



Handy Tips: Meeting Your MP

WHAT TO EXPECT

MPs want to know what it is you care about. Not only do they want to hear from you, they have a duty to listen - their job is to represent you in Parliament! MPs are generally friendly and open for a chat, but they are pressed for time so don't expect meetings to last too long. Generally appointments will last around 10-15 minutes - so make sure you've got your key messages ready. You might find it helpful to prepare in advance and perhaps even rehearse what you want to say beforehand. It's also important to research who your MP is. Find out what they care about and whether or not they have taken an active interest in the environment before - that way you can go into the meeting fully prepared. You can find a lot of that information here.

All MP surgeries are slightly different, but in most cases you are likely to be sat in a waiting room before your appointment with people from your local area. Once it is your turn, you'll be invited into an office for your chance to persuade your MP why they should be supporting a new law for nature's recovery. You won't regret it (and to your friends, family and potential employees it sounds really impressive - so be sure to let them know!).

HOW CAN I MAKE MY MEETING EFFECTIVE?

Share your story:

MPs love personal stories. Share yours with them, choosing experiences that have taken place in your local area and meant a lot to you. This way you can show your MP how much the natural environment in your area matters. Perhaps there are some moments shared with your Wildlife Trust or events you've attended that stand out? Can you think how even more wildlife in your area would help to improve it?

Have a clear ask:

To make your meeting as successful as possible, make sure you have some clear things to ask your MP to do for you. For example, you could ask them to write to their Party Leader e.g. Theresa May or Jeremy Corbyn, and their environment team to support an ambitious Environment Act for all the reasons shared above. You can also ask them what they think they can do to help make this happen too!

Don't worry if you're not an expert:

It's your MP's job to listen to you and you will probably know far more than them - just be passionate about the issue.

Take a photo:

Ask your MP if you can take a photo with them - this is a great way to let others know that people have been speaking to them about nature's recovery, and to encourage them to do the same. MPs often like the publicity too!

NEXT STEPS

Following up with your MP is a good way to keep your meeting fresh in their mind – sending them a quick 'thank you' email with the photo is a nice way of doing this.

It might also help to take brief notes on what was said in the meeting so you can remind them of anything they have committed to and hold them to it!