

A guide to meeting with MPs to talk about autism

Why you should organise a meeting with your MP

Meeting with your MP is a really important opportunity to make sure they understand what autism is, how it might affect people in your area, and what can be done to make your area more inclusive to autistic people. Your personal experiences are really powerful, so if you do know anyone who's autistic, or are autistic yourself, do share your views with your MP.

Here are some questions and topics you can focus on when you meet with your MP:

Do they understand what autism is and the key difficulties people face today?



If any members of your group have any experience of autism, what changes could best support them?



What would make your community more autism-friendly?



What change do you want to see in your area?



Step 1: Invite your MP



- You can find their contact details on www.parliament.uk
- MPs' schedules can be booked up really far in advance, so make sure to give them as much notice as you can. MPs will usually be in their local area on Fridays, so it might be best to try and schedule an event on that day, if possible.
- Contacting MPs can feel quite daunting if you haven't done it before. You can have a look at our 'Meet your MP' activity to help you with drafting invites.

Step 2: Getting your MP to take action



Meeting with an MP is a really important way to get them to understand and then champion an issue, both in Parliament and in their local area. You can talk to them about taking action, and here are some ideas about what you could ask them to do:

Get MPs to pledge their support:

Ask them to share a message on social media after the meeting. Here's an example of what they could share:

"Today I met with @Scouts in
I pledge to support autistic people
and their families by pushing for a
more #AutismFriendly community."

Encourage them to:



Mention our charity on Twitter! Our handle is @Autism



Use the hashtag #AutismFriendly so we can keep track of their pledges.

We'd also encourage you to take a photo with your MP (and make sure everyone is happy to have their photo taken) and then share this on your own social media platforms. Remember to hashtag #AMillionHands

Tell them about our work in Parliament:

Let them know that in Parliament, there's a group of MPs from across political parties who care about autism, called the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Autism (APPGA). They work together to raise the profile of autism in Parliament. In your meeting, you can mention that they can get involved in this group to champion autism nationally.

Talk to them about the National Autistic Society's Understanding Autism session:

Our charity is going to be holding an Understanding Autism session with MPs in Parliament in 2020. This session will improve MPs' understanding of autism and provide them with tips and guidance on how to better support autistic constituents.

If they would like to come along they can email: appga@nas.org.uk

Following up: It's always good to send a thank you email to MPs after meeting with them, and leave your contact details with them in case they want more information (if you're happy to).