



Tips on working with your MP

To help you get in touch with your local MP and prospective parliamentary candidates, we've put together some information on finding out who your candidates are, how to address them and who to contact in their offices.

There are also some tips on things you can do to increase your chances of getting your local politicians along to events.

How to find your local MP and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs)

Constituencies

Constituency boundaries are **changing** at the next general election in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Enter your postcode on this website to find out which constituency you are currently in, and which constituency you will be voting in at the election: <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/boundaries/>

Candidates

For a list of current MPs visit: <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/mps/>

For a list of PPCs visit: <http://www.democracyclub.org.uk/>

How to address your MP

MPs should be addressed using their title and surname. For example:

- Caroline Spelman, MP for Meriden and Conservative Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, should be addressed as *Mrs Spelman*
- Tessa Jowell, MP for Dulwich and West Norwood and Minister for the Cabinet Office, should be addressed as *Ms Jowell*
- Vince Cable, MP for Twickenham and Liberal Democrat Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, should be addressed as *Dr Cable*
- Ed Miliband, MP for Doncaster North and Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, should be addressed as *Mr Miliband*

Contacting your MP

MPs have both a constituency office and a Westminster office. Constituency offices are often run by a single secretary, researcher or caseworker, whilst Westminster offices tend to be staffed by a secretary and a researcher.

- As a general rule, if you want to organise a meeting with your local MP, it's best to contact their constituency office.
- If you want to organise an event with your MP, it's best to contact both offices to determine the appropriate person to talk to as responsibilities for co-ordinating events varies a great deal between constituency and Westminster offices.

Organising an event with an MP

A typical MP's diary takes the following pattern:

	am	pm
Monday	Constituency	travel if constituency is outside of London
Tuesday	Westminster	Westminster
Wednesday	Westminster, including attendance at Prime Minister's Question Time on Wednesday lunchtime	Westminster
Thursday	Westminster	travel if constituency is outside of London
Friday	Constituency	Constituency

Organising events for London MPs

- If you are organising an event in London, the only real time to avoid is Wednesday lunchtime and afternoon: the MP is likely to need to be in parliament for Prime Minister's Question Time and other high profile discussions.
- If you are organising an event outside of London, the best times for a London MP are Tuesday and Thursday morning.

Organising events for Non-London MPs

- If you are organising an event in London, the best times for a non-London MP are Tuesday and Thursday morning.
- If you are organising an event in the MP's constituency, the best times are Monday morning and Friday.

Attracting your MP to an event

In addition to finding the right time to hold your event, there are some a number of things you can do to make your event more attractive to an MP. These include:

- Inviting the local media to your event and providing a photo opportunity for the MP.
- Researching your MP's key campaign issues eg. youth crime or local job creation and tying your event in to one of these issues, showing what your social enterprise is doing to help.

