



**Brexit  
Civil Society  
Alliance.**

**Campaign Toolkit**  
Make your voice heard  
in the Brexit process

# Toolkit contents

[About the Brexit Civil Society Alliance](#) 3

[About this toolkit](#) 5

## Brexit and Civil Society

[Introduction](#) 7

[Replacing EU Funding: UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#) 8

[Legislating for Brexit](#) 10

[How a bill goes through Parliament](#) 14

[Local government & Brexit](#) 16

[Brexit: devolution & constitutional challenges](#) 18

## Tools and tactics

[Identifying key moments](#) 21

[Lobbying](#) 23

[Importance of storytelling](#) 28

[Messaging](#) 30

[Tools for communicating](#) 31

[Engaging with the media](#) 33

[Networks & alliance building](#) 35

## 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.**

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 and Ireland and England. These voices represent all parts of civil society, including health and social care, human rights, environment, consumer and workers' rights, equality, food, farming, trade and education.

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.

The Alliance is neutral on the 2016 referendum outcome and does not take positions on what direction the Brexit process should take. We seek 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 Brexit and engage with the decision-makers in the process. This could either be through lobbying around specific pieces of Brexit 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 tactics and tools.

# Brexit and Civil Society



# Introduction

**Brexit poses significant and complex challenges for civil society. For even those with the best of intentions, 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.**

As a starting point, there are some specific areas that may have significant impacts on your organisation, which it is helpful to be familiar with.

For organisations in receipt of EU Structural Funds, the replacement of this EU funding is an increasing concern. Civil society organisations want to ensure there is funding in place to protect the interests of beneficiaries and service users that may be affected if funding was lost post-Brexit.

Leaving the EU inevitably requires a range of changes to our domestic legal landscape, from environmental standards to fundamental rights. In this chapter, we map out some of the changes that will likely arise from Brexit and what civil society organisations need to prepare for in terms of legislation.

Brexit has also exposed the fragility of our constitutional settlement. The devolved nations and regions have been repeatedly side-lined in the process of EU withdrawal. This toolkit will look at what some of the challenges have been and continue to be in making sure that voices are heard from across the UK in the Brexit process, and not just those in London.

# Replacing EU Funding: the UK Shared Prosperity Fund

---

**The Government has committed to replacing EU Structural and Investment Funds with a new UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) after Brexit. Although as yet there are few details, the Government has announced that the new fund will aim to ‘tackle inequalities between communities by raising productivity, especially in those parts of the country whose economies are furthest behind,’ as part of its Industrial Strategy.**

The SPF represents a real opportunity to design a fund that builds on the strengths of EU funding, while overcoming its weaknesses. While EU funding has provided a lifeline to some people and communities experiencing disadvantage and discrimination, its bureaucratic complexity has deterred many voluntary and community organisations from applying.

For this opportunity to be realised, organisations currently in receipt of EU Structural Funds and those they work with should be involved in the design and delivery of the SPF, so that it is shaped by those it is intended for.

In England Local Enterprise Partnerships and Combined Authorities are likely to play a key role in administering the fund locally. While some have a good track record of working with the voluntary and community sector, many do not. There is therefore a danger that the new fund will be used for high-profile infrastructure projects, not to support those furthest from the labour market.

No details have been given as to how the SPF will be administered in the devolved nations.

A consultation on the SPF is expected soon. A working group established by NCVO and ERSA has produced a set of design principles inform the development and delivery of the SPF 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

At the time of writing, the government has still not opened the consultation. But if you are interested in submitting a response to a consultation, keep an eye on Government's consultation website for when it is published [here](#).

Compile case studies that can be used as part of the consultation response, or when communications 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 \(October 2018\) UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Creating inclusive growth](#)

[Local Growth Fund to LEPs](#)

# Legislating for Brexit

**Forty years of EU membership has inevitably affected many areas of UK law- from protecting the UK's wildlife and environment to our right to protect personal data to name but a few.**

The Government has so far announced twelve Brexit bills. Some cover areas where significant policy changes are expected, such as agriculture and fisheries, or in areas that were previously governed by the EU, such as customs and trade. This section will look at some of the key legislative changes required by an EU withdrawal and some of the central parliamentary procedures that is helpful to be familiar with.

## **Key legislative changes: the EU Withdrawal Act 2018**

To avoid a legal vacuum after we leave the EU the Withdrawal Act 2018 transfers all current EU laws into UK law. For instance, while a member of the EU, the UK implemented the Working Time Directive, which gives workers, among other things, the right to at least 4 weeks of holiday and the right to work no more than 48 hours per week. Because of the EU Withdrawal Act, this directive is being copied over to the UK statute book and may be 'amended, repealed and improved' as necessary by the UK Parliament. These laws being copied over receives a new legal status- retained EU Law.

However, certain EU laws and regulations will no longer make sense when we have left the EU, for instance laws that refer to EU bodies or refer to EU member states. Therefore, the Act gives ministers significant powers to 'edit' EU laws, rules and regulations after exit day. These edits are not meant to change overall policy but only meant to make technical changes - such as removing references other EU member states.

These changes are commonly referred to as statutory instruments- a form of secondary legislation that ministers can use to fill out, update or amend laws without Parliament having to spend time passing a new Act.

It is worth keeping an eye out for the statutory instruments that are being published under the EU Withdrawal Act or other Brexit related legislation- some of them may have particular interest to your organisation, whether it is changes to employment regulations, consumer rights or environmental standards. You can find published statutory instruments [here](#).

The [European Statutory Instrument Committee](#) in the House of Commons has created a public engagement tool, where individuals and organisations that comment on particular statutory instruments. You can find the public engagement tool [here](#) and leave a comment on any of the statutory instrument that you believe will have significant impacts on your organisation or policy area and therefore warrant more scrutiny and debate by Parliament. The Committee also publish weekly reports on statutory instruments they believe need more scrutiny by MPs, you can find them [here](#).

# Preparing the statute book for change

Leaving the EU inevitably requires a whole range of domestic changes- from immigration to agriculture and fisheries and road haulage rules. If your organisation have concerns about the post-Brexit immigration system, how new trade deals may impact on standards or whether the government will deliver on the promise to ensure a 'green Brexit', the pieces of legislation below will be a vital vehicle for pushing for the changes your organisation wants to see.

## **Brexit legislation that has not received Royal Assent**

- **Withdrawal Agreement Bill** - This will give legal effect to the withdrawal agreement reached with the European Union. It will contain necessary implementing provisions in key areas of the Withdrawal Agreement such as citizens' rights, the financial settlement and the transition period
- **Trade Bill** - This will enable the UK to negotiate and operate its own international trade policy. The key issue here is about achieving parliamentary control over the trade agreements the Government wants to enter into
- **Immigration Bill** - This will enable the UK to operate its own immigration system in relation to EU countries after it has left the EU
- **Fisheries Bill** - This will enable the UK to run its own fisheries system
- **Agriculture Bill** - This will establish a new system for payments to farmers and landowners after leaving the EU Common Agricultural Policy. This is potentially a way to incentivise stronger protection for the countryside
- **Animal Welfare (Sentencing and Recognition of Sentience) Bill** - After the House of Commons voted not to incorporate part of an EU treaty that recognises animals as sentient beings in the EU (Withdrawal) Act, the Government introduced a draft bill which will reflect the principle of animal sentience in domestic law and increase maximum sentence for animal cruelty
- **Environmental Principles and Governance Bill** - This will ensure that environmental protections are not weakened as a result of leaving the EU and will also establish a watchdog to hold the Government to account on environmental outcomes

## Brexit legislation that has received Royal Assent:

- **EU Withdrawal Act**- The Act sets out to repeal the European Communities Act 1972 once we have left the EU, meaning that EU laws will no longer take effect and have precedence over domestic law. To avoid a legal vacuum after we have left the EU, the Act transfers all existing EU laws into the UK. This creates a new category of law - 'retained EU law'
- **Nuclear Safeguards Act** - This ensures the UK continues to meet its international obligations for safe treatment of civil nuclear materials and for non-proliferation, after leaving the EU and Euratom
- **Sanctions Bill and Anti-Money Laundering Act** - This aims to enable the UK to operate its own policy to impose or remove sanctions on other countries
- **Customs Act** (formerly titled the Taxation (Cross-border Trade) Bill) - This aims to enable the UK to run its own customs system, including setting and collecting customs duties
- **Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Act**- This will ensure that the UK can operate a permit scheme for international road haulage for whichever journeys may require permits and introduce a trailer registration scheme to allow UK trailers to be used freely internationally
- **Healthcare (European Union Economic Area and Switzerland Arrangements) Act**- the Act provides the Secretary of State with powers to fund and arrange healthcare outside the UK, to give effect to health care arrangements between the UK and other countries, territories or international organisations, such as the EU and make provisions in relation to data processing

On our website, you will find more resources on the different Brexit bills and what they mean for civil society [here](#).

Institute for Government has a handy tracker of how far the various Brexit bills has made their way through Parliament found [here](#).

# How a bill goes through Parliament

---

Each bill consists of a series of clauses (called 'sections' when they become law in an Act of Parliament), 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 peers in 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. How far the Lords are prepared to push a disagreement depends mainly on whether it thinks there is a mandate for the bill from the public and whether it thinks there are important legal principles at stake. This process is sometimes referred to as 'ping-pong'

## **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.**

But this is 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 39 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 and you can find more detailed information [here](#). If you want to engage or find out more about your LEP then look [here](#).

But of course, there are two things aligning with these changes that are having significant impacts on civil society organisations. The first is the continuing austerity measures that have impacted local councils significantly. Between 2010 and 2020, councils will have lost 60p out of every £1 the Government had provided for services, which resulted in a warning from local government leaders that the financial viability of some councils is now under threat.

The second is Brexit and the ability of local authorities, LEPs and others to plan and mitigate for whatever fallout there is as we leave the EU. 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](#).

The Local Government Association are also producing advice for authorities [here](#). Research for the UK in a Changing Europe, found [here](#), suggests that the implications of Brexit are profoundly different for the different cities, regions, and nations of the UK.

Local Enterprise Partnership 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 Local Enterprise Partnerships is expected.

Whilst the next wave of City Regions and elected mayors was on the cards this is likely to be put on hold for the time being - although this is not stopping the existing mayors to rattle the cages of national government for more powers, money and flexibility in spending priorities.

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”.

The first Local Industrial Strategies will be agreed with Government by March 2019 with the aim to agree Local Industrial Strategies across England by early 2020. It is likely that it is where the post EU funding, or the 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 LSP 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.

# **Brexit: 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 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, as its name suggests, 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 more easy to change from the centre in Westminster.

The question of who decides about issues that were previously EU competences – such as GM crops, fishing quotas, state aid to industries, data protection, energy labelling and internet security – has been at the heart of debates in Scotland and Wales. The debate in Northern Ireland has been diffused by Stormont having been suspended since January 2017 but civil society groups in Northern Ireland have been leading the conversation on the implications Brexit will have on the Good Friday Agreement and the rights contained within it.

Brexit has also opened up challenges for devolution settlements in England. In a joint statement following a meeting in Bristol in October 2018 the eight directly mayors said the proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund worth at least £2.4bn a year, which the Government has said will replace European structural funding, should not "languish in Whitehall amidst red tape and bureaucracy". In other words, elected mayors see a central role for them in the management and distribution of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

What Brexit has exposed is the fragility of current constitutional settlements and a lack of shared understanding about the status and role of the devolved nations and regions and the inability to resolve a full devolution settlement in England. As Professor Nicola McEwen said in this [blog](#) is “does not bode well for the ongoing efforts to reform the UK’s system of territorial governance in preparation for life outside the EU”.

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

One thing that is certain is that both devolution and subnational arrangements have been especially vulnerable to the constitutional challenges thrown up as we leave the EU.

Available explainers here:

[Brexit Civil Society Alliance: Devolution issues in the EU Withdrawal Bill](#)

[Brexit Civil Society Alliance: Brexit exposes our constitutional fragility](#)

[Institute for Government: Brexit & Devolution](#)

[UK in a Changing Europe: Brexit & the Union](#)

[The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee: Devolution and Exiting the EU: Reconciling differences and building strong relationships](#)

# 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:

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

# 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. And if you hold events or other activities that give your target the chance to meet members of the public, consider inviting them to come to you instead. 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 [here](#) 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](http://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](http://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 MEPS 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 your 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 the questions about 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.
- [Hatch for Good](#) helps you to craft stories. As you answer questions, you will be provided with suggested tools, case studies and resources that are customized to your needs.
- [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 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.

- 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](https://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 wide an 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](http://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 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 means 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 **wish list 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

**BREXIT CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE**

**WWW.BREXITCIVILSOCIETYALLIANCE.ORG**

**@BREXITCSA**

**INFO@BREXITCSA.ORG.UK**

**020 7278 4443**