

St Michael's House Protocols

Guidelines for seminars and conversations.

St Michael's House is a practical expression of Coventry Cathedral's commitment as a world centre for reconciliation to be a place where people come to address difficult and contested issues through honest, open and informed conversation and dialogue.

How we occupy shared space with those who differ from us is as important as the matter under discussion. The following protocols should govern conversations convened by St Michael's House.

Participants will be invited to give their consent to working within these guidelines.

Protocol One - Respect for the Space

We seek to create a safe space where all feel welcome and respected.

We seek to be an inclusive space where all views are heard and diversity encouraged.

We offer space which is private but not secret.

Protocol Two - Shape the Conversation

We invite participants to give careful attention to each other and therefore:

- Listen actively to those speaking.
- Acknowledge what others say before moving on to have our say.
- Separate people from the problem, the personality from the argument.
- Tell our stories to share about ourselves.

We commit to a process in which we:

- Accept how we and others feel and the legitimacy of our feelings.
- Become mutual and interdependent participants.
- Concern ourselves with shared interests and not defined positions.
- Develop sensitivity to the views and perceptions of others.

We acknowledge our responsibility to:

- Recognise others have a stake in the outcome.
- Remain open to the future we must share.
- Retain our curiosity in the other person.

Protocol Three - Share the Learning

We encourage participants, when possible, to openly share knowledge and understanding gained from being part of this space.

We expect participants to be free to use any information received, but neither the identity nor affiliation of the speaker, nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

We require that participants refrain from exploiting others with whom they have shared this space by misuse of what has been learnt.

"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace." James the Apostle.