

Show the Love

COMMUNITY ACTION PACK

February 2023





Climate change. Nature in crisis. Cost of living. These problems can feel huge.

Start small. Take action and #ShowTheLove for our planet this February.

Together, we will show decision makers that the UK public wants to see urgent action to tackle the climate, nature and cost of living crises – for the love of our families, our homes, our livelihoods and our planet.


Since 2015, people from across the UK have used the power of green hearts every February to ask politicians to tackle the climate crisis and protect what we love from its worst impacts.




Why Show the Love?

People all around the world are feeling the impacts of climate change and spiralling costs of living, but we're united in wanting to see a safer, greener future.

Soaring energy bills, ever-increasing extreme weather and threats to the natural world are leaving our communities at risk and paying the price.




The solutions are there. We need to support the people hardest hit across the world by the impacts of climate change. We need to protect and restore nature. And we need support to stop our homes wasting energy and to quickly move towards cheaper and cleaner renewables that bring down household bills and give us reliable, secure energy the nation can be proud of.




The UK's huge potential for wind, wave and solar power means we can lead the way in tackling the cost of living and the climate crises - at the same time.

People all across the country and around the world are doing their bit to make changes to daily life. But we can't do it alone.



We need the government to step up to bring down bills, power up renewable energy and end our reliance on oil and gas - so we can protect and restore our natural environment and help the next generation enjoy a safer, greener and fairer future, at home and abroad.



When you make and share a green heart, you are sending a clear message to people in power that we want to see urgent action to tackle climate change, protect nature and bring down bills.



The more green hearts MPs see, the stronger their mandate to make sure your wishes are acted on in Parliament. This pack is full of ideas on how to use the power of green hearts to persuade politicians to act.



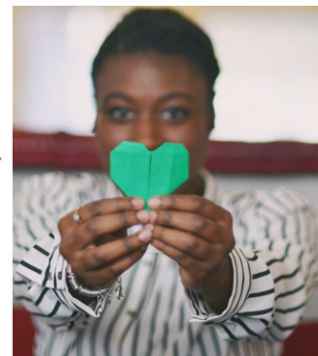
How can I get involved?

We'd love you to create a green heart - either at home or with others in your community and use it to ask your MP to champion action on the climate, nature and cost of living crises. You can find your MP's contact details at members.parliament.uk/constituencies.

Here are some ideas to get you started. You could use one of these ideas as an activity for a community group event during February, or get together with some friends to do a green heart crafting session.

Make, wear and share green hearts

Craftivism is a great way to get creative - combining activism and crafting! Why not craft your own green heart - check out our resources page at theclimatecoalition.org/showthelove for ideas and inspiration. Personalise your green heart for your MP and send it to them with our foldable card. You could even craft your green heart as part of a community event!



Credit: Hannah Henderson, Christian Aid

Bake a green heart

If you prefer food to fabric, why not get baking? Create a green heart cake with your MP's name on it. Take a picture and share it with your MP - this could be via social media, email or letter.



Credit: Roseland WI

Create a green heart with your community

Come together with local people and create a green heart with your community members! That could be on your bikes, after a tree planting event in your local green space or swimming in your local blue space. Take a picture and share it online using the hashtag #ShowTheLove. Don't forget to share it with your MP as well, either by tagging them on social media, sending them an email or writing a letter.



Credit: The Climate Coalition

Digital green hearts

If getting creative online is more your thing, there are lots of ways to get involved. You could share a picture or story about the people, places and lives you love and don't want to lose from climate change. You could recreate a famous Valentine's film using green hearts. You could create a giant green heart with your community. Or you could film a video message with your community about why they care about climate change and want to see action!



Credit: Hannah Henderson, Christian Aid

Share your photos or videos on social media and use the hashtag #ShowTheLove. Don't forget to also tag or share with your MP, asking them to champion action on climate, nature and cost of living.

Letter writing

Invite members of your community to write letters to your MP about what is important to you and why you want them to take climate action - the more people who write to your MP, the more likely your MP is to act.

We'd recommend personalising your letter and perhaps including a thank you for their recent work - it's a great way to begin building a positive relationship with your MP. You can email your MP or send them a letter in the post.

Share your green heart with your MP, asking them to champion action on the climate, nature and cost of living crises. Use your green heart and our foldable card (in the back of this pack) to send them a message.

However you decide to Show the Love this February, make sure you let us know! Fill in the form at theclimatecoalition.org/showthelove, and share your creations on social media using the hashtag #ShowTheLove, and tag us!



Credit: Bianca Tuckwell, WWF UK




Credit: Liam Finn, CAFOD

Why is talking to your MP important?


Engaging with your MP is more important than ever, at a time when there are so many issues our society is facing. When constituents like you engage with decision makers and educate them, it's possible to convince even the most sceptical to take action. You could help persuade politicians that many of the solutions to the climate crisis and the cost of living crisis are the same - meaning climate action is championed rather than sidelined.

We know many people are unsure about how worthwhile contacting their MP will be, and many feel daunted by the prospect of doing so. But, meeting your MP is an opportunity to see real, tangible action on climate change at a local and even national level.





Hope for the Future is a member organisation of The Climate Coalition which supports people all across the UK to engage their MP. Sarah Jordan, HFTF's Director outlines why it is so important to talk to your MP:




Engaging with your local politician can sound intimidating, but in fact it can be simple and fun! They are elected to represent you. Meeting constituents who are passionate about a particular area, and who are clear on how their MP can help, is a real highlight of an MP's job!

We know that building a relationship with your MP can encourage them to become a more committed climate champion in Parliament. If every MP had constituents effectively and positively advocating for climate action, even small changes in individual MPs' knowledge and approach to climate policy could have a drastic impact on action in Parliament as a whole.

You have a powerful role to play in moving climate change further up your MP's agenda, just by having a simple conversation with them about your concerns.

Through facilitating hundreds of MP meetings, we know that MPs feel as though their constituents have a general concern about climate, but often little guidance as to what action voters would like to see. Your voice matters in translating this general message into tangible and concrete action that your MP can take. Although the climate crisis is a global issue, if the UK is to meet net zero targets, we need to see decisions around infrastructure happening at a local and national level and this is where you can effect change by working with your MP.



Hope for the Future exists to support you through the entire process of engaging your MP. Get in touch at hftf.org.uk to request their support.






Top tips for engaging your MP



1. Research your MP



It's worth doing a bit of detective work before you make contact with your MP. Find out things like which political party they are in, what their interests and areas of expertise are, and if they're interested in any climate-related issues or solutions.



You might not agree on everything but this is a great way to find common ground to tailor your communications. Check out theyworkforyou.com to get an overview of their voting record or members.parliament.uk/constituencies to see if they've written any questions about climate change. Hope for the Future can help you with this research, get in touch at hftf.org.uk

2. Send a personalised message or invitation

MPs are more likely to respond to personalised emails and letters so make sure you tailor your message as much as possible. Make sure it's clear in your email that you are in their constituency by including your postcode. Struggling to get started? Check out Hope for the Future's template letters or fill out Hope for the Future's support request form to get tailored support.





3. Make a plan

Before meeting or contacting your MP, it's helpful to decide on what issue you want to talk to your MP about. It's great to bring some facts to help you make your argument but don't overwhelm your MP with statistics.


MPs want to know about local issues so focus on how climate change is affecting your constituency and what action they, as your representative, could take.

Always try to include an action. This may be, 'Please will you write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor calling for leadership and action on climate, nature and cost of living on behalf of our constituency?' or 'Please will you meet with us to discuss sustainable transport solutions in the town centre?'



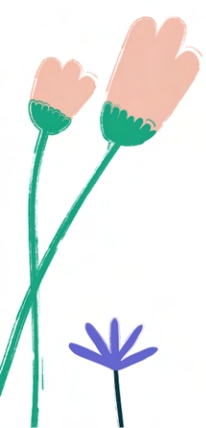


4. Follow up

Send an email or a letter to your MP to thank them for responding or having a meeting with you. This is a great way to build up a relationship with them. It's also a great opportunity to remind them of any commitments they made and ask them to keep you updated on the progress they make.



We know that the most effective outcomes are achieved when we think about each MP engagement as just one part of a longer term relationship. Great Big Green Week is happening again in June, just a few months away! Speaking to your MP now about climate change is important for sustaining their interest over the course of the coming months and years, a time when climate action is so vital. Keep an eye on [greatbiggreenweek.com](https://www.greatbiggreenweek.com) for guidance on how you can prepare for the biggest week of climate action the UK has ever seen!

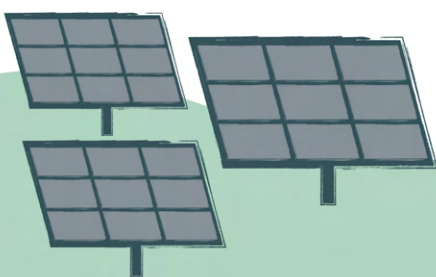


What is The Climate Coalition calling for?

Our vision is for a country and a world where children walk to school breathing fresh air instead of dangerous fumes, and where their parents think about the future with hope instead of fear. We want brilliant engineers, builders, and scientists to roll out the solutions that will make our homes and cars safer, cleaner and cheaper to run. We want to hold our heads high in the knowledge that the UK is doing its fair share to stop climate change, and helping the hardest-hit. We want to look at our mountains, forests and seas with wonder, not worry.

Now we need the government to step up to the challenge. Science tells us that this is a make-or-break decade for the planet we live on. Time is short, and we're running out of patience for more warm words. Instead, this must be a decade of delivery. We call on the Prime Minister, Chancellor and every government minister to rise to their historic responsibility to keep people safe, the climate stable, and nature protected.

You can read more about what we're calling on all political parties to do in our campaign asks - Secure, Fair and Green: A Plan for Climate, People and Nature
www.theclimatecoalition.org/campaign-asks-2022



FOR CLIMATE

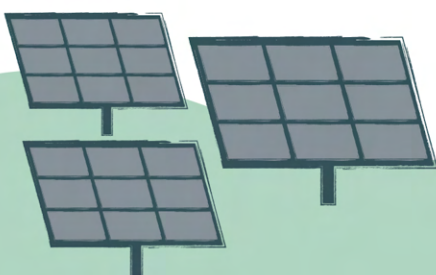
Make the UK's homes warmer, bills cheaper, and air cleaner by urgently increasing energy efficiency and replacing polluting fossil fuel energy with affordable renewables.

FOR PEOPLE

Stick to the British value of fairness by supporting the people hit hardest by floods, droughts and other climate disasters around the world, and who are least responsible for the crisis.

FOR NATURE

Protect and restore the UK's priceless forests, rivers and moors so they're there for future generations. Expand our green spaces to help keep the climate stable and allow nature to thrive in our wild and farmed places.





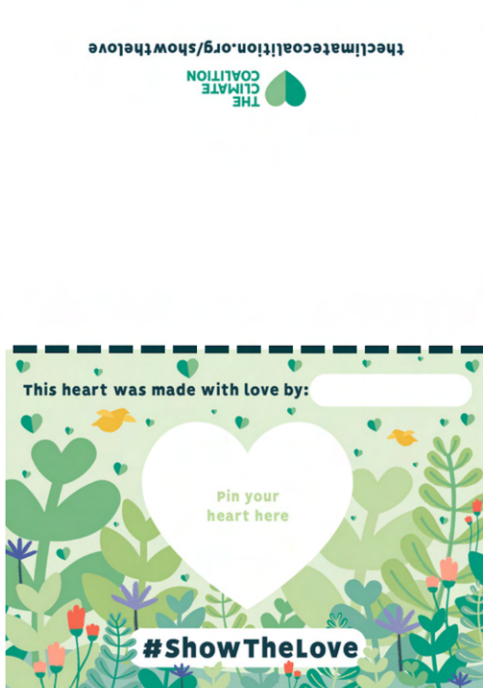
Send a postcard to your MP

Your MP has a critical role to play in representing your concern for climate change in Parliament by putting pressure on the UK government to live up to its promises and lead the world to a safer future. Please ask your MP to become a champion of action on climate, nature and cost of living together, by sharing your green heart with them.

- Step 1** Fill in the card and add a bit about why you want your MP to champion action on the climate, nature and cost of living crises. Then fold your card (instructions on the next page).
- Step 2** Attach a crafted heart if you've made one or a picture of your green heart - don't forget to add the name of your community group if you're part of one!
- Step 3** Pop the folded card and heart in an envelope and send it to your MP. You can find their constituency surgery address at members.parliament.uk or alternatively send it to House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.
- Step 4** Keep an eye out for their response! If you hear back please email us: campaigns@theclimatecoalition.org.

Folding your postcard

Fold along this line first



Then along this line

And you should end up with something like this



#ShowTheLove

Pin your
heart here

This heart was made with love by:

Dear

MP,

I want to see urgent action to protect the people and places I love from the climate, nature and cost of living crises. I'm sharing this green heart with you because...

Will you champion action on climate, nature and cost of living across this government?

Please show your support by:

- Sharing a photo of this green heart on social media, pledging your support to protect all that we could lose to the climate and cost of living crises - don't forget to tag @thecoalition and use #ShowTheLove #WarmThisWinter
- Make your voice heard by championing action on climate change, nature and the cost of living in Parliament.

Thank you

Name:

Postcode:

Email/phone:

Organisation/group:



theclimatecoalition.org/showthelove