

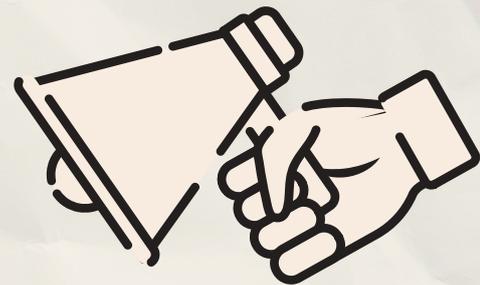
# Influencing Decision Makers



**Cheshire**  
Wildlife Trust



It can be scary if you haven't spoken to people in authority very much, but there is one important thing to remember: they are people! They have bad days and good days, just like you do. Sometimes they are incredibly knowledgeable, sometimes they are new to the role, and sometimes they are just the right person to help your cause...



Inviting your local representatives to be part of your campaign can really get your cause noticed by the people you need to influence.

Even if your local representative disagrees with you, keep an open and respectful dialogue so you understand their perspective.



Links to informational videos can be found at the end of this document

# Local Councillors

Councillors play a crucial role in local governance. They are responsible for making decisions on local issues, managing public services, and representing the interests of the community.

Use these links to:

[Find your local council](#)



[Find your town/parish council](#)



Councillors are often responsible for planning decisions:  
[Find out how to respond to planning developments here](#)

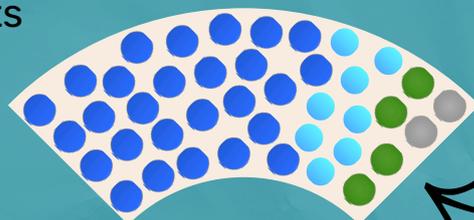
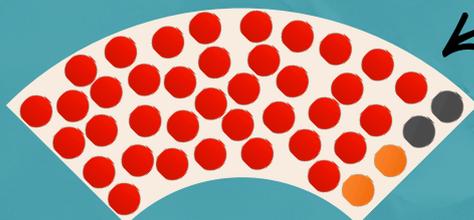
## What can you ask of Councillors:

- Vote on council matters
- Raise/follow-up on issues
- Respond to your questions
- Influence policies
- Table motions
- Support your cause
- Influence spending decisions
- Write to someone important

## Find out who makes up your council

You can find this information on your local council website.

- Labour
- Independent
- Local group
- Conservatives
- Liberal Democrats
- Green
- Reform UK



The largest party usually (but not always) leads the council and makes the decisions, so it is good to talk to them first.

If that does not work, approaching the opposition or smaller parties can put pressure on the main party.

# Members of Parliament (MPs)

Find your local MP here 

## Quick tips on speaking with your MP

- Assume they want to help you
- Be politically neutral
- Start from scratch - assume they know nothing about the issue
- Don't use jargon - speak plainly
- Anticipate their questions and prepare answers
- Have a clear ask - what do you want them to do?

## What can MPs do and what you might ask of them

- Ask a question in Parliament
- Write to the Government
- Host a debate in Parliament
- Influence the local council
- Vote on legislation
- Make changes to legislation (more likely to be accepted if an MP is from the Governing party)

## Inviting your MP to a meeting

### Place

What location would help showcase your cause?

### People

Who are your experts and your strong communicators?

### Position

Where do they stand on your issue?

### Party

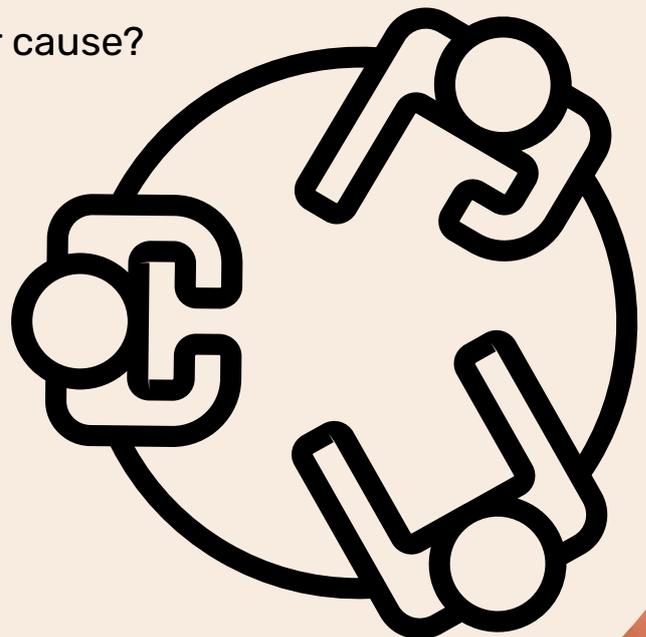
Are they in opposition or in power?

### Ask

What do you want them to do?

### Think back to your core messages

Be prepared to challenge any misconceptions



# Petitions

**Petitions are a great way to put pressure on decision makers and show the local community is behind you.**

We use Action Network because it doesn't have a signature limit and lets you contact your supporters. You don't need to use a council's website to make it official.

## Choose your petition target

Consider stakeholders like councils and MPs. Who can change things? Are they a realistic target?

## Find out your local petitioning process

See what restrictions there are for submitting a petition.

## Choose your petition platform

Make sure you can access your supporter data. Make sure it can handle the number of signatures you need. Microsoft Forms has a 1K signature limit and may not be suitable.

## Gather the signatures

Make sure you hit the minimum number within 6 months. Only launch publicly when you are ready.

## Submit your petition

Make an event of it with a speech or press release.



Check out Cheshire Wildlife Trust on our socials.

Discover more of our campaigning guides below:

[Communicating with your supporters](#)

[Starting a campaign](#)

[How to engage people in your campaign](#)

If you have questions about the content above, please email: [campaigns@cheshirewt.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@cheshirewt.org.uk)

## Watch our video guides

**[How to Contact your MP](#)**

**[About councils and Local Authorities](#)**

**[Speaking to Councils with Confidence](#)**



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