Ludlow Quaker Journal

May/June 2025

This Journal will publish anything that Friends think is of interest; so its range may be very wide. If you find it too long, select only what interests you from the Table of Contents.
Please contact Barbara Mark if you would like to have something included or wonder if you have a subject that might be of interest.
It will be published on-line only and will come out when enough articles have been gathered in. Comments and letters to the editor are also welcome.
Do remember if this copy is pdf you can listen to it via Windows 10 'read aloud' option at the top of the sheet.

Contents:

page 2. A visit to Leominster's historical connections to Quakers
page 4. Work on the dry-stone wall in the garden
page 5. Demonstration in Ludlow about Gaza
page 7. Articles from Faith in Action
page 8. Every Casualty Counts news
page 9. Quaker Peacebuilding Perspective
page 10. Fund Raising for Cancer
page 12. Recipes
page 14. Book Review
page 15. Community work in Ludlow
page 18. Dell House Hotel
page 18. Dept Justice campaign in South Sudan
page 19. Truth and Integrity group news
page 20. Gardening for Health new App
Environmental Issues pages
Quaker Earth Care gathering, South Shropshire Climate Action, Land and ocean temperature rising and Radio 4 Rare Earth programs

A visit to Leominster

Leominster Museum, upstairs looking at the documents about Quakers in their collection. They include sketches and paintings by one of the Newmans who lived in Etnam Street.

Ludlow Quakers had a very enjoyable visit to Leominster on Saturday May 10th. exploring a town with many Quaker associations and benefiting from Annie Wood's detailed knowledge of the town. A group of 17 people, efficiently brought by shared transport, gathered at Grange Court, the lavishly decorated timber-framed former Market House, which was reconstructed on its present site as a house in the 19th century and is now in community use. It dates from 1633 and would have been familiar to George Fox, and to the early Quakers, who are recorded at Leominster from 1668.

A leisurely walk through the town introduced us to its history. First via the churchyard around the substantial remains of the medieval priory, whose origins go back to the 7th century. Then along Church Street, past the 13th century Forbury Chapel marking the former entrance to the monastic precinct, and some handsome houses of th 17th-18th century demonstrating the prosperity of the town based on the wool and cloth trade. Broad Street – the main N-S route - has more fine houses, many of them with frontages concealing older parts behind. No. 14 on the E side, a grocer's shop in the early 19th century, became the workplace and home of the Newmans, a Quaker family, who played a significant role in the town's development. Their story is told in the recent book by Maggie Waldman: *A Friend in Deed, the life of Henry Stanley Newman* (2023). Among Newman's many achievements was the founding of the Leominster Orphan Homes in 1869, and it was to provide training for orphan boys that he founded the Orphans' Printing Press in 1873, next door to his shop at Nos 10-12 Broad Street, with a stationer's shop in front and the press in a warehouse at the

back. The press produced many Quaker pamphlets and from 1891-1932 it printed *The Friend,* - Newman was editor from 1891 until his death in 1912, followed by E.B. Reynolds.

From the S end of Broad Street, (where we could study the small model of the Market House close to its original site) via Drapers Lane, once part of the market area – to Corn Square where our party dispersed to explore the market stalls and coffee places. We reassembled to view the former Quaker Meeting House in South Street (closed 1969 and sold), a somewhat forbidding frontage of the 1860s which replaced the original meeting house built 1687. In the 17th century it stood, with burial ground behind, on the southern fringe of the town. We followed a path along the site of the town ditch, and turned north into Etnam Street, (the main W-E route of the A44 before the bypass was built). Our destination was the excellent Museum, in a building erected as a Mission Room and used from 1886 as an adult school, one of the many educational enterprises with which the Newman family was involved. Documents relating to the Newmans had helpfully been put out on display, and a fascinating range of other material demanded further visits. But it was time to return to Grange Court and to our lunch waiting in the light and spacious upper room, where afterwards Cynthia gave us a fascinating talk on the remarkable character of the Orphan Homes founded by Newman, in 1869, and from 1871 occupying two house built in Ryelands Road to the west of the town centre.

Our route after lunch took us past Ryelands Road to Newlands Quaker Burial Ground opened in 1904. Among the long grass we could hunt out the graves of many Friends, including tombstones moved from the Burial Ground in the town. We discovered many graves of Quakers who had a significant impact on the town in Victorian times, including members of the Newman, Southall, Neild and Pumphrey families.

The weather had been glorious all day, and it was very helpful that several of us had brought chairs so that we could sit in the sun in the peaceful atmosphere of the burial ground. We were able to discuss the problems of managing the site, while enjoying refreshments kindly provided by Cynthia and Clive.

This is at Newlands Burial Ground

Thank you for this article, Bridget

Work on the Dry Stone Wall in the garden

Jamie, James and Isaac have been working hard in the garden re-building the dry-stone wall between the top garden and second part.

This is a photo of taking all the stones off the garden and into a pile. You may be able to spot Issac's pet dragon, Ember, keeping an eye on things as the work progresses.

As you can see Isaac is supervising and checking on quality.
Many thanks go to them for all their hard work

Here are a couple of photos of the completed work
Thank you, Jamie, for sharing this with us.

Demonstration in Ludlow about Gaza

This was organised by a group called Radnor Palestinian Link which got together after the Israeli/ Gaza conflict, when it seemed that the Israeli's wanted to take over the Gaza strip. Many Quakers have been supporting these demonstrations particularly as the killing and destruction in Gaza got worse and worse.
On the 10th May they held a demonstration in Ludlow. Quakers from across the area came to support it. Unfortunately, Ludlow Quakers had organised a trip to Leominster (above) on the same day so there were only a few friends from Ludlow Meeting.

The demonstration getting started in Castle Square

Ursula and Colin talking to passers by

Representatives from other Quaker Meetings

Mary Hopkins with her banner

I would like to draw friends' attention to The Friend publication 6th June. The one with the basket of flowers on the front cover. It is an excellent one and has a lot of very moving words in it.
One such letter moved me so much I want to share it with you here. It is a letter from Louise Rendle about Gaza, and the suffering, both Israeli and Palestinian. In it she shares a statement that was circulating on social media by a young soldier who had served on the IDF. He notes that for years Israelis' have wanted to flatten Gaza and take it over. Therefore, it is not surprising to see the events unfolding at the moment.

Also, please can I draw your attention to the statement about Gaza which came out of Yearly Meeting. Easily found on Friends House Quaker web site.

Faith in Action: two articles

The World Council of Churches, through its Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) will launch an international #NotoAnnexation campaign this month. This is in the lead up to the anniversary of the occupation of Palestine. 7th October 2023
Through webinars, educational social media content, and lobbying letter templates, the campaign seeks to raise global awareness and understanding of the impacts of Israel's 55 year occupation of Palestine and the growing risk of annexation of the West Bank and Gaza.
You can learn more through the introductory webinar here, and through following the Instagram and Facebook accounts of @eappiukireland

Since the police raid on Westminster meeting house, Quakers in Britain's public affairs team have been busy pushing for positive change and defending our right to dissent.

We have:

- spoken to the Deputy Mayor of London for Policing and Crime (DMPC) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
- supported Quaker MPs to have a meeting with the DMPC and MPS scheduled for later this month.
- supported Westminster Meeting House Quakers to meet with MPS and local police officers.
- Had a productive meeting with Westminster MP Rachel Blake, along with a Westminster Meeting elder.

Seeking change with politicians can often be a lengthy process but Quakers working

with others have already made an impact. This wouldn't have happened without the incredible meeting for worship outside New Scotland Yard, numerous local protests and countless MP letters. The government has now brought forward its scrutiny of the Public Order Act and we'll be working with our growing Civil Society Voice network to draw attention to the repressive nature of the law.

Every Casualty Counts (as seen advertised in The Friend.)

Since ECC was established, we have supported organisations around the world to document fatalities due to armed conflict and mass human rights abuses. Many of these organisations are locally based and record the impact of violence on their own communities. Sometimes, the casualties they document are their own colleagues, friends and family.

Inspired by the many powerful memorialisation initiatives taking place in conflict-affected and post-conflict communities globally, EU is developing a global memorial project to acknowledge all those who lost their lives to armed violence or to mass human rights abuses in 2024.

"Every person who died has the right to be remembered, and their families deserve just satisfaction. If the circumstances of their deaths are withheld, they die twice – both physically and on paper." Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union

The Memorial 2024 project aims to break away from the common presentation of victims of war as stereotypes and statistics, and it will instead present the casualties as unique individuals whose life was cut short. We aim to change the way that the human cost of armed conflict is portrayed in the UK media and public discourse to challenge the default assumption that military action entailing mass killing is both unavoidable and acceptable.

This project will also help to improve the standard of casualty recording practices worldwide, by requiring all research contributors to meet rigorous quality control requirements. This will help embed a transparent, consistent minimum standard across the field of casualty recording, thereby improving the credibility of casualty recorders' work. Increased public trust in how conflict fatalities are documented will make it harder for political actors and news media to dismiss information on civilian deaths as unreliable or 'propaganda'.

This project will produce, distribute and promote a report that documents 2024 through the stories of individual victims of armed conflict. Working with members of the Casualty Recorders Network, we are compiling the stories of individual victims from across the globe to honour and preserve their memory. The Memorial 2024 project will bring together separate narratives to focus on the shared humanity and suffering of all those affected by armed violence.

EU is uniquely positioned to produce this report because we convene a global network of 66 casualty recording organisations. Individually, these organisations publish information about the deceased in various formats and this project will be the first attempt to compile this information to create a global memorial report. The report will contain 365 obituaries of individually verified victims, linked to each day of the year.

We hope that these stories will be shared widely and used to educate people on the reality of armed conflict today. In countries such as the UK, where most of the population has never experienced direct armed conflict, memorialisation and remembrance initiatives can inadvertently imply that war is a thing relegated to the past. We want to challenge that comforting misapprehension and emphasise the fact that the horror of war is still a daily reality around the world and that it destroys the lives of people just like us.

If you would like to learn more about this project, to get involved, or to support in other ways, please contact info@everycasualty.org.

Quaker Peacebuilding Perspectives

I am a member of this American group but cannot participate very often in their zoom meetings. It is an informal international group of individuals, acting on Quaker principles, motivated exclusively by making a practical contribution to peaceful conflict resolution.
This is achieved primarily by producing statements for use by NGOs to submit jointly in their names to the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC).
The current focus is on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
The successful first initiative taken for Session (58) of the UN HRC (24 February–4 April 2025) resulted in three separate NGOs joining in submitting the statement to that session.
It may be viewed here:
https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g25/033/23/pdf/g2503323.pdf
This was followed by preparing an updated, more substantial statement, submitted jointly by two separate NGOs to Session (59) of the UN HRC (16 June–11 July 2025). The statement may be viewed here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1P-H3BHuiAgKX-F11HCgGHBBwCtfyejB5N8ZZMo6EKCM/edit?tab=t.3a7wajxhslou
We are now working on the statement for Session (60) of the UN HRC (8 September – 3 October 2025). The registration form for NGOs wishing to jointly submit the next statement may be found here:
https://forms.gle/DuLjdrWRk2f6QgCDA
We meet online twice weekly without expectation of regular attendance – each moment with each participant is a bonus not a duty. All are welcome!

You are invited to contact Quaker Peacebuilding Perspectives in connection with this matter at peacebuildingperspectives@gmail.com
Barbara

Fund Raising for Cancer

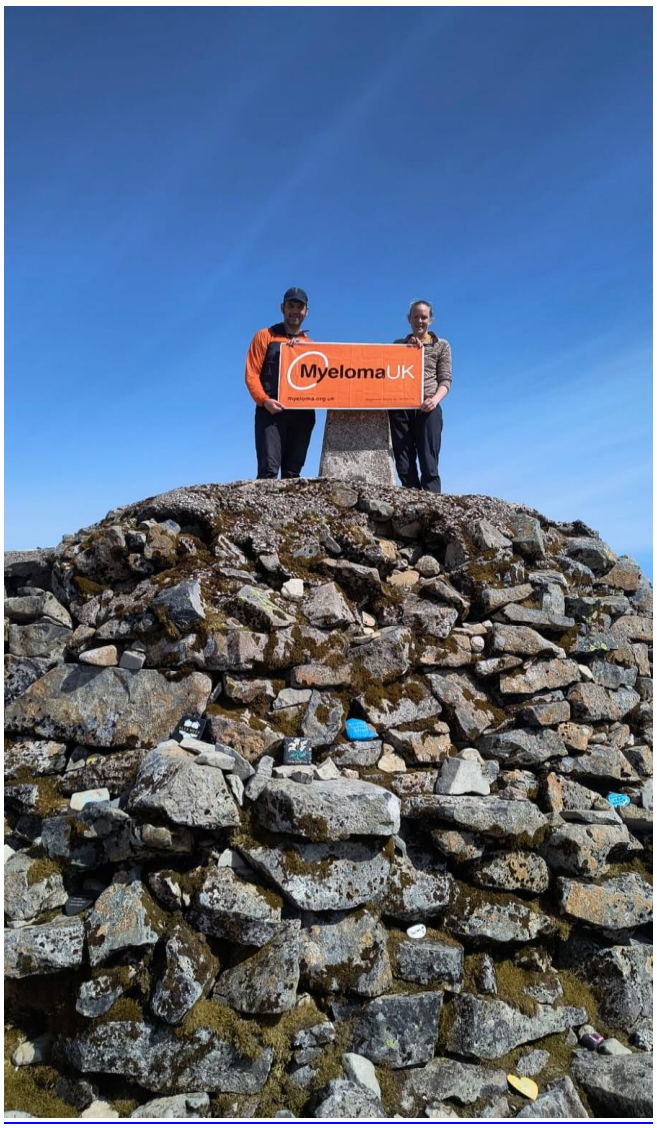
Myeloma Fundraising Walk – Final report from Paul Weeden

I have been treated for Myeloma since 2017. Myeloma is a blood cancer that is treatable but not yet curable with over 30000 people in the UK living with the disease. Life expectancy has increased with over 30% of people living more than 10 years and many new treatments being introduced. Myeloma UK is a dedicated charity that provides information to patients and families, sponsors research and lobbies for better treatment.

As you probably know one of my sons, Tom and his wife completed their 5-day charity walk at the beginning of May - starting at Schiehallion and ending on Ben Nevis covering about 140km and climbing many mountains along the way (9000 metres of climbing).

Liz reported "*It was an amazing and challenging experience. We were pushed close to our physical limits, walked through some stunning and remote locations, enjoyed amazing views and visibility, experienced all weathers from rain, snow and ice to glorious warm sunshine. Carrying the heavy rucksacks was challenging but by day 3 our bodies started to get used to them. The toughest bits were long, steep uphills on sketchy paths and bogs and long scrambly descents at the end of long days. Apart from a few blisters and a touch of sunburn we made it through unscathed.*"

I am so incredibly grateful to everyone who has sponsored them. They have raised well over £5000 (with gift aid). It's not too late to sponsor them and help raise money for Myeloma UK.To Donate visit the link:
https://www.justgiving.com/page/tomandlizwalk...


MyelomaUK
myeloma.org.uk

Recipes

These recipes are in memory of Peter Higgins who died in Bury St Edmunds on 11th June 2024
He gave The Journal a recipe every publication for several years.

Ukrainian Borscht Soup

This is the Ukrainian version of borscht which is different from the Russian or Polish versions. However, no two Ukrainian cooks agree on the precise recipe.
This recipe will feed 8 people so halve the quantities for 4 and freeze half. It will freeze exceptionally well for up to 3 months in the freezer.

Ingredients

2 tbsp Olive oil
1 Onion
1 Leek
6 small Beetroot (borscht is all about the beetroot)
4 Carrots
2 sticks Celery
2 Bay leaves
1 litre Stock (chicken, beef or vegetable)
400 g White beans (drained from a tin)
2 tbsp Tomato puree
2 tbsp Red wine vinegar
3 tbsp Parsley
2 tbsp Dill (many cooks add a lot more dill)
Salt & Pepper

Method

Peel and dice all the vegetables. (You can wear gloves to stop your hands turning purple from the beetroot.)
Heat a large pan and add the olive oil.
Fry the onion and leek for 3 minutes and then add the rest of the vegetables, beans as
well as the stock, tomato puree and the red wine vinegar.
Add in the bay leaves and half the parsley and season well with salt and pepper to taste.
Cover the saucepan and simmer for 20 minutes until the beetroot and carrot are soft and cooked through.
Stir through some finely chopped dill.
Serve as a chunky soup or blend up the soup for a smooth silky version – you can blend up half and then keep the other half chunky so you get a nice thick base with some chunks in. Drizzle on some live yoghurt and sprinkle on some more dill and serve with crusty bread.

Notes

Add potato, celeriac, parsnip or swede, if you have some that needs using up.
Vegetarian - use vegetarian stock and almond or cashew yoghurt

LEMON AND RASPBERRY MOUSSE
This is a simple, tasty, light summer pudding you can make in advance. Serves 4/5
Ingredients
200ml double cream
1 lemon zested and juiced
200g lemon curd
100ml thick Greek-style yogurt
200g raspberries
½ tbsp icing sugar
Serve with shortbread biscuits
Method
Whip the double cream, lemon zest, 1 tbsp lemon juice, lemon curd and yogurt in a bowl with an electric whisk until soft peaks form. Spoon into small serving glasses or ramekins and chill for one hour.
Mash half the raspberries with the icing sugar using a fork, or purée in a small blender to make a coulis. Cover and chill for one hour until ready to serve.
To serve, spoon the coulis over the mousses, garnish with the remaining raspberries and serve with the shortbread biscuits alongside.

Book Review

Ursula recommends this book from a local activists that she knows
Review by Steve Whiting from The Friend 15 October 2021 Steve is from Stevenage Meeting.
ACTIVISM FOR LIFE by Angie Zelter
Angie Zelter is a social change phenomenon. She is a dreamer of campaigns, creative strategist, meticulous researcher, persuasive negotiator, movement organiser, team-player and leader by example. She has an irrepressible vision of justice and peace and, naturally, a world free of nuclear weapons. Activism for Life recounts her story. It begins in 1970s colonial Cameroon, where Angie witnessed extreme inequality and everyday racism. Then she read an alarming article in The Ecologist on environmental destruction: 'I'd had a university education. Why didn't I know any of this?' She'd woken up.
After an initiation at Greenham Common, her first project was the Snowball Civil

Disobedience campaign of 1984. Encouraged by the words of a Quaker friend ('Follow your spirit and act in the truth of that spirit') Angie cut a hole in a fence at a military base in Norfolk, and asked to be arrested. Next time, the number of people tripled, then tripled again, then again... Through this campaign, she says, she was 'able to experiment with how far to "disobey" the state and the courts and discovered it could be quite far'.

Angie takes us through actions to resist logging in rainforests; peace service in occupied Palestine; and Seeds of Hope Ploughshares, in which she and three other women disabled a fighter-jet destined for Indonesia. In a celebrated trial, they argued that they had committed a crime to prevent a greater crime, and were acquitted. Quakers have shown strong support for many of these projects, conceived to revitalise the anti-nuclear weapons movement. Another landmark trial acquitted Angie, alongside a Danish activist, Ulla, and our departed Friend, Ellen Moxley, after they destroyed laboratory equipment serving the Trident system. Angie went on to set up Public Interest Case Against Trident, in which local magistrates were asked to start criminal prosecutions against the Defence Ministry for war crimes. And that seven-mile pink scarf linking Burghfield and Aldermaston? That was her idea too. More recently, she has founded XR Peace, part of Extinction Rebellion, recognising that the war industry is destroying the planet.

Angie's activism encourages mass participation, from anxious first timers to seasoned activists. Her campaigns provide a safe environment, always with a supportive invitation to take the next step.

Activism for Life is an excellent campaigning textbook, and an inspiring read. It did leave me wanting to learn more about the inner Angie – her spiritual rootedness, and how she deals with fear, endures prison, channels anger – but that's not this book. What she gives us here is a lifetime of actions taken and lessons learned. Speaking truth to the hard face of power is something that Angie has taken further than most of us. But we must all do what we can. As she says: 'It is better to try and fail than not to try at all... Never give up!

Community Work in Ludlow by Andy Fensome
Community and Projects Coordinator Hands Together Ludlow

Here is the second e-mail bulletin to you all as members of the Ludlow Community Support Network. These bulletins are designed to share information and updates relating to the activities of the Network within the town.

The work to deliver services and activities across Ludlow together continues and I have included the key updates below. Please remember to send me any news/updates that you wish to highlight so that they can be included in the next e-mail bulletin.

a) Christians Against Poverty ("CAP") - Meeting With Mark Triggs

CAP partner with local churches to help clients with their 'Journey out of Debt'. Money Coaching Sessions are also available.

CAP have 3 Debt Advisers in the Bridgenorth office, and, at present, the team can take on a maximum of 3 new clients for targeted debt help a month. In terms of Money Coaching (teaching people to understand their finances, budgeting techniques and generally improve their confidence when it comes to handling money) Mark would like to see a lot more people to sign up for these sessions. They are run on an ad-hoc, demand led basis and can be run in Ludlow. Furthermore, Mark would be keen to train up prospective new Money Coaches. CAP also offer Life Skills which enable clients to learn practical skills to help them to live well on a low income. CAP also organises Job Clubs.

b) Community Mental Health Service , Assertive Outreach Team- Meeting with Sally Pearce and Jo Poulter

This is a new team which will adopt a proactive approach to engage individuals within the community who are struggling to access, or remain engaged with, mental health care. If we know someone who is struggling in the community the team is happy to be contacted for any advice. However, in order for an individual to be formally added to their case load, that individual must be registered with a GP surgery in Ludlow. Once added to the caseload, the team will look to meet with the person once a week if possible.

c) Enable- Meeting with Ruth Davies and Shelley Instone

Enable should be thought of as one large team with lots of different teams within it. It is part of the local authority and is funded by other government departments, including NHS and DWP. Essentially Enable's function is to support people into employment. Shelley works in the Ignite team within Enable and the only criteria required to get support is to have left formal education. Within Ludlow, Enable also work with the addiction recovery team at The Hawthorns (We are With You) and the Community Mental Health Team at Corve Street. If we become aware of anyone that might benefit from some extra help to get into employment, we should call or e-mail Shelley Instone who will contact the individual (if they consent) and will take it from there. Shelley also offers some in-person interview slots which can be held at HTL premises (we have hosted these before and they have been very successful) Shelley can also help people with their CV and she also has a network of employers that she can call and arrange interviews for (whilst the job-seeker is with her)

Ruth is involved with the upcoming Connect to Work Scheme which will be launched this summer. Connect to Work will concentrate on helping disadvantaged groups, such as refugees, care leavers, carers and ex-offenders get into employment. This scheme will also help stay in work once they do get a job. Eventually, Ludlow will

receive its own Enable Connect to Work adviser. This person will be based in the town and will look to build strong links within the community.

d) Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service ("SDAS")- Meeting with Lynne Kemp
Referrals to the service from Ludlow are less than in the North of the county. Domestic abuse tends to go hand in hand with addiction, mental health and money issues. Lynne wants to work with other organisations so that, post any referral made to SDAS, this co-working can holistically support the victim with other problems that they will doubtless be facing due to the domestic abuse they are going through. In other words, the victim's 'file will not be closed' and they will continue to receive support once the threat of domestic abuse is no longer there.
Lynne would appreciate it if other organisations reached out to SDAS with appropriate contact details as she wants to enhance the networking effort within the organisation.
Referral Method
Via www.shropsdas.org.uk and, if appropriate, select "Professional" tab and select "External Agency Referral Form" Please note that funding is only available for Shropshire so we cannot make referrals for victims from other counties

e) Other Items
i) Citizens Advice Service ("CAS") - We have been working with CAS to prioritise the reinstatement of services to Ludlow. We are pleased to say the CAS has confirmed that it now has funding to do so which is excellent news for the town

ii) Cooking Workshops - Hands Together Ludlow will be running various cooking workshops in June and July as part of the Shaping Places Initiative . Please contact us if you would like to know more

iii) Rural Policy Focus Group - Kreseda Smith is a Rural Criminologist based at Harper Adams University. She is undertaking a piece of research to explore the feelings of rural communities towards the police, and what factors are affecting these feelings. Kreseda will be holding a focus group at HTL's premises on Monday 19th May at 1pm to try to obtain some evidence to develop policy and practice recommendations in conjunction with focus group participants. If you know of anyone that would like to be part of this group please contact us

iv) Summer Lunch Club - Running for the final three weeks of the Summer Holidays, HTL will be providing packed lunches for Premium Pupils in Ludlow. The pupils are signed up through their schools and are issued with a reference number so that they are assured of a nutritious lunch during the weeks that the Government do not provide vouchers. Other pupils can be signed up as well if they are referred as whilst they may not receive free lunches at school, they may be from a disadvantaged home

and in need of such sustenance during the holidays. Please help us to encourage parents, schools and other organisations to sign children up for the project, the lunch is entirely free and packaged daily with fresh ingredients, ready for collection each morning.

v) Community Lunch- Just a reminder that HTL provides a Community Lunch on a Tuesday and Friday. These are popular and require booking in advance. If you know of someone that might be benefit, please get in touch

vi) Ludlow Youth Centre - We understand that all services will be provided at Helena Lane . However, if any emergency accommodation is needed by any service providers, please let HTL know, and we will help if we have availability .

Thank you for reading this bulletin. I hope you found it helpful. Please continue to proactively share as much information as you can with HTL. We tend to find out about developments with respect to services and activities in Ludlow either by osmosis or because we have asked a direct question. The more we know about opportunities within the town, the more we can signpost people to these opportunities/activities. This can only be beneficial for the town as a whole.

The Dell House.

Can I tell you about this Quaker run hotel in Malvern and recommend it.

Kevin and Elizabeth Rolph are Friends at Malvern Quaker Meeting. This 19th Century house, with lots of interesting history, was converted into a hotel by them and they have done a huge amount of work on the house and grounds. They started off hoping it would be used as a retreat for Friends. However, it has started a new life being a venue used by board gamers who hire the whole hotel for conventions every now and then. This group is called

Dellcon. Speaking to Elizabeth, she said it is almost like a retreat because people come for a board game weekend all stressed and tired and leave refreshed and in good spirits.
I stayed there, renting all three self-catering apartments, for my sisters 70th birthday family gathering. The self-catering is not as grand as the main hotel, which has high ceilings and a great stair case and is beautifully decorated and appointed. We had a lovely weekend and Kevin and Elizabeth could not have been more attentive and kind. They showed us round the large garden with many sculptures of animals, nooks to sit in and got the garden train set out for the grandchildren.
We were lucky because the weather was beautiful for our stay. We had drinks on the patio, overlooking the plains of Worcester, and had our birthday picnic set out in one of their garden rooms, before going back to the patio to eat it.
I could recommend it for a Quaker retreat but also a lovely, special place to go and stay or recommend to relatives.

Do look it up on the internet www.thedellhouse.co.uk
Barbara

South Sudan

Debt Justice has just shared this new Lobby campaign

> It's the big news no-one is talking about. South Sudan, a country devastated by years of conflict and war, flooding and economic crisis, has been sued in the London High Court by one of its largest commercial lenders for $657 million!
> I find this news so hard to stomach. South Sudan is facing one of the most severe humanitarian crises in the world. Pushed to the brink of economic collapse, now a London court has ordered the government to fork out nearly 50% of its revenue over high-interest loans made during the pandemic.

Truth and Integrity

We have been reflecting on the wealth of ministry shared at the two Global Meetings for Worship in April and you will see another opportunity to reflect is below.
A number of suggestions were made in the meetings about sources of information, poems and practices that Friends may find helpful and we thought it would be helpful for you to have them in advance. These are as follows:

Byline Times - https://bylinetimes.com/

The Elders - https://theelders.org/

Full Fact - https://fullfact.org/

Fix the News - https://fixthenews.com/

Positive News - https://www.positive.news/

Daily Meditations - https://cac.org/daily-meditations/

Woking Debates - http://www.wokingdebates.com/

Reading

"Quakerism of the future - Mystical, Prophetic and Evangelical" by John Yungblut (Pendle Hill Pamphlets 194)

"How to stand up to a dictator" - Maria Ressa

Don't hesitate - Mary Oliver - https://www.best-poems.net/mary-oliver/don-t-hesitate.html

The Second Coming - WB Yeats
- https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43290/the-second-coming

Gardening For Health and Wellbeing

A letter from Thrive

We all know that transitions can be challenging, one transition we've worked hard to support at Thrive is moving on from a fixed term STH programme. We try and start preparing people for that change mid-way through the programme, but we've long

wondered what more we could do to increase the likelihood that people continue to garden at home once they've finished their programme at Thrive.

This is one of the key reasons we developed a new app, called Cultivating Wellbeing and is the first gardening for health and wellbeing app on the market. The app promotes the use of nature and gardening to improve physical, mental and social health, with useful guides and the ability to schedule activities and have gentle reminders.

The app supports people to self-manage their health and wellbeing and will provide a softer progression from in-person services. We know that having follow-on activity also strengthens funding applications, through extending the impact of the services beyond the initial intervention.

The University of Essex have undertaken research to help us understand the impact for those using the app and has been validated by The Organisation for the Review of Care and Health Apps (ORCHA), enabling us to list the app on NHS digital libraries.

Thank you for sending me this Phi

Environmental Issues

Quaker Earthcare Gathering:

Nurturing Radical Worship and Witness -An all-age gathering at the Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire, DE55 1AU
Friday 23rd – Monday 27th October 2025

All Friends are welcome to participate the extended gathering process, including free online sessions throughout 2025. Part of this is an all-age residential at The Hayes, Swanwick. These are being organised by Quakers in Britain, Living Witness, Quaker Support for Climate Action and others.

Tickets for the residential are: Adults £375, 6-16 year-olds £120, 0-5 year-olds £20. Financial support is available. However all the pre-booked residential spaces are booked at Hayes but there are still a few bedrooms available on a first-come-first-served basis. We may also have space for non-residential participants so please do

ask us if you live locally or wish to arrange your own accommodation.

Join us to explore how our Quaker faith and communities can help us to meet the Earth crisis with hope, strength, and compassion. Our time together at the residential will be deeply rooted in worship, and will include a children's programme, short talks, workshops, discussions, practical activities, music, dance, art and much more.

The residential will be accompanied by a broader community building process including online sessions in the months before and after, designed to nourish our Quaker faith and communities to meet the Earth crisis with hope, strength, and compassion
We are hoping this gathering will engage Friends with a wide range of lived experiences. Friends are welcome at the Quaker Earthcare Gathering whether they have found a role in Earth crisis response or are still seeking.

For more information look at Friends web site or phone Ailish Carroll-Brentnall

Telephone: 07518206894

Some South Shropshire Climate Action News

As we reported briefly last issue, recent research found that 89% of people across the world want their national governments to do more to fight global heating. In the UK the figure is a still remarkable 82.4%, across the political spectrum.
You would never believe this, reading much of the popular press or standing on a Climate Action stall. You might blame long-standing, well-funded misinformation campaigns by the fossil fuel industry, or political posturing.

So why - when almost 9 out of 10 people worldwide are united in wanting action to fight the Climate crisis -do we so often remain silent? Experts believe it is because they wrongly think only a minority share their views.
We are social creatures, and research has shown we are hugely influenced by how we perceive others think. If we can challenge this self-fulfilling bubble of silence by making people aware that their pro-climate view is, in fact, by far the majority view,

we can unlock a social tipping point and push leaders into the Climate action so urgently needed.

So this month, why don't we all join Market Drayton Group and raise the subject of Climate change in ONE conversation (goodness knows, there are enough prompts!) and be sure to make the point that across the globe 89% of people want more action from their governments. That would be over 1000 tiny pricks in the bubble of silence.

Here are some useful guides to help you get started:

Client Earth

Talk Climate Change

or watch a video here

The Market Drayton Group has been very busy on other things as well.

A Climate Fresk with an A'level group proved very successful.

They are organising to meet their MP at The Mass Lobbyon 9th July, as Leominster is.

Shropshire Council has promised to think seriously about divestment after being approached again.

The annual duck race, and biggest fundraiser, was cancelled last month because of low river levels. Periods of drought are one of the symptoms of our changing weather patterns, driven by global heating. They are hoping to re-arrange during the autumn floods.

Severn Trent have announced that they have dropped their plan to build a pipe outfall into the Onny after much lobbying by the group and others. They will instead invest in improving the treatment of sewage at the Bishop's Castle wastewater treatment works.

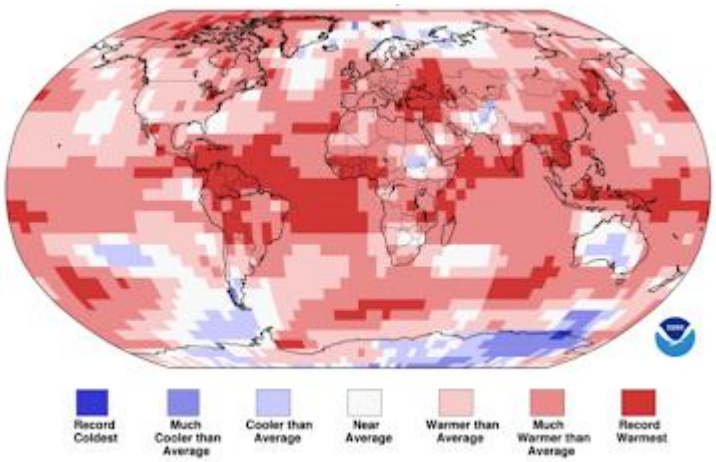
News from Shropshire Climate Action.

SCA was at the Morville Annual Community event. It was very well attended, and it was great to talk to several local farmers about renewable energy and how they are

combining solar with agriculture (primarily sheep grazing) on the same land. There was interest too in battery storage, and the installation of wind turbines, now some of the planning restrictions have been lifted.

According to the Impact Community Carbon Calculator, Morville has a higher-than-average carbon footprint, thanks to the widespread use of oil for home heating. The Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) attending the event were highlighting theft of fuel from oil tanks as a leading example of crime affecting rural communities in Shropshire. Perhaps that's another argument for having a heat pump installed?

Land and ocean temperatures, April 2024



A message from Eko.

Many environmental groups, including Eko, are looking at these words.

Humanity has two years left "to save the world", says the United Nations' climate chief.

April was the hottest month ever – and the 11th straight month to set a new record for global heat. If we don't change now, it won't be long before all of us

are forever locked into a future of extreme droughts, floods…even global food shortages.

The worst offenders responsible for our overheating planet – are the financial industry that poured $705 billion into big oil just last year – and they are flying completely under the radar. Their profits are soaring but which media organisation tell us all about this?

Barclays, JPMorgan Chase, Citi and Bank of America are carrying on with business as usual: pumping billions every year into energy projects which continue to pump CO2, even though these banks pledged to drastically reduce their emissions. The companies that they generously provide with loans, investments and insurance cause 80 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions.

If banks simply stopped financing fossil fuels, it would be a real reset for the global economy – and for the fight against climate change.

But right now, the financial incentives are all wrong. We need to force banks and insurers to rethink and recalculate how they do business.

Barbara information from Eko

Rare Earth , Radio 4 .

This is a brilliant program if you have not already listened to it.
Can I draw your attention to the episode on 13th June (find it on Sounds) where they discuss the cost of internet data storage issues.
Barbara