

Local Development Worker's Report 2025



Me and my daughter Ella on the way home from North Scotland AM

I'm Zoe Prosser, Local Development Worker for Quakers in Scotland. I work to support the Quaker community across Scotland, from the Quakers in Wigtown (the furthest south) to the Quakers in the Shetland Islands (the very north). My role is paid for and managed by Britain Yearly Meeting (so, indirectly, by all of you).

Normally around this time of year I produce a newsletter and, separately, a report on my work. I thought that this year I would save your inboxes and combine the two.

This year has been one of unprecedented change for Quakers across Scotland, with four Quaker charities and three Area Meetings planning to lay themselves down. At the same time our Quaker communities have been incredibly brave; facing conflict, difference and change.

In this context I've attempted to help where I can and hinder as little as possible. Quakers have been innovative; sometimes a solution has been found before I've even been informed of an issue.

My role has been to provide support, encouragement, information and advice where it is sought. It was both a pleasure and an honour. I look forward to 2026.

"I'm so grateful for all the good work you do, what a boon to Friends in Scotland at this time of change."

From an email sent by a very kind Friend

2025 Priorities

The priorities that Friends suggested I focus on in 2025 were:

- Continue to strengthen and develop support for role holders.
- Supporting Quaker communities to be loving, inclusive and all age.
- Pointing the way to information about available resources and materials, including videos and non-traditional resources, to help Quaker Meetings and role-holders identify what they need, and developing and creating further resources where there is a need.
- Supporting the Quakers in Scotland Co-ordinating Group to work for change.

I'll use them as a structure to tell you a little bit about my work this year (so far).

1. Strengthening and Developing Support for Role Holders

This year, I've continued to support and refine our network meetings, with varied outcomes across different groups:

- Elders and Pastoral Care Friends (5 times a year): This network continues to thrive. Friends consistently report that these meetings are spiritually nourishing, practically useful, and deeply supportive. The group has become a trusted space for sharing wisdom and exploring spiritual nurture. This year we considered 5 themes or topics:

- Inductions and Training
 - Supporting Friends through difference - Theism and Atheism
 - Quakers in Scotland – Consultations
 - Outreach
 - In late November we will have our last meeting of the year where we plan for 2026
- Nominations Friends (quarterly): Despite the concern and strain Friends have felt around nominations, attendance of the network has been low. This indicates that we are not getting nominations support and networking right. I am meeting with the clerks of nominations for QiS and SESAM and hope that Friends who are part of the nominations network will advise me on the best way forward with this group.
 - Clerks of Local Meetings (5 times a year): This network was one of the two which were newly launched in 2025. It appears that clerks and correspondent clerks from across Scotland have welcomed the opportunity to speak to one another about the challenges that they face. Interestingly a lot of what the clerks speak about have also been covered in both the elders and pastoral care networks and, occasionally, the nominations network.
 - Trustees of Quaker Charities (5 times a year): This is another network that was newly launched in 2025. This is the network that has inspired the most learning for me, as I had little knowledge of many aspects of trustee's work before I started this network. It has grown into supportive and helpful community, and I think that Trustees have found value in connecting and sharing governance insights during this time of change.

Overall, role holders report increased confidence and connection, cross-Meeting collaboration has grown, and we've seen a deepening of spiritual grounding in Quaker roles.

"you sounded confident at that [networking] meeting we had, and that gave me strength... I have learned a lot and understood a lot more because of the conversations we've had. Your way of engaging has given me food for thought and helped me to feel part of a community that can address difficult issues safely."

A participant of the Elders and Pastoral Care Network

As Quakers in Scotland takes on the work of North, East and West area meetings, our network meetings may change. These changes will happen in consultation with members of the different networks.

2. Supporting Quaker Communities to be loving, inclusive and all age.



Falkirk and Polmont Spiritual Review day

The highlight of my year when it comes to working with a loving, inclusive and all age community was facilitating a workshop for Falkirk and Polmont LM introducing Spiritual Reviews.

My daughter Ella, who has just turned 10, supported me in delivering the first exercise of the day. Falkirk and Polmont have an unusually (for Quakers) diverse range of ages and the youth and energy of the young Friends required adaptation and flexibility. The day was joyful and I was very pleased to have had the opportunity to work directly with Friends from Falkirk and Polmont.

I have worked with meetings and spoken to Friends who are concerned about how to make our community loving and inclusive in all sorts of ways. This work has resulted in discussions, workshops and lots of future plans.

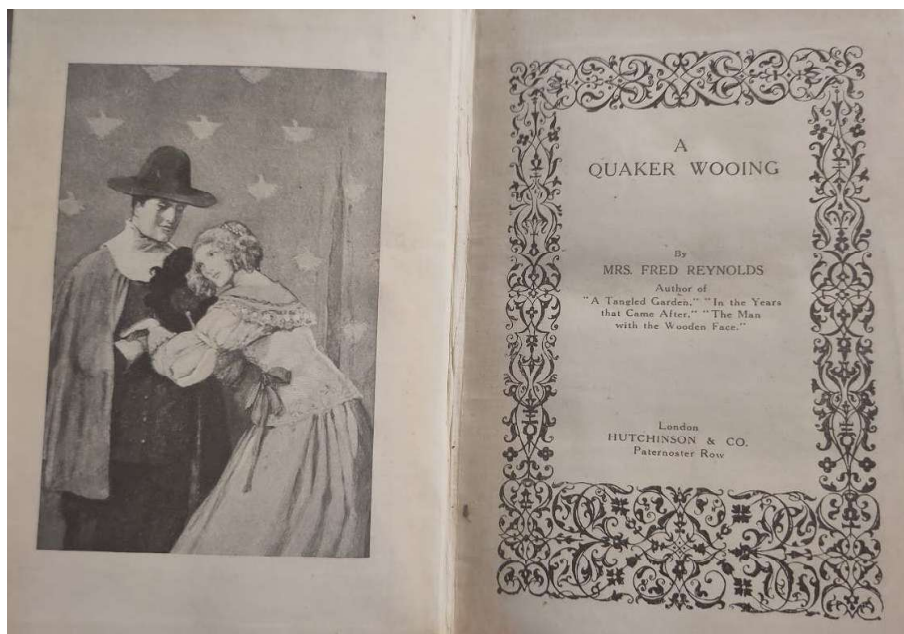
3. Pointing the Way to Resources and Creating New Ones

I've continued to create and share resources through:

- Network meeting notes
- One-to-one support with role holders and Meetings who have specific questions and requests.

New Resources Developed:

- A **Safeguarding Workshop Pack** (now available for Meetings to run themselves) – *"Looks great and I can see myself stealing from it in some training I am developing for my AM for certain office holders"* A Friend at a BYM Safeguarding Network Meeting where it was presented.
- A number of advice and consultation documents to support Friends who are working on specific tricky topics. This has resulted in a surprisingly interesting dive into several aspects of Scottish law around safeguarding, charities and a few other topics.
- A number of rough and very simply edited videos to discuss particular topics or upcoming workshops.



A "resource" discovered in Aberdeen Quaker Meeting House library. The front page of "A Quaker Wooing" by Mrs Fred Reynolds (other resources might be more helpful to the challenges Friends have faced in 2025)

4. Supporting the Quakers in Scotland Co-ordinating Group to Work for Change

I've continued to support the Co-ordinating Group and its **Community Subgroup**. My role remains supportive rather than directive, and I've worked to maintain clear boundaries while offering practical help.

Highlights:

- I supported the development of a proposed new way of working for elders and pastoral care Friends in Scotland in consultation with elders and pastoral care Friends across Scotland.
- The first meeting of Quakers in Scotland after General Meeting for Scotland laid itself down was very moving. I thought particularly about Peter Christy, who was part of Options for Scotland and who sadly died last year.

Additional Work and Achievements

- Supported Friends across all Area Meetings in Scotland
- Supported Emily Provance's trip to Scotland following the Swarthmore lecture
- Attended West Scotland Friends' Gather and NSAM Residential at Pluscarden Abbey.
- FINISHED the book – *Mutual Accompaniment and Creation of the Commons* by Mary Watkins – which I started just after I started this role in 2021 and have been grimly plugging through (off and on) ever since. Honestly bits of it are excellent and very readable, but other bits are tough going.
- Survived two children changing schools (including one going from primary to secondary school).

Looking ahead

In terms of my priorities, we have suggested to Quakers in Scotland that my priorities remain the same except for priority number 4, which we hope Friends will agree to change to

“ Supporting Quakers across Scotland (including area meetings and Quakers in Scotland) to find good ways of working within our changing structure”.

This will allow for both the Quakers in Scotland Coordination Group and all other Quakers and Quaker communities who are affected by the current changes.

Whether your Quaker-related challenges can slot into my priorities or not, I hope that you will get in touch with me if there is something I might be able to help you with.

zoep@quaker.org.uk

Helpful Information and links

For Newcomers

Discovering Quakers

This initiative provides simple, friendly ways for newcomers to connect with Quakers. It includes weekly “Quaker Lives” Zooms, enquirer packs, and a welcoming website. Whether someone is spiritually searching or simply curious, this is a great starting point.

Website: discoveringquakers.org.uk

What Is the Quaker Way?

Gentle, one-hour monthly Zoom sessions introducing Quaker worship, values, and spiritual practice. These welcoming and reflective gatherings are ideal for people exploring whether Quakers are their spiritual home.

Frequency: Monthly

Register: https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=MGHYU_KJUq_K4_1UYIBaC6sKC-7eK5LkJYiC58JmldURTFKRlhIRk8zNlhKNkVEVFdFNVFITEpaVi4u&route=shorturl

Witness and Solidarity

Quaker Peacebuilding Network

The 'Quaker Peacebuilding Network' is for Quakers who are interested and active in local peacebuilding efforts in Britain and Ireland. The online meetings will provide an informal and supportive space to share experiences, difficulties and dilemmas, to identify emerging common challenges and develop ideas.

If you would like to join the network and participate in this online space, please email peacebuildinginbritain@quaker.org.uk

Courses from Woodbrooke

Woodbrooke is a British Quaker learning and spiritual centre offering courses, retreats, and resources rooted in the Quaker tradition. It is for people who are interested in Quaker faith, practice, peace and social witness. Here are a selection of upcoming courses, go to <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/our-courses/> to find out more.

- **Quaker Treasurership in a Nutshell** — Saturday 29 November 2025 (online). A one-day course offering clear guidance for Treasurers in Quaker meetings. [Woodbrooke+1](#)
- **Diversity and Paradox: Ancient Wisdom for Today** — Monday 17 November 2025 (online). A short online course reflecting on timeless wisdom and its relevance today. [Woodbrooke](#)
- **Living More Deliberately: Spiritual Activism With Henry David Thoreau** — Tuesday 18 November 2025 (online). Combines spirituality with social-activism themes — suitable for Friends interested in faith + witness. [Woodbrooke](#)
- **Poetry Reading As Spiritual Practice** — Saturday 29 November 2025 (online). A creative, reflective course exploring poetry as part of spiritual life. [Woodbrooke](#)
- **The Start of the Quaker Way** — Friday 8 May – Thursday 28 May 2026 (online). A longer-format deeper study course on Quaker faith and practice, ideal if you're looking ahead. [Woodbrooke](#)

Youth, Children and Families

For Young Friends

If you go to this website - <https://www.quaker.org.uk/communities/children-and-young-people/young-quakers> - You can see information about what is organised by Quakers in Britain to support young Friends your age. Please also look out for more communication about Scottish Quaker events and opportunities in 2026!

For Parents and Carers

There is a Quaker facebook page for parents - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/259029634289418/> - it is pretty quiet but it is a good place to ask questions and get support.

For those who work with Quaker Children and Families

There are a lot of materials for Friends who work with Quaker children and young people on this Quakers in Britain website - <https://www.quaker.org.uk/communities/children-and-young-people-2/i-work-with-children-and-young-people-in-a-quaker-setting> - please also check the leaflet on the next page.

Youth, Children and Families Support Network

Join us to share ideas about supporting Youth, Children and Families to be a thriving part of your Meeting.

Free Online

Visit

www.quaker.org.uk/events
for more details.

Email any questions to
cypadmin@quaker.org.uk

Dates and Times:

Thu 18 September 7:30pm

Thu 16 October 11am

Wed 26 November 7:30pm

Wed 17 December 11am

Sunday 18 January 6pm

