

THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

**How can your Great Big
Green Week event have
more political impact?**



Why invite your local politician(s) to your event?

Great Big Green Week is a week-long climate festival taking place from 10th-18th June. Local events will take place all over the UK involving many different people, all passionate about tackling climate change! Not only will the week celebrate community action happening on climate change all over the country, but it will help to influence and inspire local politicians, compelling them to take action and advocate for more to be done on climate and nature in their local area and in Parliament.

Using Great Big Green Week as a platform to engage members of your community is a great way to raise climate awareness and start or continue local democratic engagement on an issue in your area. Local events can help to bring climate change home and inspire action for real change on the climate and nature crises.

Community events demonstrate wider community interest in an issue, leading local politicians to hear directly from their constituents about what matters to them. Politicians will be even more interested to hear from people they haven't heard from before, especially if they represent a community who wouldn't usually engage on this issue.

The Climate Coalition has got you covered when it comes to ideas for the type of event you can hold for this year's Great Big Green Week - check out their [A-Z of events](#).



Local children get involved in a climate and nature trail as part the Great Big Green Week in Sheffield in 2021.

Taking a common ground approach to planning your event

Finding common ground with your local politician is a really effective way of engaging them on an issue that you care about. By identifying an issue related to climate change and nature that you care about, and then finding where this overlaps with your local politician's interests, you can create an event based on broadly mutual interests. And, by taking this approach in your event planning, you'll also be more likely to reach others in your constituency who might not already be engaged in climate change, particularly if you focus on an issue of local significance. This will demonstrate that there is a strong local mandate for action to your local politician.

Common Ground Approach in Action!

It's in our Nature:

Reimagining Aberdeen's Green Spaces



As part of Earth Day 2021, Hope for the Future supported Aberdeen Climate Action (ACA) to organise an event on the importance of nature and conservation, particularly the development of green spaces bordering local industrial zones.

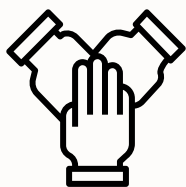
Given many local livelihoods depend on the oil and gas industry in Aberdeen, the complexities of balancing nature with industrial growth were a key consideration when approaching this event with Kirsty Blackman MP. We found common ground on the shift to net zero, given Kirsty had spoken on this before, for which both sustainable industry and enhanced local biodiversity are key. So the event was focused on the role of those key green spaces, and the future of these in Aberdeen.

To learn more about building a relationship with your local politician, check out '[The Power of Engaging your Local Politicians](#)' resource!

Top tips for planning your event



Consider how you will keep momentum after your event, both with your local politician and your event attendees. This could include organising a follow-up meeting and sending them photographs and a summary of your event (e.g. number of event attendees, quotes/feedback) - use this as an opportunity to really push the climate agenda!



Identify other local groups and/or campaigns you could collaborate with on the event - they could support the event planning, appear as a speaker and help spread the word!

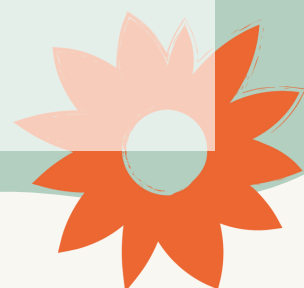
Before your event - clarity and collaboration are key!

What role will your local politician(s) have?

Local politicians are busy people; therefore they have to be selective when deciding which local events to attend in a given week, and they are more likely to attend events where they have an active role. There are a variety of roles your local politician can take in your event, and as a group it is up to you to decide where you think their contribution fits best.

Ultimately, the role your local politician takes in your event will be decided by them, but sending a clear, concise and friendly email that appropriately sets out their role and what you feel they can contribute, is a great place to start.

Think about how you want your local politician to get involved. We've listed some of the ways we've previously had local politician's contribute to constituency events in the table below.



What role will your local politician(s) have?

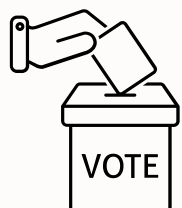
Role	Description	Great for...
Panellist	Your local politician will be a member of your panel, alongside other invited speakers.	Getting your local politician to take a leading role in the event and will take an active role in the event discussion.
Presenter / Prize giver	Your local politician will make a formal contribution, presentation or speech during the event. You could also ask them to award a prize on the day.	Ensuring your local politician makes a contribution to the event theme, it also means they will have a more specific brief in preparing for the event.
Chair / Host	Your local politician will be responsible for providing direction through the event, introducing speakers and facilitating discussion.	Getting your local politician involved even if the topic area is unfamiliar to them, this role still offers an opportunity for them to be an active participant as well as ask questions. This role also allows them the opportunity to listen without having to think about their own responses so much, therefore proving to be a good educational opportunity for our decision makers.
Attendee	<p>Your local politician will attend the event as an audience member.</p> <p>It's a good idea to have a member of your event team greet them when they arrive and show them around the event.</p>	<p>Getting your local politician along to your event if they are reluctant, unable or it is not suitable for them to take a more leading role. You could contact your local media outlet to see if they'll run a story about the event and include a photo of your politician attending.</p> <p>It also provides you with an opportunity to showcase local action and expert perspectives that you want your local politician to be aware of. If your event is in-person, it also means that your local politician can network more informally with constituents in the audience.</p>

If you aren't quite sure how you'd like your local politician to contribute to your event, then please get in touch with Hope for the Future at events@hftf.org.uk who can help you to decide.

Important dates!



Local council elections are scheduled to be held in England on 4th May, and in Northern Ireland on 18th May. Inviting your local councillor to your event can be a great way of welcoming them to their new post, and building the foundation of building a great working relationship.



If your event is taking place slightly before Great Big Green Week (and before the elections!) then be mindful of sending invitations to all candidates standing in your local ward.

Sending your invite

You should send your local politician a formal invitation to attend, speak at or host your event. This can be sent via post, email or both. You can use this template letter to invite your local politician to your Great Big Green Week event.

Local politicians' calendars are very busy. Providing their office with **as much notice as possible** will mean your local politician is more likely to be able to attend and gives their office the time to ensure that they are appropriately prepared to take part in your event.



Make sure you provide your local politician's office with as much information as you can when you send your invitation. This should include any confirmed speakers and timings for the event. Before the event takes place, ensure you have provided the office with a final running order and speaker list. It can also be a good idea to arrange a phone call with the local politician or their office staff to run through final details before the event takes place.

Invite checklist

- ☐ Identify what role you'd like your politician to take on the day
- ☐ Send an invite as early as you can and share as much information as you can!
- ☐ Keep the politician / their office up date on any progress / changes
- ☐ Offer to have a phone call before the event takes place to run through final details



Once the date is set, you should upload your event to the Great Big Green Week website. Your events will be added to our events calendar so people can find out what events are going on in their area (and across the country!) that they can attend during the Great Big Green Week.

You can visit the website at: <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>

During your event

Things to consider:

- ☐ Make sure you know when you are expecting your local politician to arrive. Someone in your planning group should have the role of meeting and greeting them. When they arrive, show them around your event and make them feel welcome.
- ☐ Introduce your local politician to other speakers/guests you have invited, as well as the event planning team.
- ☐ Create opportunities, if possible, for your local politician to hear from members of your community. This could be in the form of a Q+A session or through the meet and greet.
- ☐ Consider how you will collect data during your event to help see how successful your event has been. This could include the number of attendees, questions to ask your guests/speakers, thoughts/feelings/feedback from event attendees.

After your event

After the event, make sure to set aside time to meet with your planning group, using this as an opportunity to collate feedback from your attendees and identify key themes as a group. This will provide you with a wider perspective of the success of the event and further areas for discussion and/or interest in taking this issue forward locally.

Scheduling a follow up meeting is a great way to keep the relationship with your local politician, so that you can build trust and encourage them to do more on climate and nature. You can also signpost to future local opportunities relating to climate action and to support local groups you've met as a result of your event.



Olivia Blake MP joins Hope for the Future staff and constituents at an event in Sheffield as part of the Great Big Green Week 2021.

Post event checklist:

- ☐ Share your success online - Tag your local politicians whether they attended or not and The Climate Coalition. Twitter: @theccoalition Instagram & Facebook: @theclimatecoalition and use the hashtag #GreatBigGreenWeek
- ☐ Send a thank you email to your local politician for attending and share photos of the event. You can use this as an opportunity to clarify what the community wants to see as a result of the event, and scheduling a meeting.
- ☐ Reflect on feedback from event attendees and speakers/guests. Use this to infer next steps and what your community wants/needs. This is really useful to carry forward in further discussions with your local politician.
- ☐ Share your feedback of Great Big Green Week with The Climate Coalition! This will help them make next year's event even bigger and better.
- ☐ Celebrate your achievements with your planning group! Hopefully this has been a great opportunity and one you'd like to repeat next year.



Inspiring examples with effective outcomes

Warrington Speaks Out On Climate



This dedicated group of Warrington constituents were determined to get climate action on the local agenda. They had previously struggled to engage their local MP, so decided to organise a local event bringing together different perspectives from across Warrington to talk about why climate action is so important, including the NHS, local nature conservation, education and business.

They were successful in engaging not just one, but two local MPs! The online event was attended by almost 100 people.

Show the Love and beyond



A group of constituents organised a meeting with their newly-elected MP Robert Langan as part of Show the Love in February 2020. Since then, local environment groups have continued to meet with their MP to discuss issues surrounding climate change, including transport.

They went on to organise an online event (attended by over 100 people!) on sustainable rural transport, supported by Hope for the Future, in which Robert Langan joined as a panellist, alongside expert speakers in the field. As a result of these conversations, Robert Langan successfully pushed for the introduction of an integrated travel network within High Peak, a fantastic achievement and tangible result of the dedication of these constituents.

Do you want to connect with other community organisers planning events during Great Big Green Week?

Join our Great Big Meet Up on Wednesday 12th April, 6pm-7:30pm alongside other community organisers to really focus on the power of political engagement this June.

We'll be talking about how you can take your event to the next level and signposting resources, training and support available to all those participating in Great Big Green Week!

For more information, and to sign up head to [The Climate Coalition's Great Big Green Week webpage](#).

We provide our resources and support to individuals for free and it's the support from partners like The Climate Coalition and the generosity of individuals that enable us to do so. Consider becoming a Friend and supporting our work from as little as £1 per month. Visit www.hftf.org.uk/become-a-friend for more details.



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