



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Toolkit for UK Parliament Week events and activities

ukparliamentweek.org
#UKPW16



PUBLICISING YOUR EVENT



Parliament Week
Engage. Explore. Empower.

Publicising your event

Publicity can help you get the right audience to your event, and raise your organisation's profile. This toolkit will give you tips about creating different types of publicity, and what you can do to maximise your publicity.

Writing about your event

No matter how you're publicising your event or activity, try to keep the information about it as short as you can, be clear about what it is and who it's aimed at, but also try to tailor what you're saying to your audience. Use bullet points where necessary and create hyperlinks to any supporting information rather than including it all in the text.

Include information about where it is, when it will take place and if there are any costs. You should also let your audience know about access arrangements.

If you are aiming to attract school groups, direct your publicity towards teachers and include relevant information about where it fits in to the curriculum. Doing this makes it much easier for teachers to justify why they are spending time on an activity or attending an event with their students.

Lastly, remember to include details of your social media channels and the UK Parliament Week hashtag: **#UKPW16**

Social media

- Update your social media accounts regularly to build anticipation around your event – create teasers by posting interesting information prior to the event

Include the UK Parliament Week hashtag **#UKPW16** and tag **@YourUKParl** in your tweets so we can retweet you

- If you have any high-profile speakers or attendees, ask them to share information with their followers
- What organisations do you know that could tweet about your event? Are there any influential people with lots of followers who might retweet for you?
- Create a two way conversation: reply to people's comments and questions
- Thank people for supporting your event or activity

Leaflets and posters

Using leaflets and posters can be an extremely effective way of publicising your event/activity. Make sure they:

- Are eye-catching
- Are distributed where your audience will see them or pick them up (e.g. a library or youth centre). Include all the details (e.g. date, who it's for, how to book, venue, contact details)
- Use simple, jargon-free language
- Include the official UK Parliament Week partner logo, website and hashtag **#UKPW16**

Website

- Include all the details (e.g. date, who it's for, how to book, venue, contact details)
- Include the official UK Parliament Week partner logo and link to the UK Parliament Week web page
- Upload your event to the UK Parliament Week website

Media coverage

Media coverage can help encourage people to attend your event, but will also help to raise awareness of the work your organisation does. This information is intended as a guide to get you started. If you are unsure about any of the steps, please contact the UK Parliament Week team and we'll do our best to help. Email us on **ukparliamentweek@parliament.uk** or call **020 7219 3522**.

Maximising media coverage

Media coverage can help encourage people to attend your event, but will also help to raise awareness of the work that your organisation does. This information is intended as a guide to get you started.

If you are unsure about any of the steps, please contact the Parliament Week team, and we will do our best to help.

Step One:

Research local media outlets, for example:

- Newspapers (national and regional)
- Blogs
- Magazines
- Local authority newsletters
- Radio stations
- TV channels

Figure out which channels have the largest relevant audience for you, and prioritise those. Try phoning the outlets to find out who is the best person to send a press release to. Ask about deadlines, and make sure you plan around submitting material in time for those.

Step two:

Create a press notice. This should be concise and punchy, avoid overloading with adjectives and include as much key information (date, location, speakers) as close to the beginning as possible. You can use our template press release as a guide for creating your own.

Include no more than 2 (or 3 max) quotations. For example, one from CEO/chair (or equivalent) of your organisation and ideally one from your local MP.

If you can include or offer images, this may help to gain coverage.

Things to include:

- Key details of your event
- Parliament Week standard text
- Contact details for the person who will deal with any media enquiries
- Availability of interviewees
- How to register for attendance
- Quotes (max. 3)
- Details of your organisation
- How to get images
- A clear headline

Contacting your MP for a quote

To add some weight to your press release, include a quote from your local MP. Contact your MP's office well in advance to find out who the best person to liaise with is (find contact details for your local MP here). To speed the process up, offer a draft quote (suggested version included in the template press release) for your MP to edit. Give clear deadlines, and follow up if you don't hear back.

As a final check, make sure that you would be happy for anything in your press release to appear in print.

Step three:

Consult the UK Parliament Week team. We'd love to see your release before you send it - please send it to us at least a week before you send it out so that we can look it over. It doesn't matter if your MP's quote is not signed off, we would like to see it anyway. Please email it to ukparliamentweek@parliament.uk.

Step four:

Circulate your release. Tips for circulating:

- Paste the text of the release into the body of the email. Don't use attachments – they won't get opened.
- Use the 'headline' text as the subject of your email
- Provide clear contact details at the top
- BCC all media outlets, so recipients can't see who else it has gone to.
- Proofread again!
- It goes without saying, but make sure your quotes have all been signed off before sending!

Ideally, your release should go out a few days before your event. Don't send it more than a week in advance, as it will get lost in people's inboxes.

Step four:

Call the media outlets you particularly want coverage from, check they've received the release and see if they'd like more info. Journalists get a lot of emails, so be ready to resend if necessary.

Local Radio

It's always worth phoning local radio in advance to warm them up, and then again after sending the release. It's best to phone after ten past the hour, as they will be busy with news bulletins just before. Make sure you have information to hand, and an interview candidate to offer up.

Support and advice

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss your press plans with someone from the UK Parliament Week team, please do drop us a line and we'll do our best to help. Please bear in mind that the more time you give us the more help we'll be, so don't leave it to the last minute. You can contact us at

ukparliamentweek@parliament.uk.