

Meeting and lobbying candidates



Speaking with your prospective representatives is a great way to raise an issue you care about and ask them to take action.

Finding your candidates

Everyone in Scotland is represented by one 'constituency' MSP and seven 'regional' MSPs.¹ You should consider approaching candidates who are standing to represent your constituency and your region.

You can find a list of candidates running for election in your area on the Democracy Club website by entering your postcode on this web page:

<https://candidates.democracyclub.org.uk/>

Alternatively you can see a full list of candidates on these two pages:

<https://candidates.democracyclub.org.uk/elections/sp.r.2021-05-06/>

<https://candidates.democracyclub.org.uk/elections/sp.c.2021-05-06/>

Arranging a meeting

Before approaching your candidates, you might like to find a little more about them. What topics are they interested in? Do they have any particular interest in the climate or environmental issues, or have they taken any action to protect green spaces in your local area?

You can find this out by looking at their website, social media pages, speeches, questions and motions they've lodged, and their party manifesto.

You might like to let them know what you want to discuss so that if you're able to arrange a meeting with them, they can prepare.

Planning what you're going to say

Think about a few key points that you want to make and / or commitments that you want from your candidate. Some things to consider:

¹ Find out more about the elections here:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-02/Your%20Scottish%20Parliament%20election%20voting%20guide%20May%202021.pdf>

1. Ask at the start how much time they have. A meeting could be as short as 15 minutes, but sometimes you'll get longer.
2. Try not to be nervous. Your candidates want to represent you and they should be pleased to meet you to hear your concerns.
3. The meeting is a chance to establish a rapport, present evidence to back up your arguments, and find some common ground before the election. It's still worthwhile, even if you don't get them to immediately agree with everything you want.
4. Start by telling them why you care about this issue. Your message will be more powerful if you can make it personal. You can also ask the candidate how they feel about the issue and what actions they would take if elected.
5. Be passionate but also polite. You might not agree with them on everything, but you're more likely to get your point across if you remain calm.
6. Take some notes with you including the key points you want to express, and relevant evidence or arguments to back it up.
7. It's fine to take notes on the discussion, especially regarding actions they agree to take.
8. **Ask them to commit to doing something** before the meeting is over. This could be something they can do now such as signing a pledge and something they do if elected, such as asking a question in Parliament or writing to the Government.
9. You don't need to be an expert, but remember if you have read up on the issue you may well know more than they do.

After your meeting

After your meeting, it's a good idea to thank them for meeting you and to provide them with any relevant information.

Remind them of any action they said they would take and say that you would like to contact them again in a week or two to check their response.

This is the first election where in-person meetings haven't been possible so we don't know exactly how such meetings might go. We'd love to hear how you get on so please do feel free to [get in touch with Friends of the Earth Scotland](#) at any point.

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