82150494485">https://quaker.zoom.us/j/82150494485</a> Meeting ID: 821 5049 4485