



Writing to your MP ahead of COP26

Address your MP formally - make sure that you've spelt their name correctly and are using their correct title. Putting your address in the top right corner and theirs in the top left helps show that you are official and based locally. Find information on your MP [here](#).

Add a subject line - this helps focus the reader in on the letter, and what it is asking for

Introduce yourself - where you are writing from and why. You want to make a good first impression and be clear about what you want. Make sure you keep it focused on COP26, as a more specific and time-sensitive letter will be more likely to get a positive response - otherwise you risk not being seen as a priority. Outline what COP26 is, and why you are relevant to it.

Talk about your project - talk about how it helps to reach net-zero (renewables, retrofits, transport - it could be any of these and more!) and the other amazing features of the project in terms of social benefit and climate awareness. This is a chance to brag, so use it! Again, try to link this to COP26 and its aims, putting yourself forward as a solution.

Talk about community energy more generally - if you're running out of space, this area can be cut back, but bear in mind that not all MPs are aware of community energy projects, and some outline will be useful.

Set out your asks - what do you want from this letter? Sending a letter for awareness is not without its uses, but it's unlikely to be brought before an MP if there is no request accompanying it. The first stage of interacting with your MP is usually to request a meeting or visit, and then when you have them in front of you you can go on to make more specific requests. Think about what might be best to invite them to (your new flagship turbine, for example), and try to make it as exciting and media-friendly as possible.

In the lead-up to COP the UK government will be releasing their Net Zero Strategy which will be funded in the Comprehensive Spending Review. These are scheduled for autumn, and it's vital that we keep up the pressure on the government to include strong support for Community Energy in both.

Sign off - end with a formal sign-off ("best regards", "yours sincerely", rather than "Cheers"). Then add the names of the signatories along with addresses and postcodes (you will need to be based within the constituency in order to get a response from the constituency office)

- Make sure it is well presented - think about your formatting, add an address, and make sure you spell their name correctly! This will help it look professional and will help you be taken seriously.

- This might look a bit different if you've already interacted with your MP before
- This is just a guideline! Don't feel constrained by it, but bear in mind to keep your letter focused and concise.

Contacting your MP

Save this letter as a PDF, and attach it to an email to be sent to your MP. You're best off sending it out on a Monday so that they have time to read and respond before you follow up. Give them a couple of days to respond, then follow up with a phone call.

As you're contacting your local MP, you are always best off contacting them **at their constituency office**, especially if there is a parliamentary recess. The current recess began on July 22nd and extends to September 6th. This is the best time to invite them for a visit as they are spending more time in their constituencies!

Keep going until you get a response - MPs have a lot of competing claims on their time - make sure your voice doesn't get drowned out. If it's a negative response, it's always worth trying again once enough time has passed. Don't give up!

Any questions? Please contact Henry at h.bettley@communityenergyengland.org - we'd love to hear from you!