

# Get Involved

It's your UK Parliament



The House of Commons and the House of Lords make up the **UK Parliament**. They make decisions that affect us all.

This leaflet sets out the different ways you can share your views with UK Parliament on issues that matter to you, and how you can keep informed on the day-to-day events in Parliament.

### Contact your MP

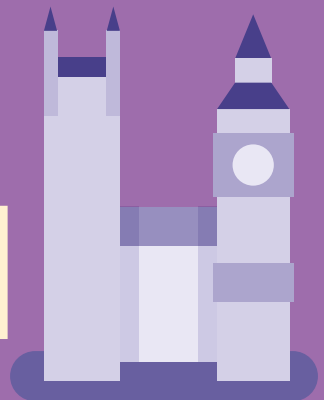
Wherever you live in the UK you have a local Member of Parliament (MP) who is your representative in the House of Commons.

If you feel strongly about something that you think Parliament or the government should do, you can contact your MP to ask if they will raise it on your behalf. MPs can ask questions directly to government ministers. There are also opportunities each week in the Commons for MPs to raise an issue – from short debate slots to question time sessions.

share their concerns. They can then work together more effectively to press the government for action. MPs cannot take up every case but, if they are able to help, they can be a very useful advocate.

Find out who your MP is and how to contact them: [members.parliament.uk/members/commons](https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons)

By speaking out about a problem, an MP can attract the support of other MPs who



## Contact a member of the House of Lords

The House of Lords is the second chamber of UK Parliament and shares the task of making laws and checking and challenging the work of government.

Members of the Lords come from different professional backgrounds and apply their experience to the House's work. They bring specialist knowledge and independent experience as they debate current issues and check and change bills before they become law.

Contact any member of the Lords and search for the areas they are interested in: [members.parliament.uk/members/lords](https://members.parliament.uk/members/lords)

## Watch UK Parliament at work

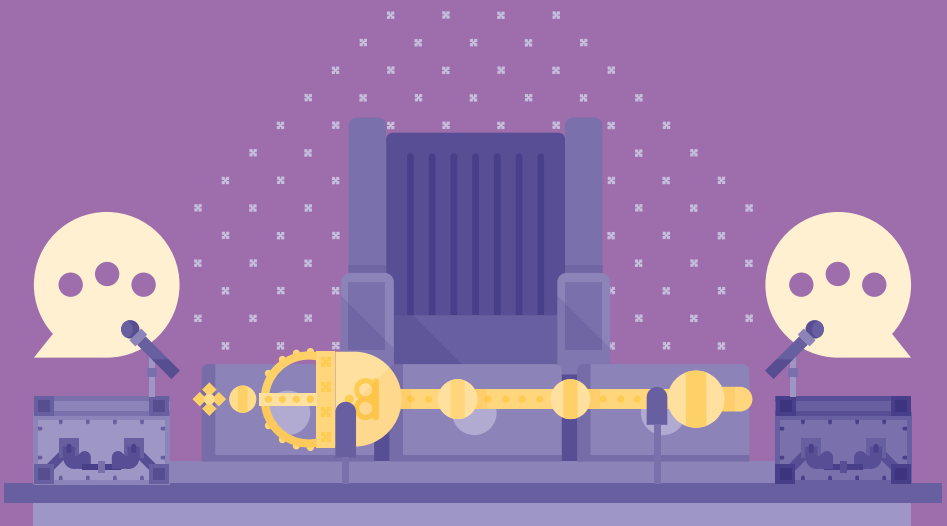
UK Parliament is open to the public. Everyone can watch the action in both the House of Commons and House of Lords.

Advance booking is not necessary but it is recommended for Prime Minister's Question Time on Wednesdays.

When Parliament is sitting you can also take a guided tour of Parliament, free of charge, Monday to Friday.

You can watch the action live, or on catch up, on [parliamentlive.tv](https://parliamentlive.tv)

Find out more: [parliament.uk/visiting](https://parliament.uk/visiting)



## Have your say on changes to the law

Making laws is one of the core roles of UK Parliament. If you feel strongly about a proposed new law (bill) that Parliament is considering, or you think changes should be made to it, you can ask your MP or a member of the House of Lords to raise the issue on your behalf.

Your MP may get to speak and vote on the bill during its stages in the Commons. You can let your MP know if you would like them to support or oppose the bill, or ask if they will either propose or support changes (amendments) to the bill.

You can also send information (submit evidence) directly to a Public Bill Committee during its committee stage in the Commons.

Members of the Lords often focus on bills that relate to their specific areas of expertise or interest. The best way to find out which members are working on the bill that

interests you is to check who will be speaking at the bill's second reading debate in the House of Lords chamber. To do this search:



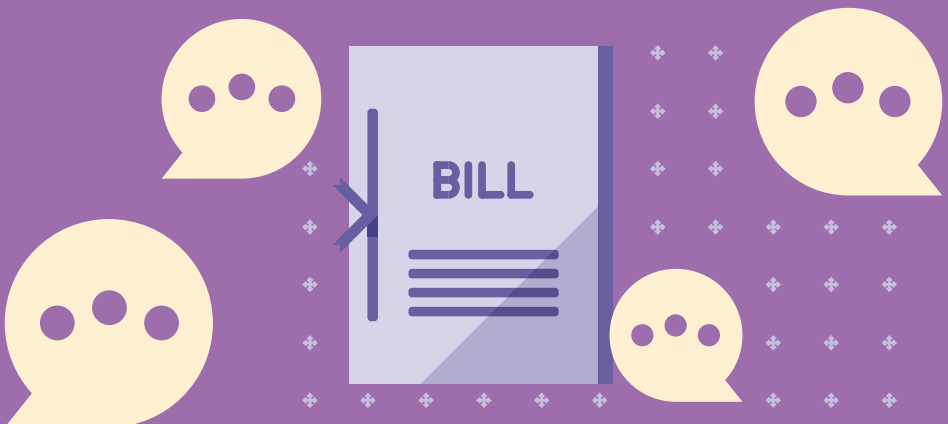
**speakers list lords**

You can also search members of the Lords by policy interest: [members.parliament.uk/members/lords](https://members.parliament.uk/members/lords)

Sometimes the government publishes a bill in draft form, to allow for consultation and scrutiny, before it is officially introduced to Parliament. It is often possible to send in your comments on the bill at this early stage. To find current draft bills search:



**draft bills**



## Start or sign a petition

**Petitions are a good way of showing MPs and the Government that a lot of people feel strongly about an issue.**

Any British citizen or UK resident can sign or create an e-petition on [petition.parliament.uk](https://petition.parliament.uk).

If an e-petition reaches 10,000 signatures it receives a written response from the Government, and those that reach 100,000 signatures are usually debated by the House of Commons.

The Petitions Committee keeps you informed about any action that is taken on an e-petition you have signed or created.



**petition parliament**

**You can also ask your MP to present a public (paper) petition about an issue that you care about. These are different from e-petitions.**

## Share your experiences to inform debates

**MPs regularly get the chance to have debates on local or national issues, pressing government ministers for action or asking them to explain their decisions. The topics can include support for people with specific health conditions, environmental issues, education policy and much more.**

When signing e-petitions, you can give your permission to receive updates relevant to the petition, including opportunities to share your experiences of these topics with MPs. They can then reflect on what you have shared, and bring your stories into their debates.

These invitations are often also sent to people who sign up to receive the Your UK Parliament newsletter. When signing up, you can indicate your topics of interest, and where you live. This helps to ensure the invitations are relevant to you. Sign up via the [Get Involved](#) page.



**parliament get involved**



## Share your views on a select committee inquiry

Both the Commons and the Lords have select committees. These are smaller groups of MPs or members of the Lords set up to investigate an issue and report their findings.

Select committees usually launch each new investigation with a call for evidence which invites members of the public with an interest or experience in the topic to share their views either via email or by attending an event. Based on the facts they gather during the inquiry, select committees make suggestions for how things can be improved. In this way, they try to influence future government decisions.

You don't have to be an expert to share your views; a committee looking into how school meals or bus services can be improved may learn more from parents and passengers than chefs and bus operators.

To find out more about select committees and to see which committees are currently asking for views from the public search:

 **select committee inquiries**



## Follow UK Parliament online

Find out what is happening in both Houses in the week ahead:  
**[whatson.parliament.uk](https://www.whatson.parliament.uk)**.

Discover what bills Parliament is considering and track their progress:  
**[bills.parliament.uk](https://www.bills.parliament.uk)**

See what your MP or members of the Lords have said in Parliament and check how they have voted: **[members.parliament.uk](https://www.members.parliament.uk)**

Follow the Commons and the Lords on social media.



## Vote in an election

A general election takes place at least every 5 years in the UK. This is your opportunity to decide who should represent you as your local MP and to have a say in who governs the country.

To vote in a general election, you need to be a British, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen. To find out more search:



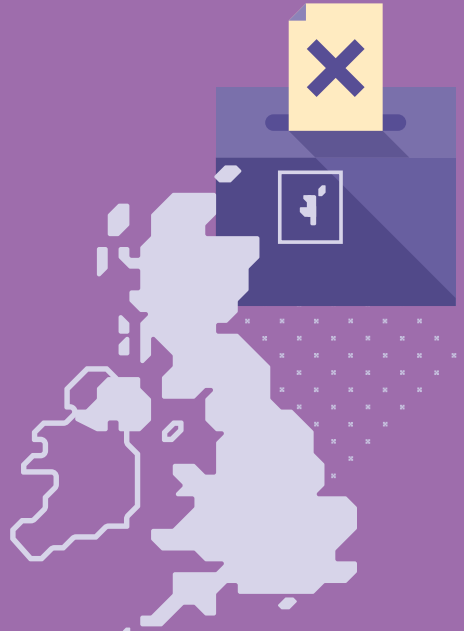
**register to vote**

Don't forget, you can stand as a candidate in a general election. Find out more on the Electoral Commission's website: [electoralcommission.org.uk](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)

You can also nominate somebody to become a member of the House of Lords. To find out how search:



**Lords appointments**



## Be informed

The House of Commons and House of Lords publish briefings each week that cover every topic discussed by Parliament. These are available for the public to read.

Commons and Lords briefings are a good place to start for anyone who wants to contact Parliament about an issue. Understanding the background of a topic will help you to make sense of the arguments on either side.

It will also help you to make a better, more persuasive case yourself. To find briefings on topics discussed in Parliament search:



**research briefings  
parliament**

## Want to know more?

Contact us if you have a question about the House of Commons or House of Lords.

### House of Commons Enquiry Service



**hcenquiries@parliament.uk**



**0800 112 4272 (Freephone) or 020 7219 4272**



**House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA**

### House of Lords Enquiry Service



**hlinfo@parliament.uk**



**0800 223 0855 (Freephone) or 020 7219 3107**



**House of Lords, London, SW1A 0PW**

Callers with a text phone can talk through Text Relay by calling **18001** followed by the full number.

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