

Application Pack

Parliamentary Engagement Officer (Scotland)





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Introduction



David Loxton, Head of Communications and Fundraising at Britain Yearly Meeting (Quakers)

This is an exciting time to join us and make a real impact.

Our trustees recently agreed strategic priorities for the next 5-10 years to support the church to reinvigorate Quakerism.

This includes:

- working for a sustainable and peaceful world
- supporting Quaker meetings and other groups to be diverse, to thrive and grow
- simplifying structures and practices in our local and national organisation.

Parliamentary engagement in Scotland will be vital for enabling Quakers to influence politics and society, and raise awareness of our community and its priorities. Despite the pandemic we are very keen to progress with this important work.

We hope the information in this pack will fire your interest. Quakers are inspired by faith to work for a just, peaceful, and sustainable world. We seek to fill the gaps, to work where help is most needed, alone or with others – wherever we will have the greatest impact.

If you want to join a friendly and effective communications team and to contribute to the work of the Quakers, we look forward to receiving your application.

You will find in this application pack background information about the Quakers, salary and benefits of working for us along with the job description/ person specification for the post.

Kind regards,

David Loxton

Head of Communications and Fundraising



About Quakers

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is a radical faith group with its roots in Christianity. It emerged in the mid-17th century as a group with no separate priesthood, and with a form of worship based in silence.

Quakers have been committed to peace, equality, simplicity and integrity throughout history, and are known for work to bring about social change over the years, such as on the abolition of the slave trade, the relief of suffering in wartime, improving living conditions for factory workers and the introduction of same-sex marriage.

You can read more about the story of Quakers at www.quaker.org.uk/intro-quakers.

About Britain Yearly Meeting

Quakers in Britain is a national charity that supports the work of Quakers across England, Scotland and Wales. It is formally as Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (BYM). It employs around 200 people, who are accountable to the charity trustees, who in turn are appointed by and accountable to British Quakers.

As well as supporting Quaker meetings to be well-run faith communities, BYM works to translate Quaker faith into action in a wide variety of ways. This includes engaging with national and local politicians. Quakers have used advocacy to promote our faith and our values for over three centuries.

A Quaker workplace

We aim for our workplace to be consistent with Quaker values - broadly the same as most well-run progressive organisations. For example:

We expect staff to respect each person regardless of age, race, religion, gender, transgender status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, marital or civil partnership status

- We avoid unjustifiable and unlawful discrimination in our employment practices
- We follow good employment practice, with clear and supportive line management
- We have a 1:4 ratio between the lowest and highest salaries
- We aim to be open and honest in all our work
- We avoid titles such as 'Mrs.' or 'Mr'.

Very few jobs with BYM are restricted to Quakers, although about a third of the staff are Quakers or linked to Quakers in some way.

About the team



Quaker Advocacy and Public Relations

The Parliamentary Engagement Officer (PEO) is part of a small team focusing on external communications. The team empowers and supports staff throughout BYM, recognising that every employee is a communicator and applying communications skills to shared campaign goals. Other members of this team conduct parliamentary engagement in Westminster; help to produce publications and manage the website; support relationships with print and broadcast media; and coordinate social media.

Working with Friends

The PEO works closely with Quakers (also known as Friends) in Scotland. The General Meeting for Scotland (GSM) decides the priorities for advocacy in Scotland, which are then taken forward by the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG). The PEO must work closely with the PEWG on pursuing the advocacy goals of Quakers in Scotland.

Working with colleagues

The PEO works closely with colleagues in Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW), the department which runs programmes on issues including climate justice, migrant rights, peace, and criminal justice reform.

There is also a strong relationship with the office of the Recording Clerk (the equivalent to the CEO) in relation to cross-organisational issues.

BYM priorities

This is an exciting time to join BYM, when our work is being shaped by new priorities. Trustees have asked us to focus on:

- Thriving Quaker communities – supporting meetings and other Quaker groups to be diverse and inclusive, to thrive and grow
- Working with and on behalf of Quakers to build a sustainable and peaceful world
- Simplifying our structures and processes in local and national organisation.

We are also taking steps to make sure all of our work is:

- Distinctively Quaker, both in what we do and how we do it
- Integrated between Quakers locally, nationally and internationally but also within the organisation
- Well-governed – particularly being resourced, impactful and communicated effectively.

For information about Quakers in Britain, and the values Quakers share, see www.quaker.org.uk/about-quakers.

You do not need to be a Quaker or a person of faith to work for Britain Yearly Meeting but we would expect you to be in sympathy with Quaker values.

Make peace
a way of
LIFE

POWER from renewables



not rifles



NO



WAR

IMAGINE
A WAR FREE
WORLD

QUAKERS
FOR PEACE
& AGAINST THE
ARMS TRADE

Love

Our values



Our Values

How we act as Quakers goes together with what we believe.

Quakers don't have a fixed creed because we have found that the search for truth can lead us to new expressions of values as well as confirming existing ones. We call these values 'testimonies'. Today we focus on equality, peace, truth, justice and simplicity, and how they relate to one another.

Our testimonies encourage us to work for a more just, peaceful and sustainable world. It's not always easy to live this way, but as Quakers we encourage each other to keep trying.

Equality and justice

Quakers believe everyone is equal. This inspires us to try to change the systems that cause injustice and that stop us being genuine communities. It also means working with

people who suffer injustice, such as prisoners of conscience and asylum seekers. We were campaigning for independent juries in the 17th-century, for marriage equality in the 21st, and for a range of things in between.

Peace

Quakers are perhaps best known for our peace testimony. It comes from our belief that love is at the centre of existence and that all human life is of equal worth. It has led Quakers to refuse military service and work creatively for peace. This has ranged from practical work in areas affected by violent conflict to developing alternatives to violence at all levels. This could be personal or international.

Truth and integrity

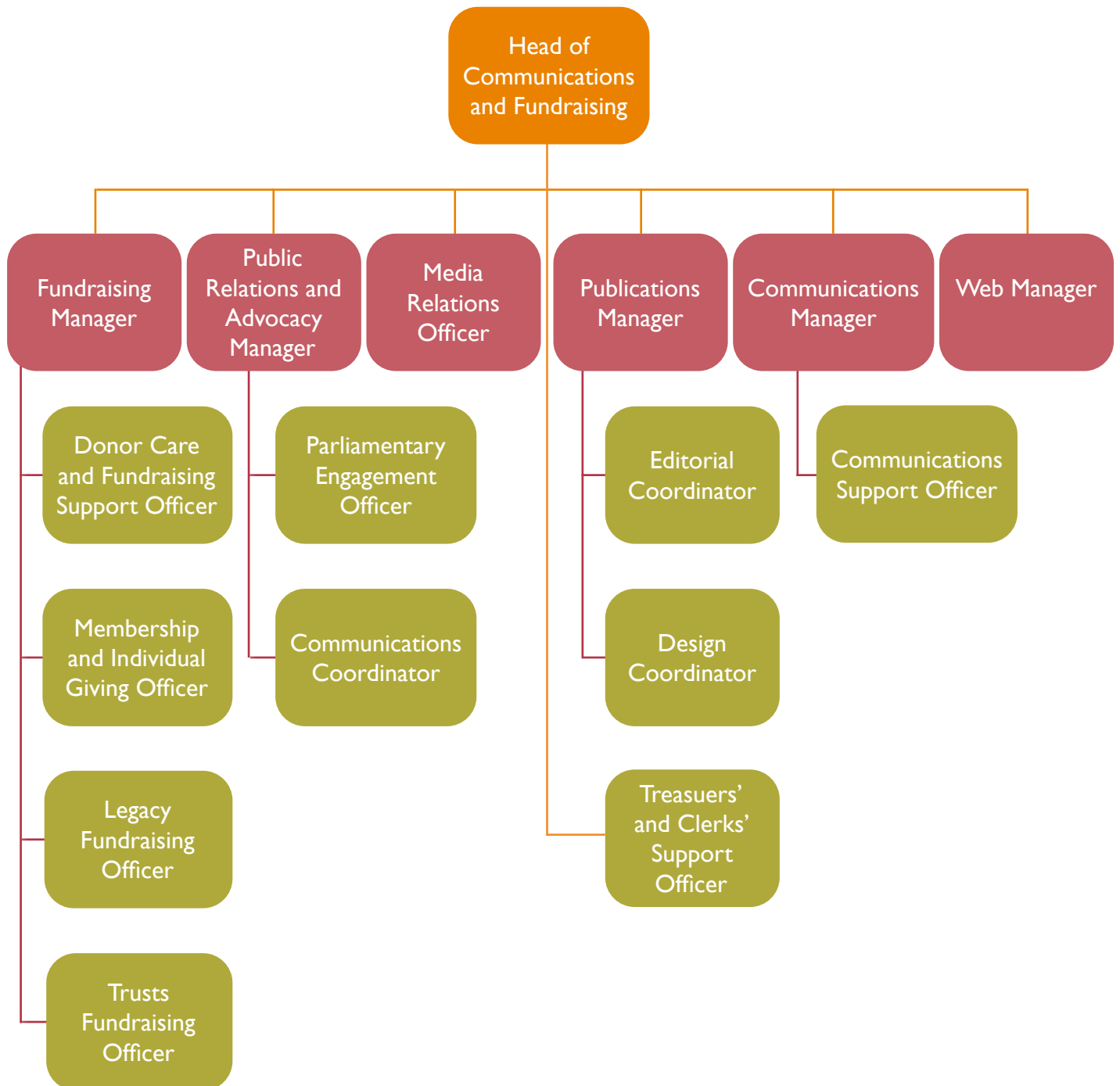
Quakers try to live according to the deepest truth we know, and we connect most deeply to this in the stillness of worship. This means speaking the truth at all times, including to people in positions of power. As we are guided by integrity, so we expect to see it in public life.

Simplicity and sustainability

Quakers are concerned about excess and waste in our society. We want to make sure our use of natural resources is sustainable. We try to live simply and to find space for the things that really matter: the people around us, the natural world, and our experience of stillness.

The process of living out our faith is often called Quaker Witness – you can find out more about Quaker work by listening to our podcast: www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/podcast.

Organisation chart



About this post



Job purpose

The role of the Parliamentary Engagement Officer is to enable Quakers in Scotland and across Britain to carry out advocacy work to deliver political and social change.

Background

The Parliamentary Engagement Officer (PEO) is one of a small team working to increase public understanding of Quakerism in Britain and to influence politics and society in line with Quaker values. We work in Holyrood and Westminster, and support Quakers to engage with policy-makers across Britain. We work on issues including climate justice, migrant rights, peace, and criminal justice reform.

BYM's current priorities are for a sustainable and peaceful world; thriving Quaker communities; and simple structures and practices.

Practicalities

The successful candidate will be line-managed by the Public Affairs and Advocacy Manager and will work closely with the Quaker Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG) in Scotland to promote Quaker values in the public realm and to plan and deliver parliamentary engagement.

You will be supported by your line-manager through visits and Skype catch-ups, but will work alone for the majority of the time, either from home (within commuting distance of Edinburgh) or in a co-working space in Edinburgh. The role will involve some travel with overnight stays. The PEO works for 24.5 hours per week (0.7 FTE).

You will agree with your manager which days and hours you will normally work. You will be line-managed by the Public Affairs and Advocacy Manager.

Key accountabilities



1. Political research, monitoring and advice

- Support and advise the Quaker General Meeting for Scotland (GSM) and its Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG) to enable them to develop policy positions and influence the political process in Scotland.
- Understand Scottish parliamentary processes and legislative timetables and communicate these clearly to PEWG, colleagues and, where appropriate, local and area meetings.
- Monitor and analyse political developments. Horizon-scan the Scottish social and political landscape. Alert PEWG, colleagues and, where appropriate, local and area meetings to opportunities and channels for action, both proactive and reactive.
- Research elected MSPs and those standing for election who may support Quaker concerns. Carry out other specific research as required. Use central systems to record and share this information.

2. Communicating and influencing

- Translate Quaker concerns into impactful communications to influence politicians, the media and the public via a range of channels including meetings, briefings emails, press releases and social media posts.
- Coordinate organisational responses to consultations, inquiries and calls for evidence.
- Represent the Scottish Quaker voice in internal communications channels and improve colleagues and members' understanding of the Scottish context

3. Building and maintaining relationships

- Build and maintain relationships with the following types of stakeholder, and assist and advise Quakers in Scotland (particularly the PEWG) to do the same:
 - politicians, parliamentary committees and civil servants in Scotland.
 - ecumenical and secular organisations and networks in Scotland that are aligned to Quaker concerns.
 - colleagues and committees at BYM, to enable them to understand and input into the advocacy work in Scotland.

Person specification



Qualifications

Essential

- Degree or equivalent experience

Knowledge

Essential

- Understanding of the Scottish parliamentary system.
- Knowledge of and sympathy with Quaker values.

Desirable

- Knowledge of one or more particular areas of current Quaker programme.
- Knowledge of Westminster and Welsh parliamentary systems.

Experience

Essential

- Experience of working in public affairs, parliamentary liaison, advocacy, policy and/or campaigning in a voluntary or public sector organisation.
- Experience of producing audience-focused and impactful communications.
- Experience of building and maintaining relationships with politicians and other stakeholders to achieve policy goals.

Desirable

- Experience of working with colleagues and volunteers spread across different geographical areas and with different areas of expertise.
- Experience of working with print and broadcast media.

Skills

Essential

- A self-starter able to work alone and under own initiative.
- Ability to analyse political developments and recommend actions in response.
- Ability to manage own workload in the context of competing demands and tight timescales.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to build and maintain strong internal and external working relationships, including across different geographical areas.
- Strong IT and social media skills.

Salary & benefits



Salary

£20,677 (£29,538 pro rata per annum)

Location

Edinburgh (home or co-working space)

Hours of work

24.5 hours per week

Contract term

Fixed-term contract until December 2021.

Holiday

27 days per year plus bank holidays pro rata.

Sabbatical scheme

Staff are able to take a nine-month unpaid sabbatical leave.

Cycle to work scheme

We offer a cycle to work scheme which helps you save money on a new work bike and spread the cost of the bike over monthly tax-free instalments.

Annual Season Ticket Loan

We will provide with a loan of up to £7,500 to cover the cost of your season ticket repayable in 11 monthly instalments.

Pension scheme

Quakers have a generous pension scheme where we contribute 8% of your salary and you contribute 3% of your salary. You have the option to increase your contributions should you wish and to pay your contributions via salary sacrifice.

Sick pay scheme

We have a very generous sick pay scheme:

If you have less than 12 months service, you are entitled to full sick pay for three weeks followed by three weeks at half pay.

After one year's service, you are entitled to full sick pay for three months followed by three months at half pay, subject to a maximum of six months since the start of your service

After four years' service you are entitled to full sick pay for six months followed by six months at half pay, subject to a maximum of 12 months.

Private Health Insurance

If you are off work due to sickness for more than 52 continuous weeks you will be eligible, subject to requirements of the scheme, to sick pay.

Employee Assistance Programme:

Quakers offers access to an independent, confidential employee assistance programme, which is available 24 hours a day.

Family Friendly Policies

Our family friendly policies give enhanced maternity and adoption leave. Once you have one year's service by the 15th week before your baby is born or you adopt, you will be entitled to six weeks at full pay, 20 weeks at half pay and 13 weeks at SMP.

How to apply



Please visit www.quaker.org.uk/jobs for the application form.

The closing date for applications is:
midday on 3 September 2020.

The principles of equality and diversity are important to Quakers in Britain in all aspects of its work. The information you provide will help them to monitor and refine their employment practice and respond to the needs of the diverse range of people that the organisation comes in to contact with.

All applications will be considered immediately after the closing date.

Interviews will be conducted by David Loxton, Head of Communications and Fundraising, Grace Da Costa, Public Affairs and Advocacy Manager, Joyce Taylor, Convenor of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group, and Martin Burnell, Clerk to General Meeting for Scotland Trustees, on **16 and 17 September 2020.**



Apply online at www.quaker.org.uk/jobs

