

Lobbying a Member of Parliament

For good lobbying you not only need to know who has the power to do what, but also what you can ask the decision-maker you are lobbying to do.

Ask a Parliamentary Question

Oral questions are tabled two weeks in advance to a government department and are drawn by ballot. There is only time for 10 - 15 questions to be answered, but they are asked at Question Time (and therefore may get media attention). MPs get the chance to ask one supplementary question that Ministers do not know in advance.

In addition MPs can ask an **unlimited number of written questions** on your behalf, usually to get information from a government department.

Benefits

- ☺ **get publicity** (although this can be limited);
- ☺ **bring issues to the attention of Ministers** (they have to answer supplementary questions, which they'll need to prepare for);
- ☺ **gathering information.**

All written and oral questions have the answers published in [Hansard](#).

Table or sign an Early Day Motion

This is a kind of **parliamentary petition**. You can find out if there is an existing EDM on the issue and who has signed it by going to the following website: edm.ais.co.uk

Benefits

- ☺ **moves issues** up the political agenda (if they have lots of signatures);
- ☺ generates a **public list of supporters** for an issue;
- ☺ **provides a commitment** to which MPs can be held in the future.

Raise the issue in an Adjournment Debate

Adjournment Debates are short debates (30 or 90 mins) initiated by backbenchers. The MP speaks, and the Minister responds. This is an opportunity to **get a Minister to speak on a particular issue** and to **get publicity**, especially for local issues.

Introduce a Private Members' Bill (PMB)

- ☺ can **achieve a change in the law**;
- ☺ can get a **show of support** for a change in the law;
- ☺ **gets publicity.**

But not many PMBs make it. There's a Ballot system to decide which MPs can introduce bills, as there is limited time to debate them.

