



Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office

Lobbying, poverty and the Get Fair campaign

Overview



- **Nice to see you?**
- **Get Fair campaign**
- **Lobbying and Hustings**
- **Thinking of questions**

Nice to see you?

✠ Unemployment in Scotland has fallen by 30,000 over the last year...

✠ Higher or lower?

Nice to see you?

- The number of 16-24 year olds in the UK not in education, employment or training is...
 - 500,000
 - Higher or lower?

Nice to see you?

- **There are nearly 100,000 people on local authority housing waiting lists...**
 - **Higher or lower?**



Nice to see you?

- The percentage of children in poverty who are living in workless households is...
 - 50%
 - **Higher or lower?**



It's time to GET FAIR

- Coalition of over 60 organisations
- A just and fair society, free from poverty in all its forms
- Protect the poorest in our society
- Correct the weaknesses in the economy
- The UK is the fifth richest country on the planet yet the gap between rich and poor continues to grow. 12.8 million people are living in poverty. It's time to GET FAIR.

Possible policy asks

- Moratorium on elements of current welfare reform programme
- Child poverty targets – invest the money!
- Improve take up of existing benefits
- Action to support a living wage in key sectors of the economy

Making a difference

- YOU have expertise, YOU can set agenda
- Reserved/devolved
- Clear about what you want to achieve
- What kind of contact?
- Prepare. Find out what you can
- Use SCPO
- Use the media
- Other parliamentary possibilities

What can your politician do outside Parliament?

- ✘ Seek answers from local council, NHS Trust, other bodies
- ✘ Open, chair or speak at an event
- ✘ Raise awareness of your issue: putting out a press release, writing a letter to media, highlighting it at meetings, in speeches etc
- ✘ Sign a pledge in support of your campaign

What can your MSP or MP do in Parliament?

- ✘ Ask parliamentary questions
- ✘ Speak in debates/Member's debate
- ✘ Raise the issue with relevant Minister
- ✘ Organise delegation to meet Minister
- ✘ Table motions
- ✘ Introduce a Member's Bill
- ✘ Influence parliamentary committee
- ✘ Lodge amendments to legislation

Letters/Briefings: handy hints

- ✠ Be brief (ideally one side A4, max 2)
- ✠ Be polite
- ✠ Stick to one issue
- ✠ Write an *individual* letter
- ✠ Include your contact details
- ✠ Mention your involvement in local church/school/group etc
- ✠ Request a reply and/or a meeting

Letters/Briefings: content

- ✘ Explain clearly why you are writing and why your concerns are relevant – use evidence to support your claims
- ✘ Always be factually accurate
- ✘ Outline arguments in your favour
- ✘ Describe your proposed solution
- ✘ Give a response to potential arguments against your solution

Meeting your MSP

- ✠ Always go well prepared & briefed
- ✠ Know who is going to speak, in what order and who will take notes
- ✠ Engage – don't condemn
- ✠ Consider most persuasive arguments from MSP's perspective & anticipate counter arguments
- ✠ Get a commitment & follow it up
- ✠ Keep the MSP updated on issue

If your MSP is a Minister

- ✘ Make it clear that you are contacting them as an MSP
- ✘ Arrange a meeting (need good reason due to Ministers' hectic diaries)
- ✘ Gives you access to someone with direct decision-making powers
- ✘ Will add weight to your cause
- ✘ Likely to be better informed of Government policy

Organising a hustings

- Get a group together – ecumenical
- What area to cover?
- When?
- Contacting the candidates
- Chairing the meeting
- All candidates?
- Publicise
- Sound and accessibility

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- **What questions would you like to ask at a hustings?**

Thank-you!

✠ Please take our survey found on our website
www.actsparl.org

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