



Let's lobby our MPs

Make big changes happen by influencing your MP!

MPs – Members of Parliament – are crucial when it comes to protecting our planet. That's because they decide on the laws we all follow. But they don't make these decisions alone. An MP's job is to represent the views of everyone living in their local area. And that includes you!

Concerned about the lack of cycle lanes in your area? Worried there is too much plastic in the local river? Whatever the issue, you can tell the people who represent you and ask them to do something about it. So contact your MP to make change happen!

What's lobbying?

When a person or group tries to persuade a decision maker that something should or should not happen we call it lobbying. Usually people lobby elected representatives – like MPs – but anyone with decision making power can be lobbied. That includes the head of a company or even a headteacher. You can use the tips and activities in this sheet to lobby anyone!

Can political lobbying work?

Definitely! At Greenpeace, we lobby MPs and other decision makers all the time. And we've had success: in 2018 the UK Government backed the creation of an Antarctic Ocean Sanctuary. Hundreds of Greenpeace supporters helped make this happen by talking to their MPs. This is just one of our victories. But they only happen when people like you speak up and let their MP know that they care and want something to change.

How do I lobby my MP?

From tweet to meet – follow the steps below to influence your MP and make a difference on an issue you care about. Check out [this video](#) as a starting point.

1. KNOW YOUR ASK

Be clear on the issue and what you're asking your MP to do.

Issue: An MP can help if the issue affects people in their local area and other parts of the country.

Ask: Ways MPs can help are:

- ▶ Write or speak to Government Ministers or the Prime Minister
- ▶ Speak in a debate or ask a question
- ▶ Sign a petition
- ▶ Attend an event you are holding
- ▶ Try to change the law
- ▶ Publicly support your view point

For example:

Issue: You're concerned about the air pollution on the road near your house.

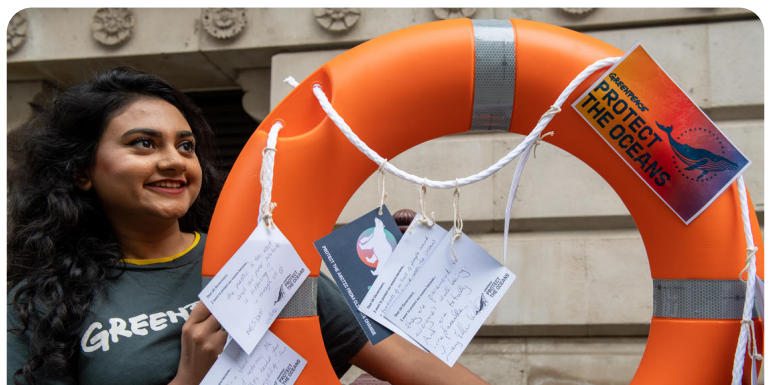
Ask: Your MP to support national funding for more cycle lanes.

2. DO YOUR RESEARCH

Get to know your MP! Type your postcode into theyworkforyou.com to find out their:

- ▶ Name
- ▶ Contact information
- ▶ Political party
- ▶ Issues they are interested in

Many politicians have blogs, websites and are active on social media. Check out tweetyourmp.com to see your local politician's online presence. The more engaged you are with their work, the easier it is to find shared topics of interest and develop a positive relationship.



In August 2019, Greenpeace delivered hundreds of postcards to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with messages from supporters asking for the establishment of ocean sanctuaries.

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3. GET IN TOUCH, ALL IT TAKES IS...

5 MINUTES



Write a post on social media to start a conversation, draw their attention to an issue or ask for their support.

Find your MP on social media and use @....

1 HOUR



Write an e-mail or a letter. Show you've considered an issue carefully and provide information to help your MP get involved. Check out our example letter on the next page to help you write your own.

Send it to the contact information you found in step 2.

3 HOURS



Meet your politician. The meeting will likely last about 15 minutes but taking some time to prepare will help to get your message heard.

Check for surgery appointments and drop ins on a politician's website and book your slot. If regular appointments aren't available, write a short letter, email or call the office to request a meeting.

4. MAKE IT COUNT

MPs receive hundreds of letters, emails and posts everyday. Make yours stand out from the crowd by following these top tips!

- ▶ **Make your ask clear:** Whatever you're asking your MP to do, make it clear.
- ▶ **Keep it local:** Politicians want to hear how issues are affecting your community. Whatever the issue, try to make it relevant to your community's daily life.
- ▶ **Use logic and emotion:** Several well chosen facts combined with the personal reasons you care make for a compelling communication.
- ▶ **Be concise:** Sharing the most important points is more impactful than overloading them with information.
- ▶ **Be polite and positive:** Politicians are more likely to listen.
- ▶ **Ask for a reply and an update:** You'll want to know the outcome.
- ▶ **Get creative:** Drawings, photos or artwork can be unique ways to grab your MP's attention.

5. FOLLOW UP WITH A THANK YOU

Tweet, email or write a letter to thank them for acting on your ask. It helps build a strong and positive relationship. So get your voice heard by talking to your MP today!



In June 2020, Greenpeace delivered a giant paper plane letter to the Chancellor in London. The letter, signed by 167,000 members of the public, called for any money given to airlines during the pandemic to prioritise jobs and climate targets.

What's next?

- ▶ Get more top tips for influencing your MP – read [this blog](#).
- ▶ Find out more about MPs by watching [The Role of Parliament](#) and reading [Simple Politics](#).
- ▶ Find out how to influence those around you through your conversations – read [Let's talk about it](#).

You can use the skills you've learnt to lobby anyone on an issue you care about. That could be your school, the local council or a company.

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An example of the type of letter you could write and things you could ask your MP to do!

[Your address]
[Date]

Dear [name of MP],

I live in Peterborough, and I'm 17 years old. I'm writing to urge you to support greater investment by the government in cycling, walking and public transport across the UK. This will be a vital step towards tackling climate change and making a transport system that works for everyone.

Our transport system is broken. The UK is one of the most car dependent countries in Europe but a quarter of UK households don't own a car. If you don't have a car you have to hope you have good cycle lanes or can access public transport. But more than a million people in the UK live at least a mile from a bus stop with a regular service. In my local area buses rarely come and there are very few cycle lanes. I don't feel safe cycling on the roads but I really want to! The lack of transport options means I cannot join the local football team because I can't get to practice. Surely I should have this opportunity? If a cycle lane was made along the main road to the football club I could safely travel to practice.

Also, road transport, like cars, buses and lorries is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. This is worrying! The government needs to make it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport so we can reduce the effects of climate change. This is important for everyone but particularly young people like me. We'll feel the effects of climate change most because we will be on the planet longer.

It cannot be right that we are continuing to invest money into a transport system that increases climate change and disadvantages people if they don't own a car. We need fairer transport for both people and the planet. It's been great to see the government's starting to take this seriously, but we need much more money so we can genuinely make transport more accessible for everyone.

I would be grateful if you could come and meet with students at my college and listen to our concerns. Many of my friends feel the same way as I do. We'd like the opportunity to talk to you about them.

Thank you for taking action to make transport more accessible and greener in our local area. I look forward to hearing from you with dates for when you can come and visit us.

Yours,

[Your name]