

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

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

Watch UK Parliament at work

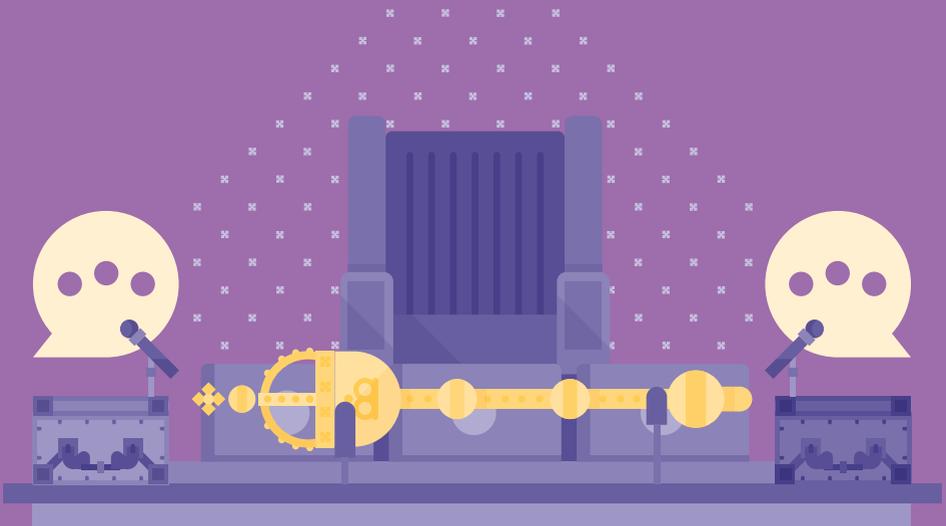
UK Parliament is open to the public. Everyone can watch the action in both the House of Commons and House of Lords.

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

Find out more: 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:



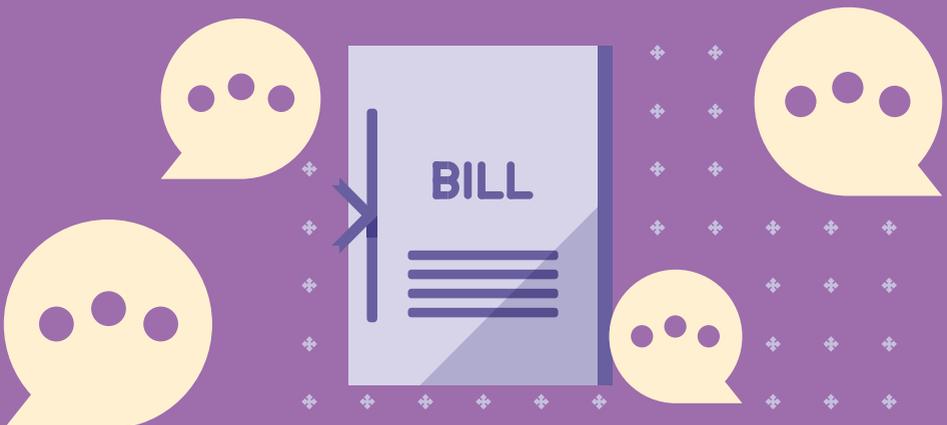
speakers list lords

You can also search members of the Lords by policy interest: members.parliament.uk/members/lords

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



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**



Start or sign a petition

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

Any member of the public can sign or create a petition on the Parliament and government petitions website: petition.parliament.uk

Petitions that attract **100,000** signatures or more are usually debated in the Commons.

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

To find out more search:

 **petition parliament**

Share your experiences to inform debates

Members regularly have the chance to lead debates on local or national issues, pressing government ministers for action or asking them to explain their decisions.

The topics can include health conditions, environment, education policy and much more.

The Chamber Engagement team enables people with practical experience and knowledge of such subjects to share their insights with the Member leading a debate. This helps to inform the debate and gives the public a chance to have their voice heard in Parliament. To view our activities search:

 **chamber engagement**

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

There are general elections every few years so you can decide who should represent you as your local MP and have a say in how the UK is run.

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



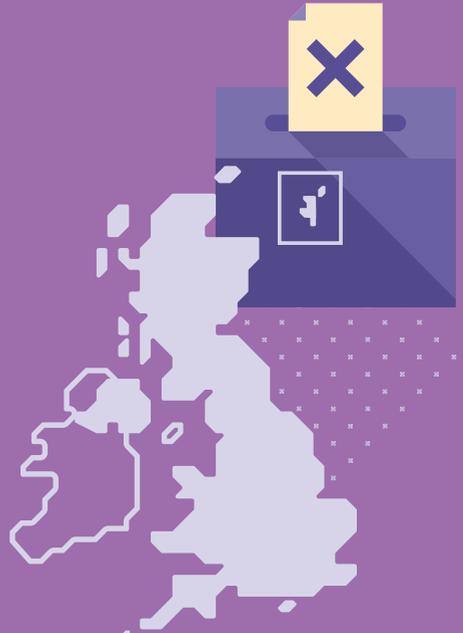
register to vote

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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