



Minutes of Elders in Central Edinburgh Local Meeting

These minutes by Henry S. Thompson, Clerk *pro tem*
Held at 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh on 24 November 2015, 7:00 p.m.
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1. Attendance

Present: Cathy Bell, John Fox, Rachel Frith, Janet Grimwade, Kerstin Phillips, Henry Thompson (in the clerk's chair)

Prevented: Madeline Patterson

During the opening worship, 23.10 from *Quaker faith & practice* was read:

We need both a deeper spirituality and a more outspoken witness. If our spirituality can reach the depths of authentic prayer, our lives will become an authentic witness for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, a witness which becomes the context for our prayer. Out of the depths of authentic prayer comes a longing for peace and a passion for justice. And our response to violence and injustice is to pray more deeply, because only God can show us the way out of the mess that the world is in. And only God gives us the strength to follow that Way.

Gordon Matthews, 1989

2. Matters Arising

2.1. 2015-10-15 item 2, Becoming Friends group

There is still one person whom we have been unable to contact: we will go ahead and arrange a date to begin early in the new year and hope we can let them know.

3. Archiving previous minutes

Janet will send the GM guidance on this to Henry; Cathy and Kerstin now have all of Marilyn Higgins's minutes, Henry still has to work through his archives. We will return to this.

4. Doorkeeping notices

Henry sent an edited version per the changes agreed at our meeting of 2015-10-15 to Ruth Follan and David Clarke (keepers of the upstairs and downstairs rotas respectively). Ruth replied with a number of helpful suggestions (circulated at the meeting).

We agreed with Ruth's first and second suggestions, and Henry will make appropriate modifications and circulate them.

We will return to the question of a chair in the new year

5. Informing newcomers meeting

Henry will do the 3rd Sunday session on 20 December, when Madeline may be able to join him. Janet will do 17 January.

6. Publicising leaflet on Membership

We considered whether we might put the Membership leaflet on chairs one Sunday. We agreed to do this on the 4th Sunday in January, 24 January, Kerstin who is sitting up front will take responsibility for this.

7. Reading Quaker Faith and Practice

Rachel will lead the lunchtime discussion of Chapter 23 this coming Sunday, 29 November. The chapter for December is chapter 3, general council for church affairs, and as there is no lunch the last Sunday we will just skip that day. The chapter for January is chapter 2, approaches to God, worship and prayer, and Janet will take responsibility for the lunch table on 31 January.

8. Child protection

A letter has been sent to all Clerks of Elders from AM about the Goddard Enquiry (England and Wales) into child abuse. This includes a copy of a recommendation from Friends House about reliable storage of any documents, including ones which originate electronically, that address (possible) cases of child sexual abuse. We need to be mindful of this advice, and Kerstin and Cathy will copy it to all AM Elders.

Cathy will ask Madeleine Harding where the written guidelines are for how to respond when concerns about possible abuse arise. The answer from Madeleine is

David and I are the Safeguarding Co-ordinators and Mary Jane Elton the deputy for AM. The policy and procedures file is kept in the office but David and I thought the cupboard in the Bow Room might be the better place to keep it. So when I am next in the meeting house which won't be this Sunday, I will put it in the cupboard in the Bow Room.

9. Meeting for Worship on 25 December

LM agreed that there would be a bring and share Christmas lunch if anyone stepped forward to coordinate. This has not yet happened, as far as we know. We agree that we will hold Meeting for Worship on Christmas day, for 30 minutes from 1100, Kerstin will sit up front. Janet will notify LM Clerks.

10. Bench duty

A draft was circulated electronically. Final draft forthcoming.

11. Meeting dates for 2016

We will continue with 7 p.m. on 4th Tuesday of every month except August and December. We may always cancel if insufficient business is in prospect. Janet will ask 7VT staff to book rooms accordingly.

12. Next Meeting

We agreed that our next meeting would be on at 7:00 p.m. at 7 Victoria Terrace on Tuesday 26 January. We ask Kerstin Phillips to act as Clerk *pro tem*.

13. Friends' urgent business

The meetings on Spirituality organised by Annie Miller and Jim Pym have gone well, and they would like to have a new set of monthly sessions from January to the summer. We are happy for this to go forward, and thank them for their efforts.

Don Stubbings, writing on behalf of AM Nominations committee, has asked us how many AM Elders from Central Edinburgh we would like to have. We agreed to ask AM Nominations to aim at a steady state of nine, which means at the moment we need two more. Janet will reply to Don's request.

We should look at State of the Meeting, and numbers, at our January meeting.

The Clerks of AM Elders will be circulating a plan for working through Chapter 2 in *With a Tender Hand*, which we will need to fit in to our ongoing work if possible.

Kerstin reported on a meeting at St. Augustin's on "Funeral Poverty", with average costs exceeding £3,000 pounds. One church has had to cover costs in anticipation of repayment after a house has been sold. The local council is regularly overspending its budget for the burial of indigents. The Funeral Director business is not regulated.

John raised the question of whether the various wall decorations in the Bow Room were appropriate for a room where we have Meeting for Worship. Given it is only once a month we decided we would leave things be.