

MANCHESTER & WARRINGTON AREA QUAKER MEETING NEWSLETTER NO 43 AUGUST 2025



RHS GARDEN BRIDGEWATER, SALFORD

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The wild flowers under our feet

by Ursula Sharma

We all like the idea of a wild flower meadow; glorious colours of cornflowers, daisies and poppies, enriching the environment and bringing the countryside into our gardens. Yet we often overlook the humble flowers that pop up here and there in very urban environments. Too often these are not valued and are destroyed as weeds. For several years I have noted a line of golden field marigolds filling the crack between the fence and the pavement along somebody's house in a nearby road and have enjoyed them. A few days ago I was surprised to see that every single flower had disappeared, uprooted no doubt by someone who valued tidiness over beauty. A pity because these tiny marigolds, a legacy of earlier forms of agriculture no doubt, are uncommon in the wild.



Some of these urban flowers are quite humble like these pineapple mayweed flowers that (with a bit of imagination) do look like tiny green pineapples. White clover and medick flourish in gutters and cracks in the kerb, the occasional campion or cow parsley appears in tree pits. And pellory-at-the-wall does exactly what it says on the tin and will scramble up against any wall or fence it can find. And just sometimes you can see something spectacular like this majestic thistle growing in a crevice by someone's gatepost, or the vivid purple marsh orchids lining the canal at Stretford.

Dame's violet, ladies' smock, jack-by-the-hedge, fumitory – I have seen all of these turn up on my allotment, in a side street or at the edge of the recreation ground. I love both their imaginative folk names and their admirable resilience. Long live the plants of the pavement, the greenery in the gutter!



War and Peace **by Bonnie Meekums, writer and therapist**

I'm sure we are all concerned about the various military conflicts raging in the world right now. Gaza and Ukraine are most in our consciousness in the UK, but there are conflicts all over this fragile ball we call home. Wikipedia lists a depressing number, some of which (e.g. Myanmar, and various Israeli conflicts) have been ongoing since 1948[i]. Wikipedia lists six major wars, each with more than 10,000 deaths a year, ten minor wars (1,000 to 9,999 deaths p.a.), and a further sixteen conflicts with at least 100 deaths a year, some of which have been ongoing since 1918. And then there are ten 'skirmishes,' with fewer than 100 deaths. The fact that two of the major wars date back to 1948, four of the minor wars began in the last century, and of the other conflicts and skirmishes there are also many dating back over fifty years tells you something about how effective war is in bringing about peace.

The founder of Quakerism, George Fox (1624-1691) spoke passionately against war. He lived in a time of social upheaval and war, and he paid the price for his dissent, as did many of the early Quakers, with repeated incarceration. This is what he had to say in 1651 about war:

'I told [the Commonwealth Commissioners] I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars... I told them I was come into the covenant of peace which was before wars and strife were' [ii].

Quakers are encouraged, through the book of discipline called *Quaker Faith and Practice* in the UK, to foster peace as a way of life, and to 'be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one. (George Fox, 1656)

I am a Quaker, but I struggle sometimes to fully uphold the Peace testimony, despite knowing war solves nothing. Had I been alive during the second world war, I might have felt called, as many Quakers were, to put my own life on the line without carrying arms, by volunteering for the Friends Ambulance Unit. But then again, I am the mother of two half Jewish people. Their lives, and the lives of their children, would have been at risk if Hitler had managed to invade Britain. Might I have felt tempted to take up arms, if women had had the opportunity (which they did not)?

In my latest novel, *Aggie's War*, set in that Second World War, Aggie is befriended by Hilda, a Quaker who is convinced that war is wrong. Aggie is not in agreement. Her doubts are given voice in her diaries as she considers and argues with Hilda's words, but over time as she sees the sense in what Hilda is saying she develops broadly pacifist views.

At the heart of Hilda's argument is that phrase of George Fox's, that there is 'that of God in every one,' and another of the Quaker testimonies linked to this, which is the principle of equality. We all have equal value. No one is better than another person, and certainly not because of wealth or status. Living out their faith, the early Quakers got into a lot of trouble because they would not doff their caps to authority figures!

Here's a little flavour of what *Aggie's War* is about:

In the shadow of the London Blitz, Aggie, fearful and grieving, navigates her fractured world where war threatens the human spirit. Struggling with the loss of her adoptive parents, Aggie finds an unexpected connection with Hilda, a fiery Quaker pacifist, promoting equality.

As their friendship blossoms, Aggie discovers a new confidence—but not without questioning Hilda's pacifist ideals. Making the difficult

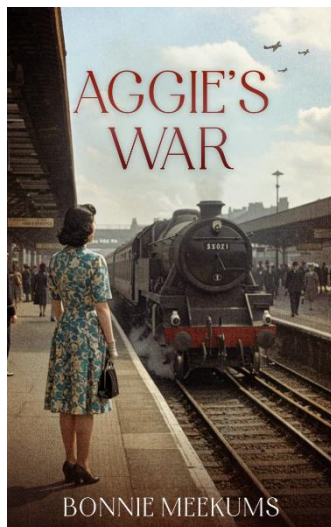
decision to evacuate with her children to Yorkshire, Aggie begins writing about her experiences. After the blitz, she returns to London and discovers a friendship with Lincoln, a black GI with a heart as steady as his Lindy Hop steps. Now Aggie faces the biggest challenge to her new-found confidence.

Set against the vibrant yet tumultuous backdrop of 1940s Britain, *Aggie's War* is a powerful tale of courage, friendship, and the ongoing fight for justice, equality, and peace.

If you would like to immerse yourself in Aggie's struggle, you can buy a copy here: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Aggies-War-Bonnie-Meekums-ebook/dp/B0FBRC98BW/>

Or, if you can't afford to buy a copy, why not order it from your library? If you do buy a copy, please consider leaving a review. Reviews (unless they are horribly mean, which they usually are not) are like a nice Quakerly cup of tea for an author. They give us the pick-me-up we need.

Thanks for reading this, and thanks in advance if you do decide to read *Aggie's War*. I'd love to know your thoughts.



How we might cope with the current geo-political crises?

by Nick Tyldesley Citizen of Bolton

It was probably wise for Early Friends to avoid involvement in post Restoration politics – all Cabals and Whig/Tory rivalries – keeping a low profile was good for survival. Other, louder radical groups like the Anabaptists, Levellers and Diggers felt the wrath of central government and were persecuted. This is not to say that Quakers were/are apolitical. We can applaud the campaigning for prison reform and the abolition of slavery. The Peace Testimony was in the public domain when conscription became an issue in the world wars. But when faced with our current geopolitical crises in Gaza and the Ukraine plus other parts of Africa Friends need to ask some searching questions about their responses and suggested solutions.

Of course, in private and in Meetings we will be deeply saddened by the relentless killing of civilians [and troops]. What can we do to lessen the horrors that can be effective? Constantly suggesting that both sides need to talk and be prepared for compromise is just wishful thinking – even the US with its powerful weapons and international leverage finds Russian/Israeli intransigent. Letters to MP's urging a peaceful settlement- the message to be passed onto the government will have little impact per se. Vigils may make us feel just a little bit smug and proactive but who do they really convince and do they influence the decision makers? Going on a mass demonstration in support of one side brings marching Friends into potentially confrontational situations and striking a political stance. Quakers, believing as they do there is that of God in everyone may be reluctant to be fully partisan. Seeing both sides of an argument can lead to fence-sitting as an easy cop out. Do Friends fundamentally want to get embroiled in the murky world of international deal making and bullying? Do they full confidence in national leaders to act with integrity in accordance with the wishes

of their electorates?

Perhaps the way forward is do small individual steps. Yes, we can contribute towards humanitarian aid in a variety of ways. There are no shortages of opportunities to fund practical assistance through charities and aid agencies. Taking in refugees was a feature of the early part of the Ukraine conflict. Boycotting products from unacceptable regimes seems inadequate but it did help in the campaign against apartheid in South Africa. Sporting/cultural boycotts may have a wider impact but do require government support.

Intercessional prayers for peace should not be discounted. We do need to remember though that our prayers are not guaranteed an instant answer. The theology of such praying is complex but there are many examples where prayers have been answered. It is still worth a try, though. Having a public period of silence [as on Remembrance Day] helps to forge a sense of community and gets media attention.

It is easy to feel just overwhelmed by all the misery around us- such is life. But we need to consider our own mental well-being. None of us can take on the burdens of worrying about world crises, poverty at home and the impact of climate change- single-handed as a permanent crusade. We should be grateful that in this country people are healthier, materially much better, better fed and with a plethora of opportunities for travel and self-fulfilment. The Finns can offer good advice on keeping happy. This all seems somewhat frivolous but taking delight in the beauty of nature [and holiness], and our friendships and relationships give us the strength to address other less pleasant issues. Living for the moment, having bucket lists and perhaps above all a sense of **Faith** [however hard it is to define or seek out] can be an essential survival strategy on our journey through life. A smile towards someone down on their luck, albeit such a small gesture should not be discounted. Comic

Relief started to address the problems of poverty and has blossomed over the years in its impact. Something similar might do the same for post war reconstructions?

As a footnote: the iron laws of history do show that all wars end sometime and political careers end in tears and hubris rules OK. So perhaps there is some hope for the future...!

SHOWING OF "THE LINE WE CROSSED"

BY STEVE HORNBY

Hi Everyone

We showed the first pre-screenings of this documentary film about repressive protest laws in April 2025 at Mount Street Meeting House.

The laws continue to worsen as this government proceeds. I am not sure they yet realize that the laws they are passing will be used against THEM too after the next election. That is what history teaches us. Martin Niemoller phrased it far better than I could ever attempt to.

[The Line We Crossed – Page75 Productions](#)

With just 2 screenings we got over 200 attendees at Mount St. After constructive feedback from this and other pre-screenings the film has been tightened (ie shortened) and further work has been done on the sound.

The film is now on general release and it is imperative for the film maker Liz Smith that screenings are full in order for her to encourage as many independent cinemas as possible to show the film.

https://open.substack.com/pub/lizsmithpage75/p/touring-with-the-line-we-crossed?r=6px2k&utm_medium=ios

The first screening in London at the weekend was sold out, as will be the showing in Bath this Wednesday night. There are showings at independent cinemas all over the country in the coming weeks.

There is a showing next Tuesday evening 15th July in Leigh. Can you please spread the word far and wide amongst your personal contacts and in Notices so that Liz can get this and other showings sold out too. I have not yet seen the final version, so I will be going to the showing in Leigh and taking a friend. Tickets are inexpensive.

<https://www.leighfilmfactory.com/film.php?id=407>

Eventually Liz will be able to persuade **HOME** to screen the film in central Manchester, and hopefully ultimately get one of the main broadcasters to show it on national TV.

Hope you can help Liz in her endeavours.

Please contact me if you need any more info.

Go well. In Peace and Friendship

Steve Hornby <sh350l@gmail.com>

ECCLES LOCAL MEETING Autumn Activities

Proposed to have a **quaker lunch on Sunday, 28 Sept. 2025 at Eccles Meeting House**. All are welcome to this event, which is informal but will include music, poetry and good food.

Eccles Quakers welcomes everybody to our **Arts-Crafts Workshops**, which continue with a sewing series. All welcome!

Friday, September 5, 2025, 4-6 pm

Making Quilts, A Peaceful Art. Led by Ruth Turnock. We supply all materials to introduce quilting, share our ideas, and practice on some small projects.

Venue: the Garden Room, Eccles Meeting house back garden, heated rooms, tea/juice are supplied, disabled friendly.

Friday, Oct. 3, Quilt Making on Bigger Scale. How to plan a quilt. More info about the Quaker Tapestry at Kendal. We supply some starter materials. A special visitor will share ideas.

Venue: the Garden Room, Eccles Meeting house back garden, heated: Juice/tea are supplied, disabled friendly.

Friday, Nov. 7, Sewing by Crochet Methods. Toys, clothes and decorations. We share skills and you will learn stitches. All materials supplied. A special visitor will share ideas.

Venue: the Garden Room, Eccles Meeting house in the back garden, tea/juice are supplied, disabled friendly.

* * *

We plan **three Quaker Study Groups**. Open to all, these are in our warm, welcoming Main Building from 5-7 pm, including tea and vegan snacks.

Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025, 5-7pm How We Read The Bible, aimed at a wide audience. Quakers are led by Keith Archer to consider the Bible in its context and as stories. All who come can share their views on this controversial topic. Pizza snack.

Venue: tea room at Eccles Quaker Meeting House, Off Wellington Road, Eccles. A small-scale, disability-friendly, safeguarded environment.

Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025 5-7pm Sharing Our Thoughts on a Bible Story. The group will choose a passage, and Keith Archer will facilitate a discussion. Samosa snack. All welcome.

Venue: tea room at Eccles Quaker Meeting House, Off Wellington Road, Eccles. A small-scale, disability-friendly, safeguarded environment.

Thursday, Nov. 20th, 5-7pm What is the Ignatius Method? An open discussion. An informal study group discussing a method of reflection and discernment. Salad snack. All welcome.

Venue: tea room at Eccles Quaker Meeting House, Off Wellington Road, Eccles. A small-scale, disability-friendly, safeguarded environment.

Plastic is Everywhere

by Diane Lewin

Plastic is everywhere.

An article from 'Conversations' by Dr Alan Jamieson
Found animals loaded with organic pollutants in the Mariana Trench.

Tested species of amphipods (scavenger crustaceans) between 7000 and 10000 metres in depth and all were loaded with persistent organic pollutants (POPS) .

In deep sea they are hydrophobic (bind to ' not water').
Take the pollutant PCB's from 1940 to 1970 used in paints, plastic etc. Now 35 % have been released into the environment, invulnerable to natural degradation.

The deepest place on Earth, the bottom of the Mariana Trench continues to host masses of contaminated amphipods.
POP's were banned in 2001 at Stockholm Convention but we now have plastic microbeads in our oceans and plastics will continue to be found in the deepest trench at 11 kilometres plus down. Mount Everest fits into the Trench with room to spare so yes, plastic gets everywhere.

LAST DAY OF PLAYGROUP AT SALE MEETING HOUSE by Janet Roberts



This is a photo of Park Road Playgroup leaders on the last day of term, and the final day for the playgroup, which was formed more than six decades ago, and sadly, now is closing. The playgroup was started by four ladies in Sale including our Friend Pat Lee of Sale Quaker Meeting, and for the first few years was run in their private homes. They moved into Sale FMH nearly sixty years ago, and not long after, Irene joined the team, and has continued to run the playgroup as we know it for many years. Pat Lee had a close interest in the group for the rest of her life. Sale Friends have enjoyed the close association and will miss both the children and the Playgroup leaders who have breathed life into Sale FMH five mornings a week in term time for so long. This is a photograph of the current staff, some of whom have continued in this job for a very long time. Left to right Elspeth, Sarah, Irene and Sarah.

COURT ACTION OVER PALESTINE ACTION

(from an email received from CAAT)

On Monday 21st July, CAAT (Campaign Against Arms Trade) will be in court to support the Judicial Review seeking to overturn the proscription of Palestine Action.

This is a dark time for democracy and a dark time for all those of us wanting to take action against the arms trade.

Prior to proscription, support for Palestine Action was widespread. It crossed movements, ages, classes and ethnicities. People who wouldn't themselves climb on top of an arms factory roof supported those that did, including those who don't attend marches or other campaigning events.

This support didn't disappear overnight. It meant tens, if not hundreds of thousands of people, woke up on the morning of 5th July as potential terrorist sympathisers, confused and afraid about what this means. *This is unprecedented.*

These are scary times. It is impossible to underestimate the chilling impact of a proscription or predict how different police forces will react. Just in the last two weeks we've seen South Wales police detain people holding signs in support of Palestine Action, including two people in their 80s, for 36 hours while house raids were carried out. In Kent, one woman was threatened with arrest under terrorism laws for a legal pro-Palestinian protest. Meanwhile, Police Scotland charged

one man with terrorism for wearing an "action is needed for Palestine" t-shirt, and arrested Shut Down Leonardo Edinburgh activists for terrorism for an action at Leonardo's Edinburgh factory. We urge everyone to [read the resources](#) our friends at Netpol are compiling and attend a Green and Black Cross [Know Your Rights Training](#).

We're not going to lie and say that this fear isn't felt by all of us at CAAT.

But with this fear also comes determination and affirmation of our commitments to our values and purpose. In September, DSEI - the UK's largest arms fair - returns to London. We will not let this monstrosity of death and destruction happen without opposition, and Stop the Arms Fair will release details of protests and events happening across the two weeks soon. DSEI is our opportunity to come together across our movements to show how we won't be deterred from taking action against the arms trade, and we hope as many of you as possible will be able to join us in London to oppose DSEI.

We will not stay silent while our government continues to supply spare parts for F-35 jets, via the global stockpile, even after admitting there is a clear risk that Israel will use them to commit war crimes and that Israel is not committed to complying with international humanitarian law.

The government's own [Export Control Joint Unit](#) found that "it is uncontentionous that conduct which could, in principle, satisfy the physical

component of genocide continues to take place in Gaza".

Despite this, the high court ruled that it would not comment on whether the government is breaching international law with this unprecedented exemption because it claims that the relevant international law is not enshrined in domestic law.

Our government and our courts are failing us. Instead of taking the only legal and moral option available to them - imposing a full two-way arms embargo - a Labour government is criminalising people doing what they feel is necessary to stop a genocide as terrorists.

There is a long-standing powerful history of direct action and civil disobedience in the peace and anti-war movement, directly targeting the tools of war and disarmament actions, and these are an important and widely-supported parts of this cause. CAAT is a proud supporter of this movement, one that long pre-dates Palestine Action, and will continue post-proscription.

So our message is clear.

We will continue supporting groups taking action against the arms trade. Direct action against genocide profiteers and accomplices is not terrorism, and our solidarity with the Palestinian people's freedom and liberation struggle is not terrorism.

We hope you will join us. In solidarity, *The CAAT team*

SALE IN JULY



The AM Burial Ground at Sale in July



View from upstairs at Sale FMH



Another view from upstairs at Sale FMH



To the right, the multi-stemmed Lime tree has been pollarded at 4 metres!



The AM Burial Ground at Sale in July



Graham Cragge put in extra time to clear some of the brambles. Great job done!

Photos by Janet Roberts

MESSAGE FROM STOCKPORT FOR PEACE

To mark the 80th anniversary of the nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki we'll have stalls on Saturday 9th August 9.30 to 10.45am on Market Street, Marple, then 11.30 to 1pm on Lancashire Bridge, end of Merseyway, Stockport. Please join us.



REPORT ON EXPO AT NEC BIRMINGHAM JULY 9TH -10TH 2025

by Sandra Dutson

You might wonder at my attendance at this event and how it links in any way with Quaker witness. It is because batteries, like many commonly used items in the modern world are so little understood by many of us. We are ignorant of the growing demand for them for the green transition but also for weaponry, space exploration and other often more questionable uses. Increasing awareness of the mined materials in batteries, hence electric cars amongst many other things, is important. Please do read on

Since 2022 I have attended this event, held annually. It is billed as ONE EVENT. FOUR CONNECTED INDUSTRIES. These are advanced material, advanced ceramics, battery cells and systems and vehicle electrification. I heard initially of the Expo via a promotion notice in an on line newsletter 'Plugged in' produced by my electricity supplier 'Good energy'. I was interested as it related to my involvement in the Conflict Minerals Campaign and also more widely in environmental concerns. Although it is intended mainly for academics, business people and people in relevant industries including start up companies I go as a Quaker and tick a box about my interest as 'supply chain'. So far I have not incurred any costs to going and feel free to ask questions at the Panel events and of the individual exhibitors.

This year in addition to the 2 days of the EXPO there was an opportunity the day before to visit and be shown around the Battery Britain Midlands Showcase at Coventry and hear several speakers involved in setting this up.

In all as well as the visit to Battery Britain I went to around 8 of the Panel discussions. At any one time in the huge space at the NEC there can be around 4 or 5 panel and speaker events. I also visited several of the small exhibition stands (of which there were around 300 in all).

I will not give a full account of every session but try to distil some key messages that emerged for me. I emphasise I am not an expert and this record may contain some inaccuracies.

COLLABORATION.

There is a big emphasis on this. The event is understood as a major networking event to share thinking and ideas. At the visit to the Battery Britain event at Coventry it was stressed that the centre in Coventry had originally involved both Labour and Conservative councillors working together. There is a strong conviction there is need for a UK Battery business and this means bringing together politicians, academics, investors and businesses. The big question seemed to be around whether some sort of Chinese connection was helpful and though some were supportive of links many not.

DEMAND FOR BATTERIES.

- There is undoubtedly huge and growing demand for batteries globally. This is in part related to green transition technology but also robotics, drones and defence demands.
- China dominates the market.

UK BATTERY INDUSTRY ISSUES.

UK is attempting to develop its own Industry and a major issue is how to gain control of whole supply chain.

- In terms of minerals the plan seems to become self sufficient in minerals by 2050. This requires some mining, especially for lithium, in UK and then recycling or reusing existing minerals in finished products. It was acknowledged the Auto industry is largely ignorant of the Mining industry.
- This in turn requires emphasis on circular economy, designing for sustainability so repair and 2nd life are fundamental.

- At present some parts of recycling processes are not possible in the UK

IMPORTANCE OF INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY, INCLUDING CRITICAL MINERAL STRATEGY.

- There is now a UK Industrial Strategy and batteries are one of priorities.
- Government policies and regulation are vital for consumer confidence and investors.
- Investment is particularly needed at the scaling up stage of development. It is harder to obtain than at innovation stage.
- Coventry could be scaled up to giga standards as one of a few other development hubs following example of China.

REGULATION.

Though there may be too many and proliferating regulations they are generally vital for safety, fairness and sustainability reasons.

The European Battery Passport which will be in place by Feb 2027 will ensure the following are documented:

- Carbon footprint.
- Sourcing of materials
- Recyclability
- Performance.

It is not clear whether this will apply to batteries made in the UK but there seemed some consensus about aligning with the EU.

Higher standards re labour costs and materials mean higher costs.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES RE EVS. (Chinese call them 'new energy vehicles').

Demand issues.

- Cost and purchase model (ownership or lease)
- Owners of fleets want reassurance comprehensive charging infrastructure.
- Only 60% of UK homes have their own driveway (so providing household charging facilities not possible)
- Cost of energy.
- Availability of steel.
- Some changes in lifestyle may be off putting.

Impact of Tariffs. Encouragement of local may be good?

SPACE EXPLORATION AND SATELLITE USE.

I just went to part of a session on this but feel important to be aware

239 launches of just one rocket during course of year in increasingly likely and mean more satellites may be in orbit as launching them becomes cheaper.

INTERACTIVE SESSIONS.

These were held in separate area and I attended one, 'How do we build a supply chain that's future proof and competitive?'

I had to book to attend this and was very disappointed by low numbers interested. I did meet 3 interesting people all from an organisation called CRU: www.crugroup.com

Some of what they shared on basis of research claimed to be independent:

- recycling of all minerals possible by 2045.
- 80% batteries in China no longer contain cobalt (of interest as high percentage of cobalt mined in DRC)

- Copper is vital
- Cost of recycling is still very great.

We did talk around my concerns re DRC and queries re whether huge demand is really justified. They were interested and seemed to suggest should be some focus on processing element of supply chain, mostly even almost exclusively done in China.

DISPLAY STAND FOR CAWLEYS LITHIUM BATTERY RECYCLING SOLUTIONS. Interesting conversation with one of people at the stand. Very knowledgeable about the shredding deconstruction and segregation of fractions. Still some fractions sent elsewhere for final part of process.

Generally there seemed more focus on recycling than re-use.
If you are interested in a wider discussion please get in touch.



RHS GARDEN BRIDGEWATER

SALFORD COUNCIL CALLS FOR SUSTAINED CEASEFIRE IN DRC

by Sandra Dutson

This was a motion brought before Salford City Council on July 16th 2025. It was passed unanimously.

Sustain the Ceasefire, Facilitate Peace and Aid to Address the Humanitarian Crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) To be moved by Councillor Yolande Gholá and seconded by Councillor Mishal Saeed.

A ceasefire has recently been announced in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), offering hope for an end to one of the world's longest and most severe humanitarian crises. For over three decades, conflict and political instability claimed thousands of lives daily and displaced millions. Violence has left families without food, shelter, healthcare, or education. Women and children have suffered horrific abuses, including rape. The UNHCR raised alarm over the worsening situation.

This is not just a Congolese issue - it's a regional and international crisis. The international community must act through diplomacy, cooperation, and African-led peace processes to ensure protection for civilians and accountability for those responsible for violence.

As a City of Sanctuary, we must stand in solidarity and support a lasting ceasefire, humanitarian aid and respect for international law. The people of Congo deserve lasting peace, dignity, and the chance to rebuild their lives.

The UK government released statements (linked below) outlining the measures it will take to address the humanitarian crisis. This is welcomed, but more must be done to ensure meaningful impact, sustained humanitarian aid, and long term support for peace and stability in the DRC. This motion calls on the City Mayor, Paul Dennett, to write to the Foreign Office to ask for:

- Continued efforts to implement a lasting peace process and tangible support for the people affected through this crisis;
- Provide a detailed update on the measures the UK government committed to undertake to address the crisis;
- Review the effectiveness of the approach taken and explore what additional measures can be taken to ensure peace and stability. The motion also calls upon this Council to:
 - Raise awareness about this longstanding international conflict;
 - Ensure that any Congolese residents in our communities are well supported.

UK HM Government Statement - June 2025



Councillor Yolande Amana-Ghola, who moved the motion.

(I interviewed her in the March 2023 AM newsletter - Editor.)

FUTURE OF CONFLICT ADVISORY GROUP

by Elizabeth Coleman

I am the sole remaining member of Conflict Advisory Group, now that Robert Wilson has completed his last task, taking responsibility for the Building Transformative Relationships workshop, when I was ill in hospital. Area Meeting thinks the group is useful, but Nominations Committee has failed to find enough people in our AM to form a strong group.

Area Meeting agreed at its July meeting to approach neighbouring AMs to ask them to nominate one or more people. The group will still report to M&WAM. There is no fixed workload, so the activity level of the group can depend on the time and people available. A group of 3 people would be fine. I am happy to continue to serve, though my contribution will be limited by poor health.

Area Meeting agreed that the purpose of the group is:

- 1) To help members and attenders to be more skilled in dealing with conflict at its early stages, so as to prevent major problems from arising. This could be done through workshops, written materials, encouraging people to go on Woodbrooke workshops etc.
- 2) Being able to signpost people where they want someone to help them to deal with a conflict in their meeting. CAG members might do this themselves, or be aware of who can help, and perhaps encourage people to train to help.

One advantage of having a group that is not exclusively M&W people is that it can be better to have someone you don't know to help you deal with conflict.



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

MANCHESTER MUSEUM



HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI ATOMIC BOMBINGS 80th ANNIVERSARY CIVIC COMMEMORATIVE EVENT

Wednesday, 6th August 2025, 11.30am – 12.30pm
Foyle Education Classroom, Top Floor, Level 3, Manchester Museum,
University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL



Outline Order of Ceremony

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 11.30am | Official welcome and introductions |
| 11.35am | Why are we here today? Remembering Hiroshima & Nagasaki 80 years on |
| 11.40am | Readings – the importance of the gingko tree to the people of Hiroshima and Manchester |
| 12.00pm | Observance of a Minute's Silence for all innocent civilian victims of conflict |
| 12.01pm | Mayors for Peace Joint Appeal led by the Mayors of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Manchester |
| 12.05pm | Readings –
Hiroshima by Agyega
August 6 th by Sankichi Tōge
Let Us Be Midwives by Sadako Kurihara
Let There Be Peace by Lemn Sissay |
| 12.20pm | The UN Peace Affirmation |
| 12.30pm | Conclusion – please feel free to look at the Hiroshima Peace exhibition in the Living Worlds Gallery and other parts of Manchester Museum – European Museum of the Year 2025 |

There is lift access to the top floor for those that need to use them. Please ask at the main reception for directions to the lifts and the Foyle Education Suite Classroom.

Nagasaki Atomic Bombing Commemoration

Join us in Heaton Park for our yearly Nagasaki commemoration organised in collaboration with Mayors for Peace and Nuclear Free Local Authorities.

The gathering will involve the Bolton Clarion Choir, reflections from peace activists, the laying of the bouquet by the Deputy Lord Mayor, and several readings.

Saturday 9th August 2025, 2-3pm

Western Pleasure Grounds, (next to the Stables Café Complex), Heaton Park, Manchester M25

ODL

The Future of Our Meeting House Properties: Next Steps

Wendy Hampton has moved on and is no longer our Regional Development Officer. (She has been replaced by Alison Tarpey-Black.) However, she agreed to do one major task for us after leaving the post. She agreed to facilitate meetings with each LM to discuss the future of our premises. This was brought about when all our Meeting Houses were surveyed, and it was realized that a huge amount of money (over £550,000) was needed for repairs. We began to question if we could afford our Meeting Houses.

All the meetings with Wendy have now taken place, and reports of each have been circulated.

As a next step, Area Meeting agreed at its July meeting to set up a small group comprising one Friend from each Local Meeting to consider the accounts received, in the light of the requirements of both financial and spiritual sustainability, and to bring their discernment on a way forward to the next Area Meeting on 2.10.2025.

Robert Wilson has agreed to co-ordinate this group meeting and Local Meeting Clerks are asked to pass the name of their appointed Friend to him.

We are very grateful to Wendy Hampton for the work she has undertaken on our behalf on this matter. She has encouraged us not to feel that we need to make rushed decisions, and it is important that Friends are in unity about any action to be taken.

AREA MEETING DATES

Thursday October 2nd - 6:30 for 7pm Central Manchester and online (hybrid)

Tuesday December 2nd - 6:30 for 7pm start by zoom only

GREEN LEAF AID FOR KINSHASA

I have asked our Administrator, Mary Atkinson, to send the Green Leaf newsletter out with this AM newsletter. Green Leaf is a charity that supports children in Kinshasa, DRC, who would otherwise be street homeless. The vast majority of its funding so far has come from Quaker meetings and individuals.



John Dalton, a Manchester Quaker

FOR YOUR DIARIES – EVENT ON 5 OCTOBER AT MOUNT ST

Sue Johnson draws our attention to this:

I would like to report on arrangements for a Human Rights event being held at CM Meeting house on Sunday 5th October. 'It's a 70 mins song cycle performance created and sung by the descendants of a Nuremberg prosecutor and lawyer who was a key player in the creation of the European Convention on Human rights ECHR 75 years ago. The songs are based on his letters and poetry'.

The occasion is to mark the 75 th anniversary of the Convention on Human Rights. Sue and others had met the family group who perform the cycle at the vigil.

Following some discussion earlier in the day between Sue, Val, Steve and Mary from the office at Mount St the proposal was as follows:

- The performance would be held at CM Meeting house on Sunday 5th October at 2pm
- There is no charge but a collection for Amnesty International would be held
-
- It might be linked with 2 other possible events at the Meeting House.
 - i) The Conservative Party Conference
 - ii) An Amnesty exhibition of up to 45 panels re the history, art and agriculture

CONFLICT MINERALS CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

The work of CMC has been disrupted because of armed violence in the areas where we work. However, Joel Amani organized a 2-day meeting in Bukavu.



Joel explaining the acronym CMC to the participants of the meeting.



In the current context where the eastern part of the DRC is under the yoke of the rebels, it was an opportunity to bring together some stakeholders in the mining sector who have taken refuge in Bukavu, excavating reprisals and

the occupation of the rebels in extractive areas in order to understand how a potentially rich country can remain poor.

Hence the rationale for CMC's hard work to ensure that the Congolese population benefits from its mineral resources in light of the motto "*Let the People in DRC benefit for their wealth*"

The two-day meeting revolved around three questions:

1. What is the impact of the recent conflict on the Congolese mining sector?
2. What do local communities think about the work that is currently being done in the mines?
3. What do they want to communicate to those who, in other countries, use gadgets containing minerals?

Under the moderation and organization of Mr. Joel AMANI, Member of CMC and one of the speakers of this meeting, the meeting was well animated and very enriching, given the participatory approach, the freedom of opinion and the manifest interest of all the participants in the meeting.

**FROM EAST CHESHIRE AM NEWSLETTER –
MEMORIES OF ANGIE SEDDON (WHO USED TO ATTEND
WARRINGTON MEETING)**

Angie (Angela) Seddon
01/07/1967 – 19/05/2025

A funeral was held on Wednesday 10th June for Angie following her death on Monday 19th May.

A Requiem Mass service accompanied by a reading from Barbara Seddon (Angie's sister) was held at St. Monica's Catholic Church in Appleton, followed by a private service for close family at Walton Lea Crematorium.

Refreshments followed at the family home afterwards. Donations to Papyrus UK.

A poem 'God's Garden' was included in the order of service booklet:



God's Garden

God looked around his garden and found an empty place
He then looked down upon the earth and saw your tired face
He put his arms around you and lifted you to rest
God's garden must be beautiful, he always takes the best
He knew that you were suffering, he knew you were in pain
He knew that you would never get well on earth again
He saw the road was getting rough and the hills were hard to climb
So he closed your weary eyelids and whispered 'Peace be thine'
It broke our hearts to lose you, but you didn't go alone
For part of us went with you, the day God called you home.

Angie had an interesting career, she worked in catering and worked for a while in Germany learning Patisserie skills, here she met a friend for life called Birgitt who she has visited in Germany not long before she died.

After her work in catering she did a degree in Social Sciences and became a social worker, she was a champion for the neglected and the under-represented and worked tirelessly to get justice and support for them. She took this role at Wigan Borough Council very seriously.

Later she went on to work on projects around the Wigan area such as a gardening scheme and a craft workshop in a straw bale building for the local community. She continued this work until funding ran out and she was then out of work.

Whilst out of work she continued supporting others by sponsoring others in a 12 step recovery programme.

Angie was a creative and gifted lady – she loved making things out of wood and using colour in creative ways. She enjoyed bringing old things back to life and undertook furniture restoration and home décor.

She loved music passionately and was often to be found enjoying her latest collection or download and dancing about the house. She was an avid reader and enjoyed reading spiritual texts from many sources, a particular favourite being the Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh.

As we know she was a Quaker too – she originally went to Quaker meetings in Warrington for many years, and she loved meetings for worship. Later she returned from a pause to attend Frandley Meeting House where she was delighted to re-kindle her Quaker practice. She found comfort and solace in the silence and the words.

Finally – Angie was a fun-loving, joyful and warm person, who was a kind friend and a listening ear to many, she will be sadly missed.

Gilli Bruce

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If you are not on the mailing list, and would like to be emailed future copies of the Newsletter, (or to stop receiving it,) email Mary Atkinson on admin@manchesterquakers.org.uk with your request.

Please send items for the Newsletter to elizcol@dialstart.net The deadline for newsletters is 5pm on the last day of the month. **The deadline for the September newsletter is 5pm on 31 August.** I put almost everything I receive into the newsletter, with very little editing. Short items with pictures are best. When submitting items for publication, please be aware that the newsletter is a public document, posted on our website, and we do not control who sees it. Think before submitting personal information, email addresses and photos. Try to avoid sending text and photos that are under copyright, and get consent from people in photos if needed.

Look at the website <https://www.manchesterquakers.org.uk> under “Newsletters and Events” if you’d like to see back-issues.

If you want to make contact with anyone who writes in the newsletter, and no contact details are given, email me elizcol@dialstart.net and I’ll forward your email to them.

Please feel free to forward the AM Newsletter and/or the Green Leaf Newsletter to anyone who may be interested.

Elizabeth Coleman, Editor 07969 385080