



Campaigning ahead of the 2024 General Election

A General Election is highly likely to be called in 2024, as charities, groups and individuals across the UK continue campaigning to defend the right to claim asylum and build a compassionate asylum system. Asylum Matters has collated a number of guides and resources to support you in taking action ahead of the election and to ensure your work keeps within charity and electoral commission rules.

General guidance for effective influencing ahead of a general election

- Lloyds Bank Foundation have shared a general guide entitled [What to Expect When You're Expecting a General Election](#), which includes tips on why it's so important to be in touch with prospective MPs, supporting people to register to vote, and understanding new requirements around voter ID.

Charity guidance for campaigning ahead of a general election

- Bates Wells and the Sheila McKechnie Foundation have prepared a guide entitled [General Election 2024: Charity Campaigning](#) which shares expert legal guidance on how charities can raise their voices in the run-up to a General Election.
- Page 12 of [Lloyds Bank Foundation's guide](#) also has a useful, short overview of what charities can and can't do in the run-up to an election.
- Asylum Matters is a charity, and is politically impartial. We do not support or favour any political party or candidates.

New constituencies

- Many constituencies are changing this general election. This [resource on boundary changes from the House of Commons Library](#) allows you to show how each constituency will change and allows you to view the new boundaries.
- This [tool from Electoral Calculus](#) also allows you to check existing and new boundaries.

Identifying and contacting prospective candidates

- The [Who Can I Vote For tool](#) lists many of the candidates that have been announced.
- The Movement Research Unit (MRU) has built a [new database of Labour general election candidates](#) that may be elected later this year and if so, will be new to Parliament.
- [Election Polling](#) has a tool that identifies the most marginal seats in the UK.
- Social media profiles may contain contact information or a link to candidates' campaign websites. You could also contact the local branch of their political party.

Tips for meeting and speaking to candidates

- You could invite your candidates to meet with local organisations and people with direct experience of seeking safety.
- If you are approaching someone who is already, or has previously been, an MP, you can research their voting record and their particular areas of interest at www.theyworkforyou.com.
- City of Sanctuary's [Speak up for Sanctuary Handbook](#) discusses why authentic expression can be so powerful when speaking to candidates, and shares tips for preparing for potential canvassing or hustings events.

- The Migrant's Rights Network has also published a [Words Matter Manifesto](#) which explores how to defy devise rhetoric and hostile narratives around migration.

Being prepared with specific policy recommendations

- When speaking with candidates, it is useful to have a clear idea of what needs to change and what you want candidates to commit to. Asylum Matters has prepared a [resource outlining key principles and policies](#) candidates could commit to in order to build an asylum system that truly protects and supports people seeking safety.
- You could supplement this with evidence outlining the need for change, for example:
 - 👉 IPPR's [report on the 'perma-backlog'](#) being created by the Illegal Migration Act;
 - Border Criminologies' [report on the criminalisation of people seeking asylum](#) under the Nationality and Borders Act;
 - 👉 Asylum Matters' [parliamentary briefing](#) on the harms of institutional accommodation;
 - 👉 The Lift the Ban coalition's [report on restoring the right to work](#) for people seeking asylum.
- You could also ask candidates to sign the [Fight the Anti-Refugee Laws Pledge](#) and commit to defend the right to seek safety in the UK.

Attending or organising a local hustings

- A hustings is a meeting at which candidates from all parties address and take questions from voters on a range of subjects, and are a useful way of reaching several candidates at once. You can find details of local hustings online, via social media or in your local paper.
- It's useful to be ready with specific questions you want to ask each candidate. These could include:
 - ? What steps will you take to defend the right to seek asylum in the UK and build a fair and compassionate asylum system?
 - ? Will you support restoring the right to work for people seeking asylum?
 - ? What will you do to ensure people seeking asylum are able to live in safe, dignified accommodation in our communities?
- The Joint Public Issues Team has also shared [guidance on how to organise your own hustings](#).

We will continue to update this resource in the run-up to the election, so if you have anything that you would like us to include, let us know at info@asylummatters.org.