

The Pagan Federation (Scotland)



Who are we?

The Pagan Federation (Scotland) or 'Scottish PF' is a democratic organisation whose membership is drawn from all the Pagan traditions including Wicca and other forms of Pagan Witchcraft, Druidry, Heathenry, Celtic Paganism, Shamanism and Goddess-Spirituality. It is an autonomous national body within the Pagan Federation, Europe's largest and most active Pagan organisation. Paganism is a spiritual way of life which has its roots in the ancient nature religions of the world. It is principally rooted in the old religions of Europe, though some adherents also find great worth in the indigenous beliefs of other continents.

What do we believe?

The Three Principles of the Pagan Federation (Scotland)

The three principles of the Pagan Federation (Scotland) are not intended to provide a doctrinally definitive Pagan creed. They do provide a general outline of some key, mainstream, Pagan attitudes and beliefs concerned with how we relate to the Earth, how we relate to other living beings, and how we relate to the divine (our Goddesses or Gods or a more abstract spirit of life). Each is open to a range of honourable and reasonable interpretations.

i. "Love for and Kinship with Nature. Reverence for the life force and its ever-renewing cycles of life and death."

*The first principle of the Pagan Federation emphasises the importance of love and respect for nature in Paganism. It recognises that human beings are part of **nature** and that our lives are intimately interwoven with the web of life and death.*

ii. "A positive morality, in which the individual is responsible for the discovery and development of their true nature in harmony with the outer world and community. This is often expressed as 'Do what you will, as long as it harms none'."

*The second principle of the Pagan Federation puts forward a broadly humanistic approach to ethics which seeks to maximise both **individual freedom** and **personal responsibility**. It recognises our place as human beings within the web of life wherein everything we do, or refrain from doing, has consequences for ourselves and for others. It encourages working towards peaceful outcomes while acknowledging the legitimacy of both self-defence and justice. This is compatible with all Pagan paths, and essential for a tolerant, diverse and humane society. The Wiccan Rede is given as an illustrative, but not definitive, example of this general approach to ethics - this does not insist that we harm none under any or all circumstances. It does encourage us to be aware of the context in which our actions operate, to consider the probable consequences of the choices we make, to choose those which are reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances and thus minimise such harm as cannot be prevented, and take responsibility for our contribution, by either action or inaction, to the outcome. Hard ethical decisions are not about whether harm will happen, but about where it will fall.*

iii. "Recognition of the Divine, which transcends gender, acknowledging both the female and male aspect of Deity."

*This principle encompasses a range of Pagan understandings of **divinity** including, but not restricted to, pantheism, all forms of polytheism including duotheism, Goddess-recognisant monotheism, and animism. It requires us to acknowledge that where the divine is understood as deity or deities having gender, it must include a Goddess or Goddesses as well as a God or Gods. It also recognises that there are Pagan understandings of divinity which cannot be thus categorised. Modern Paganism tends to approach theology through a synergy of multiple understandings of the divine or Divinity in the abstract, and modern Pagans tend to regard the **honouring** of the Gods, of the divine as it is manifest within this living world, as of greater importance than theological speculation as to its or their precise nature.*



What do we do?

Scottish PF provides accurate, factual information on modern Paganism to government, NGOs, civic society, the media and the general public. We work to defend Paganism from defamation, strive to protect Pagans from religious discrimination, and campaign for equality of respect alongside the other religions of this country. In all our endeavours, Scottish PF promotes factual accuracy about Paganism, and works towards the goals of tolerance, respect and mutual understanding.

Scottish PF provides a range of other services. We maintain a register to assist those seeking reputable Pagan Celebrants to officiate at namings, handfastings, funerals and other rites of passage. Most of these celebrants are also able to perform legal religious marriages because, in October 2004, the Pagan Federation (Scotland) was formally recognised by the Registrar General as an organisation suitable to nominate Approved Celebrants to conduct religious marriage ceremonies under Scots Law.

Scottish PF also provides educational resources for schools and for Pagan parents.

The Scottish PF organises a very popular national Conference and a family-oriented Summer Camp each year to bring Pagans of all paths together to celebrate the diversity and vitality of our community. Scottish PF publishes a newsletter for members in Scotland and helps to publicise the growing number of moots and other Pagan events in this country. We help members to meet like-minded people and provide basic information on Paganism and suggestions for further study to enquirers.

The Scottish PF provides speakers for interested groups who wish to learn more and explore relevant issues relating to inclusion, equality and diversity within their own organisations.

During the past twenty years The Pagan Federation (Scotland):

- * has worked to improve the balance and accuracy of media coverage of matters relating to Paganism.
- * raised £2,000 to fund an analysis of Pagan responses to the 2001 Census and thus extract the first accurate data on the number of Pagans in Scotland. We continue to liaise with the General Register Office for Scotland on relevant Census matters.
- * has participated extensively in interfaith dialogue to win respect and recognition for Pagans within our multi-faith society, and to improve relations between Pagans and other religious groups. We have been Full Members of the Edinburgh Inter Faith Association since 1998 and became Associate Members of the Scottish Inter Faith Council in 2013.
- * has worked with various Government and other bodies, including the NHS, on matters of policy and participated in various civic multi-faith projects such as 'Values in Harmony' (2007-9) for the Scottish Inter Faith Council & the Equality & Human Rights Commission), 'Reflections of Life' (2009-11; for Scottish NHS Education) and 'Belief in Dialogue' (2009-11; for the Scottish Government Working Group on Religion & Belief Relations).
- * has been actively engaged in campaigning on marriage equality issues since 2005, and has been an active participant in the 'Equal Marriage (Scotland)' and 'Faith in Marriage' campaigns since their inception.
- * provides Hospital Visitors on request and provides information on dealing with Pagan patients and clients to the Health and Social Care services. Scottish PF will also, under appropriate and limited circumstances, facilitate chaplaincy provision for Pagan prisoners.

For further information or to arrange a speaker, please contact:

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