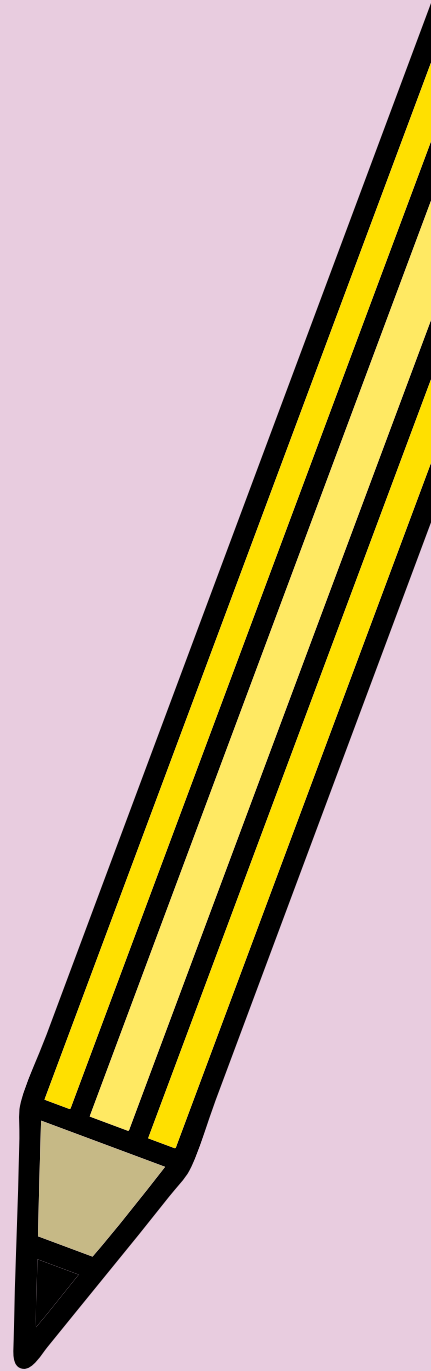




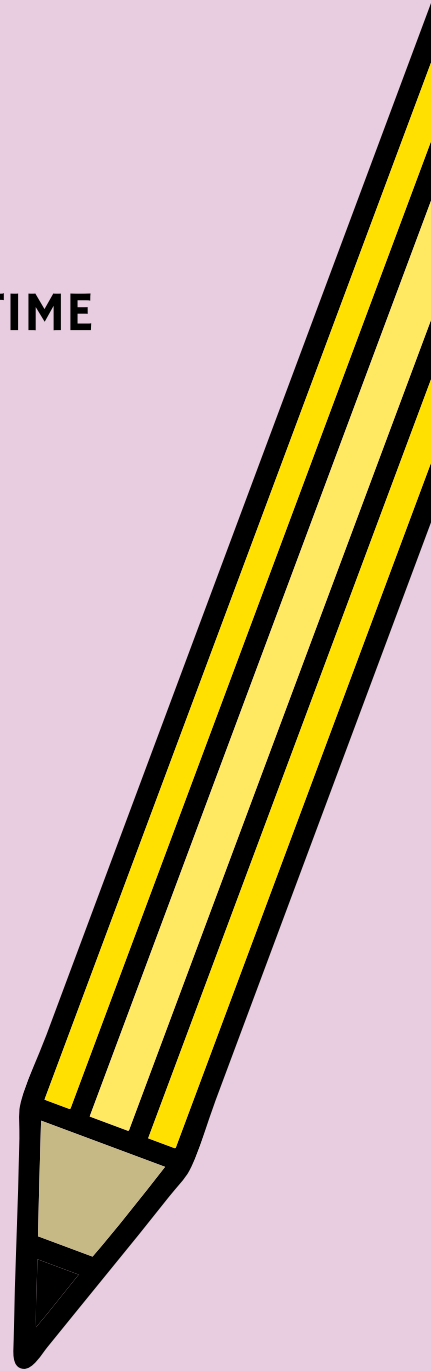
**gendered
intelligence**

MEETING YOUR MP




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- 2 - GETTING IN TOUCH FOR THE FIRST TIME
- 4 - PREPARE FOR THE MEETING!
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- 7 - LET THE PEOPLE KNOW!






Step 1
Research your MP on
theyworkforyou.com 

Step 2
Write to your MP 

Step 3
Prepare 

Step 4
Ask your MP to... 

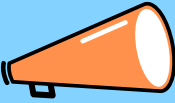
Write to Minister

**Ask a parliamentary
question**

**Give a Westminster
Hall Debate**

**Ask a Prime Minister's
Question**

Step 4
Follow Up 

Step 5
Spread the word! 

GETTING STARTED

So now you know you want to influence Parliament to try to make the world a bit less daunting for trans people, but you don't know how to go about it. First things first, if you don't already know who they are, you'll have to find out who your MP is.

Go to www.theyworkforyou.com and stick in your postcode. The site will reel off your MP's past voting record, so you can gauge what kinds of things they care about, and whether it seems likely they'll be amenable to a conversation about issues which affect trans people.

If you don't have time for this or don't care how they've voted on issues before, that's fine! After all, people are likelier to listen and make decisions based on how you interact with them, not just any preconceived notions they may have.

GETTING IN TOUCH FOR THE FIRST TIME

Your MP has a duty to respond to and meet with you, and this is made all the likelier if you make it clear any meeting is going to be useful for the MP. No one wants to go to work to be badgered with things they can't do or have failed to do – positivity is key with first (and all future!) contact.

When you email, keep it short and sweet. What's important for you to get across and what can you offer in way of change or information? For example, you might be the parent of a young trans person who wants to relay to your MP the precarious situation your child finds themselves in, and want to offer constructive ways your MP can improve the lives of all young trans people. You could link to organisations already doing work here and/or the avalanche of vitriol these children and young people themselves in – that way your MP is already a bit clued up before your meeting.

Explicitly ask for a meeting and ask about their availability, otherwise they may assume you just wanted to share information over email. Don't forget to add your full name and address - including postcode - as well as your phone number. This will help them confirm you're a constituent and speed things up a bit.

You may choose to include Gendered Intelligence's policy briefing, which can be found here (genderedintelligence.co.uk/briefings). If you're stuck



or lost, get in touch and we might be able to help you sort your thoughts out (cara.english@genderedintelligence.co.uk) but the strength of your meeting will be your personal conviction and intuition, not what we as an organisation think.

MPs are incredibly busy people and their assistants perhaps even busier! If you don't get a response, try again in a few weeks' time. Why not phone as well? It's much more difficult to brush away people's concerns when they're not just an email. Be persistent but not annoying – MPs are trying to do a million things and their assistants are being pulled in a million different directions.

Eventually, you'll agree on a meeting! They'll give you a time, date and place to go for the meeting. If you can't make it work, don't fret, just rearrange. Double-check the length of the meeting so you know how long you have to say what you need to say.

NOW THAT YOU'VE FINALLY GOT A DATE IN THE CALENDAR, PREPARE FOR THE MEETING!

Reflect on what issues are particularly important to you, and ways your MP may realistically help improve things. If you're concerned about transphobia infecting daily life in the UK, something you may raise would be:

- facts and figures around trans safety (and lack thereof)
- trans healthcare (and lack thereof)
- concerns around trans people in gendered spaces (and lack of founded concern thereof).

If you just want to bust some myths, break a few ill-founded perceptions or humanise the realities of being trans, do it! If you're particularly concerned about hate crime, pivot the conversation around that.

Make bullet-points and practise! Don't just reel off faceless, distant facts but talk about real-life experiences and realities - bring to the fore that the issues you're raising affect real people in the UK and your local area/constituency in particular. This is what it should link back to when your MP wonders why an issue should matter to them - because the issue matters to their constituents, and they're in that office to represent and reflect their constituents' wishes and concerns.



COHERENT AND SOLID ASKS

So you're at the meeting – what now? Introduce yourself (or yourselves, if more than one of you has gone) and a little bit about what you're hoping to get from the meeting.

Be aware your time with your MP is likely to be very short indeed, so keep things short and friendly!

What do you want your MP to take away from the meeting? What do you want them to do afterwards? Right now, you might just want assurance they'll be on side when it comes to changes to the Gender Recognition Act but you might also want them to bring attention to an issue by:

- writing to any relevant Ministers (e.g. Minister for Women and Equalities)
- hosting a Westminster Hall Debate
- asking a parliamentary question
- asking the Prime Minister a question at Prime Minister's Questions

Feel out what's reasonable and realistic for the MP, and what's likely to actually make a difference, and try to achieve it. Understand that for a lot of MPs, this will be the first time they're having to think hard about issues they mightn't have given much attention to before.

Actively listen, express yourself with clarity and understand that for people new to anything trans, there might be a tension between wanting to do the right thing and being afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing. This isn't a space for judgement, just a time for you to make your case as to why this issue or that problem should have some light shined on it by your MP. Rock the boat but do it gently.

ALMOST TIME TO RELAX!

Once you're done and have said goodbye, sit somewhere and collect your thoughts about what was said and what the next steps should be.

Send a thank-you, follow-up email to your MP/their assistant as soon as possible. Mention what you'd discussed might be follow-up actions from either of you, and hold them to it!

Stay in touch and who knows, you might even get a life-long ally out of your meeting.



LET THE PEOPLE KNOW!

Please do let Gendered Intelligence know if you've followed any of this advice, if it was useful, what could be improved, and most importantly if you feel you've started some piece of change, small or large. You might also want to tell other people about your experiences, what was daunting and what wasn't. If you're on social media, wear that parliamentary engagement badge with pride and tell the world!

Working together we can help create an even bigger groundswell of support for trans and non-binary people in parliament. It can feel like we're on the bottom rung of the ladder of people's concerns but by making a cogent, honest and accurate case, things can and will change for the better. We're all helping to create beautiful, positive change where important decisions are made which can have massive impact on people's lives. If engaging with your MP seems like it mightn't be worthwhile, just remember the famous mantra from a beloved supermarket: every little helps!

THANK YOU!