



GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

5 March 2016
St Andrews

Min. 1 Worship

During Meeting for Worship we heard a reading from Quaker Faith and Practice 3.29 on the value to be drawn from our meetings for church affairs.

Min. 2 Welcome

We welcome 3 attenders to this GM and one member of an Area Meeting outwith Scotland.

We will record the total numbers of all present and add them to these minutes.

East Scotland	11
South East Scotland	11
North Scotland	2
West Scotland	6
Total:	30

Min. 3 Reporter

We appoint Jane Pearn from South East Scotland AM to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask East Scotland AM to report on the next GM.

Min. 4 New members and deaths

We record the following new members since our last meeting:

Alison Moore (SE)
Chris Mayo (N)
Chloe Greenwood (N)

We record the following deaths:

Elizabeth Seale Carnall (SE)
Alan Davies (SE)
James Lewis (SE)
Faith Cullingworth (N)
Irene May Chapman (N)

Min. 5 Dates and Venues for 2017-18

We propose the following GM dates and venues for 2017-18

South East - 11 March 17 (already agreed)
West - 10 June 17
East - 9 Sept 17
North - 18/19 Nov 17
South East - 10 March 2018

We ask AM Clerks to consider these dates and for GM to confirm them in June.

Min. 6 Report and accounts for 2015

We have received the annual report and examined accounts for 2015 from our Treasurer, John Phillips. Total income, mainly from area meeting quotas and grants from Britain Yearly Meeting and the Camfield Trust, was £28,005. An additional £6000 was contributed by Area Meetings to meet our commitment to part-fund the post of Parliamentary Engagement Officer. Payments totalled £31,062, giving an overall deficit for the year of £3056. This is part of a planned reduction in our reserves to reduce the burden on Area Meetings of the new parliamentary post.

We ask our Central Committee to consider the method of producing and frequency of updating the Book of Members and to report to a future GM.

We authorise the Clerk to sign the Annual Report, amended so that the fourth sentence in this paragraph now reads: "During 2015 she has been working on informing us about and challenging military programmes undertaken within Scottish schools; on attempts to introduce peace education; and she has been addressing questions around the renewal of Trident."

The report and statement of accounts is attached to these minutes.

Min. 7 Report on Meeting for Sufferings

Our representative, Jane Pearn, has highlighted two issues from Meeting for Sufferings she feels may be of particular interest to Friends in Scotland. There are to be wider soundings on an invitation from 'Citizens UK' to join a project to sponsor individual refugees. Quaker Peace and Social Witness will report in due course.

Secondly, the Meeting looked at the gap between how we currently do things and the vision in 'Our Faith in the Future'. She felt this exercise could be an opportunity and a challenge to Friends in Scotland. We have briefly considered how we might raise the profile of the Quaker message and will return to this at a future meeting.

Min. 8 Parliamentary Liaison Function Group

Elizabeth Allen has spoken to a written report circulated with the agenda. In partnership with Forces Watch, we are petitioning the Scottish Parliament against militarisation in Scottish Schools. The petition is on the Scottish Parliamentary website and is open until 20th March. There are currently 616 signatures.

An event was organised on 28th January in the Scottish Parliament in partnership with the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre to commemorate the centenary of conscientious objection. Feedback on this has been positive.

An election guide has been produced for the forthcoming Scottish Parliamentary Election highlighting issues of concern to Quakers and work is ongoing on other briefing papers. Efforts are being made to improve communication with Scottish Friends by revising the Round-up briefing notes, through the GM website and by greater involvement of members of the PLFG and Elizabeth has sought feedback on what communication Friends would like.

Min. 9 ACTS delegation to Brussels

An invitation was received from ACTS for Quaker representatives to join a delegation which they are sending to Brussels from 5th - 7th April to learn about and reflect on the work of the European Union,

particularly given the forthcoming referendum on the UK's membership of the EU. The European Commission has agreed to pay for the cost of flights, transfers and two nights' accommodation.

As names of representatives were required before March, the Central Committee considered the invitation and agreed that Pamala McDougall and Joyce Taylor should represent General Meeting as members of the delegation.

Min. 10 Devolution: Meeting of the Recording Clerk with Clerks for Scotland and Wales

The Recording Clerk invited the Clerks of GM for Scotland and the Meeting of Friends in Wales to meet with him in response to a minute from the Meeting of Friends in Wales which asked Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee to consider how BYM might respond to the changing situation regarding devolved powers in Wales and Scotland. Our Clerk has reported that Welsh Friends considered there was a lack of awareness among English Friends of the differing circumstances and attitudes in the devolved nations and that BYM needed to consider what changes in structure and in ways of working might be required to respond to this. He shared his impression of the feelings of Scottish Friends at the meeting having consulted members of GM Central Committee.

It was agreed that GM and Meeting of Friends in Wales should improve communication between them to explore similarities and differences; that the Clerks should meet at least annually with the YM Clerks; and that further consideration should be given at the meeting of the Agenda Committee in November to the possibility of some discussion of this issue at the 2017 YM Gathering. GM was encouraged to be more ready to bring issues to Meeting for Sufferings, even if they related solely to Scotland.

Min. 11 Quaker Meeting Houses Heritage Project

Marianne Butler, who we appointed as Scottish Co-ordinator of this project, has reported that the project has been running for almost two years in England as a collaboration between BYM and English Heritage. Its extension to Scotland will involve seven meetings which own their own meeting house and will require the appointment of a local contact and completion of a survey form. The purpose of the project is to assess the historical heritage of the buildings and to provide Area Meetings with a strategic planning tool.

Min. 12 Meeting of Interfaith Leaders with the First Minister

Phil Lucas has reported on the meeting of Interfaith Leaders with the First Minister in November which he attended in place of Jim Pym. This was the first Interfaith summit which a First Minister has called and was well attended with a wide range of faiths represented. Phil was impressed by the tone and openness of the meeting.

Min. 13 Scottish Prison Chaplaincy Advisors

Elizabeth Allen and Robin Baker met with two of the Scottish Prison Chaplaincy Advisors to explore ways in which Quakers might become more involved in this work. Although qualified religious representatives can apply to be paid prison chaplains, the role for volunteer, unpaid chaplains has in practice been very limited in Scotland. It was suggested that there might be benefit in running creative listening groups in some prisons and that Friends might be well-placed to do this. Elizabeth and Robin are to write a briefing paper and provide a taster session at a future prison chaplains' meeting.

Min. 14 Proposed review of the purpose and format of GM

The Clerk has suggested that it is good practice periodically to review whether General Meeting is serving the needs of Friends in the way in which it conducts its meetings and provides opportunities to broaden the spiritual life of Quakers in Scotland. He has suggested that as a first step in this process, a questionnaire be circulated to all members and attenders through LM Clerks, the Scottish Friend and the GM website. Friends would be encouraged to respond even if they did not normally attend GM. A report would then be prepared in consultation with GM Central Committee and brought to a future General Meeting. The questionnaire would seek views on what would encourage greater attendance, what obstacles and discouragements there are to attendance, what improvements could be made to the format of General Meetings and on the future of the residential General Meetings. It was agreed that this initiative should proceed.

Min. 15 Nominations matters

Nominations Function Group have brought forward the following names and we agree to appoint them:

1. **Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees**
Hilary Patrick (1st triennium) with immediate effect until December 2018
2. **Web Manager Steering Group (West)**
Ruth Bacon (1st triennium) with immediate effect until job done
3. **ACTS Members Meeting**
Alison Burnley June 2016 to June 2017
4. **Representative Friend**
Pamala McDougall June 2016 to June 2017
5. **Peace and Justice Centre**
David Somervell (1st triennium) with immediate effect until December 2018

Min. 16 Policy on Donations

Our focus this afternoon has been to consider carefully the donations and affiliations made by General Meeting. John Phillips, our treasurer, led us in an exercise to consider where we are putting our efforts and money. Are we happy with where we are? In the spirit of worship sharing, we considered the previously circulated draft guidelines on policy written by John Phillips, on how GM watches over its donations and affiliations to other bodies. A list of the current ones are in the Trustees report in the notes section of the accounts under payments.

It became clear that we appreciate these guidelines and hope to adopt them once adapted by our treasurer and considered by Trustees. We remember they are not prescriptive. There are a few points that John is happy to consider making to this document.

We feel the next step is for Trustees to consider and sign off a final draft of these guidelines. In particular we like the point that concerns being brought to GM for donations should be tested at AM, and local meeting level where appropriate. We would like to encourage our representatives to report back regularly as set out in the guidelines - but hope that reports do not become too onerous to receive or produce.

We thank John for all the work in producing this document and for the further work it will take to prepare it for Trustees.

Min. 17 Closing Minute

We record our thanks to East Scotland Friends for being our hosts at this GM, and look forward to meeting again in Glasgow in June.

Martin Burnell
Clerk