



**Brexit
Civil Society
Alliance.**

Campaign Toolkit
Make your voice heard
in the Brexit process

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Who we are

Attention is often paid to what the post-Brexit future holds for business but often the human impact and stories are being forgotten - the Alliance is here to make sure these stories are front and centre.

Established in July 2017 the Alliance has been active in shaping and improving Brexit legislation, connecting politicians with civil society, educating, informing and advocating for those who may feel remote from the Westminster process.

We give a voice to a wide range of groups in the Brexit process from across all parts of the UK. We connect organisations from Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England. These voices represent all parts of civil society including; health and social care, human and workers' rights, environment, consumer, food, farming and trade standards, equality, and education.

The Alliance was neutral on the 2016 referendum outcome. As we go through the process of leaving the EU we will continue to raise the concerns of member organisations and work to ensure that the Brexit process delivers on our three principles: open and accountable lawmaking which respects the devolution settlements; a high standards UK; and no governance gap after Brexit.

The Alliance's work is made possible by the generous support of the Legal Education Foundation and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. We are hosted by Unlock Democracy.

What we want

We want to make sure that civil society organisations understand the Brexit process and what is entailed as the UK leaves the EU. This is so they are able to best advocate and articulate their interests in the Brexit process.

1. Open and accountable lawmaking - Legislating for Brexit must respect democratic processes, including the devolved nature of the UK constitution. There must be clear limits and safeguards on executive power. There must be robust parliamentary scrutiny at all levels with appropriate transparency and debate.

2. A high standards UK, with rights, standards, and funding to underpin them, maintained - Leaving the EU should not mean weaker standards, fewer rights, or loss of funding. A UK framework for common standards must be mutually agreed between the four administrations to enable cross-border working and internal common market.

3. Leaving the EU should not create a governance gap - EU institutions have a role in monitoring, oversight, and ensuring compliance with the law as well as setting regulations. Where governance arrangements are changed as a result of leaving the EU, there must be clear powers and procedures for ensuring the law is properly implemented and enforced on an ongoing basis.

About this toolkit

Cutting through the noise and politics of Brexit can sometimes feel like an overwhelming task. This toolkit is aimed primarily at those organisations wishing to equip themselves with tools to prepare for the next phase of Brexit and engage with the decision-makers in the process. This could either be through lobbying around specific pieces of relevant legislation, or making sure members and activists are equipped to engage with key areas in the Brexit process.

The first section will provide you with some of the central areas that may have significant impacts on your organisation, which is helpful to be familiar with. The second part will provide you with some useful campaigning tools and tactics.

Brexit and Civil Society



Introduction

Brexit continues to pose significant and complex challenges for civil society. It can be difficult at the best of times to keep up with the speed of politics and the myriad of issues arising from EU withdrawal.

The UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement legislated for a transition period from January 31st 2020 until the 31st December 2020. During this time the UK will continue its current relationship with the EU while the all important future trading relationship, security cooperation and the form and shape of the new relationship with the EU is negotiated. The UK will no longer be a member of the EU but will continue to be subject to EU rules and remain a member of the single market and customs union during the transition period.

Over the next year there will be specific issues for civil society groups to grapple with. We cover a few in this chapter :

1. What happens to the replacement of EU funding
2. Changes to our domestic legal landscape, from environmental standards to fundamental rights
3. Revised Political Declaration on future EU-UK relations
4. Continued concerns over EU nationals living in the UK post Brexit and the EU Settlement Scheme.
5. Continued challenges to the UK's fragile constitutional settlements especially with Scotland and Northern Ireland (although making sure voices are heard from across the UK and not just London has been an issue throughout Brexit)

Replacing EU Funding: the UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The Government has announced that it will introduce the UK Shared Prosperity Fund when EU Structural Funds start to taper off from 2020-21 stating it will be simpler to access and targeted at those who need it most.

In July 2018 James Brokenshire former Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced all funding through EU programmes was guaranteed until the end of 2020 but a promised consultation on how the new fund may look is long overdue and there is concern from some that the Treasury may reduce the UKSPF allocation in favour of other recent regeneration funding commitments (such as the New Towns fund). There is also concern about the criteria that will be used to allocate funds and who will manage the funds.

It is likely that the Government will use the Budget on March 11th 2020 to make further announcements with a possible consultation afterwards including speculation that the value of the fund may be announced as part of the “decade of renewal” budget.

In the devolved administrations it is understood that the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and the Northern Irish Executive will manage the funds.

In England it is expected that the funds will be delivered by Mayoral Combined Authorities; and Local Enterprise Partnerships, which have been tasked with developing local industrial strategies, but this has yet to be confirmed and there may be a role for others including local government.

There are a number of initiatives exploring future EU funding. A working group established by NCVO and ERSA has produced a set of design principles inform the development and delivery of the UKSPF and the consultation. Equally Ours has also made the case for an effective replacement of EU funds that supports equality and human rights.

What your organisation can do

The consultation is expected during 2020 - organisations wishing to make a submission should keep an eye on the [Government's consultation website](#) for when it is published.

Compile case studies that can be used as part of the consultation response, or when communicating to political stakeholders about the impact of the loss of funding

Reach out to your local MP and arrange a meeting to discuss EU structural funds and what your impact on service users will be if that funding was lost (see Lobbying Section for more information on reaching out to political representatives).

More resources:

NCVO/ ERSA: [Future Employment and Skills Training for Disadvantaged Groups: A successor to the ESF \(European Social Fund\)](#)

Equally Ours: [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Creating inclusive growth \(October 2018\)](#)

Local Growth Fund to LEPs you can find more detailed information [here](#):

Institute for Public Policy Research: [Regional funding after Brexit](#)

Local Government Association: [Recommendations for the design of the UKSPF](#)

Legal landscape

Forty years of EU membership has had a significant impact on our political and legal landscape. To avoid a legal vacuum after we leave the EU the Withdrawal Act 2018 transfers all current EU laws into UK law (which are called 'retained EU law'). These laws can then later be amended by ministers.

In January 2020, the Government passed the Withdrawal Agreement Act- the piece of legislation which implements the Withdrawal Agreement agreed with the EU in domestic law. This Act adds further complexity to the UK's constitutional and legal landscape- as long as the Withdrawal Agreement remains on the statute book, Parliament will not be able to legislate contrary to the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement. The Act also prohibits a Minister of the Crown from agreeing to an extension of the implementation period, which makes it more difficult to avoid leaving the EU without a free trade agreement at the end of 2020. The other key issue to note with the Withdrawal Agreement Act is that it gives ministers the power to decide which courts and tribunals should have the power to depart from judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Union. This opens up opportunities for deviation in interpretation of human rights, equality, environmental and other areas of retained EU law. Lower courts are also not bound by each other decisions- if ministers use powers to allow lower courts to depart from CJEU case law, it could result in a fragmented interpretation of, for example, discrimination and human rights law, potentially creating gaps in protections and obstacles for individuals trying assert their rights.

There are also some policy areas where the Government needs to pass specific legislation to establish new UK policies such as agriculture and immigration and some seriously contentious issues such as financial services and fisheries. An employment bill has also been promised that will protect workers' rights as the Withdrawal Act now no longer contains clauses on the protection of EU-derived workers' rights. Similarly an environment bill is long overdue promising to set legally binding targets, including a commitment to improving air quality and banning the export of plastic to countries outside the OECD.

In addition to the primary pieces of Brexit legislation- which are enacted through a full parliamentary process and requires assent of both houses of Parliament- the Government also need to pass a high volume of secondary legislation to ensure the UK statute book functions properly after Brexit.

Secondary or delegated legislation on the other hand is made by the Government - which gives government ministers the power to create laws. These are often referred to as '**Henry VIII powers**', which allows ministers to update, edit or even amend primary legislation without Parliament having to pass a new act. This type of law making is often called '**Statutory Instruments**', which do not necessarily require a vote in Parliament to become law nor does this type of law making allow parliamentarians to make amendments to them before they become law.

It's important to understand that delegated legislation is not meant to make policy changes, instead, it's intended use is to make technical or administrative changes. However, research by the Public Law Project has already shown that these 'Henry VIII powers' have already been used to make a range of Brexit-related policy changes, including weakening environmental standards and citizens rights. If you want to keep up with Brexit-related changes in legislation, follow the Public Law Project's SIFT project for further updates here.

How a bill goes through Parliament

Each bill consists of a series of clauses followed by a series of schedules which fill in some of the details. Further details are filled in by ministers through statutory instruments.

The process whereby Parliament deals with a bill consists of a set number of stages. More controversial bills generally start in the Commons and then move to the Lords. This is what is outlined here, but it is also possible for bills to start in the Lords and go to the Commons afterwards.

First Reading is purely a formality. The short title of the Bill read is out and is followed by an order for the Bill to be printed and is published as a House of Commons paper for the first time.

Second Reading is where MPs debate on the general themes and principles of the Bill.

Committee Stage is where a small cross-party committee goes through the Bill and deals with proposed amendments. Exceptionally there can be a committee consisting of the whole House – this was the case for the EU Withdrawal Bill, given its constitutional importance.

Report Stage is where the committee reports back to the whole House and is a further opportunity for amendments. These are often dealt with very rapidly, leaving the Lords to return to the issues raised.

Third Reading is where the whole House debates the Bill as amended and decides whether it should go ahead.

- Then (if it is passed) the Bill goes to the **House of Lords**, where it goes through the same process (except that the Committee Stage is for all members rather than a small committee). Unlike in the House of Commons, there is no time restriction for the different stages a bill as it goes through the House of Lords
- Then the **Commons considers the Lords amendments**
- **Then the Lords consider what the Commons has done with its amendments.** Often the House of Lords give way to what the Commons has decided, but they may send their amendments (or a compromise version) back to the Commons. This process is sometimes referred to as 'ping-pong'

Brexit timeline

Key dates to watch out for going forward:

- February 2020 - The EU announces its negotiating mandate for the future relationship with the UK. The EU has planned seminars to discuss what its aims are and will publish these for the public
- 11th March 2020 - Budget Day. Chancellor Sajid Javid will deliver the budget. You can watch live at <https://parliamentlive.tv/>
- June 2020 - As according to the Political Declaration there will be a chance for high level talks between UK and EU to “take stock of progress”
- 1st July 2020 - Deadline for an application to extend the transition period. Johnson has repeatedly said he will not extend the transition period. Negotiating the future relationship is expected to be more complicated than the Withdrawal Agreement negotiation was and 11 months is widely considered an ambitious timescale
- November 2020 - European lawmakers have argued that their meeting in late November is the last possible moment for them to sign off on a second agreement, if the transition period is to end in 2020
- 31st December 2020 - The Implementation Period ends. If a deal has not been agreed between the UK and EU then we will have a no-deal Brexit
- 1st January 2021 - If an agreement has been achieved this is when the new deal will start

The House of Commons Library has [published a full Brexit timetable](#) detailing key events that have led up to today and what to look for going forward.

Note: It's not just a trade deal that needs to be sorted out. During 2020 the UK must agree how it is going to co-operate with the EU on security and law enforcement and agree a replacement for the European Arrest Warrant scheme. By the end of 2020 the UK and EU aim to have data equivalence arrangements in place. More detailed explainer at the [CBI](#) and [UK in a Changing Europe](#).

Revised Political Declaration

Perhaps of most significance though in 2020 (and the biggest challenge) will be securing a trade agreement through the Political Declaration on the Future Relationship. This was substantially revised in October 2019 by Boris Johnson in the light of his determination to seek a much more distant trading relationship with the EU than his predecessor.

In a [letter](#) to Jean-Claude Juncker in October 2019 the Prime Minister said that he wanted a future relationship “based on a Free Trade Agreement in which the UK takes control of its own regulatory affairs and trade policy”. Specifically this now signals a move away from alignment of rules and explicitly stating that a “comprehensive and balanced Free Trade Agreement” is the end destination of the future relationship negotiations.

Attention has been drawn to several significant changes to Mays deal, notably: significant amendment to the text on a “level playing field for open and fair competition” with additional references to the autonomy and sovereignty of the UK and EU; a weakening in wording relating to dispute settlement and the role of the Court of Justice of the European Union; and less specifics on the process that will follow the UK’s exit

At the heart of this though is to what extent the UK wants to forge a future role and relationship with Europe, or whether it wants to cut and run. From January 31st 2020 the UK’s ability to shape EU legislation affecting its interests will be dramatically reduced, likewise civil society groups will have much less influence on European affairs although to some extent the EU will still affect the UK due to the size of its market and its proximity.

A summit is due in June 2020 where Britain and the EU27 will be able to assess the progress of the trade talks and it is there that any extension will be granted (although PM Johnson has pledged that he will not ask for one). In the meantime, the key will be to decide if there can be a level playing field for UK-EU trade – including on environmental and social protections, state aid and competition policy. If not, some suggest we may still end up with the hardest of hard Brexits for British business (with tariffs, customs controls and a cliff-edge exit from the single market).

Useful sources on the Political Declaration:

UK Government: [The Political Declaration](#)

Institute for Government: [Influencing the EU after Brexit](#)

Brexit Civil Society Alliance: [Can an open relationship work after divorce?](#)

The UK in a Changing Europe: [Economic impact of Johnson's proposals](#)

House of Lords European Union Committee: [Brexit: the revised Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration](#)

EU Citizens and settled status

To gain settled status, EU, EEA and Swiss citizens will be required to have been resident in the UK for at least five years before the 31st December 2020.

Those who have lived in the UK for less than five years can gain pre-settled status which can then be upgraded to settled status once the five-year mark is reached. With the passage of the Withdrawal Agreement, the deadline for applying is 30 June 2021.

There are a number of challenges arising from the Government's EU Settlement Scheme. Ensuring that over 3.5 million individuals receive correct immigration status by June 2021 is a momentous task and there is a possibility that thousands of EU citizens may fall through the cracks if they do not apply in time. Failing to gain settled or pre-settled status before the deadline will result in EU citizens becoming unlawfully resident in the UK and risk being subject to the Home Office's 'hostile environment'.

The Alliance and 30 other organisations jointly outlined what needs to happen to make the system fairer and more accessible for all EU nationals and non-EU family members. The changes we are calling for included ensuring EU citizens do not become unlawfully resident if they fail to apply; provide EU citizens with physical documentation and increased funding for third sector organisation to reach and support vulnerable EU citizens in accessing the scheme.

Additional resources about the EU Settlement Scheme:

Home Office Resolution Centre: 0300 123 7379 (Mon-Fri 08:00-20:00, Sat and Sun 09:30-16:30)

Free immigration advice:

The AIRE Centre advice line: 020 7831 4276 (Mon-Fri 10:30-18:00)

Here for Good advice line: 020 7014 2155 (Mon 09:30-11:30, Wed 11:30-13:30, Fri 13:30 to 15:30)

EUSS information in 27 languages: Mayor of London, EU Londoners Hub

Devolution and constitutional challenges

Preparations to leave the EU have exposed unresolved issues about how power and sovereignty are shared between the UK Parliament and the devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Scotland's First Minister said the passage of the EU (Withdrawal) Act (the UK's key Brexit legislation) without the consent of the Scottish Parliament has "ripped up the 20-year-old devolution convention" in the UK". However, it is merely a convention and there lies the problem with much of our hard-won devolution deals - they are not embedded within a written constitution and therefore easy to change from the centre in Westminster.

After a three-year political impasse the devolved legislature in Belfast, Stormont, is back and functioning. But it took just a week after reforming the Assembly before holding a debate as to whether to give legislative consent to the Brexit agreement. Stormont voted to reject the UK Government's Withdrawal Agreement Act.

The Government's decision to draw the new EU customs border around the island of Ireland represents a significant shift from the previous "backstop" arrangements as it now introduces a trade border between GB and NI. The latter will formally remain part of the UK customs territory, but will continue to align with the EU on specific regulations related to trade and follow EU customs rules. The extent to which regulatory processes will be required will also depend on the degree of alignment between the UK and the EU.

Further problems will arise if no deal is agreed with the EU by the end of 2020 as the UK would have to fall back on trading with the EU on WTO terms. The exception is Northern Ireland, whose trade in goods with the EU would be covered by the provisions in the Northern Ireland protocol.

For civil society groups, you will need to engage with different levels of government depending on where you are based.

Further reading: [House of Commons Library](#), [Prospect](#), [Institute for Government](#)

Local government and Brexit

For most local civil society groups and organisations their point of contact and political engagement tends to lie primarily with their local authority, although this is different if you live in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

We are in a constant and changing political arena especially for those who are heavily reliant on EU funding. Up until 2012, Regional Development Agencies played a significant role in helping shape local and regional priorities. Since then there has been a drive to create elected mayors in city regions and now some 21 million Britons live in areas with a metro mayor.

Alongside this, and to support the city region framework within England, have been local enterprise partnerships (LEPs). These are voluntary partnerships between local authorities and businesses set up in 2011 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to help determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within the local area.

From 2014 onwards the 38 LEPs in England have played a key role in determining how EU funds were to be spent locally through their 'EU Investment Strategy'. In the 2014-20 EU funding round, each of England's 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) areas receives a fixed financial allocation, in euros, from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF). This negotiated Growth Deal awarded a significant proportion of the £12 billion. If you want to engage or find out more about your LEP then look [here](#).

Brexit and the ability of local authorities, LEPs and others to plan and mitigate for whatever the future relationship between the UK and the EU looks like will have an impact on civil society organisations. Some authorities are in a better position than others to plan (because of austerity measures) and some of those such as port authorities are having to make specific plans such as Dover.

[Research for the UK in a Changing Europe](#) suggests that the implications of Brexit are profoundly different for the different cities, regions, and nations of the UK.

LEP Chairs and other local stakeholders have had to submit proposals to central government confirming that their real functional economic areas do not overlap with other LEPs (which is the case in several areas). Greater alignment and collaboration between mayoral combined authorities and LEPs is expected.

The other important strand of work is around the Industrial Strategy (published in November 2017). This, according to the Government “would work to strengthen Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure that all parts of England stand ready to play their part in the growth of our economy after our exit from the European Union, we will set all Local Enterprise Partnerships a single mission to deliver Local Industrial Strategies to promote productivity”.

Some Local Industrial Strategies have now been agreed with Government, such as the West Midlands LIS, and the aim of the Government is to agree Local Industrial Strategies across England by early 2020. It is likely that it is where the post EU funding, or the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, will reside as confirmed by the Secretary of State in a written statement in July 2018.

For those of you who are involved with local and regional civil society organisations - or in some ways is a beneficiary of EU funding the need to be vigilant around these developments is critical.

A starting point would be to engage with your local LEP and/or any local authority officer who has Brexit in their portfolio as both are useful routes to pursue. It is important that local voices are heard - whether it is about securing funding for your organisation or protecting workers rights, or changes to local government.

Tools and Tactics



Identifying key moments

Catching and riding the wave is often key to success when campaigning. This involves knowing how to identify crucial moments and plan ahead, as well as knowing how to react to unforeseen moments as they emerge.

Horizon scanning

To plan successfully for your organisation you need to know what's happening in your sector and broader political developments. Horizon scanning and scoping the future landscape is an essential part of successful campaigning. Equally important is intelligence gathering and sharing information. You need to familiarise yourself with the political landscape but also find quick ways to follow developments and share relevant news and developments.

How you do this depends on resources. It can involve desk based research, or brainstorm with your team to map out what coming up over the next 3/6/12 months. The more you are plugged into relevant networks the more you may learn about your wider environment. What are you looking for in campaign terms are the opportunities when you may have some leverage and influence. But remember that by being proactive rather than reactive means it is easier to plan and be prepared to seize key moments.

Keeping on top of the media

If you can, monitor local, regional and national press, as well as social media (Twitter in particular) to track how relevant issues are developing. You should also keep an eye on your MP's Twitter account and website to see how they are reacting to an issue. Sign up to your MP's mailing list, if they have one.

There are many good (and free!) daily political briefings that you can sign up to that will help you keep on top of key issues and developments without having to invest too much time or staff resources. Here is a list of some recommended, free morning emails giving you a brief update on the latest political developments:

Briefings and Newsletters:

- Huffington Post [The Waugh Zone](#)
- The New Statesman [Morning Call](#)
- Bloomberg [Brexit Bulletin](#)
- [Politics.co.uk](#)
- [Democratic Audit UK](#)
- LSE [British Politics and Policy](#)
- Politico [London Playbook](#)
- Politico [Brussels Playbook](#)

Lobbying

Lobbying can take many forms. In essence, it is the action of trying to influence someone who has a role in creating the change you want to see. For key pieces of legislation, your MP will be critical, but for other campaigns your Council leader, MEP (Member of European Parliament) or even a private sector official may also be people you want to reach out to.

Before deciding to lobby you should ask yourself some questions:

- What is the change I want to see from this action?
- Which person can make the biggest difference?
- What will my target already know about the issue?
- What is my target likely to already think about the issue? (What party they belong to or their career history could give you clues)
- What does the target need? (e.g. re-election, fulfilling their conscience, keeping local party members happy, getting favourable press coverage)

What lobbying looks like in practice

Lobbying encompasses a very broad range of activities from expensive dinners with ministers, advertising, sending press releases to local community groups meeting with the local MP in their constituency during a surgery. At it's core, lobbying is simply about one party advocating to another in a bid to create a particular change.

If you want to see an MP remember they will only see people in their advice surgeries who actually live in their constituency - and the same for local councillors. If you wish to see a Minister on ministerial business then that will mean (normally) going to Westminster. MPs usually advertise their surgeries on their websites. If you can't find this information, try messaging them on Facebook, Twitter or calling their constituency office. If you hold events or other activities that give your target the chance to meet members of the public, consider inviting them to come. This offers ample publicity opportunities for both sides and will make you feel more confident being on home turf.

Good practice in lobbying

The most effective lobbying happens when service users or people directly affected by a decision can address your target. For example, a homeless person is the best advocate to make the case for why a service for them needs protecting - they are best placed to speak about the real life, everyday impacts of a particular policy decision or service change.

Good lobbying also involves you bringing well thought out solutions to your target - not just problems.

Bad lobbying is when you have not tailored what you plan to say to your target. A membership organisation in Scotland once asked for a meeting with an MSP only to be told "I've been a member for years, what do you actually want me to do?".

Booking a meeting with your MP

Step 1: Find out who your MP is

To find out which MP represents your organisation then go to [this website](#) and put in the post code.

MPs have a huge number of things competing for their time, so the best way to secure a meeting is to talk about who you represent. For example, if you work with hundreds of older people in your town, that will definitely increase your chances of being taken seriously.

Step 2: Get a meeting in the diary

MPs are usually in London during the middle of the week, but reserve Fridays and time on the weekend for surgeries and attending to constituency business.

Once you've found out who your MP is, go to their website to find out what the best way to book in a surgery time is (this varies from MP to MP). If it's not clear on their website, go to your MP's profile on www.parliament.uk to get the telephone number for their constituency office.

When you phone your MP's office you will usually get put through to their diary secretary or a caseworker, who can book you in for a meeting.

Meeting your MP

1. Pre-meeting preparation

Once you've got a meeting booked in with your MP it is worth really preparing well – surgery meetings can last around 20–30 minutes, and are unlikely to be longer than that so using the time well is crucial.

- Think about what specific action you want your target to take. For instance, write to a specific minister on your behalf; vote a certain way on a bill; make a public statement
- Decide who is attending the meeting from your organisation, and who is going to say what (if more than one of you is attending)

- Decide how you will answer your target based on several possible reactions. If they immediately say they support you, have an extra action you can ask them to take.
- Think about supplementary written materials you can take with you, such as a one or two page summary of the issue you're raising. Sending your target a briefing before the meeting can also help them familiarise themselves with the issue.

If you want to find out where your MP stands on a particular issue then the following sources are useful:

- Your MP's website - all MPs have a website and many of them maintain blogs
- Your MP's social media accounts
- www.theyworkforyou.com - this website will let you do a tailored search for what your MP has said in parliament about a particular keyword

2. During the meeting

- Don't let it drag on, and don't get embroiled in a lengthy argument
- Keep your cool and don't be adversarial

Some examples of actions you can ask your MP to take include:

- Vote a certain way on legislation
- Post a photo on social media showing their support
- Press release announcing their support
- Make their views known to party leaders
- Ask a question or hold a debate in the House of Commons

3. After the meeting

- Make sure you follow-up in a timely manner on any actions that were agreed during the meeting (for example, send your target additional information if that was requested)
- If the meeting went well, thank them publicly e.g. on social media
- If it didn't go well, consider writing to the paper expressing disappointment and think about other ways you can exert more influence through other targets
- Let others in your networks (including us!) know if your MP is supporting you

How MPs will weigh up what you say

MPs make decisions based on a combination of perceived views of constituents, personal beliefs, pressure from their party, and pressure from professional lobbyists.

Decision makers don't care much about what a single constituent thinks, but they will care more about what a group of constituents think, as well as local celebrities or people who can affect their local reputation.

For this reason, lobbying as a group has much more impact. The more publicly you can do, the better. Groups in the USA have been experimenting with exerting pressure by turning up at local events and questioning politicians in full view of the media and public. You can read more about the tactics used by Indivisible [online here](#).

Engaging with other opinion formers

If your MP is being unhelpful, or you want to spread the word further, there are other people and organisations you could work with to generate pressure:

- Local papers and journalists, including regional and local TV and radio
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Councillors or those active in other local political parties
- Local civil society groups with active membership

The importance of storytelling

Gathering evidence for your campaign is important, yet communicating it effectively in a story is the key to success. Storytelling is an effective way to make key issues and concepts more engaging and is a key campaigning tool.

In order to have a great impact, it is necessary to learn to present facts in a way that sparks an emotive reaction. To get started you should think about the following:

- **What is the central issue you are campaigning about?** Before you get started, it's important that your whole team has a clear idea of what exactly the issue is that you're focusing on
- **What outcome(s) do you want to achieve?** It's important to know the direction you're heading in and what success looks like, so that you can evaluate whether or not the tactics you're using are going to help you achieve those goals.
- **Who are you key audience(s)?** Look at the different actors that could affect your campaign. Who already supports your cause, who do you need to win over, and who can put pressure on those targets?
- **What are the key moments and opportunities on the horizon?** As important as it is to create a story, its influence can be reduced to zero if it is not presented at the right time
- **Is it timely and is it relevant?** Missing the boat is such a waste of time and resources

Once you are in possession of this information, you can start thinking of the story that you want to create. A good place to start is brainstorming around some or all of the following questions:

- Why is this issue important for my organisation?
- What particular problems does this issue create in people's day to day life?
- How will this issue affect the area in which I live?
- Is this issue already affecting people? If so, how?
- Why should other people care about this problem?

- Why is it important that this problem is solved?
- Why is this issue important now?
- What would happen if this issue is not solved?
- What are the obstacles to solving the problem?
- Who can solve the problem?
- What are the solutions to the problem?
- What are the actions that I could take?
- What are the actions that other people can do?

Get a rough idea of the answers to these questions above to create a more concrete narrative around the issue you're campaigning on, that encompasses a detailed understanding of the issue at hand, what the future will look like if the problem isn't solved, and the action that needs to be taken - and by whom - to solve it.

Online resources to help develop your story

- [NGO Storytelling](#) offer insights and tips for non-profit and NGO storytellers.
- [Spitfire's Smart Chart](#) walks you through six logical steps to a strategic communications plan. Smart Chart can help you build a smart strategy to reach your goal

Messaging

It is important to communicate your story in a concrete and simple way. To ensure your story is captivating, you need to convey certain elements. When you know what the story is you want to tell you need to craft your narrative around a simple, coherent and concise message – it is about consistently evoking the same symbols, the same core idea, and the same emotional response.

Feed the Minds starter kit for creating a compelling story:

- A title which catches attention
- Use language which the audience can easily understand
- Are convincing and honest
- Have some emotion
- Describe events which are relevant to the listener's lives
- Are brief and concise
- Make it clear who wrote the story, when and where
- Are realistic and accurate
- Remind people of events

Once you have created your story, it is very important to maximise its impact. You can do this by ensuring that, as part of the written content that you provide, your story is backed by visuals and numbers.

Effective visual storytelling should:

- Use images the audience can recognize as local;
- Include elements that help viewers relate personally;
- Avoid images that spark interests unrelated to the key ask;
- Text can enhance an image's impact but the image comes first;
- Juxtaposition can be powerful

The use of numbers should:

- Be used to highlight crises
- Be used to highlight solutions
- Be used in metaphors and comparisons that can be easily understood

Tools for communicating

There are many ways of communicating with your supporters and other organisations. A strong digital presence will help boost your impact and generate interest in the work you do. It's also likely that you will gain new supporters by regularly updating your audience on your work and the issues you campaign on. Below are a few tips and tactics on how to communicate with your supporters and other organisations.

Newsletters

Newsletters or E:bulletins are a really useful way to keep people up to date with what your organisation is doing and keep the momentum going around a particular campaign. The important thing is to keep newsletters consistent in format and regular in publication.

Some tips that have worked for the Alliance:

- MailChimp.com is a great (and free) tool for sending out mass emails. It allows you to tailor newsletters with pictures and you can also track how many people actually open your newsletter
- Be consistent both with style, formatting and when you publish (weekly? Once a month?) However if there is breaking news relevant to your campaign, consider sending a reactive email to your supporters or members
- Keep it brief, relevant and timely

Social media

Clarify your goals - Think about what you want to achieve by using social media. It is helpful to write down three main things that you'd most likely be able to do. For instance: closer communication with supporters or beneficiaries, raising more money, widening your audience and so on.

Know your audience - When creating social media content, think about who your audience is and how you want to engage with them.

Keep it simple - In order to reach out to a wide audience, try to keep the language accessible. That means that political jargon is translated into simple language. Rather than assuming that your audience is familiar with technical terms, explain what they mean.

Use hashtags - Having some central hashtags can make sure that people find your tweets or that when users search Twitter for keywords, your account consistently turns up. When coming up with a hashtag, think about a keyword that describe the campaign you're working on, the values of your organisation or issues that are a concern to your organisation.

Photos and infographics - Posts that contain images are more likely to be shared and retweeted, so try to include visuals wherever possible.

Use social media tools to schedule your posts - Using social media tools like Buffer or Hootsuite can save you a lot of time by scheduling tweets in advance. HootSuite also lets you track your impact and reach across your social media channels.

Engaging with the media

Writing a press release

- A press release should be used to **publicise things that are newsworthy**, for example the launch of a new campaign, an event, or new information. The Alliance's website contains [examples of press releases](#)
- **Think about what objective you're trying to achieve through media coverage, and who your audience is.** The audience you are trying to reach will vary according to the aim of the coverage. For instance, do you want to increase donations, influence policy, attract volunteers, or launch a new campaign? Once you have identified your audience, you can be more specific and targeted in your approach to the media
- **Keep it to the point.** Aim for your press release to be no more than 500 words, and send the press release in the body of an email rather than as an attachment. Don't forget to follow up on your press release - ring the news desk / whichever journalist you sent it to, to check they received your release and have all the information they need
- **Proofread your press release before hitting send.** Sending press releases with typos means you're giving journalists more work to do. Proofread your press release thoroughly or ask a colleague to give it a once over. Also, to double check that your grammar and spelling is on point, use www.grammarly.com

Messaging

- **Agree and use key messages** to build up recognition and awareness of what your organisation stands for
- Use an **inverted pyramid** to spell out the details: the most important info in the first paragraph, info of secondary importance in the next, etc
- Try to **include keywords or titles that will raise the search engine hits** a press release gets
- You could also consider **piggy-backing on a story/scandal/theme** running in the national media, and link your story to it with a local or regional angle

Framing

- **When interacting with local media always offer a local angle to your story.** This will give your campaign greater impact as people often relate to what is happening in their local area
- **Consider whether the national problem or issue has a local dimension you can exploit.** An example could be how the Brexit legislation gives broad powers to ministers and how these powers could potentially be used to change key protections like worker's rights that people in your local community depend on

Timing

- A press release should go out **before an event and after**
- If you're holding an event and you think you have a strong local hook, it's always worth **phoning your local papers ahead of time** and asking if they want to send a photographer along
- **Be aware of press deadlines.** Local papers usually publish once a week, and if you miss the one week press cycle then your story may be too out of date to be picked up

Engaging with journalists

- **Keep an up to date list of relevant journalists and newspapers.** Focusing on those who are likely to reach your target audience. Your media list will probably include national, regional and local media. Subdivide these so that you can easily interact with the right journalist for a particular story. [AskCharity](#) is a great website to make journalist contacts
- **Build relationships,** and try to develop links with influential journalists that are interested in your field, so they come to you as a source of expertise and stories. While some papers have political and / or community correspondents, if you're unsure about who to direct the press release to, phone the paper's news desk, be prepared to quickly explain the key points of the story, and ask for the best point of contact at the paper
- **Make contact with journalists in advance** for the best chance of publicising a stunt or event. Send details of the activity (date, time, location, details, expected turnout, dignitaries in attendance) to the photo desk and news desk, and follow up with a call to ask if a photographer is available to attend

Networks and building alliances

There are many benefits to working with organisations that have similar values and aims as your own organisation including collaborating, sharing intelligence, top tips and being able to brainstorm. You may also find that acting collectively gives you far more purchase.

- **Greater reach and impact** by working together can double your reach and both organisations can potentially gain greater impact and exposure
- **Learn and share new skills** by joining forces with other charities or organisations so that you can learn from each other
- **Innovate and grow** by combining skills, resources and knowledge you can solve problems, or offer a new services that you might not otherwise have had the opportunity to do

Given all the wide range of sectors members of the Alliance come from, we have been able to exchange valuable expertise and collaborate. We have held briefings to help inform parliamentarians with Alliance members, who were at the heart of advocating improvements to the EU Withdrawal Act 2018. As an alliance, we became a strong voice for civil society when it comes to pushing for the best outcome on the EU Withdrawal Act.

Some tips on how to join forces with other organisations and charities:

- **Understand what you want to achieve** “will it further the goals of the organisation?”
- Personal contacts are good but also don't forget that this is about taking **a more strategic approach**
- Do a Stakeholder Analysis to help you build a **wishlist of ideal organisations or charities to work with**. Focus on their vision, mission, values and how their strategic goals might complement your own
- Identify **what expectations each organisation have-** keep in mind that partnerships survive as long as they contribute some added value over and above the organisations working in isolation
- Keeping **partners in the loop will make them feel engaged, valued and respected-** and so effort should be made to provide regular updates

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