Malvern Quaker Meeting





Newsletter October 2025

Items for the next issue of the Newsletter (in Word format please) will need to reach me by 28th November 2025. Past editions of the Newsletter are on our Meeting website www.malvernquakers.org.uk. *Mary Corfield* newsletter@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk

If you are not on the Meeting's email list and would like to be, or have changed your email, please contact emailadmin@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk

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Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs' Retreat at the Elim Centre

Melanie Jameson

Every three years QAAD holds a residential weekend/retreat to review their activities and plan for the future. This is the third of these events that I have been invited to in order to cross-fertilise ideas with Quakers in Criminal Justice (QICJ) as regards awareness raising. As you will probably know, QICJ had to do a lot of heavy lifting when the centrally funded post and the committee on criminal and community justice matters were cancelled. Most of this work fell to me, as Clerk at the time. Fortunately, QICJ has managed to raise its profile and get key messages across, both of which are core aims of QAAD.

However, QAAD is very different from QICJ in that it has a paid Director, supported by nine Trustees, but does not have a membership. In contrast, QICJ's ever-expanding membership comprises 186 Members, including 29 Local and Area Meetings, 6 Quaker organisations and 7 serving prisoners, along with a number of organisations with whom we exchange publications.

Fifteen Friends from QAAD assembled (conveniently for me) at the Elim Centre, a lovely venue - especially at this time of the year when the trees in their grounds are at their best. A change of treasurer meant a reassessment of financial policy, investments and use of funds, which took up one morning. The evening before we had heard from Andrew Lane, whom some of you may recall as a past Director of the Quaker Council for European Affairs, but is now a secondary teacher in Handsworth (so we know there's at least one white face!) His dedication is admirable, embedding himself in the location despite the deprivation, and meeting the children where they are, in the midst of drug distribution, poor diet, houses of

multiple occupancy, parents with 'challenging lives' (i.e. addictions) and numerous betting shops.

Early Saturday afternoon allowed time off, and Andrew (Jameson) sprang into action to offer his services as guide across the hills, ending up in our Meeting House where our visitors diligently read about the background to our building.

It was then time for me to present my thoughts on profile-raising for QAAD, who still report that people who suffer from addictions, or have this problem within their family, do not always feel welcome at Meetings. Thinking around how to resolve this as key message and not so different from QICJ's 'Welcoming All' work (mentioned in the previous newsletter) on safely integrating former prisoners. I found it helpful for QICJ to identify an external event – preferably of a week's duration, in which to present and reinforce the message; we always use Prisons Week. QAAD could consider Alcohol Awareness Week in July. Promotion in QUAKE and an article in The Friend both need to be negotiated in advance. The message can be flagged up in advance via QAADRANT and the Special Interest Group at BYM. Due to the lack of membership, Local Development Workers could be drawn in to assist, and one was present at the weekend who felt this was a possible route.

In our final session, before the closing Meeting for Worship, we considered what had emerged. My focus was on the practicalities of formulating the message, so I offered this, which we should all consider: *Individuals and families facing addiction problems are present in all regions, professions and backgrounds, including within the religious Society of Friends. Are you and your Meeting ready to provide a safe and welcoming space and listen with compassion when led?*

Meeting Outings

Elizabeth Rolph

Seven of us had a great evening out together in Tewksbury. We went to see the Museum of the Moon – a beautiful model of the Moon hanging between the arches in Tewksbury Abbey, accompanied by lighting and moon-related music. It features detailed NASA imagery of the lunar surface, and each centimetre of the internally lit spherical sculpture represents 5km of the moon's surface. Several copies have been on tour around the world, gathering new musical compositions and an ongoing collection of personal responses, stories and mythologies. I love this comment from a six-year-old from Kendal: "*Will you put the moon back afterwards*?"



We then enjoyed a leisurely meal at the nearby pub. We chatted a bit about future events/outings for Meeting, including the following:

- Singing sessions, maybe twice or three times a year.
- The minibus trip to see Christmas lights at Bromyard, likely to be early December.
- An outing to one of the charity Christmas concerts at Stanbrook Abbey. This would be at 6.30 p.m. on Monday 15th or Wednesday 17th December, price £16. They get sold out early, so if you're interested in coming, please email Elizabeth.rolph@flatlandic.net

Keep an eye on Meeting Matters for details of the others.

Advices & Queries No 30

Are you able to contemplate your death and the death of those closest to you? Accepting the fact of death, we are freed to live more fully. In bereavement, give yourself time to grieve. When others mourn, let your love embrace them.

Little Friends

Rosemary Webb



We had a lovely Little Friends session at the beginning of October on the theme of Grandparents' Day.

As you can see from the picture, we even had a grandparent turn up to share with us. We planted bulbs and made cards for our grandparents as well as watching an episode of Gumdrop on my tablet.

Liz Flanagan

I am sorry to say that I am no longer supporting Rosemary Webb in running "Little Friends" on the first Sunday of each month (but I am still baking a cake each month). This means that there is no longer any Quaker person involved despite it being called Little Friends and being held in the Quaker meeting house. If anyone is moved to fill my role, please contact Rosemary or me as soon as possible. Thank you.

Special Collections

The Special Collection for October was Escaping Victimhood (see their website www.escapingvictimhood.com). A total of £173.00 was collected.

As is our usual practice every November through our link with St.Mary's Church, Pickersleigh, the Sunday Collection for next month is for local families to enable those in need to purchase Christmas gifts.

Droitwich Canal Boat Trip

Andy and Roz Boldero

On 12th October eleven Friends set off after Meeting by minibus. The weather was dull, but it was fortunately dry and not cold for mid-October. We were in good time to be met by our captain for the day and three able-bodied assistants. They were all highly enthusiastic and knowledgeable about Droitwich, its canals and history, which they generously shared with us. They also provided us with much welcomed tea and biscuits enroute.

The Droitwich Canals are unique in this country in that they owe their existence to salt. Coal came up by canal into the town to boil the naturally occurring salt in pans, and the resulting salt was taken all the way down to Bristol by barge. In 1939 the waterways were abandoned, but in 1973 the Droitwich Canal Trust started to dredge the waterways and rebuild the locks, restoring navigation from the River Severn and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. From 1998 onwards great efforts and numerous projects for funding enabled work to progress, and by July 2011 the two canals were finally reopened.

As a result, the canal has been extensively repaired over the last fifty years. We started in the town's Vines Park on the Barge canal heading east through the Junction canal, which then leads to Hanbury Junction just over 2 miles away. However, the original course of the canal diverted to negotiate the motorway, using the culvert for the Body Brook when the M5 was built; but this only allowed a foot of headroom, and though the tunnel is long, you can at least see light at the other end, so not too spooky!



We then went up a Lock Staircase and had the opportunity of walking alongside the canal. We could watch the intricacies of the lock works as we ascended, and marvel at their sheer depth, and the human feats of engineering involved in building them all those years ago. We lost count of the number of locks we went through, but with such a proficient team of helpers, it was completely painless! We were encouraged on occasions to help open the lock gates, which turned out to be nothing like as physically demanding as displayed by celebrities on TV!

We eventually arrived at the marina, just before the canal joins the Worcester and Birmingham canal at Hanbury Junction. The marina was built in fields that had regularly flooded; it extends for many acres and is much used as a base by narrowboat owners from far and wide for exploring the vast interlocking waterways of the Midlands.

After a short break to buy ice creams at the little shop there, we retraced our route back to Vines Park and arrived back at the Meeting House at 5 p.m. Jon not only arranged the whole day but impressively kept exactly to schedule - a big thank you from all us bargees!

An Update on Active Peace Education in Malvern

Liz Flanagan

The three core teams are now each fully occupied in delivering 4 programmes each term. As I am hoping to step back a little on my 80th birthday (August 13th – 2027, since you asked) we are looking to recruit more volunteers to support the current and future developments. We would like to run a recruitment drive (not one of my strengths), develop a training programme and set up new ways of communicating with schools about safe-guarding issues.

I am so delighted that APE now has its own supporting team: Richard Bartholomew (wide safeguarding experience and communicating with local schools), John Cowan (safeguarding checking and recording for each person involved in our programme), Kevin Rolph (IT support, creator of official badges and new email hotline for schools to contact Richard, John or me about any safeguarding issue). Paul Wyatt, (finance and future training for applicants). This has taken a great load off my shoulders, and I thank them for being so willing to share their expertise and experience.

It is important to note the APE has always kept an up-to-date register of its volunteers' safeguarding statuses. But recently schools have made far greater demands on the need to provide evidence of our procedures. The above team are working on this, and we are in conversation with both new academies and local schools on the amount of information required.