QUAKERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

AUTUMN 2019 EDITORIAL

Welcome to our Autumn 2019 edition. In the month before going to press the public were presented with a statement from Boris Johnston advising that he felt that the solution for crime was to increase stop and search powers and add an additional 10,000 new prison spaces in UK prisons. We are fortunate to have a support community within QICJ to help us challenge views like this and to offer us guidance and understanding as we attempt to navigate an ever changing criminal justice system.

In this mid period between our annual conferences the newsletter is our key way to stay in touch with other QICJ members. So it's important that this publication includes the voices of as many members as possible. To this end we hope that you will all consider drafting an article for inclusion in a future edition. Articles don't have to be lengthy or have a particular format. Mark Humphries has helpfully drafted a number of the articles in this edition of the newsletter, but it shouldn't have to fall on his shoulders.

We do however have some great articles in this edition covering everything from managing life in prison as an LGBT prisoner, through to coping with the challenges faced by, and motivations for being a prison chaplain. There is poetry from the prisoners in HMP Magilligan and a number of updates on recent changes.

Excitingly we have an announcement on the theme for next year's conference...but you'll have to reach the near end of the newsletter for that :-)

Jonathan Lamb
Co-Editor


Jonathan & Mark (co-editors)

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A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE

In my role as part of the editorial team I thought that it would be interesting to have some voices from those involved within criminal justice, and inside the prison system write a few words for our Newsletter. What follows is an edited piece taken from two emails that were sent to me.



From Scotland, Clare writes…

I'd like to say a few words about Dumfries Prison.
It is not typical, in that it is small, under 200 inmates, and provides special accommodation for sex offenders, many historical, and vulnerable prisoners such as ex- policemen etc, although it has its fair share of young short timers. My involvement with the prison goes back several years following a tour given by the then Governor. I found the place quite inspirational in the dedication of the staff and the humanity and respect shown to the men in their care.

The Independent Prison Monitoring, which used to be known , rather confusingly, as The Prison Visiting Committee, underwent some radical changes a few years ago, amid fears that prisoner rights were being reduced. Hopefully that hasn't been the case. The whole procedure was rather hasty and under resourced and there have been some teething problems which have meant that I have taken time to settle into the job. Perhaps in time I will be able to update you on how things are going.
As a Monitor my role is to observe and report on all the procedures in the prison and how they impact on prisoner welfare. I also to meet with prisoners who feel that the prison staff are not addressing a particular problem. As an independent group we need to build up the trust of the prisoners, which is not always easy as many expect complete satisfaction in their case; and we cannot guarantee that.
As an independent voice I am somewhat limited in any voluntary work I would like to do in the prison as it could be seen as a conflict of interests, but I try to attend the special events such as fun days , gardening / art exhibitions etc and when I see the benefits brought to prisoners and their families by such dedicated staff I see no harm in broadcasting it.

The senior staff I have met clearly see the worth and potential of the men they work with. It must be so discouraging to see the young short term prisoners returning to the same difficulties on the outside that contributed to them being on the inside in the first place.

Thank you Clare, and we hope to hear more from you as you settle into the role.

Mark Humphries/Clare

BEING A QUAKER IN PRISON

Having a faith can be challenging to many of us. There are things that we see in our communities around that cause concern, and then we question what should we be doing about it. In prison this is no different, and I have spoken with men (predominantly) from all walks of life and with a vast array of faiths.

The one thing that I like about being in prison is that (despite what the media says) there is a community of like-minded people, and when they get together things happen. For me, as a Quaker, that has meant inclusion. It has been a great honour for me to get those prisoners who were my peers, and were marginalised to get involved in what was going on around their wing or the prison as a whole. What amazed me about this was the amount of so called ‘faces’ around the jail that welcomed this input; and then how the dynamics of a wing changed.

The last part of my sentence was served on a unit that was set up in partnership with the NHS to treat prisoners with Personality Disorders and those that had completed their offending behaviour work and wanted to test out their new found skills. My role on this unit was varied, but gave me a greater say in what we did as prisoners.

This unit created an environment of trust and enabled the residents to try new activities. As a writer I was able to set up a Creative Writing group and found that many of my peers created some life-changing poetry; others were able to express themselves in a visual way using art. One man even started to create hand-crafted greeting cards which he then sold to other inmates and staff.

Since leaving the unit and moving out of prison I have often been drawn back here with my thoughts and quiet times. There is a piece in QF&P (21.07) that says ‘It is by our ‘imperfections’ that we move towards each other, towards wholeness in relationship. It is by our oddities, our grittiness, the occasions when we hurt or are hurt, that challenge us to a deeper knowledge of each other… (Kenneth C Barnes, 1985). This piece is such a foundation for me now, and I guess it is the way that I see that of God in all of us.

Mark Humphries

AN INSIDE JOB BEHIND BARS

When I was appointed Quaker chaplain at Chelmsford prison I had to take a training course which included a session on security. The prison officer instructing us said, 'Your only physical contact with a prisoner is a firm hand shake with outstretched arm. Any questions?' A tiny, white-haired nun on the multi-faith chaplaincy team asked, 'Sometimes a prisoner will ask me to lay hands on him and say a healing prayer – would that be permissible.' The officer roared, 'The only people who lay 'ands on the prisoners in 'ere are us – and it is not with the purpose of 'ealing.'



I was authorised to carry a radio and keys and my responsibilities included collecting prisoners from their cells and taking them to groups and other activities. Each Tuesday morning the chaplaincy team held a three-hour Open Door discussion group. Its aim: 'To provide a place, time and space in which issues affecting the human person can be discussed and listened to with respect'. The intention is to promote and foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of these values in both the personal and wider community areas. Material was taken from Hebrew and Christian scripture but not exclusively and the readings stimulated discussion on problems and little victories the men encountered in their time behind bars. Chelmsford is a Category B Local and Young Offenders Institute and at one group a young chap asked me to take him out of the group to use the toilet. When we reached the top of the stairs he stopped and said, 'I don't want to go to the toilet – I just want to cry.' He told me his gran, who had brought

him up as a boy, had just died and his heart was breaking so he wanted to cry, ‘But I can’t show the other blokes I’m crying,’ he said. So I stood beside him as he wept.

I was helping to take a group of Muslim prisoners to their morning prayers in the multi-faith chapel one Friday when the officer walking next to me said, ‘If they’re so bloody holy, what are they doing in here in the first place.’ It didn’t occur to him that maybe it was because they were in prison that they needed to pray.

Among my other duties I escorted prisoners to Wednesday night meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The Anglican priest who led the chaplaincy team was concerned that vulnerable prisoners (VPs) with a drink problem were unable to attend the meetings because they had to be segregated for their own safety. He asked the governor to provide a secure space for the VPs to have their own meeting. As an AA member myself I always asked if I could attend the meetings too and was never refused. It was an unwritten rule that you did not ask a prisoner why he was behind bars though some volunteered the information when they spoke in the meetings. During my service in the prison time and again I heard men say they could not remember the offence that led to their sentence – it had happened while they were in an alcoholic black-out. It is heart warming occasionally to see and greet ex-prisoners ‘on the out’.



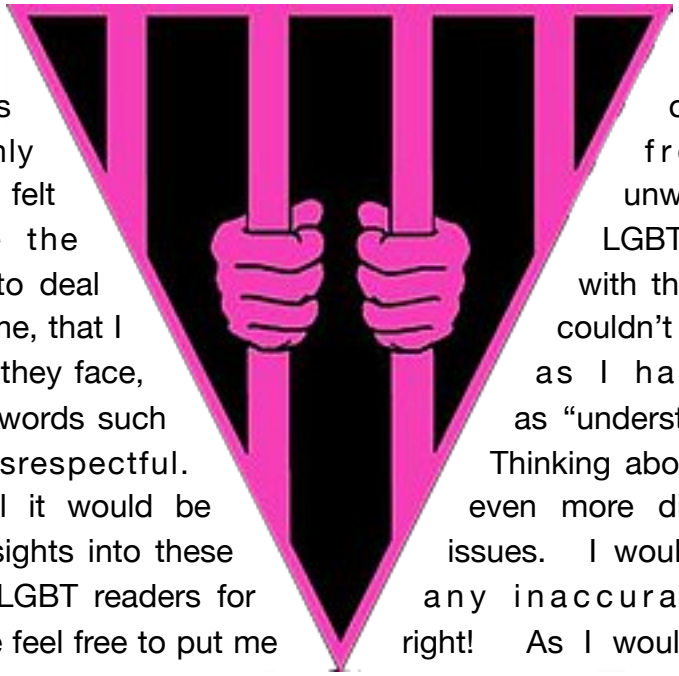
The very first AA prison group met at San Quentin corrective institution, California, in 1941. AA in Great Britain has been carrying the message inside the walls for 50 years, starting at Wakefield, Yorkshire, and Barlinnie, near Glasgow, and now holds meetings in 103 prisons.

In a letter to a prison group in 1949 AA co-founder Bill W. wrote, ‘Every AA has been, in a sense, a prisoner. Each of us has walled himself out of society; each has known social stigma. The lot of you folks has been even more difficult: In your case, society has also built a wall around you. But there isn’t any really essential difference, a fact that practically all AAs know. Therefore, when you members come into the world of AA on the outside, you can be sure that no one will care a fig that you have done time. What you are trying to be – not what you were – is all that counts with us.’

Laurie A

LGBT IN PRISON

I have often pondered within the words I write, the emotional and practical difficulties of prison and beyond, but mainly from a personal standpoint. I have felt unworthy in many ways, to really explore the LGBT. issues that exist, as I have not had to deal with them on an individual level. It just felt to me, that I couldn't really do justice to the many problems they face, as I hadn't "lived" the experience. Using words such as "understanding", seemed in a way almost disrespectful. Thinking about this the past few days though, I feel it would be even more disrespectful, not to share my limited insights into these issues. I would ask however, the forgiveness of any LGBT readers for any inaccurate thoughts or conclusions. Please feel free to put me right! As I would genuinely like to understand more.



I have never had an issue with anybody's sexual identity. Before entering prison in 2011 though, maybe by pure coincidence, or maybe by the fact that only recently has it become slightly easier to "come out", I had had very little contact with anybody who identified as LGBT. I was somewhat taken aback in prison, finding a seemingly large percentage of people identifying themselves as such, disclosed by openness, trusted friendships, or confidentially within the Listener environment. In hindsight, I should not have been that surprised, as prison is a microcosm of society.

Upon socialising more with this group, I came to have a little insight into the pressures and stresses of such an existence in a community that can be intolerant. When I think of the things sex-offenders have to deal with, such as loss, guilt, shame, and the real difficulty of being accepted back into society, I believe the dilemmas of any LGBT ex-offender is on another level entirely when they have these extra stigmas to deal with both in custody and on release.

I especially connected with two people at my last prison, and both were able to articulate these issues very well. The first was gay, and felt more comfortable not advertising the fact. Just simply wanting to live his life as a person, which I can

understand. This very much correlated with the second person, a lady called M. As transgender, she too just wanted to be accepted for who she was, but had the additional problem that her sexual identity could not be kept “personal” in the same way; her clothing was part of her identity. Beyond the abuse she suffered on a fairly regular basis, and in line with my friends’ thoughts, both felt their progression as IPP’s was much more difficult. There were no suitable courses for transgender people at that time, and both thought their sexual identity increased their risk in the eyes of some. I am no psychologist, but do feel they were right to an extent. Even if it is subconscious, and we are all human. I perceive it would be easy for some in the system to connect an unconventional sexual identity, to offending and risk in some way. I am not aware of any published connection, and can’t relate to that sort of logic, but would be interested in hearing any thoughts on the subject from those within the system.



Two more facts of prison life were further illuminated within these verbal exchanges. The first is a little sensitive, and I must convey it was a minority problem, but was also a truth. It wasn’t unheard of, for people to claim mental health problems or violence issues to get a single cell, or claim to have dietary needs to try and get better food, or convert to another religion to enhance their daily existence. Sexual identification claims were also a real temptation towards trying to access some of the benefits I have

mentioned above, along with trying to avoid participation in programmes. The frustrations of my friend and M were quite vocal on these points, as they felt it could be detrimental to all genuine LGBT prisoners, in having their needs met within the walls and fences of our prisons.

The second fact of prison life was connected to the previous frustration in a way. M was a very strong woman, and felt she had to be quite vocal in seeking those rights for herself and other transgender prisoners. As an IPP though, this can be very difficult. From my own experience, the last thing you must do is make waves, and you feel the pressures of this every day. It is an unnatural existence, as all anger, frustration, and perceived unfairness must be managed within. Towards the end of my time there, I detected that M was starting to acknowledge this. Having to curtail what she thought was right and fair, in deferment to her personal hopes and future.

These problems and stigmas do not confine themselves to inmates. As for some reason, the need to try and ascertain which officers (staff) were of a same sex sexual orientation was quite pronounced. This is especially so for the female officers (staff), who I heard many a derogatory comment being levelled at. I only wished to be treated with respect and non-judgement, and so can't understand this rather hypocritical and confusing approach at all. Possibly it just connects to another issue that is prevalent in prison, that of deflection. The need to verbally attack others, simply being a strategy intended to deflect any unwanted attention away from personal offences or leanings.
In hindsight, I feel I didn't do enough in prison to support the LGBT community, beyond my responsibilities as a Listener and Care Coordinator. Time out of cell is very limited though, and we must all decide how to use this precious time, for the best practical and emotional sustenance of others. I would have liked to stay in touch with my friend and M, but somewhat understandably, we are not allowed to communicate with those we have left behind, either inside or out. I do miss them both even now, as I do many others.

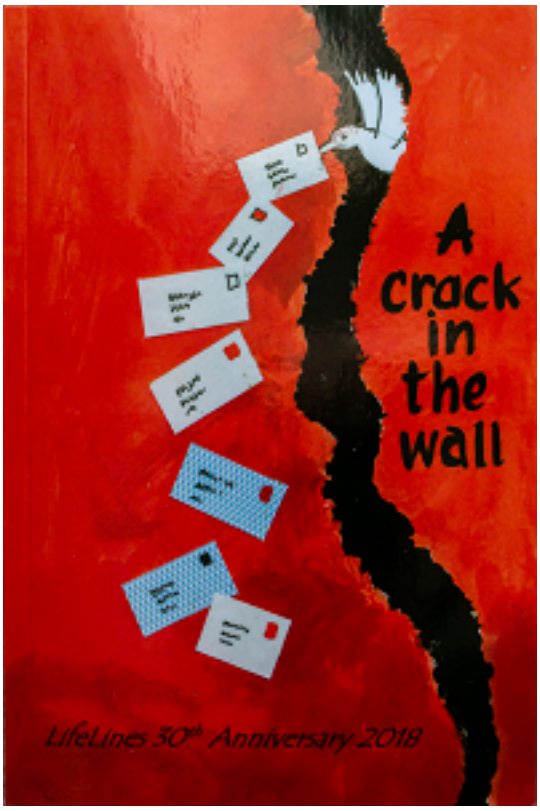
In conclusion, I think a very important perspective must always be at the forefront of our minds. However difficult our journey through prison and beyond the gate, there are always those that will struggle more. For some, this enhanced struggle and enhanced stigma, may simply be a result of their sexual identity or sexual orientation. Something, in our society, they should never feel under pressure to deny.

Steve

EMBRACING OUR BROKENNESS

LifeLines is a UK-based charity whose members correspond with prisoners on death row in the US. It has around 1300 members, most of them in the UK but small numbers in other countries as well. It was founded in Cambridge in 1988, with considerable Quaker input.

LifeLines marked its 30th anniversary last year with the publication of a book entitled A Crack in the Wall. The book consists of contributions from both prisoners and LifeLines members, as well as past conference speakers. The main theme of the book has been to bring out the value of the relationships to both parties concerned.



One of these prisoners, Paul Bolin in San Quentin, has written: "Your book was a great read, many raw emotions and heart-felt outpourings. I've let three other inmates read your book, all loved it. They commented the book as 'the most honest book they've read in quite a while. It shows us as human beings.'" This article is largely drawn from the introduction to that book.

Thirty years is a long time. When I think back to that time, my thoughts inevitably go to the fact that in 1988 Michael Lambrix, with whom I was to correspond for 26 years, had already been on death row for four years. He was to be punished three times over. In the first place, he was to serve what would count as a life sentence in the UK. Secondly, he served it in an utterly soulless steel and concrete cell, with the threat of death hanging over him daily and denied all but the most basic of facilities. As Sam Johnson, who did so much to inspire LifeLines, wrote to me in 1988 from Mississippi, “This place has taken me so low that I have to reach up to touch bottom.” And finally this highly intelligent, gifted writer was executed. When this happened in 2017 Mike had spent 33 years of his life under sentence of death. How this does not constitute cruel and unusual punishment as prohibited under the Eighth Amendment is beyond me.

Few people can have spent waiting longer for death at the hands of the state than Mike, but the length of time he was on death row was not exceptional. With the numbers of executions slowing, more and more inmates can look back on more than 30 years of incarceration. Like Mike, the vast majority can also look back on deeply disturbed childhoods: broken homes, violent and/or alcoholic parents, sexual abuse, broken education, poverty and the general kind of disorientation and dislocation from which few if any are able to emerge unscathed.

But then, like Mike, hitting death row in early adulthood, they can discover a whole new side of themselves. Against the odds, drawing on resources they never knew they had, they take stock of their situation and seek to make something of their lives. They educate themselves, or discover they are artistic. They may face up to the biggie of remorse. In short, they change – but then have virtually no outlet in which this new side of themselves can be expressed. This is where the correspondence has come in and, for many, been a veritable lifeline.

When LifeLines came into being, we felt it was only a matter of time – perhaps a decade or two – before the US would follow the rest of the civilised world and put the iniquity of the death penalty behind it. We were wrong. At the same time, it is fair to say that the death penalty in the US has been on the retreat, and maybe even that LifeLines has contributed towards the change of mood, by helping show that there are human beings on death row, rather than the monsters as the media so often portray them.

Over the years we must have put some six to seven thousand people in the UK and elsewhere in touch with prisoners on death row in the US. The contributions in this book bring out the importance of those relationships to both parties. Many of those accounts are deeply moving and give us genuine pause for thought. Lives have been changed on both sides of the Atlantic, with many saying that the correspondence has been one of the most significant things to have happened to them.

LifeLines came into being because there was a need: the emotional and spiritual void that is Death Row. Nature abhors a vacuum, and so also here; it was almost as though there was a guiding hand. I remember taking a deep breath at our autumn 1990 conference and undertaking to produce a book of prisoners' writings. The contributions poured in and a publisher was miraculously found, and Welcome to Hell was published just nine months later.



One of the chapters concerning the short-lived correspondence between a retired music teacher in Berkshire, Mary Grayson, and Ray Clarke facing execution in Florida formed the subject of a programme in the BBC Everyman series in 1992. Six thousand four hundred people wrote in responding to the appeal for letter-writers. And wrote in the literal sense: this was before the days of email and the internet. Responding to those letters was a massive exercise, but once again we received unexpected assistance, on this occasion from Prisoners Abroad.

In the space of just four years, we were able to say that we could offer a penfriend to every prisoner on death row in the US who wanted one. What had been no more than a gleam in the eye in 1988 had become a reality.

On the face of it, the correspondence could so easily have failed: here were people from very different backgrounds who nevertheless often managed to make a real and deep connection. We learned about the World Series and Thanksgiving. In exchange we shared cricket and afternoon tea. Grandmothers found themselves writing to men in their 20s. Racial divides were spanned. As the contributions in this book show, inmates often became a member of the family across the Pond.



Sister Helen Prejean of Dead Man Walking fame writes that “I cannot think of any living connection between human beings that matters more than LifeLines”. That is quite a statement, and not one she will have made idly. Why, we may ask ourselves, does the connection between prisoners on death row and people on the outside matter so much? Some people would regard the correspondence as bizarre and misguided, if not offensive. I have had people say just that to me. And at one level, I can understand what they mean. We in LifeLines have not ourselves suffered as a result of the actions of those we write to. But it is precisely the connection between “ordinary” human beings and others who have been written off as worthless that is at the heart of what we do. It is saying that we share a common humanity. It is recognising that in different

circumstances, those of us on the outside could be in the same predicament as those we correspond with. It is also a recognition of our common frailties and shortcomings – it is not that we on the outside move effortlessly through life without any problems and kindly extend a helping hand to those in need. Based on the thirty years in which LifeLines has been in existence, it is my conviction that most – perhaps all – of our members write from a place of vulnerability, based on our own limitations and what has happened to us in life. That vulnerability opens the door to compassion.

This is a theme that the US death-row attorney Bryan Stevenson picks up in the book when he writes that “our brokenness is also the source of our common humanity… Embracing our brokenness creates a need for mercy.”

What the prisoners have taught me above all over the years is the way in which light can come from the darkness. As one of our members has written, “I realised I was not only his crack in the wall, he had become mine.” Or as Leonard Cohen’s says in Anthem, “Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack, a crack in everything, that’s how the light gets in.” The letters we exchange pass through that crack, and make it wider.

Jan Arriens

To order A Crack in the Wall, send a cheque for £7.50 payable to Jan Arriens, 17 Castle Street, Bishop’s Castle, SY9 5BU.

UNODC: DRUG POLICIES

Drug policies should be based on health and not on punishment, says UNODC at International Symposium on Drugs

Brasilia, 11 September 2013 - "Disorders related to drug use should be recognized as health problems and treated like any other disease," said the Chief of the Drug Prevention and Health Branch at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Dr. Gilberto Gerra, during the International Symposium on Drugs: From Coercion to Cohesion, held this week at the National Museum of the Republic, in the Brazilian capital.

On Tuesday morning Gerra participated in the first round of discussions of the Symposium, in which he presented scientific evidence on the effectiveness of drug

TREATMENT FOR DRUG ADDICTION SHOULD BE VOLUNTARY, EVIDENCE-BASE, CONFIDENTIAL, AND WITH INFORMED CONSENT

policies based on health, not on punishment. In addition, he stressed that it is essential to recognize vulnerability conditions and end discrimination and stigma associated with drug users.

Referring to the international drug conventions of which UNODC is the guardian, Gerra noted that drug users should not be punished or detained and, when they commit crimes, they should have the option of treatment as an alternative to prison. Treatment for drug addiction should be voluntary, evidence-base, and confidential, and with informed consent: "Medical ethics do not allow treatment without the patient's consent", said Gerra.

According to him, the treatment without the consent of drug users should be only a short-term emergency measure, not exceeding a few days, and applied only in cases of acute intoxication or when the individual may endanger his/her own safety or that of others. "Long-term treatment without consent is expensive and unnecessary. We need affordable and humane treatment in the communities", he added.

Gerra is co-author of the document From coercion to cohesion - Treating drug dependence through health care, not punishment , published by UNODC in 2010, which served as the basis for the organization of the Symposium.

LONG-TERM TREATMENT WITHOUT CONSENT IS EXPENSIVE AND UNNECESSARY. WE NEED AFFORDABLE AND HUMANE TREATMENT IN THE COMMUNITIES

NOTE
from Nicholas McGeorge Friends World Committee for Consultation representative to the UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Commission. I had meeting in April this year in Vienna with Gilberto Gerra, chief of the drugs and health branch of the UNODC. In the staff summary of the meeting, he made two requests for FWCC action:

"- the Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) could be an invaluable partner in disseminating and implementing the International Standards on Drug Use Prevention (accessible here: http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2013/March/unodc-publishes-international-standards-on-drug-use-prevention.html), in particular with regard to prevention efforts geared towards children and their families;

"- the Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) could also raise awareness about the fact that putting drug addicts in prisons is not a viable solution, since many alternative measures (such as community programmes) exist to provide necessary treatment. The Quakers could be instrumental in galvanising a vocal movement, drawing attention to this very important aspect in the process of having criminal justice systems respond in a more effective way to drug addicts. "

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EMPLOYMENT & WELFARE ON RELEASE

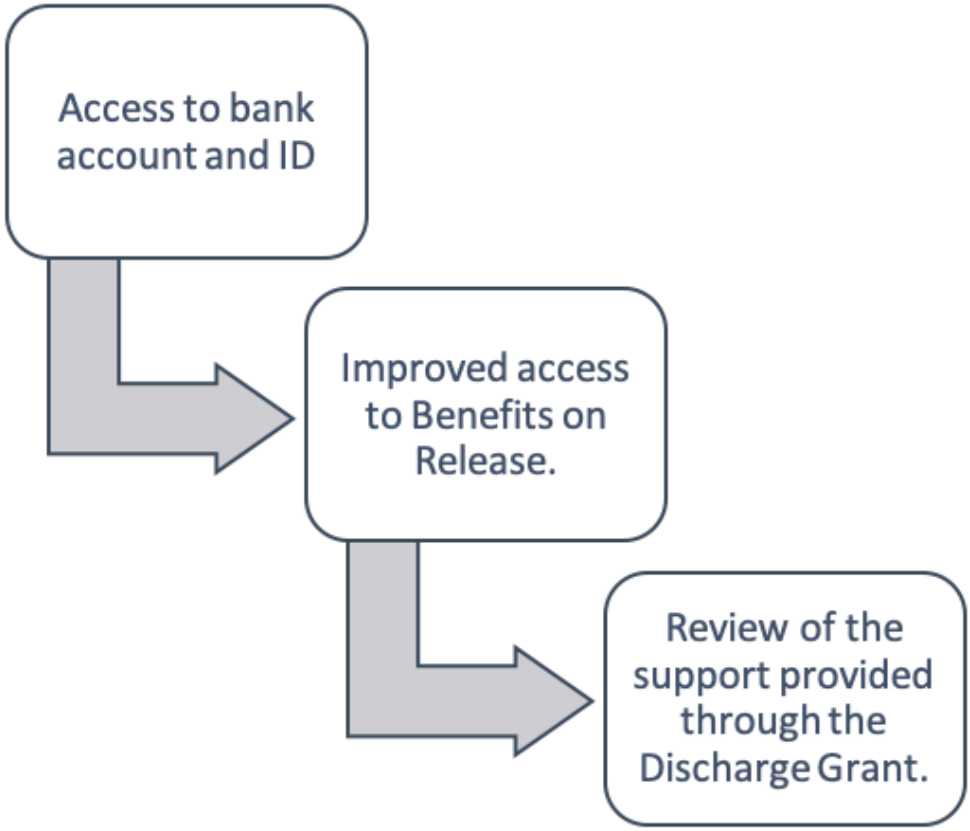
The National Partnership Agreement for Employment and Welfare Support in Custody and in the Community

As many, if not all of you will be aware, getting an ex-prisoner into work is vital for the reduction of re-offending. A recent report by HM Government has looked into this, and set up the above partnership. In this article I will look at what this Partnership aims to deliver.

The Agreement report sent to me by Ministry of Justice (MOJ) sets out to define who will be responsible for what in the Partnership between MOJ, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It also shows an overview of the journey for a prisoner from prison through to release, and identifies where each of the partners need to be involved. At the time of publishing, the Agreement was only set to run from 1st September 2019 through to 31st December 2020. It acknowledges that there will be some need for local variations, and that these will be managed by the Jobcentre Plus (JCP).

The plan is that the Partnership will work within their statutory responsibilities, but must ensure that a join-up between servicers to support the prisoners is effective for all concerned.

The Deliverables:



The Journey: Sentencing

DWP will ensure that all records for claimants are amended, support the continuation of house where applicable and keep in touch with the employer where possible

Prisons will undertake the Basic Custody Screening Tool and share with the DWP data that supports accurate benefit claims.

Probation will identify housing needs, and provide bespoke advice and options.

The Journey: Induction

DWP will provide employment/training support during Induction and throughout the sentence, and then undertake Benefit closure activity.

Prisons will initiate the Keyworker appointments. They will supply education and training required – as signposted by the Information, Advice and Guidance provider.

Probation will work with the prisoner to ensure they have a system of support in place for their release.

The Journey: Sentence

DWP will provide on-going information and advice around employment and their support on offer.

Prisons will ensure that appropriate training and education is available and will promote the use of Release on Temporary Licence to access community support.

Probation will be responsible for the Pre-Release and Post-Release support work, and will ensure that the ID and bank account are in place.



The Journey: Pre-Release

DWP will work with Probation for a handover to ensure working with the local employers etc is accessed. They will support the prisoner with Benefit claim and appointment prior to release.

Prisons will work with New Futures Network and DWP to make links with employers.

Probation will identify housing needs and support the prisoner to secure accommodation. Responsible Officer (Probation Officer) will work with the prisoner to update the pre-release plans and will work with DWP to ensure the prisoner is able to access their support with housing costs etc.

The Journey: The Community

DWP will support the claimants and prepare them to take up employment.
Probation will monitor the prisoner in the community, support them in employment search and starting work. They will ensure that all rehabilitation needs are met.

Mark Humphries

LEGAL AID REVIEW

As many of you will know, in December 2018, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) announced a comprehensive review of criminal legal aid fee schemes.

The MOJ have listened to the legal profession, and have taken into account some of the wider reforms that are already beginning to transform the criminal justice system they believe it is the right time to think more widely about the future of the criminal legal aid fee schemes.

The remit of the review will covers criminal legal aid throughout the life cycle of a criminal case, including:

- pre-charge advice at the police station, advice and advocacy services in the Magistrates' Court and Youth Court, and advice and advocacy for prisoners
- advice and litigation services in the Crown Court through the Litigators' Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS)
- advocacy services in the Crown Court through the Advocates' Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS)
- litigation and advocacy services for very high cost Crown Court cases though the Very High Cost Case (VHCC) Scheme



The review will also consider wider changes to the justice, social, economic, business and technological landscape that are impacting on the criminal legal aid.

What the Review Wants to Achieve:
The review has 2 main outcomes.

(1) To reform the criminal legal aid fee schemes so that they:

- fairly reflect, and pay for, work done
- support the sustainability of the market, including recruitment, retention, and career progression within the professions and a diverse workforce
- support just, efficient, and effective case progression, limit perverse incentives, and ensure value for money for the taxpayer
- are consistent with and, where appropriate enable, wider reforms
- are simple and place proportionate administrative burdens on providers, the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), and other government departments and agencies
- ensure cases are dealt with by practitioners with the right skills and experience

(2) To reform the wider criminal legal aid market to ensure that the provider market:

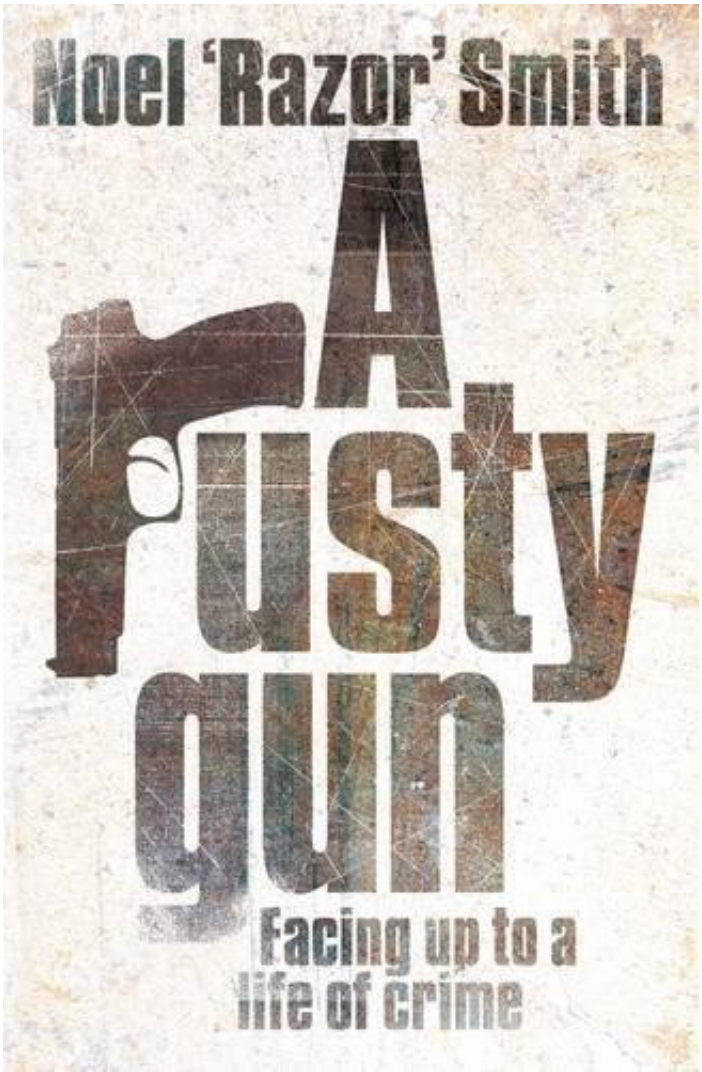
- responds flexibly to changes in the wider system, pursues working practices and structures that drive efficient and effective case progression, and delivers value for money for the taxpayer
- operates to ensure that legal aid services are delivered by practitioners with the right skills and experience
- operates to ensure the right level of legal aid provision and to encourage a diverse workforce.



The Ministry tell us that whilst they acknowledge that this is a wide-ranging review they hope to get the final report delivered by the Summer of 2020. I will hope to bring you more details as they emerge.

Mark Humphries

A RUSTY GUN: BOOK REVIEW



As a gun-wielding bank robber, Noel 'Razor' Smith was top of the criminal tree, enjoying the excitement and benefits of a dangerous and adrenalin-filled career. But he'd also spent the greater part of his adult life in prison, an environment where respect and basic survival were guaranteed only to those prepared to use the most brutal violence. In his new book, Smith takes the story on from his highly acclaimed memoir A Few Kind Words and a Loaded Gun, and describes how he came to realize that the game wasn't worth the candle.

In his mid-forties he applied to enter Grendon, then the only prison in Britain offering intense therapeutic treatment to hardened criminals. He went from a brutal high-security prison, HMP Whitemoor, to an institution where he was encouraged to investigate just why his life had been given over to violence and crime. Smith paints an unforgettable portrait of the hardened and severely damaged inmates of Grendon, many of them guilty of famous crimes, and their attempts to turn round their lives. And in particular his own arduous five-year journey to re-enter society as a straight citizen.

Reviews to Date

An extraordinary book which thrills and chills in almost equal measure' Guardian 'The best crime memoir ever written by an actual criminal' James Frey

The Author

Noel Smith was born in London in 1960. He has fifty-eight criminal convictions, and has recently served eleven years of a life sentence for armed robbery. Whilst in prison he received an Honours Diploma from the London School of Journalism, took an AS level in Law and gained a number of Koestler Awards for his writing.

Review

This is the second book by this author, in which he traces and explores his dawning awareness that crime was no longer for him, and his journey to enter Grendon, which was the only establishment in the prison system offering an intense course of treatment for hardened criminals. His first book - A few kind words and a loaded gun charts his life until this point. Having been born in London in 1960, he has fifty eight criminal convictions, and has recently served eleven years of a life sentence for armed robbery.

Others have written of Grendon's work and the therapeutic regime, but this is probably the first published account by an ex-inmate. Prisoners volunteer to go there, and have to go through a number of selection criteria to ensure that they get the most out of the experience.

The writer becomes one of the men of violence, having a long record of often violent crime, and seeking ways of addressing and reforming his thinking and lifestyle. In this book he charts his journey through the programme at Grendon, which takes five years , but also draw pen portraits of his fellow inmates, and their attitudes to, and how they benefit, or not, from the regime.

In the process, Noel not only faces up to his own past behaviour, and that of his fellow inmates, but also gives a telling account of the staff at Grendon, how much time they put in to helping those on the programme, and also an appreciation of the value of the Grendon group experience, over against the usual prison culture of containment with very little attempt to address past behaviour, but rather offering strategies for reform and rehabilitation.

He pulls no punches in describing how he was encouraged to confront his behaviour, his life of crime and violence, and in the process had to go back to his childhood and teenage years, and search his personality traits, and admit to them before other members of the group therapy programme.

This is all the more remarkable, given the fact that prison is not usually the place where prisoners are themselves, but rather the place where everyone, often including the staff, play out a series of roles and situations which reinforce their own view of themselves, and how others perceive them, and react to them. Grendon makes prisoners remove the mask, and begin to be themselves, and be honest about themselves, their past behaviour, and possibilities for the future.

This book ends with the writer finally reaching Blantyre House prison in Kent in May 2008, with no doubt more to follow to complete the journey back to life outside the criminal justice system - it should be well worth the wait.

Terry Nowell

CONFERENCE 2020: THEME

I have just been asked to draft a sentence about the 2020 conf.
I am aware that you are about to go to press - so here goes

Our 2020 Conference, Woodbrooke.
Friday 28th Feb to Sunday 1st March
This year we shall focus on people with learning difficulties.
What challenges do they face as they navigate the criminal justice system?
What measures are in place to support them?
We also hope to hear from a magistrate to gain more insight into their perspective.

In Friendship
Melanie

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

I signed up for Membership of QICJ about 20 years ago and little did I know what it might lead to! Great F/friendships and a good deal of very satisfying work on the QICJ committee and above all finding wonderful and supportive people to help me through the years! However! There's always a but isn't there and that but is that I never envisaged the role of Membership Secretary which Ann Jacob has performed for all of this century.Goodness it really is some act to follow. One of the main things being that Ann seemed to know all the members as individuals, not just names, and if there was a hiccup for instance in their subscription payments Ann would have the understanding to know why!!!!

The challenge however is I think the same for me as it was for Ann. That is to keep the Membership numbers healthy and viable so that we can be drawn together as a community through the Newsletters, through the interactions that the Membership lists may lead to, and through our physical and spiritual coming together for learning at our Annual Conferences. Thank you Ann, you will be a very hard act to follow.

So for the update. I can report positively so far. Our Membership remains around the 135 mark as per the last newsletter. We have 2 new Members, Barney Rosedale from Wiltshire and Ann Bellingham from Cornwall.That balances out two resignations, Ruth Moore Williams and Meg and Jim Platts. Following Ann's mild ticking off of those of us in arrears in the last newsletter I calculate only 15 members are now culpable!!

That's about all I have to say for this newsletter and my first report. Please send me your subs if you haven't paid yet for 2019, (subs are due on the first day of the first month of each year) and see if you can encourage new Members please!!

Simon Ewart. Membership Secretary.

POETRY FROM HMP MAGILLIGAN

3 poems written by prisoners in HMP Magilligan, a medium security prison on the North Coast of Northern Ireland. They were written as part of a creative writing workshop which took place recently there.

One day I hope to travel the world, travel so far, and never return,
the further I go, the better I feel, travel yourself and you'll know what I mean.

Life can be good if you go the right places,
seeing more people, get to know the right faces,
being here where I am is not good at all,
I'm getting a plane and making that call.

AJ

Others think it's a breeze locked up in here
Here are a few home truths, just for you
You think it's easy being caged away from life
Life turned upside down by your actions
Actions I really regret
Regret now I'm a better man
Man how I'm glad I've changed
Changed my ways and wrote a chain link
A chain link to my heart

PT

Good evening Cumulus in your stunning glory
A background of an intense blue sky
and amazing light effects
Your soft white fluffy clouds telling a beautiful story
An infinite spectrum of whites,
blue & sunset orange
Demanding respect
As I look up at you my worries fade away for a moment

RK

QICJ: PRIVACY POLICY

Members will be well aware that everyone has to have a privacy policy these days if they hold information about people, and QICJ is not exempt! So here is ours, agreed by the Committee last year. Comments welcome.

QICJ Privacy Policy

This is the Privacy Policy of Quakers in Criminal Justice (QICJ). It is not intentionally different from the policy that has evolved over the years for QICJ, but is now stated more formally because of heightened interest in such matters through GDPR: the General Data Protection Regulation. It concerns the way QICJ deals with people's personal information.

QICJ is a membership organisation, and holds personal data about individuals in order to carry out its objectives as such an organisation, principally:
To provide information to its members (in particular, through the Newsletter)
To administer the Annual Conference
To facilitate contact and support between individual members
To collect subscriptions

QICJ holds some or all of the following information, as supplied by individuals when joining or subsequently:
Name, Postal address, Email address, Telephone number(s)
Areas of criminal justice experience and/or interest
Particulars of subscriptions and/or conference fees paid or outstanding

With the exception of financial details, all of this information is generally shared with other individual members through the Membership List. Any member can choose not to include one or more items of information in this way. The information is not shared outside QICJ other than as described herein.

In the same way, personal information about individuals attending the Annual Conference may be shared with other conference attendees and venue administrators.

Personal data is held in password-protected files on one or more computers controlled by members of the QICJ Committee.

Names and addresses of members may also be held by our printers for the purpose of mailing the Newsletter etc to members.

Questions or requests in connection with personal data and the Privacy Policy should be addressed in the first instance to the Clerks.

Your Committee Members for 2019 are: Simon Ewart (Membership Secretary), Rodney Mahon (Treasurer), Ann Jacob, Alice Audsley, Marian Liebmann, Jo Rado (Co-Clerk), Melanie Jameson (Co-Clerk). Mark Humphries & Jonathan Lamb are our Newsletter Editors

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