Ludlow Quaker Journal

July/August 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.

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Blister packs collected at Ludlow Meeting

Paul has shared this message
In March 2025 Ludlow LM purchased a box to collect medical blister packs for a cost of £100. This covers the cost of collection and processing by the recycling company. They do not make money from the recycling as it is difficult to separate the plastic and metal. This box has been located in Ludlow Meeting House and by the end of August (6 months) we have filled it and need to send it off for recycling. I would like to recommend that we purchase another box to continue our recycling. We can afford to pay for it out of LM funds but if anyone wants to make a donation towards the cost that would be gratefully received.
This purchase arose from a campaign by Ludlow Cancer Support Group who raised £3000 and sent away 32 boxes over autumn / winter 2024/25. Although it is clear demand is high for a blister pack recycling scheme in Ludlow the costs involved for LCSG were unsustainable. However they are wanting to continue to raise awareness through a campaign lobbying MPs and getting local groups involved. The meeting has agreed that our name can be added to the letter as a group supporting this initiative. The letter will ask MPs to recognise that recycling blister packs is a concern for many given the scale of the plastic pollution crisis and the unavoidable nature of this particular form of single-use plastic for consumers. It will ask that they raise this matter with the relevant minister. Specifically, that MPs:

- Advocate for the inclusion of blister packs within the scope of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations for packaging currently under consideration by DEFRA

- Request the removal of the exemption for pharmaceutical packaging from the Plastic Packaging Tax

The government should require manufacturers to provide re-usable or fully recyclable alternatives as a matter of priority.
They recognise a campaign such as this will not achieve a solution overnight but hope that pressure will result in movement in this area.
Any suggestions for ways to take publicise this and take it forward would be gratefully received.

Christian Aid stall run by Ludlow friends

Ludlow friends ran a Christian Aid stall, photo above, on Thursday 14th August at St Laurence's Church. This is a yearly event. This year Faith was organising it for us.

It was a very enjoyable occasion.

John Eadie, who coordinated the coffee morning, sent a message round to thank everyone for all the hard work, not least those carrying a plethora of heavy boxes of books and jam and cakes back and forth, and of course Icon and St Laurence's. It was a hugely successful morning and provisional totals are below, with last year's figures in brackets:

Door/donations £1223.30 (£1020.50)

Cakes etc £186.05 (£162.10)

Books £123.40 (£75.80)

Total £1532.75 (£1258.40)

A splendid result!

Ludlow friends added a further £30 to the total the following Sunday after more sales.

CTAL Children's Garden Party 8th August

The party had 4 attendees, in the end, including our Isaac. Jemma Tranter led the activities.

The idea was that there had been a considerable influx of young children with their parents, who work in mostly care work in Ludlow, and most have started going to St Peter's Church

It started off with the possibility that we might have over twenty however over time the numbers went down and ended up a much smaller group. But Jemma was

amazing, the boys a joy and we had cake and ice cream and played musical chairs and statues (Cynthia was very competitive!) It was good to have the support of Tony from the Catholic Church and to be able to introduce a few others to the Meeting House garden. It was a worthwhile event despite the low numbers.

Totally Psalmic Saturday 19th July

Here is Colin introducing the third one of these events

Above is Deborah Rose on guitar

Berni Lynch who read her own poem

Totally Psalmic goes from Strength to Strength
Article written by Petra Bindloss
This year saw the third Totally Psalmic evening, thanks to *Churches Together Around Ludlow* and with the hospitality and tech expertise of kind hosts at the Methodist Church. Brainchild of lateral thinker, Colin Sheward, Totally Psalmic is a totally original concept…
What's the premise? Create something of your own based on a Psalm of your choice. Even in competition with head-liners, 'Texas', in concert at the castle, this years' Totally Psalmic managed to beguile the audience this Saturday evening.
From Sue Jones' celebratory 'A Psalm to a Personal God', to musical compositions from Liz May with her inspiring 'Always by your Side' and from trio 'Trinity', a heart-felt 'The Father's Song', it was an evening to highlight creativity, hope and community.
Everyone was a winner but the First Prize went to Rosie Corner and Owen Gore, suitably dressed as sea-farers for Rosie's uplifting 'Sea Psalm', based on Psalm 107. With the chorus beautifully written out for audience participation and presented by Owen, the song went down 'a storm'.
Deborah Rose came second with a lilting and ethereal rendition of her latest composition 'Under the Feathers of your Wings' (this was written for the event at short notice).

Third prize was awarded to Bernie Lynch for her moving ‘Pentecost Reflections in Shropshire’. Based on Psalm 121, Bernie’s poetry and music took us on a thoughtful journey from Birmingham to Bishop’s Castle.
The evening wouldn’t have been complete without William Chapman’s bold and bright trumpet solo resounding out from the gallery and the stunning art work of Jane Elizabeth Cullum. Judges, Beverley Waite and Tim Gill, had a hard task, but all were rewarded in the end with refreshments, thanks to the kindness of volunteers.
Last but not least, the Master of Ceremonies and linchpin to all, Colin Sheward, gave us a rousing lamentation based on Psalm 69. However, there was no cause for sorrow this evening:
‘*I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help’*
Donations were collected for the Wesley Charity.

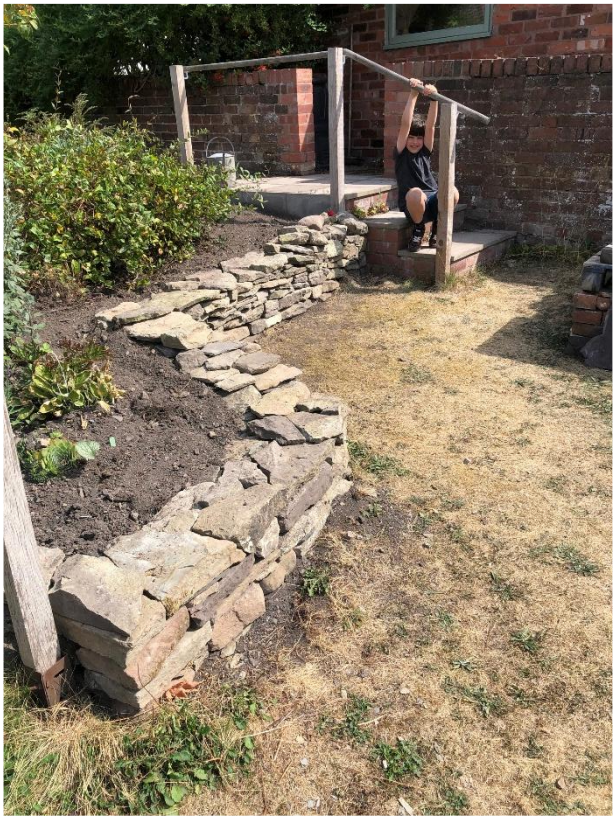
The winner Rosie Corner with collaborator Owen Gore, between judges Tim Gill and Beverley Waite.

Singing the Hallelujah Chorus

If you are comfortable with using Youtube you may like to have a look at this ‘Silent Monks sing the Hallelujah Chorus from Proud SK Parents.’

Finishing off the garden wall

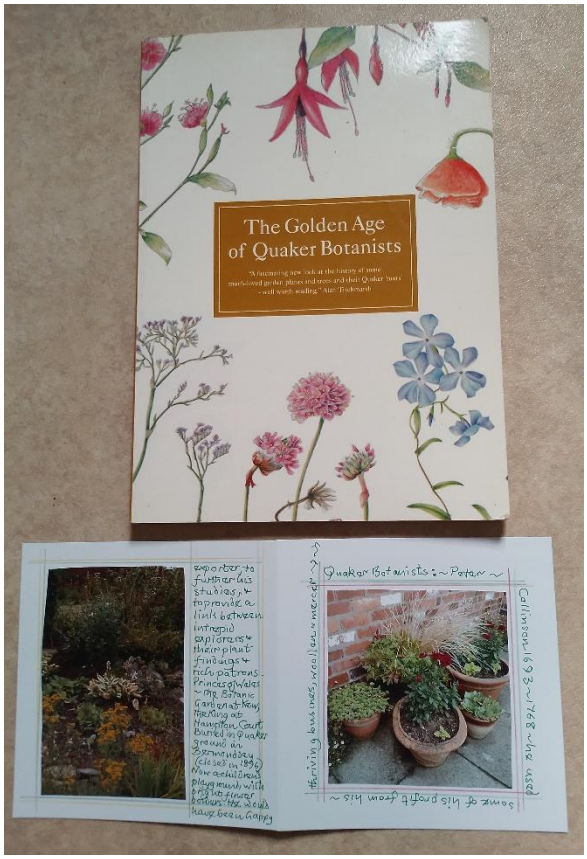
In the last edition of this Journal, we had an article about the renovation of the garden wall in the middle part of Ludlow Meeting House Garden.
It has now been completed thanks to Jamie, Jane, Isac, James and, of course the dragon Ember.
It is difficult to describe the careful way slabs of stone have to be fitted together to look good but also to be strong enough to hold back the soil. So here are some photos of the journey to the completed wall.



Many thanks for these photos Jamie. A really good job done.

Julia is making some more cards to raise money for Madagascar

Julia has written this for the Journal.
I have borrowed the book 'The Golden Age of Quaker Botanists' from the Meeting House library.
It is a good read. I feel it could be said as joyous one. You read about their work as botanists as well as learning about their other connections to charity work and other countries.
I borrowed it to put information with the photos I took of the Meeting House garden for the cards I am making. Choosing the texts to go on the cards wasn't easy as there is so much that is interesting.
I will be putting them in the Meeting House library or where notices are. They can be taken and a contribution made towards the collection for the Madagascar charity the Meeting supports.
For your interest, I have ordered my own copy. It's not available at Friends House bookshop. They gave me the number for the Quaker Tapestry Museum D8, Kendal. One of the panels is dedicated to the botanists.
My book came today.
£ 10.90 book + p and p.
Good buy and good service



On the first page is a photo of the tapestry panel with this text.

..."the universe is always singing and that man must learn to listen, so that his heart may join the universal chorus. "
1887- 1917
Sarah Martha Baker
thank you for this Julia

Poems Shared

Sally has shared this with us.
I have returned to read this poem by Elizabeth Jennings many times after first reading it in “Something Understood” an anthology of poetry and prose. It has both pleasures and depths for me.

I count the moments

I count the moments of my mercies up,
I make a list of love and find it full.
I do all this before I fall asleep.

Others examine consciences. I tell
My beads of gracious moments shining still.
I count my good hours and they guide me well

Into a sleepless night. It’s when I fill
Pages with what I think I am made for,
A life of writing poems. Then may they heal

The pain of silence for all those who stare
At stars as I do but are helpless to
Make the bright necklace. May I set ajar

The doors of closed minds. Words come and words go
And poetry is pain as well as passion.
But in the large flights of imagination

I see for one crammed second, order so
Explicit I need no more persuasion.

Maureen shared this as Ministry during Worship on 3rd August, but we cannot print all the words. It is well worth looking up though.
The words come from the chorus of the song The Rose, written by Amanda McBroom and made famous by Better Midler in 1979 film, The Rose.

The chorus of the song "The Rose" is: "It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance. It's the dream afraid of waking that never takes the chance."

If you are too afraid to try you might miss the amazing.

A Quiet Reflection from John Crook

The worthwhileness of any experience seems to be in our present age: Does it change things in time? If so, let us keep it, if not, let us discard it.

Time is no judge of Eternity. It is the Eternal who is the judge of time.

A Testament of Devotion by Thomas Kelly page 67

Truth and Integrity group work

Reflections from the Global Meetings for Worship – Sharing Uncertainty Fears and Hopes.

Quaker Truth & Integrity Group has spent some time reviewing the ministry heard in both global meetings for worship held in April. This Friends is what we heard. We think the ministry fell broadly into four categories.

Theme 1 – Democracy
Theme 2 – Truth in Public Life
Theme 3 – Fears, Hopes. What can Friends offer.
Theme 4 – Young People

Theme 1 – Democracy

We heard three parts to the issue of democracy – assaults on existing democracy, our understanding and current practice of democracy and imagining and working towards a better society within which a healthy democracy can thrive.

A. Assaults on Democracy

We have a mainstream media that seems unable or unwilling to report in detail on these assaults both in the UK and around the world. Journalists and news organisations are ultimately a reflection of our democracy – we need good journalism.

- There has been a crackdown on peaceful protest and the judiciary is being politicised. Those who are prosecuted following public protest, are prevented from explaining their motivation for protest.

- We heard about the "Dark Enlightenment" – a movement that requires further research but appears to be an anti democratic and anti egalitarian and promotes authoritarianism. It appears to have influence within the Trump government.
- There is a view of Christianity based upon fearing our neighbour rather than loving them, which is being used by those attacking democracy.

B. Understanding and Practice of Democracy

We are enjoined to "remember your responsibilities as a citizen for the conduct of local, national and international affairs. Do not shrink from the time and effort your involvement may demand". (BYM Advices and Queries 34).

- In the UK, the Government is seeking to reorganise local government and abolish more local levels of administration. The danger is that government feels even further away from people than it already does.
- We need a form of democracy that allows for a more meaningful contribution from everyone (rather than ticking a box once every four years). And we need to have a system which allows us to make decisions together. Could annual elections facilitate a more open democracy? Our testimonies and our business method point towards real democracy. How do we build on this in the World.
- Local Friends should seek to develop relationships with their elected representatives. In Scotland, there is a group of Friends who advocate Quaker values to the Scottish Parliament. They have learned that just as Parliament seems to be remote from the electorate the reverse is also true. Consequently, MSPs are often on guard when meeting the public. Scottish Friends have recently started two meetings by focussing on the person not the politics – they ask how the politician is feeling and how their work is going. There is a noticeable difference in the way the meeting then unfolds with a more open discussion.

C. Imagining a better future

We are living through a transition from an old global paradigm based use, abuse and materialism to a different, better one. The principles and practices of Quakerism are what the world wants and we need to speak out and share these with the world.

- We will need to reimagine our whole economic system and indeed, the way in which we relate to one another as individuals. Experiences proves that when people have real power they are capable of engaging with complex issues, thinking and listening deeply. This is not just about making democracy more humane as we know it but of fundamentally reimagining what it needs to be in order to deal with the problems that we are all beginning to face with climate change and surviving sustainably and creatively.

  We can only promote change together – one person speaking isn't enough. Quakers worldwide need to find a focus for action that could be helpful. What Friends can we do?

Theme 2 – Truth in Public Life

We are continuing to see a decline in the standards of truth not just in public affairs but also in social media.

Concern was expressed at the demonisation of sections of society that lead to and allows untruths to bed in. e.g. refugees and migrants.

On social media, if a lie is repeated – it sticks. How do we stop this? Again the role of the Dark Enlightenment needs to be considered.

In Wales, the Senedd (Parliament) is developing commitments to truthfulness that politicians needs to adhere to and penalties for those who do not.

We need to work in "small circles" with other people of faith.

Theme 3 – Fears and Hopes – what can Friends offer

Several Friends expressed how welcome they found the meetings for worship as they helped bring their fears into focus. We need to accept those fears and work out how to deal with them. Recognise the fear but don't let it control us – we should deal with it in the way we do with other unwelcome emotions like sorrow or guilt. Do the next right thing in front of you.

Fear can stem from uncertainty – a shifting from what we thought we knew, from our certainties. We are seekers after Truth which is unknowable and evolving. We can offer our doubt and uncertainty and recognition of the power of love to the world. It is certainty rather than uncertainty that contributes to the problems.

We need resilience to face the uncertainty of the future and in order to develop that we need to be brave and face what comes with a sense of adventure. It may be that we are called to work towards survival – what are the things that will help us rebuild? Always keep hope. What are we here for – to contend with fear, to learn from our mistakes, be of service, help when we can.

We need to be beacons of hope. We need to look at ourselves, find our skills, choose an action and *do* it. If we feel that what we do is right -"be not afraid". Be inspired by those who have gone before.

The fears of others were also referred to. The plethora of lies being told in different places about different things leads people to distrust anything they are told. In its turn that can lead to fear and then to anger. We can see this growing across the world. When people act out of anger and fear that is dangerous. But we should note that Governments are also afraid of not winning the next election, of what will happen if they fail. Division/difference is natural, and we should be able to manage it without fear – act out of hope and love. Or feel the fear and do it anyway.

Theme 4 – Young People

We were aware that young people were underrepresented at the meetings. We need to try to develop relationships with young people – which are truthful about our fears but do not place a burden on them. We need to empower young people in such a way that they can take their hope and positivity into the future.

We heard of the growth in young people coming to Catholicism. How do we speak to young people about the principles of Quakerism and how these speak directly to the problems in the world?
And how do we learn from young people? Do we allow them to contribute *their* gifts to our meetings?
Anne Wilkinson co-clerk Quaker Truth & Integrity Group

Statement on Gaza from Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)
28 July 2025

Quaker agencies have released a statement providing a stark description of what is happening in Gaza and urging courageous action.
Many of these groups have worked for years for peace in the Middle East, and feel compelled to speak out with the truth of what is happening as they see it.
Even since the statement was initiated, the situation in Gaza has worsened. American Friends Service Committee has signed a warning about starvation with 109 other humanitarian groups.
Following the attacks of 7 October 2023, Quaker groups spoke together, mourning all lives lost and lamenting with everyone who is suffering and grieving for those who have lost precious lives.
We also called on all leaders to firmly disavow rhetoric which is dehumanizing, warning that all efforts must focus on moving us away from an irreparable calamity.
Warning against collective punishment, this first statement noted that at that stage, 2950 Palestinians had been killed and siege policies we already leading to hunger and depletion of medicines.
We warned against collective punishment and concluded “people are dying as a preventable humanitarian crisis deepens” and called for a ceasefire, return of hostages, humanitarian access and engagement with the underlying issues.
It is with deep grief that now upwards of 57,000 people have been killed by the direct impacts of the war and very many more by the related humanitarian crisis.
Major international human rights organisations have concluded that Israel’s actions amount to genocide.
We appreciate that even in a global peace church, different people have access to different sources of information and will have different perspectives shaped by different theological interpretations.
All of us though share and cherish the core teachings of Jesus, including: “You shall not kill” (Matt. 5: 21), “Love Your Neighbour” (Matt. 19:19, Matt. 22:39, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27), “Blessed Are the Peacemakers” (Matt. 5:9), “I was hungry, and you fed me” (Matt. 25:35).
As a World Office we are informed by the testimony of Friends who have experienced situations first-hand. We are also aware that there are times when silence could be understood as tacit endorsement.

This is why we decided to sign a new statement based on and led-by the experience of Quaker groups that are either based in the Middle East or know it very well through their work.
It reads:

"Our peace and equality testimonies are clear: Apparent security for some, bought with the insecurity of others, tears at our shared humanity and cannot bring peace. Peace built on systematic oppression is a lie. We name what we see as genocide after deep discernment – not to incite, but to open eyes, minds, and hearts. We name this painful truth with the fervent hope that the violence it describes will cease, and with continued commitment to help heal the wounds of war on all sides".

For many years Quaker Service Norway supported a kindergarten in Gaza, until it was flattened.
We hope Friends in other parts of the world can listen with love.

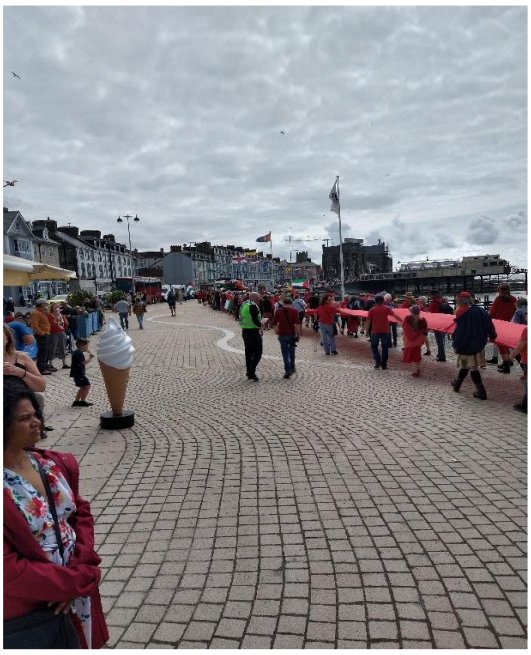
Demonstration In Ludlow by Shropshire PSC group

On 26th July there was a National day for demonstrations against the killing in Gaza. The Shropshire Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) group were in Ludlow, but Ludlow Friends did not know they were there.
However, since then I have made sure Ludlow Quakers are now on the mailing list of this group as well as the Radnor group, so we will know when either of these come to Ludlow again.

National Demonstration in Aberystwyth

On 26th July there was a huge demonstration, of over a thousand people, which took place in Aberystwyth, and I took some photos.

The National theme was ‘The Red Line’. The demonstrators carried a ribbon of red. It was very moving. There is a good video of it on facebook.



The beginning of the line had reached the pier long before the rest of the line had come out of the road beside the old Council Buildings.

Vigil for the Middle East and the Holy Land

Recently Clive and I went to a *Vigil for the Middle East and the Holy Land* held in Brimfield Church and organised by the vicar, who has direct links with a Palestinian family.

Sian had thoughtfully provided a map to help us locate the many countries that we refer to as 'the Middle East' as well as a more detailed map of Israel and Palestine including the small Gaza Strip. She had also provided a few sentences of explanation, with a reminder that the Holy Land is the land where Jesus walked and cared for people, adding that if we do nothing else we should learn from the compassion of this man, who disregarded all barriers of religion and class, and do the same in the name of our common humanity.

Several written prayers were provided to help us to focus our thoughts in this silent vigil. This one in particular spoke to me and led me to share it in Meeting for Worship. It was written by American Rabbi Sheila Weinberg

Two peoples, one land, three faiths, one root, one earth. one mother, one sky, one beginning, one future, one destiny, one broken heart, one God. We pray to You: Grant us a vision of unity. May we see the many in the one and the one in the many. May You, Life of all the Worlds, source of all Amazing Differences help us to see clearly.. As we pray together, guide us gently and firmly toward each other, toward peace.

Cynthia

Message from QARN (Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network)

It seems a good idea to remind MPs about the Bedford "Kings Arms" project and its proof of what a difference it makes for people seeking asylum when they get holistic, casework-based support, with legal assistance. The latest update on that project is here: https://kingsarmsproject.org/services/advice-service/

The initial two-year pilot project demonstrated a cost-effective and more humane alternative to detention centres: two-thirds cheaper than a detention centre and with 80% of clients being offered viable options to regularise their immigration status.

As I understand it, the Bedford project is focused on people who are at risk of detention due to a refusal of asylum or immigration status – but many of the lessons learned from the project are also relevant for people who are seeking asylum and having to stay in hotels.

As well as advocating for more resources for this type of successful person-centred support, QARN has suggested the need for policies that enable people who have

been seeking asylum to be able to work and that faster, fairer asylum decisions could limit the need for prolonged use of hotel accommodation.
There is to be a National Day of Solidarity which will be held at Derwentside IRC near Consett on 18th October. There are coaches going from Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Durham and Newcastle.
If anyone is planning on going and would like to meet other Quakers, then you can contact me at trracey@live.com and happy to meet up with you there.
Tracey
I can forward you the links if you would like to book a coach place. Barbara

Up-date of work and news from Dept Justice

It is the biggest debt crisis in thirty years, and the strength of outrage from campaigners in lower-income countries was tangible when thousands arrived in Seville ahead of a key United Nations conference, Financing for Development (FfD), at the end of June. There are 54 countries in debt crisis around the world, but international processes are failing countries that need urgent debt cancellation.

The UK, EU, US and other wealthy nations tried to sabotage the proposal for a new global debt framework, and the US even walked out of pre-conference talks. Despite these efforts by wealthy countries, African and other lower-income countries forced the debt issue onto the agenda – and managed to get references to debt justice laws and reform of the debt system into the final text.

Ahead of the conference, we joined allies around the world who took to the streets to demand action on the debt crisis. In London, we built a giant-Jenga tower, to represent the scale of the debt crisis and the devastating impact on public services and climate action.

Our latest research reveals how *the worst debt crisis in thirty years, combined with decades of austerity measures, has created fertile ground for repression and authoritarianism*. Click the button below to read our new blog – *Debt, Democracy and the rise of Authoritarianism*.

From Kenya to Tunisia and in many other countries, people have taken to the streets to protest debt-imposed austerity, including cuts to public services like education and health. Increasingly, the response by governments has been to crackdown on protests, restrict free speech and shut down democratic spaces.

Here in UK, our NHS is crumbling, schools are underfunded and energy bills keep rising, forcing more and more people into debt. But those responsible, the fossil fuel giants and the extremely wealthy, keep getting richer. It's time to join together to make those who are profiting from rising inequality and climate collapse pay up. That's why we're supporting the *Make Them Pay* rally in central London on 20 September. People across the UK are joining forces to demand that the government:

1. Tax the super-rich
2. Protect workers, not billionaires
3. Make polluters pay

Join us for a day of protest and family-friendly actions for everyone to take part in.

Excerpts from Open Democracy article

6 August 2024 | Sian Norris from Open Democracy

As Islamophobic and racist violence grip the UK, we look at the modern far right's beliefs and racist aims

In the no-man's land between the two protests, trapped between two lines of police, I bump into Priyanka Raval from the Bristol Cable. We decide to team up and cross the police line together, not an easy task when one officer refuses to let us pass despite our press cards. We keep an eye out for each other as we speak to the far right. That's when the women start shouting.

"We don't like immigration," a woman with blonde hair and sunglasses says to me, when I ask why she is here.

Why not? I ask. She shakes her head. "Don't get me started on that." The chants start. "Send them back," she shouts down a loudspeaker. "Who are you?"

"They're rapists," I hear another woman yell out. "They're dirty rapists."

Unlike the counter protest, which is a diverse crowd representative of Bristol's community, the far right group is almost all-white. Most of the small crowd are middle-aged and older, but there are younger men and women taking part too. One woman has even brought her kids.

"I'm here to represent England and Bristol," a teenage attendee tells me. He and his two friends are aged 14, 15 and 16, and carrying flags. "What they are doing is letting illegals in and it's ruining England. They're taking our rights away."

"What rights?" I ask. He looks momentarily confused. "The rights to freedom, the rights to do what we want to do," he says. "They're invading our country."

His words, once extreme, have now become part of the mainstream anti-migrant rhetoric: in 2022 the former Home Secretary Suella Braverman described the "migrant crisis" as an invasion. I'm about to ask a follow-up question, when an older man interrupts and asks where I work. "openDemocracy," I say brightly. He turns to the teenager and warns him off talking to me. "The only good media is GB News," he says. The teen looks a bit embarrassed, as if he has been caught out.

GB News is one of several media outlets that pushes misinformation and anti-migrant talking points. One of its star presenters is Reform UK's leader Nigel Farage…..

……..Dr Hannah Ryan, from the University of Birmingham, says that "it is important to acknowledge the role of the British press in spreading sensationalist news stories based on anti-immigrant rhetoric. From the over-reporting of migration to the consistent use of the factually incorrect term 'illegal asylum seeker', the tabloid press

in particular create the narrative of asylum seekers as problematic and threatening." Media imagery, she told openDemocracy, "emphasises asylum seekers as dangerous others with a particular focus on men of colour who are represented as 'breaking into Britain'."

….. Both sides are angry about homelessness, low productivity, unemployment, poor public services, long waits in the NHS. But while these issues have been caused by more than a decade of austerity under Conservative rule, and the financial crisis that preceded it, the far right has chosen to blame migrant people, claiming falsely that people seeking asylum are receiving preferential treatment and benefits, including by being housed in hotels.

Barbara

History of Quakers found at Visit to Iron Bridge

(another visit)

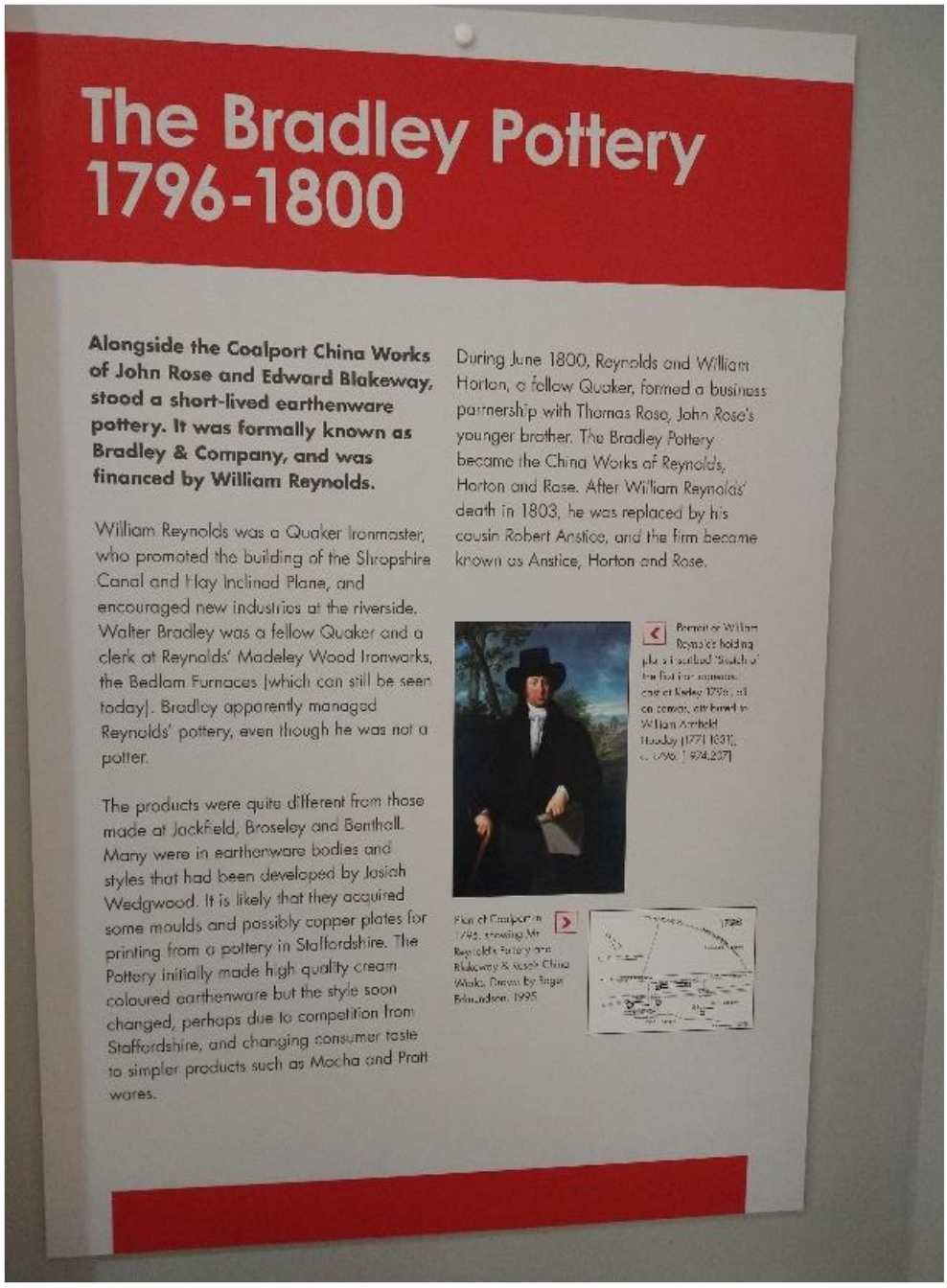
Coalport China

The last visit Ray and I made to the selection of different museums at Ironbridge was the Coalport China Museum. Like the others it did not disappoint.

This Museum is located inside the former Coalport China Works. On the car park area there is the YMCA and café. Coalport China Works was established in 1796 by John Rose, who had previously worked at the Caughley works in Jackfield. (Now hosting the Tile Museum) Access to the nearby Hay Inclined Plane (which you can visit at Blists Hill Victorian Town) facilitated the transportation of goods and materials and helped Coalport become a major centre for fine quality china in the 1800s. This is a bit like full circle as Bliss Hill, and thus seeing the top of Hay Inclined Plane, was where we started our museum visits, with the grandchildren.

For more than a century, Coalport China Works were among the most successful of their kind anywhere in the world. In its heyday, Coalport won many gold medals and prizes for its work at international exhibitions, including the 1851 Great Exhibition held in the Crystal Palace, Hyde Park. The company occupied the factory until its closure in 1926.

The exhibition of china is very worthwhile seeing and, again, the story includes some very well know Quaker families. There are Bottle Oven chimneys over the kilns to look at as well as reflecting on the hard life of the workers.



There are workshops for children and there are hands on activities for children to do. One of which is painting their very own object to take away.
Right at the end there was a display of this very fine dragon. I include a photo of it for the youngest member of our Quaker Meeting, Isaac, who has a dragon called Ember who goes everywhere with him. Ember might like to know about this dragon!

Jackfield Tile Museum

A week before the visit to the Coalport Museum we had visited the Jackfield Tile Museum.

Once home to the largest decorative tile works in the world, the small village of Jackfield at the eastern end of the Ironbridge Gorge in Shropshire is now the site of a unique museum housing magnificent displays of tiles and ceramics dating back to the 1800's.

It is housed in buildings that were originally opened in 1874 as a 'model' factory, for the Craven Dunnill Tile Works. This company specialised in decorative wall and floor tiles, and are still in operation on site today. Maw & Co also moved to Jackfield in 1883 to establish the biggest works in the world.

As you arrive at the car park you see the Design Studio, Drawing Office and Trade Showrooms which are housed in a modern building infront of the old, well restored site.

Articles about the Environment

Have Your Say: New Nature Recovery Map Now Open for Consultation

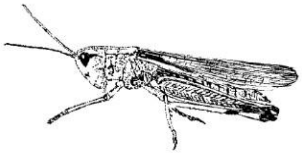
The draft Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published and the consultation focuses on two key resources:
· A strategy document outlining county-wide priorities for nature recovery.
· An interactive map showing where nature is thriving and where targeted action could deliver the greatest benefits for wildlife, water, soil and climate resilience.
The LNRS identifies key opportunities for supporting nature across the region — and could influence future environmental funding and land management decisions. This is your chance to see what is being suggested and help shape the final strategy.
Residents, landowners, community groups, environmental organisations, town & parish councils and businesses across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are all encouraged to review the new interactive map and strategy and share their views as part of the consultation to help make the strategy as good as possible.
View the map & strategy document and submit feedback:
www.shropshire.gov.uk/lnrs
We hope the strategy and map inspires action and collaboration to help nature thrive.
Consultation closes: 15 October 2025
Questions? Contact: lnrs@shropshire.gov.uk
Graham Ludlow Branch Communications 01743284280

Caring for God's Acre

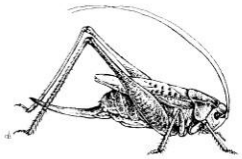
Hopping with Life

Why not have a search for grasshoppers and bush-crickets in your local churchyard? Churchyards can be real havens for them as they contain a range of different habitats which may suit different species.
Some are found in long or tussocky grass, some scrub and hedgerows, and some in the canopy of trees. Some burial grounds can have more than 3 grasshoppers per square foot!
The easiest way to identify grasshoppers from bush-crickets is to look at their antennae. Grasshoppers have shorter, thicker antennae compared to the antennae of crickets which are long and thin, almost hairlike. Another difference is in their habits, grasshoppers are herbivores, feeding mainly on grass as their name suggests, whilst bush-crickets eat a range of foods including aphids and small caterpillars as well as plant material. These insects have been around on the earth for a long time, they are found in the fossil record of the early Triassic, about 250 million years ago, making them the most ancient group of herbivorous, chewing insects that are still living.
Grasshoppers and crickets are tasty prey items to many larger creatures such as birds, mammals, spiders and amphibians so they have good senses to help them escape this fate. They have large, compound eyes on the sides of their heads, giving a wide field of vision, ears on either side of their abdomens and of course the antennae to sense touch. If under threat they will jump astounding distances, up to 80cm, equivalent to a human jumping the length of a football pitch.

Have a look for grasshoppers within the long and tussocky grass of your churchyard or shake a tree or shrub branch over something white like a bedsheet or plastic tray to see if any bush-crickets fall down.
Showing these special creatures to children opens a world of delight and interest.

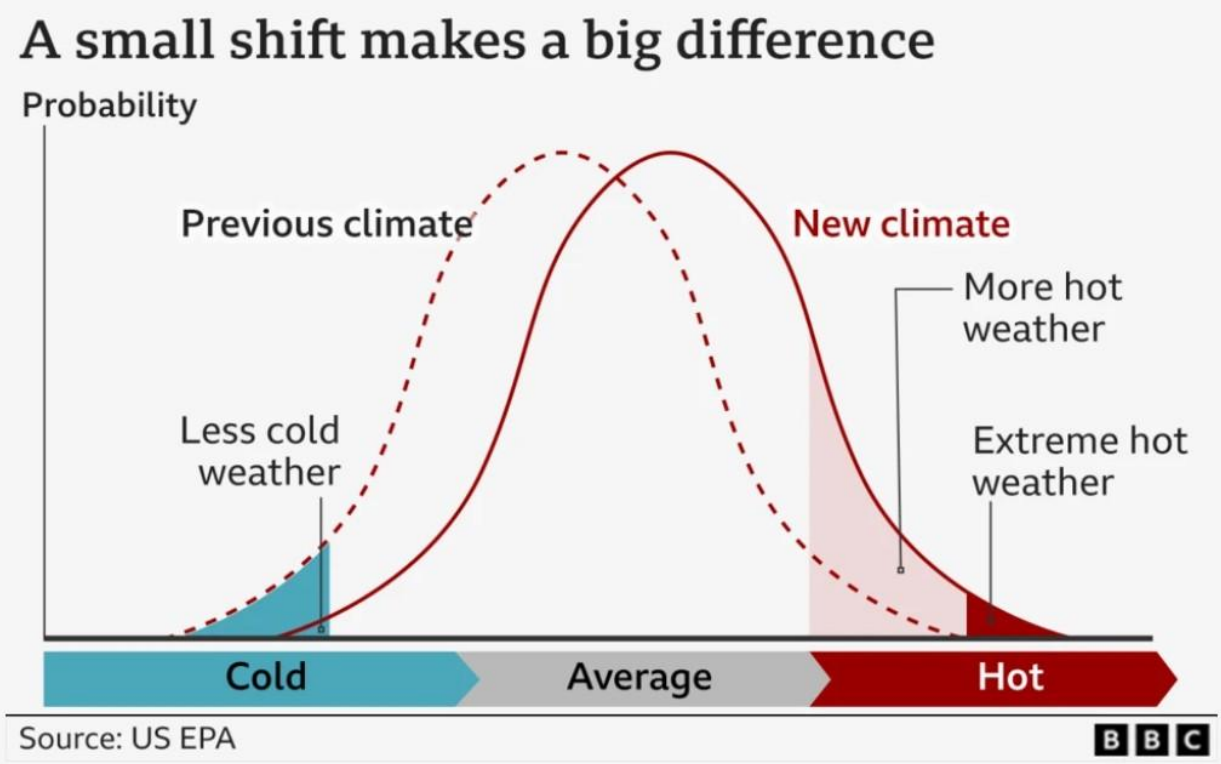


Grasshopper with shorter, thicker antennae



Crickets have long, thin, almost hair-like antennae

Look how, as the distribution of temperatures shifts, those that were previously extreme are brought into the range and new extremes become significantly more likely.



We are often talking about how it used to be colder back in the day. Well that is borne out by the Met Office's data. We really are getting increasingly fewer cold days. The Met Office says there were 14 fewer days with air frosts – when the air temperature falls below zero - in the last decade compared to the period 1931 to 1990.

This is the weather now as Global Warming has caused climate change which we are now all being affected by.

If the Gulf Stream stops, because too much ice has melted into oceans, then things will change rapidly. See the article below.

The Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC)

For those who are comfortable with YouTube you may like to look at Sabine Hossenfelder's recent article, 26th January 2025, about the North Atlantic Meridian called New Ice Age for Europe becomes more likely. This is more commonly called the Gulf Stream by those in UK who do not work in the field.
It is slowing down because the salinity is dropping. This does not bode well for Europe and UK. We will see a very much colder climate as soon as the flow stops.

Radio 4, Rare Earth

Could I recommend listening to the Rare Earth program on radio 4 'sounds' from Friday 22nd July. It is about how the insurance industry effects environmental issues.

Fishing in UK seas using bottom trawlers

I heard this on a radio 4 program, and you may like to take part.
The UK government is conducting a public consultation, which began in June 2025 and closes on September 29, 2025, to gather views on a proposal to extend the ban on bottom trawling across more English Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). This consultation invites marine and fisheries stakeholders to provide their evidence and opinions on the prohibition of using bottom-towed fishing gear in specified MPAs, which is a destructive method that drags large nets along the seabed, harming delicate habitats and marine life. Look this up at the government web site.
Barbara

I wonder if you listen to radio 4 'Rare Earth'? I can recommend it. On Friday 22nd August there was one about the Insurance Industry.
Barbara