

Guide for Meeting Politicians and Decision-makers

Why do it?

Many politicians make decisions on climate change that are based more on what the public wants than what scientists recommend. Yet very few members of the public have spoken to our local politicians about climate change. It is therefore very important that you tell our politicians how you feel about climate change and what you'd like them to do. In addition to sending them letters or taking part in radio-talk-back and sending letters to newspapers, we recommend that you meet with them. Here are our tips:

Before the meeting

- Decide who will attend (going with a buddy or in a small group is best).
- Get in touch with the politician's diarist to request an appointment and give the diarist an indication of the issues you wish to discuss.
- Once an appointment has been arranged, send a proposed agenda including names of those attending. Make it clear on the agenda what you want your politician to do.
- Do your homework on the issue and on the politician.

During the meeting

- Remove obstacles to being heard e.g. dress conservatively.
- Start with introductions. Wear name badges or give the politician your business cards.
- Confirm the length of the meeting and pace the discussion accordingly.
- Follow your agenda. If possible assign a minute-taker.
- Don't feel you have to know everything about climate change. Your credibility is as a concerned citizen/parent, not a scientific expert.
- If relevant, bring something to leave with them e.g. a report.
- Remind them that they represent and are accountable to you as a citizen.

After the meeting

- Follow up with an email or letter thanking them for the meeting, providing any information you promised and reminding them of what they said they would do.
- Debrief with your colleagues to discuss what you learned, what went well or not so well.