

Winter - Spring

My work in the first Quarter of 2024



Me and my daughter at Loch Lubnaig

Today I am wearing sandals for the first time. Blossom is on the trees and the bluebells are out. It feels like Spring is beginning to turn into Summer.

This newsletter is late, ideally it would have come out at some time in April. It's been an incredibly busy start to the year and I am proud of the work that I been involved with – have a look at “Highlights” below to discover some of the things I have done.

One of the joys of being a Quaker and a Local Development Worker is that I can get my family involved in my work.

My youngest daughter accompanied me on our first ever joint road trip. We met Friends at the West Coast Friends Gathering in Crianlarich (we stopped along the way at the incredibly picturesque Loch Lubnaig for these pictures).

My daughter had a wonderful time meeting new Friends and playing with the two other children who attended the event.



Loch Lubnaig

News and Opportunities for Scottish Quakers

There's a lot going on with lots of exciting opportunities and things to think about. Please go to the end of this newsletter for more information about:

- Quaker resources for the General Election
- Information about Yearly Meeting 2024
- George Fox 400 Event Planning
- Greenbelt volunteering opportunities
- Opportunities for connection and learning for adults, families and children

Ways in which I can support you:

Opportunities for New Friends

I am supporting an online opportunity for Friends who are new to Quakerism:

What is the Quaker Way? is a monthly series of online sessions for newcomers to explore Quaker spirituality and community. Each session includes small group sharing and listening. They are led by staff from Quakers in Britain.

All sessions are on Thursdays from 7.30pm-8.30pm on Zoom. You are welcome to attend one or more sessions, and you can join on any date for the first time.

For dates, and to receive a Zoom link for the sessions, please register [here](#).

Opportunities that I can provide for Your Meeting:

My ongoing work for Quakers and Meetings includes activities I can run to support your work and learning:

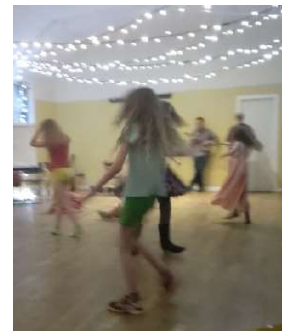
- Quaker networks for role holders, such as Elders and Pastoral Care Friends.
- Support for Quakers – whether those are as individuals, groups, local and area meetings, or General Meeting.
- RESTORE workshops – RESTORE is a great model for reflection after the meeting or group has gone through a difficult time.
- Gifts Workshops – Affirming and uplifting session that allows Friends to get to know one another better.
- In person “getting to know you” visits to your meeting – do invite me, I would be delighted to meet you!
- Bespoke workshops and events for your meeting – is there something you need particular support with? Please get in touch and we can see if I can help.

If you would like to know more about all of 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>]

Highlights from my work – January-March

Community subgroup of the Quakers in Scotland Coordinating Group

The Quakers in Scotland Coordinating Group has set up a subgroup of Friends from across Scotland. The Community subgroup wants Local Meetings and other worshipping communities to consider how they fit into the wider Quaker world and what it is that they need. They have a questionnaire that Friends can consider as part of a group. If Friends would prefer to feed back to the group without answering the questionnaire, they could do that too. If you would like a copy of the questionnaire, or any advice about how to respond, please get in touch with me at zoep@quaker.org.uk.



Dancing at the community focussed Wiston Weekend

Setting up additional networks

We have new role holder networks! In the first quarter of the year we held the inaugural meetings of the clerks network and the trustees network. These meetings are an opportunity for Friends to be involved in either clerking or trusteeship in Scotland. If you would like to take part in either of these networks (or the Elders and Pastoral Care and Nominations networks), please get in touch with me at zoep@quaker.org.uk.

Threshing Meetings and talks

I was honoured to be asked to clerk two threshing meetings for different meetings in the first few months of the year. I also had the pleasure of visiting St Andrews Meeting to give a talk on “Keeping Your Meeting Thriving”.

Safeguarding Prototype



Madeleine and Rocky

Madeleine Harding (Safeguarding Coordinator for General Meeting) and I ran a prototype Safeguarding workshop at Central Edinburgh.

It is a general responsibility for everyone in meetings to look out for one another, this workshop explains what that responsibility looks like and what support is available.

This workshop will eventually be available for every meeting to download and run themselves. This picture is of my cat Rocky “helping” Madeleine plan the session.

Elders Workshop with Woodbrooke

I was asked to run an in-person session alongside Woodbrooke’s online session about Elders and Eldership for Glasgow Meeting (with visitors from the west of Scotland). In the morning Woodbrooke introduced the concept of eldership and spoke about the history of appointed elders. In the afternoon I ran a session for Glasgow meeting to consider how they would like eldership to be expressed in their meetings.

West Coast Friends Gathering

My youngest daughter and I went to the West Coast Friends Gathering in March. It was an absolute pleasure to reacquaint myself with Friends from the more remote places in the West of Scotland. My daughter made new friends and was delighted to go on our first ever road trip just the two of us.



My daughter and one of her new friends at Crianlarich

News and Opportunities in 2024:

Resources for the General Election

Colleagues who are involved in parliamentary work have put together a pack to prepare meetings for the general election. It will be available [here](#) by next week.

It will include:

- An **election guide** for individuals, groups and meetings on the upcoming general election. It gives an overview of some key issues for Quakers in Britain, suggesting questions that Quakers may wish to ask their parliamentary candidates. It has advice about ways to engage your meeting and wider community in the election.
- A **template email** for individuals to adapt and send to their local parliamentary candidates.
- Local meetings can order up to three printed copies of the election guide for their meeting. They can also order up to five **greetings cards** to send to local candidates on behalf of the meeting. These resources are free but are strictly for local meetings (not individuals) and limited in numbers.

Eventually there will also be resources for staff and volunteers working with children and young people, and a Quaker briefing for parliamentary candidates, which Friends can refer to if they have meetings with candidates.

If Friends have any questions about these resources, they can contact politics@quaker.org.uk or call Grace Da Costa on 020 7663 1138.

Yearly Meeting 2024

Yearly Meeting is open to any Quakers (whether members or attenders). It is the opportunity for all British Quakers to consider topics, learn from one another, name what we feel led to do as a whole body and affirm our Quaker community.

This year Yearly Meeting 2024 is happening in Friends House in London (just by Euston train station). You can attend in person or online. For more information please go to the Yearly Meeting website [here](#).

If you would like any help or advice about attending, do please get in touch with me – zoep@quaker.org.uk.

Are you planning a George Fox 400 event?

This could be a great way to celebrate your meeting and talk about Quakers and Quakerism. Ellie McCarthy is our new George Fox 400 coordinator, she works part time to coordinate Friend's events and plans.

Ellie has shared the George Fox 400 narrative, it is something that might be shared with Friends news agencies or other organisations:

2024 marks the 400th anniversary of the birth of George Fox, the best known of the group of men and women who founded Quakerism.

Fox made a point of living with integrity, acting against injustice and building a faith community that practiced what they preached, looking for that of God in everyone.

Quakers through history continued to live out these values, playing an important role in the abolition of slavery, modelling fair employment practices and working for humanitarian and social change.

Today, Quakers in Britain work for peace, climate and social justice. Quaker communities create spaces for people of all faiths and none to explore their beliefs in quiet stillness.

Following the example of George Fox and early Friends, Quakers continue to live and work by testimonies to peace, simplicity, truth, integrity and equality.

I have an email listing resources that you might find helpful – please contact me at zoep@quaker.org.uk or email Ellie directly at georgefox400@quaker.org.uk if you would like the list of resources or would like to add your event to the George Fox 400 website.

Are you interested in being a volunteer at Greenbelt?

Greenbelt is a Christian based festival of creativity and activism that runs from 22-25 August 2024 near Kettering, Northamptonshire. The Quaker Arts Network is looking for volunteers to help run a Quaker space. If you would like a copy of the application form for volunteers please email me at zoep@quaker.org.uk.

Opportunities for connection and learning:

Opportunities for Parents, Children and Young People:

Please consider passing this information on to other parents/carers or young people in your worshipping communities:

1. [Giant Online Childrens Meeting](#) on the first Sunday of every month.
2. Parent epilogue with Woodbrooke, second and fourth Monday of month
<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/worship/quaker-parent-epilogue/>
3. Europe and Middle East Section - youth group which meets online regularly and in person annually: <https://fwccemes.org/emes/emes-youthgroup>
4. Rising Up!, the newsletter for Young Adult Quakers [YAQ Update: Autumn 2023 \(mailchi.mp\)](#) You can subscribe to this newsletter [here](#).
5. [Conversations With Our Children: living as a Quaker](#) on Tuesday 19 March. This is a “pay as led” session, run by Woodbrooke and it would be great for Quakers with children and young people in their families and meetings.

Woodbrooke’s 2024 programme

Woodbrooke, Britain’s Quaker Studies Centre, have some wonderful courses. Do have a look and see if anything appeals to you. You can find the information about their upcoming events here - <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/our-courses/>

Discovering Quakers website

The Discovering Quakers website is run by Friends who want to encourage those who might find a home in Quakers to attend and try out meetings. It is full of articles, blogs, posts, videos and podcasts, and you can also join online events organised by the group. To find out more, please visit their website <https://discoveringquakers.org.uk/>

Contacting me:



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

My telephone number is 07529 225 282

My email address is zoep@quaker.org.uk

My website address is <https://www.quakerscotland.org/our-work/support-for-meetings>