

## Report from Parliamentary Engagement Working Group to GMS 20 September 2025

### 1 Good news about the appointment of an interim Parliamentary Engagement Officer (PEO)

Wonderful recruitment news: the post of interim PEO during Sarah's parental leave (October-'25- October '26 has been accepted by Lucy Le Roux (formerly of Christian Aid), well known to GM Clerks and PEWG Convenors through our regular meetings with and co-working with Christian Aid, and known to Friends who were at GM in March last year when she spoke to us about Loss and Damage funding. Lucy starts in early October so soon after that she will be reachable by email; meanwhile Sarah continues in post till mid-October and will keep us all updated. We wish Sarah well as she awaits the arrival of her baby.

### 2 Need for new members and convenors

This is a challenge, especially as Lucy starts, is the small size of our group as from January unless new members come on board. We will lack representatives from the north and east, leaving us with 1, possibly 2 from west Scotland and 2 from south east Scotland. I use these as geographical terms rather than AM terms, because as Quakers in Scotland comes into being we still want to feel we represent Friends from across the country. And we need new Convenors to serve the group and GM, and to support Lucy: she has excellent competence and experience, is familiar with PEWG work and is even used to working with Quakers! – we could not have hoped for a better appointment – but she deserves support, a Friend to run the meetings and be the Friendly connection between the PEO, the group and GM. Please contact the Convenors to enquire if you might be interested in this work; we encourage 'enquirers' to attend a meeting and 'observe' without (much) pressure!

### 3 Highlights of ongoing work

#### a) Stop Climate Chaos Scotland mass lobby on 18 September

Thanks to Friends who took part in this event; please let our PEO know how your conversations went as it's very helpful to be as fully informed as possible about MSPs' views. The next PEO email will include comment on this event. Do sign up for this email (contact Sarah [SarahK@quaker.org.uk](mailto:SarahK@quaker.org.uk) to know what's happening in Scottish Quaker advocacy. New sign-ups would boost Lucy as she starts.

**b) Briefing Quakers in Scotland on the May 2026 election manifestos and election:** The PEO will be providing materials to Friends to facilitate their contacting their MSPs and election candidates – this will be towards the end of this year and early in 2026.

#### c) We've responded to four Consultations since June's GM

- *Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill*: call for views from the Social Justice and Social Security Committee (closed 24.8.25)
- *Ecocide Bill*: consultation from the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee (closed 9.9.25)
- *Draft Climate Change Plan 2026 -2040 (CCP)*: call for views from the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee (closed 19.9.25)
- *Environment Strategy* (closes 29.9.25) A response is underway

#### d) Discussions with Scottish Enterprise (SE) human rights checks

- The PEO is working with Amnesty International to respond to the initial review of the human rights checks that Scottish Enterprise apply to funding decisions. The genocide in Gaza has sharpened attention and added urgency to this issue. The First Minister made a speech on 3 September about the situation in Gaza, which included a change in funding policy on arms but we will be looking closely at this (loopholes are a risk) as we work with Amnesty to continue the dialogue with SE. Contact Sarah if you would be interested to read John Swinney's speech.

### 4 PEWG's 3-year priorities (2026 – 2028)

These are to be agreed at General Meeting for Scotland in November; after consultation with the AMs we are drawing up a paper for that GM.

**5 Time for Reflection:** Two or three potential Quaker TFRs are under discussion with Friends.

Carolyn Burch and Richard Raggett, Co-Convenors, Parliamentary Engagement Working Group