



**Britain Yearly Meeting of the
Religious Society of Friends**

Claire Perry, Minister of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London, SW1H 0ET

21 November 2017

Dear Minister of State Claire Perry,

I write on behalf of Quakers in Britain following the release of the Clean Growth Strategy (CGS). Quakers now call on the government urgently to develop UK climate policy to fully meet our legal and moral obligations to cut greenhouse gas emissions. For Quakers, good stewardship of our planet and its resources is a religious duty, and we are motivated by our faith to work tirelessly on this issue.

Thank you for the recent publication of the Clean Growth Strategy. Quakers are deeply concerned about the crisis of climate change and its impact on communities around the world, including in the UK. Urgent action to cut greenhouse gas emissions is key to building a just economy which allows all people to live in peace and security. We celebrate the commitment demonstrated by nations gathered at the COP23 at Bonn this month. However, we know that fulfilling the UK's international obligations on climate change requires bold leadership from government and have therefore awaited the publication of this strategy with keen interest.

The Clean Growth Strategy contains some encouraging developments. We welcome the new energy-efficiency targets for industry, the government's commitment to invest half a billion pounds in more offshore wind capacity, and steps to build a smarter grid. We recognise progress on support for ultra-low emissions vehicles. The intention to limit energy bills for households and improve household energy efficiency are positive steps in addressing the ongoing injustice of fuel poverty.

However, we are concerned that the Clean Growth Strategy in its current form fails to address fundamental weaknesses in UK climate policy. The scope and detail of this strategy falls short of the ambition and clarity now acutely needed to meet the UK's legal and moral obligations.

I ask that the government urgently develops the strategy, and related climate policy, to ensure that:

1. The UK is set securely to achieve emissions reductions well within the UK's legally-binding fourth and fifth carbon budgets for the years 2023-2032. We are concerned that the Clean Growth Strategy currently draws on "flexibilities" within the Climate Change Act 2008 in order to account for the remaining discrepancies of 6 per cent and 9.7 per cent

between the projected emissions cuts from existing and proposed policies and those required by the fourth and fifth carbon budgets respectively. Lord Deben, Chairman of the Committee on Climate Change, has said that these carbon budgets should be delivered through domestic action “without the use of accounting flexibilities or reliance on international carbon credits.”¹

2. The UK meets its legal obligation under Article 2 of the Paris Agreement, ratified by the government less than a year ago, to not only limit global warming to “well below 2°C” but to pursue efforts to further limit warming to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels by 2100. This target was advocated by many nations that are worst affected by climate change. Its inclusion in the Paris Agreement was a milestone for international cooperation. It is likely that the difference between 1.5°C and 2°C could be deeply significant for the safety of our climate. Findings by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research suggests that a 1.6°C increase could lead to complete melting of the Greenland ice sheet². We call on the government to do its utmost to protect communities both in the UK and overseas from 2°C warming.

Setting the ambition and committing to policy that would rapidly and comprehensively cut emissions would avoid passing on the costs of mitigating and adapting to climate change to more vulnerable communities around the world and to future generations. As a people of faith we believe that all people are children of God. The Prime Minister’s recent public recommitment to the Paris Agreement following President Trump’s announcement of the USA’s withdrawal from the deal is commendable. However, in order to provide leadership to strengthen international efforts to tackle our climate crisis, the UK must deliver the domestic action that fully accounts for its commitments.

May I ask for an opportunity in the coming weeks for my colleagues to meet you team to discuss this matter? We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss our questions and concerns in detail, and to hear more from you about how the Clean Growth Strategy and other climate policy will be further developed by the government.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Parker

Recording Clerk

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¹ www.theccc.org.uk/2017/10/12/ccc-welcomes-publication-uk-governments-clean-growth-strategy/

² Alexander Robinson, Reinhard Calov, Andrey Ganopolski. **Multistability and critical thresholds of the Greenland ice sheet.** *Nature Climate Change*, 2012