# QUAKERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## SPRING 2020 EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Spring 2020 edition. Many of us left the annual conference just a few weeks ago. Re-energised and filled with new enthusiasm for the work we do within this sector, only to be met by a changed world in the face of the pandemic we currently exist within. Almost every aspect of our lives have changed and not least the ways we have to work to continue to deliver support, rehabilitation and services with the criminal justice system.

I for one have been astonished by the speed with which ordinarily glacially slow systems have cut through red tape and typically security heavy protocols to make sure that prisoners, staff and volunteers stay safe and get the support and rehabilitation they need. Many of the articles in this edition make reference to new methods and challenges we face in a COVID-19 affected criminal justice environment.

It had been a worry for me that I would struggle to get articles during this time, and put out a plea a few weeks ago to the members. What can I say…you're AMAZING. In the next 14 days or so I received probably enough material for not one but two editions! Thank you, this newsletter is only possible with your help and is here to share your thoughts, experiences and knowledge.

If your submission is not included in this edition, rest assure that it will find its way into a future one. In the meantime why not visit our website conference page at

**http://www.qicj.org/conferences.html**

to see speaker's presentations and links to relevant organisations

**Jonathan Lamb Editor**



## ARTICLES

**1** - Editorial

**2** - Conference 2020 Report

**5** - QPCs In The Face Of COVID-19

**8** - Silence: A Poem

**9** - Lock Down: A Theatre Review

**11** - In Cell Technology - Pros and Cons

**13** - A Bit Of A Stretch: Book Review

**14** - Membership Update

**15** - QUNO: Incarceration & The Rights Of Children

**17** - Trauma Healing & Anger Work In Rwanda

**20** - Towards A Lasting Legacy For Prisons From The Coronavirus Crisis

**21** - Minutes of 2020 QICJ AGM (Feb 29th 2020)

**24** - Contact Details

# QICJ CONFERENCE 2020

**Adrian Smith**




On February 28, fifty three members of Quakers in Criminal Justice gathered at Woodbrooke, the Quaker college at Birmingham, for their annual conference. The title of the event was Challenges & Helping Hands. I took it as a healthy sign that there were some I had not met before; overall many were elderly Friends, as they are the ones with the time and money to attend.

The opening session on 'The Magistrate's Perspective' was excellent. Patricia Bradbury used slides to set out the work of a magistrate in terms anyone could understand. Well-informed people round the room asked questions as she went along. I was surprised to learn that 95% of criminal cases are dealt with entirely in magistrates' courts: it is the remaining 5% (indictable offences) which go to Crown Court and get reported in the newspapers.

Saturday morning brought two speakers on the subject of people with learning difficulties and disabilities, and how they experience the criminal justice system. Neisha Betts of the Key Ring Living Support Network explained that 'Learning Disability' means impaired intelligence and social skills, in practice an IQ of below 70. Many prisoners come just above this level. Up to 10% of adult prisoners have IQs below 70, and 25% of children who are in prison. Criminal justice systems are 'paper heavy' (don't we all know it) and beyond the understanding of the simple-minded. During the trial of a close friend upon a serious charge, I met him in between sessions to translate the legal gobbledegook into ordinary English, so he could understand what was going on. And he was the defendant.

After coffee, Melanie Jameson spoke to us of specific learning difficulties which can undermine the process of rehabilitation. People with specific difficulties may be of high intelligence, but have often faced obstacles in education and beyond. Since their areas of difficulty are 'specific' they may function very well in other areas – if given the chance! The term 'neuro-diversity' includes autism, and is favoured because it implies no sense of judgement. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia ('Clumsy Child Syndrome'), Dyscalculia and ADHD

are all interlinked. Some people with ADHD indulge in risky behaviour, because ordinary life does not satisfy them.

Friends were allocated to small groups which met three times in between the main sessions and gave everyone a chance to get their voice heard. My group of ten included a former magistrate, probation officer and Quaker Prison Chaplain. People were involved with the Alternatives to Violence Project, restorative justice and Circles of Support & Accountability. There were also two ex-prisoners.

Additionally, there was a choice to attend two out of three workshops. One on the Prison Phoenix Trust was led by Sam Settle. I attended the other two, led by Judy Roles and Marc Pearson.

Judy is the Quaker Prison Chaplain at HMP Long Lartin in South Worcestershire. It holds 550 - 600 men, a quarter of them Category A (men considered the highest risk to the public if they were to escape but who mix with Category B men across the prison). The chaplaincy is a multi-faith team, including two full-time imams who have served over 15 years each, a full-time Anglican as well as part-time Roman Catholic, Free Church and Quaker and many volunteers.



Faith becomes a precious thing for many prisoners, as it is one thing that cannot be stripped away from them in prison. Worship takes place in free time, so it doesn't affect work or education. Men have a legal right to one hour's worship per week and an additional one hour's faith study. The Quaker group has 30 mins of quiet time often with original poetry shared as ministry – it is not actually called a Quaker Meeting, as if it was, only men registered as Quaker would be allowed to attend. Instead it is advertised as a multi-faith meeting and all faiths are included in the dozen or so who attend each week. All are accepted in the group, which is now an equal mix of men from the Mains wings and Vulnerable Prisoners (VPs) from separate wings

Together the men have designed and created their own panel for the Quaker Tapestry to show what they value about their meeting behind bars – 'a form of meditation' which has brought a sense of camaraderie and achievement.

Marc is a Birmingham man with the title 'Community Engagement Coordinator'. He is employed by the Medaille Trust which combats modern slavery. Modern slavery takes more subtle forms than the chattel slavery some of us learned about at school in Latin lessons. He noted that the UK was the first country to pass a Modern Slavery Act (2015). There 40 million slaves in the world today, a quarter of a million of them in Britain. (I found this incredible.) The most common countries of origin for slaves in Britain are Albania, the UK itself, and Vietnam. Albanians are most often trafficked for sex, UK

citizens – particularly children – to operate the ‘County Lines’ set up by drugs gangs, and Vietnamese to work in nail bars, brothels and cannabis factories.

The founder of the Medaille Trust was a Catholic nun, Sister Ann, who noticed foreign women on the streets of Southampton. The Trust is the largest provider of accommodation for former slaves in the UK and operates nine safe houses, with a total of 116 beds. Its work is governed by the ‘four Ps’: prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership. The Trust supports victims during criminal justice proceedings, though in the UK convictions are rare. In 2018 7000 victims came forward, but just two people were convicted. The aim is to eradicate slavery in Britain by 2025.

At the AGM, Ann Jacob stood down from the committee after uncounted years of service; she was properly made a life member. QICJ has about 130 members; new members each year just about balance those who fail to renew their subscriptions. Rodney Mahon introduced the accounts with his usual humour. Our application to become a Quaker Recognised Body and a charity involves a new constitution, which was approved. We learned that Quakers are the only faith group represented on the Criminal Justice Forum (I deplore this.) There will be a criminal justice session at Britain Yearly Gathering in Bath and stall at the Groups Fair – Covid 19 permitting!



In the evening we watched a newly commissioned play by the Journeyman Theatre Group, Lock Down, performed by Lynn and David Morris. They took the roles of a long-term prisoner and a new Quaker prison chaplain. The play was shocking in its expose of the absurdity and futility of many of the rituals of prison life. The events presented had actually occurred, such as a terminally ill patient being offered a hospital scan and a long-awaited parole hearing on the same day; he had to choose between them but the outcome was irrelevant as he died shortly afterwards (his ashes are scattered at Evesham Meeting House Burial Ground). Afterwards someone said: If we hadn’t laughed we would have cried. After the play we moved into the Epilogue which closes every day at Woodbrooke. That night it consisted of a heavy silence.

On Sunday morning Marian Liebmann led a reflection on the theme of the conference. She distributed sheets of paper on which we recorded what we had learned, challenges we faced and what we intended to do about them. The event closed with an hour's Meeting for Worship, which was deeply gathered from the start. When other people left, I stayed on for extra nights, feeling that I was recovering from the passage of a whirlwind, so much seemed to have happened in so short a time. The event was very much helped by the choice of venue. I sometimes think that you cannot be a proper Quaker until you have stayed at Woodbrooke. Our weekend coincided with a group meeting to consider the spiritual aspect of climate change. They were succeeded by Elders and Overseers and a group studying Brahms' Requiem. Every day begins with an optional Meeting for Worship after breakfast and ends with an Epilogue which can take many forms.

Criminal Justice in Britain today easily leads to despair but I remember the saying: It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness.
WORDS 1382

**NOTE See our QICJ website www.qicj.org and select '2020' under the heading 'conferences' for speakers' slides and documents**

---

# QPCs AND COVID-19

---

**Collected by Marleen Schepers**

## Quaker Prison Chaplains have found new ways to continue their work during Covid-19.

There I was, on 29 February 2020, together with around 20 Quaker prison chaplains and other Friends working in Criminal Justice, at the Quakers in Criminal Justice Conference, watching 'Lock Down', a new play by Journeymen Theatre, about Ron, a lifer, and Kathy, a newly appointed Quaker prison chaplain. Little did I know we would all soon be in lock down...not the same though. Lock Down explores the hidden plight of the elderly and infirm inside UK's jails and asks some big questions about how the system is coping with this ever increasing problem. As Ron is fond of saying 'There is no system. That is the system.'



As Secretary to the Quaker Prison Chaplains Committee, which met online on 28 March, I am working together with our Quaker Faith Adviser and other Quaker prison chaplains to send weekly encouraging thoughts to all prisons, emailed via Chaplaincy HQ at the Ministry of Justice. We are adding colourful, uplifting photographs to our 'Quaker' contributions for those prisons where a poster can go on the notice boards in the wings.

"The message has been warmly received by my two prisons. I am no longer going in as I am in the vulnerable age bracket and both establishments kindly agreed to pay me to stay away! This wonderful idea will enable me to have weekly contact with my two chaplaincy colleagues and ensure they don't forget the Quaker element in their team!"

Most men and women in prison are now locked up most of the time, allowed out of their cells only to access showers and have some exercise (around one hour a day). Not being allowed to attend funerals of relatives is already causing more distress. Those who were on ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence), which is an important part of the process of resettlement and rehabilitation for prisoners, are all locked up again, after their taste of freedom. Others, the large number of elderly prisoners, find it safer to be locked-up during this crisis.



With fewer opportunities to meet face-to-face with prisoners, just when they need it more, chaplains at least find themselves spending more time with prison officers, who need pastoral care more than ever.

**Quaker chaplains bring hope in new ways as their role has changed:**

There are ten on our YOI chaplaincy team and we are required to come into work once or twice a week (unless we have to self-isolate or have a high temperature when tested at the gate).
As with other prisons, our services of worship have been cancelled (together with secular events organised by the chaplaincy); our only function at present is to perform statutory duties and provide pastoral care if required.
Fortunately the young people I see are in a more resilient age group, but nevertheless an area has been designated for them to be in medical isolation should the need arise.
Postponing court hearings and cancelling visits is obviously going to cause immense frustration for prisoners and they are bound to need our presence more than ever during this crisis. **James**

At my prison we have been making up packs with designs to colour in and quizzes to do. We are trying to speak to as many men as possible during the day without getting in the way of the staff and the regime. We have also got a few jigsaw puzzles which we are

able to loan out. Yesterday we were still able to take someone up to the chapel to light a candle in remembrance of the death.

The pastoral support that we can offer is hopefully helping a little at the moment and I am grateful that my new managing chaplain is still happy for me to come in as a volunteer. **Fran**

I have been confined for a couple of weeks. I send a letter to each Quaker resident in my prison every week, and a reflection to be distributed more widely. I send these by email to the head chaplain and he prints them out to put under the men's doors. It is not much but it's something to let them know they're not forgotten. **Medhina**

I have been collecting jigsaws from friends and charity shops and running a puzzle club in our major London prison for the last year, handing out jigsaws, cards, chess and backgammon. In this Covid-19 crisis the prison has agreed to refund me £5000 to make in-cell packs for the lockdown. We are currently making these. Each in cell pack has (made from A3 paper which is laminated) a chess/draughts board, a backgammon board, a ludo board with snakes and ladders on the back; and 20 x 2 = 40 counters and 4 dice so that they can play, a pack of cards, ten sheets of adult colouring with a word search on the back of each and seven felt tip pens. Then they get the choice of dominos or chess pieces.



Our single cells don't get the games but do get the colouring sheets, more pens, cards, sudoku with instructions and yoga exercises from the Prison Phoenix Trust.

I have been in the prison 9am to 5pm every day since last Monday and we have one wing delivered, and two wings ready to go out tomorrow. So, we have five wings left to do – but three are not so urgent because they are the three wings that I have been servicing with puzzles and games for the last year so they are not without anything to do.

The team making the packs [in prison] are organised by me and a volunteer from a charity, which helps foreign prisoners. The prison sends us whoever is spare.

We have asked everyone and anyone who lives walking distance from my house or the prison and who has a jigsaw – or books, or pens and pencils – to spare, to leave them outside my house or in a special box outside the prison visitors centre. This will enable us to open up more in-cell activities to all as the crisis goes on. We are already collecting many donated puzzles. **Liz**

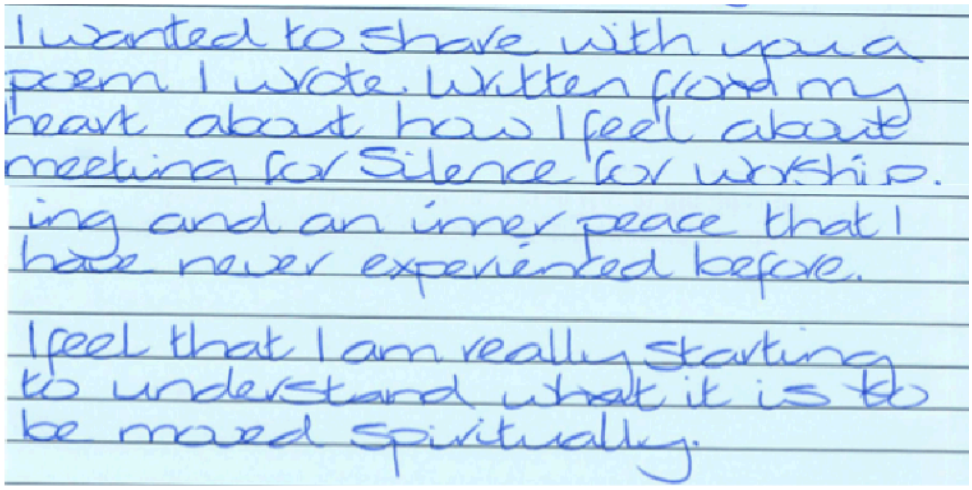
# SILENCE

**A poem by Brian, a current prisoner**

And so it is time.
At first I am troubled by background noise.
The outside chatter of daily life, the creak of a chair

I smile in the knowledge that it will come.
I feel an expectant connection with those I am with.
A friendship, a bond

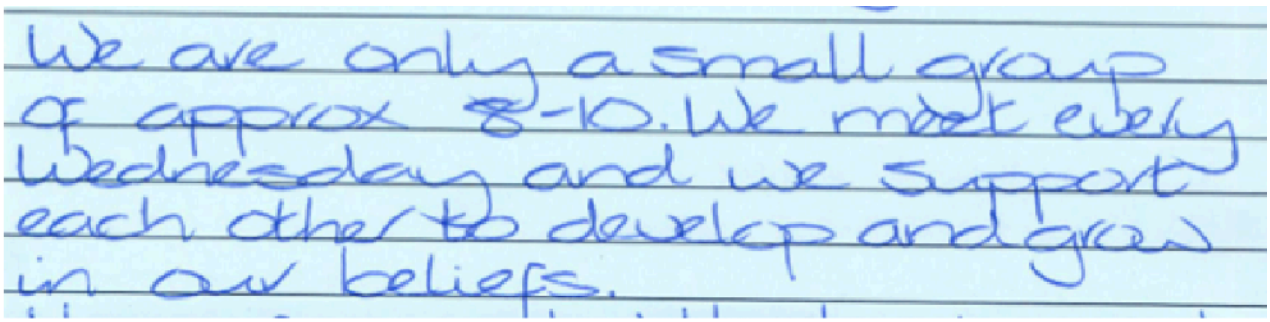
Then as the first gentle wave laps over me, noise drifts away on a breeze.
As the waves ebb and flow over me, cleansing me of my troubles, I see the faintest of light.


I wanted to share with you a poem I wrote. Written from my heart about how I feel about meeting for Silence for worship. ing and an inner peace that I have never experienced before.

I feel that I am really starting to understand what it is to be moved spiritually.

Why do I at first resist that what I seek?
I allow myself to open and move forward towards the light.
I am aware of my urgency, however, I know the power is far beyond mine.

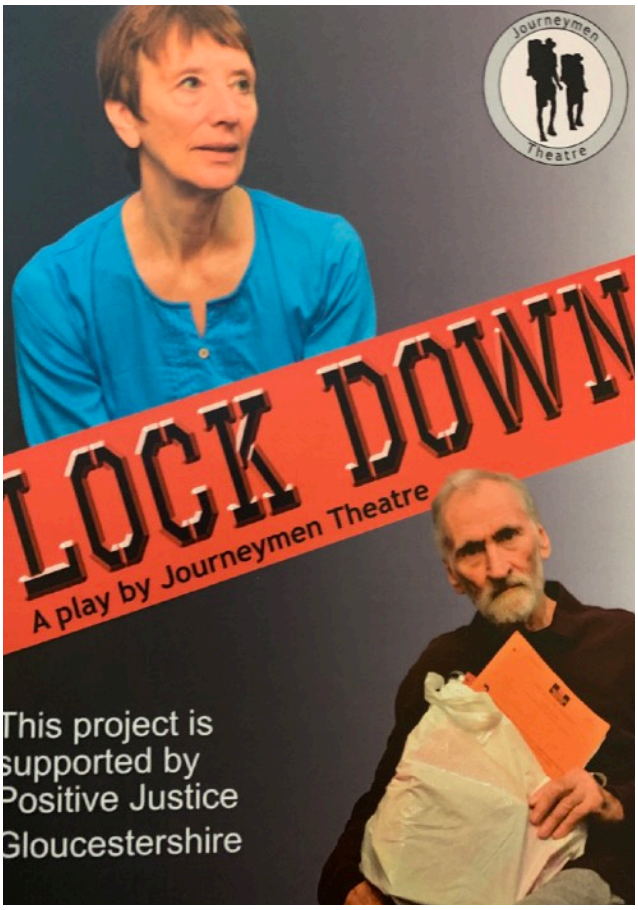
I'm drawn deeper along a tunnel and then out into the open.
I'm flooded by the brilliance of the light, and warmed to my core.
I'm healed by the silence, I'm alone with God.


We are only a small group of approx 8-10. We meet every Wednesday and we support each other to develop and grow in our beliefs.

# LOCK DOWN: A REVIEW

**A review of Journeymen Theatre's new play, by John Lampen**

"That's the system—NO SYSTEM!" This is the repeated cry of Ron, serving a life sentence, during Lynn and Dave Morris' new drama, premiered to a full audience in Stourbridge Meeting House on 26 February. The play is packed with stories and incidents which make his case for him. They are all based on what the authors heard from prisoners, staff and chaplains during their extensive research. From my own recent visits to prisons and conversations there, I found it entirely accurate.



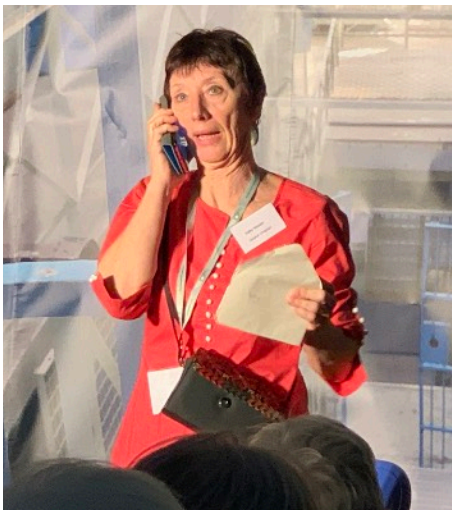

Yet this is not primarily a piece campaigning for prison reform. It simply and often humorously states the facts, refusing to demonise the individuals who have to make the system somehow work. Then it asks us to make up our own minds.

The play looks particularly at the increasing numbers of elderly male prisoners (mostly no threat to society) who will never be released, partly because of a logjam in the parole system, and partly because there is virtually no provision for them on release—some would certainly die on the streets. The oldest current inmate is 104, and the oldest person to be sentenced (for "historic" sexual abuse) is 101. Meanwhile the doors of prison cells are too narrow to admit a wheelchair, there are only two stairlifts in the whole system though prisoners need to move between floors for their medication and recreation, and the staff have no training in geriatric physical care, let alone dealing with dementia.

There are two characters: Ron, and Kathy who is a newly appointed Quaker prison chaplain with everything to learn when the play begins. The play is carried by their slowly developing relationship, as Ron enlightens her, taunts her, bickers, takes out his frustrations on her, and gradually comes to trust her good will and good sense. We learn as she learns from his long experience: the reduction in educational provision, and how prisoners now have to buy art and learning materials from their meagre earnings; how it may be worth becoming a Muslim or Jew simply to secure a better diet; and the cruelty of not allowing a man to attend the funeral of his grandmother, who was often the one steady caring influence in his life.



Ron is remarkably resigned to his situation. Indeed he gives up his right to parole, because he knows he is better where he is. Yet he sees the flaws and failings of the system, and puts them across to Kathy with sharp intelligence and wit. The audience laughed a great deal, and it was not a harrowing evening… Or perhaps it was, if we grasp the truth about this immensely expensive national institution, continually failing to deliver what it is set up to do, managed by arbitrary and often harsh decisions, and barely under control.



The play is not designed to offer solutions. But it reminds us that in the face of bad social structures, alongside the need of systemic reform, there is also the need to operate as humanely as possible within existing constraints, as Kathy does. Nationwide, prison reform is among the most unwelcome issues for a politician or media source to take up; I hope that this play, moving, funny, convincing and beautifully performed, will play its own small part in telling people that the system most of them support is neither effective nor humane.

## A footnote to this article by Mary Brown

**For many at the conference the highlight of the weekend was the play 'Lock Down'. Friends were deeply moved, and raised over £200 for RECOOP, the charity for older prisoners. The play was commissioned by Positive Justice Gloucestershire, and was shown in Stroud the following week to an enthusiastic and largely non-Quaker audience, who raised over £500 for the charity.**

**I would urge all members of QICJ to book it to be shown in their area just as soon as life returns to normal – if it does. If possible to non Quaker audiences. It needs to be seen by readers of the Daily Mail. Please don't forget this valuable resource.**

# IN-CELL TECHNOLOGY: PROS & CONS

**By Melanie Jameson**

Prison Inspection reports consistently show that many prisoners spend too much time locked in their cells, lack 'purposeful activity' and are often unable to progress beyond basic education. Another complaint is the inability to maintain good family connections due to limited opportunities to phone.




Staff shortages are another long-standing issue, and one with widespread implications. With insufficient officers to escort prisoners round the jail, visits to the library are reduced or curtailed altogether and activities, including education, can be cancelled without warning. Volunteer-led activities are also at risk.

A partial solution is the development of in-cell technology, something that the Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA) has been calling for over many years, and for which the Ministry of Justice has developed a strategy. The PLA advocates this both as an alternative and as an additional way to engage with learning, and a method of delivery which is less likely to be subject to disruption. Furthermore, the PLA maintains, administration would be eased by the ability to book appointments (eg with Healthcare) from your cell, submit applications, order food from the canteen and access the electronic kiosks remotely: these devices are widely used in some establishments. Most importantly, family links

could be strengthened and the problem of maintaining privacy could be overcome by phoning in-cell via this technology (with pre-loaded individual phone numbers only, of course.)

In-cell technology would operate via an intranet (not the external internet) with a limited offering appropriate to the prison and the educational and resettlement needs of 'residents'. Materials would be uploaded to help prepare people for the on-line world they will need to get to grips with. The concept of using intranet technology has been around for some time in various guises. The one that has been around the longest is theVirtual Campus, which was initially conceived as a flexible way of bringing learning to prisoners less likely to engage with education, via terminals on the wings. Anyone could log in using their unique learner ID and pick up where they had left off. Materials were also developed for staff and I submitted my resources on working with people who experienced Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, Dyscalculia and Asperger Syndrome. Unfortunately this initiative was undermined by a lack of computer access outside education departments, but it is still on the table, with options for taking qualifications on-line.

Over the last few weeks, with prisons now on lockdown and face-to-face teaching/ instruction curtailed, in-cell facilities take on a new relevance. Prisoners are currently only un-locked for phone calls, showers and a short time in the open air so will feel more cooped up than ever.

However, I must balance this call from the PLA with my experience when participating in a European Prison Education Conference in Belgium. We were taken to Beveren, a new prison, of which our hosts were very proud. It was constructed with the latest in-cell technology, known as PrisonCloud. All the buildings struck me as clinical, soulless – and deserted. Although all cells were modern, clean and en-suite, it was as though the aim was to confine prisoners as much as possible, with minimal personal interaction. Instead the built-in technology became the chief mode of communication.
https://insidetime.org/belgian-prisoners-allowed-access-to-the-internet-in-their-cell-via-prisoncloud/

We all know how important human contact is, especially now when our lives are circumscribed. As far as prisons are concerned, I would suggest that the benefits of in-cell technology be balanced by the greater need for contacts with personal officers/key workers, library and education staff and volunteers in a wide range of roles and family.

Finally, let us not forget the particular stresses on prisoners and all those in the prison sector at this difficult time.

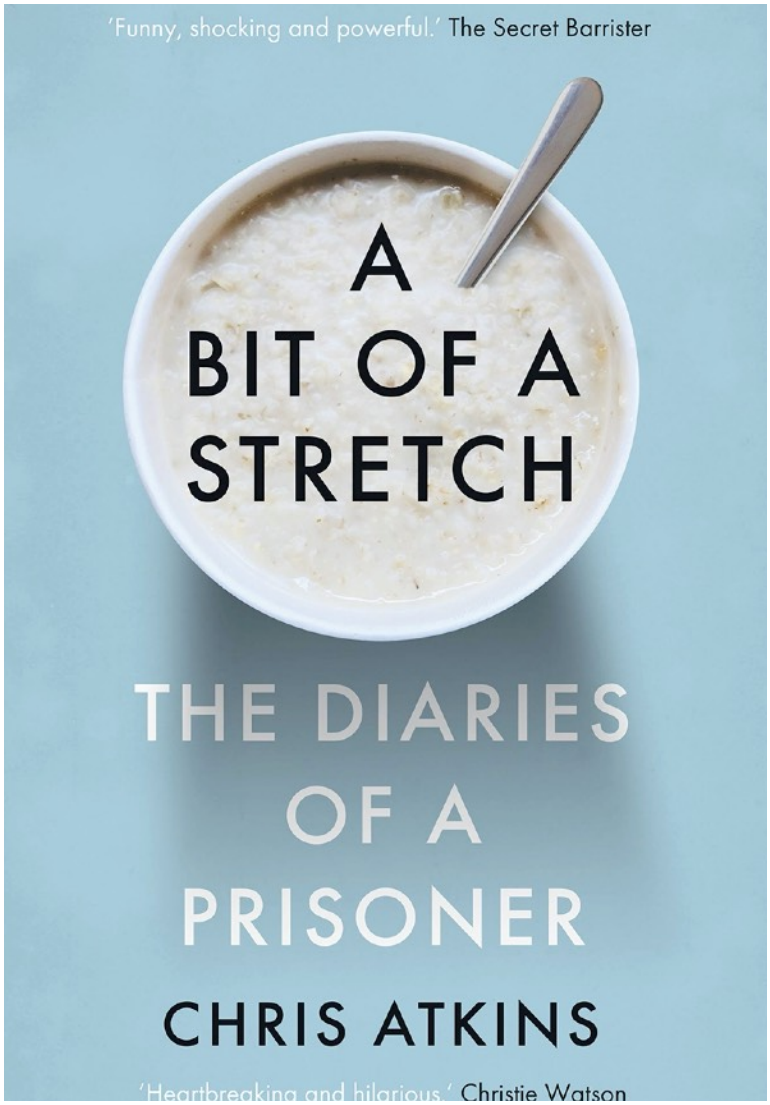
Acknowledgment to the Prisoner Learning Alliance Website
https://prisonerlearningalliance.org.uk

# A BIT OF A STRETCH: BOOK REVIEW

**From "The Week" Magazine**

**A BIT OF A STRETCH: THE DIARIES OF A PRISONER**
**by Chris Atkins - Atlantic 336pp £16.99/The Week Bookshop £14.99**

In 2016, the documentary-maker Chris Atkins was given a five-year prison sentence for using a tax scam to fund one of his films, said Rosamund Urwin in The Sunday Times. Having become that "rare breed, a middle-class liberal who has seen the true horror of our penal system", he has "done the inevitable" and written a memoir about his time inside. Focussing on his first nine months in jail, at HMP Wandsworth in south London, A Bit of a Stretch is a darkly funny work which also makes a compelling case for reform. Atkins starts out in a graffiti-ridden cell in "Beirut", one of Wandsworth's toughest wings, said Yvonne Roberts in The Observer. His cellmate, a cocaine-dealer named Ted, soon gives him a valuable lesson in "shitiquette": he turns up the volume on the Victoria Derbyshire show on television and disappears behind the toilet curtain. "Why do we have to listen to this crap?" Atkins asks. "So you don't have to listen to mine," Ted replies.




Most prisoners on Beirut are locked up 23 hours a day, said Blake Morrison in The Guardian. To get out of his cell and earn money and other privileges,

Atkins involves himself in as many activities as possible – including "dry lining" even though he has no idea what that is. Soon, he is moved to H wing, the "prison equivalent of Hampstead", where, in a "strange mirror of wider society", he is surrounded by fellow former public schoolboys. Atkins is a "fantastically informative" guide to life inside, offering sharp insights and "boxes full of statistics", along with amusing examples of prison slang (an electronic tag is a "chav nav" or "Peckham Rolex"). He ends with a set of "straightforward proposals" for making prisons both more humane and more effective. "What are the chances of them being adopted?"

To conclude this piece, and please forgive me for one more spiritual analogy, but what keeps me going each day, what drives me on, is the resurrection of the seemingly dead. Around two years ago, my eldest daughter sent me a message. Simply worded it read, "It has taken me a long time to process all this, but you are my Dad, and I love you and forgive you.". For me, this is the pure essence of hope, and "Life after Death".

---

# MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

---

**Simon Ewart, Membership Secretary**

At our AGM held at the end of February it was reported that membership remained stable at around 130 individual and Group memberships. As a result of the conference we are now up to 135 in total. The other good news is that only 5 individual members, and 6 group members remain with unpaid subscriptions for this present year. This was about 60 miscreants at the time of the AGM !! Thank you to everyone for your support.

We'd like to extend our thanks for Ann for her hard work and dedication over the past number of years.



# QUNO: INCARCERATION & THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

**Lucy Halton (QUNO, Geneva)**

For over 15 years, the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva (QUNO) has worked to draw attention to the impact on children of parental incarceration and clarify the existing human rights protection in international law. In March 2020, QUNO published a Working Paper on one specific sub-group of these children whose rights are increasingly being threatened: children of parents accused or convicted of association with designated terrorist groups. The paper provides a brief overview of the key human rights concerns for these children, who are too often overlooked in State actions taken in the name of countering terrorism. These concerns include non-discrimination, relating in particular to the prevalence of State policies which deem all children of parents accused or convicted of association with designated terrorist groups to be a threat, as well as the right to privacy and the right to nationality, among others.




At the recent 43rd session of the Human Rights Council, QUNO drew attention to some of these key child rights issues by delivering the following statement and question to the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Fionnuala Ní Aoláin:

> Quakers have long advocated for the rights of children of incarcerated parents and would like to draw the Special Rapporteur's attention to some of the specific issues faced by children of parents incarcerated for involvement with designated terrorist groups. These children's rights are too often overlooked in counter-terror responses.
>
> We thank the Special Rapporteur for her recent statement on foreign terror fighters, in which she reaffirmed that the best interests of the child must always be a primary consideration, and that not affording children associated with designated terrorist groups protection constitutes a moral failure by their home

States, a message echoed in comments from the High Commissioner last Thursday.

All children have the right to be protected from discrimination, including on the basis of the activities of their parents. Policies or responses which treat all children of parents associated with designated terrorist groups as security threats, including detaining or punishing them, based solely on the activities or views of their parents therefore violate the rights of these children.

Every child has a right to a nationality, as recognised in Article 7 of the CRC, and all States must ensure that children, regardless of the crimes or alleged crimes of their parents, are not subjected to statelessness. International human rights law guarantees the right of every person to re-enter their own country: children, whatever their parents may have done, are no exception to this right and must not be barred from re-entering their country.

Special Rapporteur, what measures are needed to better protect the rights of these children and could this be explored in one of your future reports?

We were pleased to be able to discuss our work and this question with the Special Rapporteur in more detail after the session, when QUNO took part in a civil society dialogue where we raised some of the specific issues encountered by this group of children, including the collection of their biometric data for the purposes of determining their nationality, and discussed ways in which QUNO could further work on this issue.

We are in the process of revising our Working Paper as a result of the extremely fruitful discussions arising from the Human Rights Council intervention, and will be considering how we can contribute to conversations about ensuring the protection and promotion of the rights of children in countering terrorism. Though the postponement of the quinquennial UN Crime Congress is a significant loss to us all in terms of advocacy opportunities on criminal justice issues, many more spaces are available to us as we continue in this work.

As we move forward, we would particularly like to speak to any Friends who are working with children who are part of this group: please do get in touch with Lucy Halton at lhalton@quno.ch

# TRAUMA HEALING & ANGER WORK IN RWANDA

**By Marian Liebmann**

This article is a brief account of six weeks I spent in Rwanda February - March last year.

**Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities**

My first aim was to learn about a group trauma-healing model I had read about and wanted to experience. Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) was developed by Quakers in Rwanda and Burundi in 2003 to help communities there suffering from trauma following the genocide in 1994. The HROC Centre in Rwanda is based in Musanze in northern Rwanda, near the volcanic region where gorilla treks take place, and which is also a big vegetable growing area.


Anger Group (Youth)

Because of the interest in their work, the HROC centre runs an International Training course twice a year. On my course the 9 participants were from the UK (me), Kenya and Rwanda – past participants have come from the US (where much of the funding comes from), Burundi, Congo, South Sudan and Nigeria. Our facilitators were from Rwanda and Kenya. This meant that the course needed to be bilingual, in English and Kinyarwanda. In Rwanda older people speak French, younger people speak English, everyone speaks Kinyarwanda. The 3-week course included team building, attending a basic HROC workshop, training of trainers, and then running a basic HROC course ourselves for a local community group. I was paired with team members from Kenya and Rwanda and our allocated community group was young single mothers, a growing group in Rwanda.

The structure of a basic HROC workshop is:
Day 1: Introduction to trauma – definition, causes, symptoms and consequences
Day 2: Loss, grief and mourning, including time for personal reflection and sharing stories in the group; dealing with anger
Day 3: Building trust – trust walk, tree of mistrust, tree of trust, how to build trust

During the course of the workshop, we heard many distressing stories. Many participants had been children during the genocide, and had experienced death of

family members, fleeing for their lives, being refugees in Tanzania or Congo, and the total dislocation of their communities.

## Anger Workshops

After the HROC training course I went to Kigali to stay at the Quaker Peace Garden guest house and run courses on 'Anger Management with Art' for three groups organised by the Friends Evangelical Church Rwanda – one for youth (18-30), one for women, and one for church leaders. These took place in the local church. In these groups participants used art materials (some of which I had brought) to look at aspects of anger, such as:


Gacaca Judge

What is anger? Is anger good or bad? Physical symptoms of anger. What's underneath the anger? Early family patterns. Anger and conflict. Triggers of anger. Ways of calming down. Trauma and anger. Relaxation

The groups went well, as people could see the links between their experiences and anger which caused ongoing problems for many people. Clearly I could not 'magic everything right' with a three-day workshop, but I hoped it could provide some helpful tools along the way.

## Genocide Memorials and Restorative Justice

The third aspect of my visit to Rwanda was visiting genocide memorials to see how Rwanda is trying to recover from the terrible time in which a tenth of the population was killed. Just after I left, in April, Rwanda commemorated the 25th anniversary of the genocide. I also wanted to talk to people about the Gacaca process.

Over 100,000 people were apprehended for the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. Because trying offenders in the Rwandan courts and the UN tribunal would have taken hundreds of years, the government decided instead to resurrect a traditional conflict resolution process called Gacaca. These were local, open-air hearings overseen by 'people of integrity' who had been elected by their neighbours. Although ringleaders of the genocide were not eligible for the Gacaca process,



Genocide Memorial

a large majority of perpetrators were tried using this informal process. Those who were found responsible were sentenced to prison or to community service, or to a combination of both. The first prisoners were released to attend the Gacacas in 2003 and the process ran until 2011.

I was lucky enough to talk to a Gacaca judge, a woman in her 60s who was a participant in one of the HROC workshops. She told me of a case where a genocide survivor forgave the perpetrator but said to his wife, 'Your husband killed my children, now I am all alone – please give me one of your children to bring up' and this was done. Although the work had been very gruelling, the Gacaca judge was very proud of playing her part in establishing the truth and helping to bring Rwandans together to live in unity.


Trust Walk

As well as commemorating the genocide, Rwanda has implemented many peace-building processes. Quakers have initiated many of these – Friends Peace House in Kigali lists HROC, Alternatives to Violence Project in all of Rwanda's prisons, transformative mediation in the community (15 trained volunteers), children's peace library and peer mediation in 5 cities, Women in Dialogue, and more. Other organisations also have peace and trust-building initiatives, and I met several inspiring individuals all working to repair the damage and make sure that 'Never Again' comes true for Rwanda. I think we have things to learn from them.



HROC Banner

# TOWARDS A LASTING LEGACY FOR PRISONS FROM THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

**By Richard Garside**

In a few short weeks, we have all had to adjust to a very different reality.
In the face of the immediate threat posed by the coronavirus, governments across the world have acted decisively and swiftly. The crisis has focused minds and prompted action in ways that would have been unthinkable only a few months ago.

In the UK, the government has been criticised for doing too little, too late, to contain the spread of coronavirus. Whatever the merits, or otherwise, of this as a general criticism, there is little doubt that in our prisons the potential crisis is very real, and growing.

RESEARCHERS AT IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON ESTIMATED THAT AN UNCONTROLLED OUTBREAK OF CORONAVIRUS INFECTION IN PRISONS IN ENGLAND AND WALES COULD RESULT IN 800 DEATHS

The over 90,000 prisoners across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, unable to take the routine precautions of most citizens, are at particular risk of infection.

Yesterday we learned that an 84-year-old prisoner in Littlehey and another elderly prisoner in Manchester had died after contracting coronavirus. There will be more cases in the days ahead. Last week, researchers at Imperial College London estimated that an uncontrolled outbreak of coronavirus infection in prisons in England and Wales could result in 800 deaths.

Some consider this to be an under-estimate.

At the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies we support prisoners and prison staff trying to reduce the risk of infection in prison. Next week we will will be embarking on a project with a number of partner organisations to assess the coronavirus situation in prisons across Europe and explore how different prison administrations are trying, or failing, to prevent infection and save lives.

Beyond the necessary, short-term measures to reduce the harm of coronavirus in prison, we also need a longer-term agenda. Across the UK, far too many prisoners, many of them elderly or with underlying health conditions, are being held in overcrowded, unsanitary, unhealthy prisons.

If an institution was to be invented with the express intention of maximising the spread of coronavirus, and of concentrating it among those most likely to be vulnerable to it, that institution would probably look much like a prison.

We can't go on like this.

Over recent weeks I have been among those calling for an immediate managed release of some prisoners, as part of a wider programme to reduce the risk of infection in prison. This is a call that is now supported by a growing number of people. The government must act on this, and now.

I HAVE BEEN AMONG THOSE CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE MANAGED RELEASE OF SOME PRISONERS

The wasteful churn short prison sentences cause is well-recognised, the current context should give fresh urgency to ending it. Our short prison sentencing project will be seeking to influence just that, both making the case for immediate reform as well as seeking to secure the system changes necessary over the longer term.

And through our After Prison programme, we will be making the case for the long-term closure of much our prison estate. Prisons are a nineteenth century solution to a twenty-first century problem. There is always a better way to use a piece of land than as a place for a prison.

The coronavirus crisis has shone a light on the wider, and pre-existing, malaise in prisons. A fundamental rethink of our use of prisons would be a small, but important, gain to have come from the current crisis we are in.

**https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/**

---

# AGM MINUTES - 29/02/2020

---

1) **Those Present and Apologies**
Present: Jo Rado & Melanie Jameson (Clerks), Rodney Mahon (Treasurer), Simon Ewart (Membership Secretary) and 20 members.

Apologies: Gillian Charters

2) **Minutes and Matters Arising**
Only Matter Arising was Item 9. Date of 2020 AGM was projected as being on Feb 22 2020

3) **Committee matters, including Meetings held during the year**

We have held 2 Committee Meetings during the year.

Sue Barrance has offered to join the Committee and we accept her offer. The Committee members now are Jo Rado, Melanie Jameson, Simon Ewart, Rodney Mahon, Marian Liebmann, Alice Audsley and Sue Barrance

Ann Jacob has asked to be released. We agree to enrol her as a Life Member and thank her for all she has contributed.

4) **Membership report.**
Simon Ewart, now our Membership Secretary, tells us that the membership is stable at around 130, but with over half our members not having paid their subscriptions for this year as yet. We are slightly down on our totals for 2019 (136), but this is possibly due to the present membership secretary being less forgiving than his predecessor with unpaid subs.

We encourage all our members to act as recruiting agents both for other interested individuals but also for their local and Area Meetings.

5) **Treasurer's report.**
Our Treasurer has reported on finances in the year to 31 December 2019. The overall financial position remains satisfactory, with a surplus during the year of £2260. The 2019 conference at Hinsley Hall had a surplus of over £900, which serves to defray the loss at more expensive venues such as Woodbrooke. Membership income is satisfactory, thanks to the efforts of our Membership Secretary. We have resurrected an old deposit account; the interest rate is pitiful, but every little helps. We continue to keep all costs under review. We thank Karen Mallik for examining the accounts and agree to appoint her to examine the accounts this year.
The report is attached. We thank Rodney for his work.

6) **Quaker Recognised Body application and progress**
We have submitted an application to become a Quaker Recognised Body within BYM, which has to be approved by Meeting for Sufferings, and is now necessary for groups wishing (for example) to hold a Special Interest Meeting or have a stall at Yearly Meeting, or to be listed on the BYM website. We have heard of an administrative delay within Friends House to our application. We have been assured by the Recording Clerk's Office that the delay does not reflect on our suitability to become a QRB, and will not affect our plans to hold a Special Interest Meeting at BYM in 2020.

7) **QICJ Constitution**
We feel that we need to prepare a new formal Constitution for QICJ, not least because some of the conference venues we use are asking for documentary evidence that we are 'educational', and hence not liable for VAT. A proper written Constitution is also desirable for the Quaker Recognised Body application. We agree that, while doing this, we may as well do whatever else is needed to become a Registered Charity, which may

open other financial doors in the future. The Committee has prepared a draft document, which has been made available to Friends present. It was decided that item 12 v) fits better as in section 11 and will be moved to 11vi). This being done, we formally agree to adopt it as our Constitution. The next step will be to submit it to the Charity Commission

8) **Newsletter Editorship**
We were very sorry to hear that our new editor, Mark Humphries, is unwell and asks to step back from this role for the time being.
Jonathan Lamb has offered to take on this role alone but asks for support in terms of submissions. We thank him for this offer which we accept.

9) **News from the Crime, Community & Justice work of the QPSW Social Justice Committee**
Teresa Parker has reported on the work of this Committee as follows
Parliamentary work has included encouragement of voting rights for prisoners, the Prevent review (work on deradicalization) and public health approaches to serious youth violence. A blog entitled "Does punishment work?" is on the revised webpage and an article was contributed to the Momentum annual book.
Much cross-programme work has continued in QPSW to try and ensure that justice is seen as a requirement for peace. Partnerships have increased including meetings with the C of E, Churches together in Britain and Ireland and the Criminal Justice Alliance.
The Social Justice Committee continues to thrive, especially working productively on power and privilege.

10) **Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering August 1-7 at Bath University:**
Melanie Jameson is willing to coordinate arrangements for a QICJ Special Interest Meeting. She has proposed the following:
Rays of hope in our crisis-ridden prisons
Despite a raft of reforms, many of our prisons are violent desperate places, with little chance of rehabilitation.
How do the most vulnerable, such as prisoners with learning difficulties, navigate the system?
Will the current administration worsen the situation, with further punitive measures?
This session will look at these and other current issues in order to inform and engage Friends. Our focus will be: Where are the rays of hope?
We have been allocated Tuesday 4 August, 14:30 - 15:30 Edge: Ensemble Room

Groups Fair: Adrian Smith is willing to be present on Sunday Aug 2 from 1900 - 2100 when we shall have a stand and display board in the Chancellors Building.
We wish to take up the option of our stand remaining in place for the duration of YMG. Sue Barrance and Martin Schweiger will arrange the display for this, in consultation with the Committee.

11) **Future Conferences**
Next year's Conference will be at Ammerdown from Feb 26 to 28 2021.
In 2022 we will be at Hinsley Hall in Leeds.

**Josephine Rado and Melanie Jameson**

Your Committee Members for 2020 are: Simon Ewart (Membership Secretary), Rodney Mahon (Treasurer), Alice Audsley, Marian Liebmann, Jo Rado (Co-Clerk), Melanie Jameson (Co-Clerk), Teresa Parker & Sue Barrance. Jonathan Lamb is our Newsletter Editor


# Published by Quakers in Criminal Justice

**Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not represent the views of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Quakers in Criminal Justice or the Newsletter Editor**



**Newsletter Editor:**
**Jonathan Lamb**
**34 Salisbury Street**
**Belfast, BT7 1AH**
**jonolamb@mac.com**

**Membership Secretary:**
**Simon Ewart**
**Skewjack Barn**
**St Levan**
**Nr. Penzance**
**Cornwall, TR19 6NB**
**simonofskewjack@gmail.com**