



**CHANGEMAKERS: A GUIDE
TO MAKING POLITICAL AND
SOCIAL CHANGE**

**THE OPEN UNIVERSITY
FOR UK PARLIAMENT WEEK**

WE BELIEVE THAT

SMALL ACTIONS LEAD TO BIG CHANGE.

CONTENTS

Foreword	1
Introduction	3
How small actions lead to big change	4
Step 1 - get started:	4
Step 2 - find inspiration:	5
Step 3 - have an impact:	8
Step 4: spread the word!	13
Further resources	15
Picture credits	16



FOREWORD

The Open University is involved with UK Parliament Week because of the shared values of the two organisations.

The Open University's mission is to be open to people, places, methods and ideas. We promote educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality university education to all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential. Our vision is to reach more students with life-changing learning that meets their needs and enriches society. In achieving our mission, we are committed to, and are guided by, the enduring Open University values of inclusivity, innovation and responsiveness.

This mission is central to the work of my own Faculty, Arts and Social Sciences, and to the School of Social Sciences and Global Studies. This guide is an outcome of my colleagues from the Politics and International Studies discipline. As experts in the workings of the UK Parliament, political engagement, and democracy, they have been

instrumental to the production of this guide. This guide would not have been possible without Dr Donna Smith's commitment and dedication to making political and social change.

Building on both The Open University's values and the aims of UK Parliament Week, this 'Changemakers' guide will enable students, as well as the general public, to make a difference through learning about political and democratic engagement. The guide offers inspiration to all changemakers, no matter how small.

Dr Shonil Bhagwat

Head of School of Social Sciences and Global Studies

The Open University



FOREWORD

Parliament can give everyone an opportunity to be a changemaker.

As the Member of Parliament for Newcastle-Upon-Tyne North, I see examples every day of people working to make our community a better place to live and work. As Chair of the House of Commons Petitions Committee, the group of MPs who take Parliamentary action on petitions, I see the huge range of issues that people want their Parliament and the Government to deal with.

Changemakers can be high-profile petitioners like Marcus Rashford MBE, whose tireless campaigning has seen the Government begin to act on the need to end child food poverty. But changemakers don't need to be household names.

Changemakers can be the new parents who are worried about the support they and their new-borns could get during the Covid-19 pandemic, or the workers in hospitality who feel that Governments had long ignored the needs of their industry. They

can be the people who start and sign petitions, share them in WhatsApp groups, on social media, or from person to person. They can help to power campaigns and build networks of people who share their goals. Their campaigns can see tens of thousands of people joining with them to make sure Parliament investigates, debates and deals with their concerns.

Petitioning Parliament is just one way to try to make change.

This guide provides ideas, insight and inspiration for how you can start to make change, and I hope that you will take time to engage with Parliament to bring about the difference you want to see.

Catherine McKinnell MP

Chair of House of Commons Petitions Committee



INTRODUCTION

In 2020 The Open University launched its 'Changemakers' social media campaign, part of the university's partnership with UK Parliament Week.

This campaign, designed by Politics and International Studies with students as partners as part of the 'Open Politics' initiative, engaged Open University (OU) students and the wider public in making a difference by learning about political engagement. The campaign asked people to think about individuals who've made a change in society and the impact they've had (politically, democratically, socially), with people submitting their nominated changemaker on Twitter (search #OUatUKPW on twitter to see the submissions).

UK Parliament Week (UKPW) is an annual event that engages people from across the UK with the UK Parliament, helps people to explore what it means to them, and empowers them to get involved. The theme of UKPW 2021 is 'how small actions lead to big change'.

The OU is building on its partnership with UKPW, and the work undertaken so far by 'Open Politics', with this guide to making political and social change. The guide encourages people to engage with the UK Parliament in particular, as well as politics more generally, giving people the essential knowledge and tools needed to make change.

In this document we have highlighted some of the changemakers nominated by OU students and the wider public. We hope this guide will help you to understand how you can be a changemaker, with the nominations an inspiration to making change, whether big or small.

Dr Donna Smith

Politics and International Studies

School of Social Sciences and Global Studies

The Open University



HOW SMALL ACTIONS LEAD TO BIG CHANGE

Most of us have issues we care about. These could be issues that affect us – or our family – personally, issues that affect the community we live in, or something that impacts society on a national or global scale. Many people want to raise awareness of the issue they care about and bring about real-life change.

But how do people have an impact? How can you make change?

Change can be focused on:

- The political; for example, campaigning for a change of government or to change a policy
- The social; changing how something works in society, such as the rights a group has.

Of course, these things overlap – campaigning for a social change may lead to political change. Change can be big or small. It could be a small individual action which leads to a much bigger change.

There are lots of different ways you can make change, whether that's by engaging with the UK Parliament to get your voice heard or by using other channels. Keep reading for ideas!

Step 1 - get started:

- **Do your research:** it's important to gather all the facts, the names of key people and organisations, and information about the best approach to making change; read the news and keep on top of the issue and different opinions to it – try and understand the 'other side' of the argument as this will help you make your argument
- **Work out your aims:** what are you trying to achieve? It is useful to have a limited number of clear objectives; focusing on informed solutions can be useful
- **Reach out to others:** you may be able to join in with a pre-existing campaign or make your own campaign stronger by working with others
- **Identify your target:** who is the best person or group to approach to make change? Who is the decision maker? Who is responsible? This could be an individual, multiple people, an organisation, council or parliament, or the general public – it depends what your aims are
- **Think about timing:** too early and you may not have an impact, too late and you may not be able to influence. Recognise the topicality of an issue, and when decisionmakers might be receptive to certain arguments
- **Think about mode:** should your focus be social media, a formal report, or speaking at public meetings? What are your skills? You will probably need to campaign in more than one mode
- **Think about accessibility:** make sure as many people as possible are able to engage with your content (for instance, providing subtitles on videos, or the transcript of a speech)
- **Contact your representatives:** if you hope to change the law, you may need to contact or lobby your elected representative; this could be a councillor or a member of a parliament or assembly (such as the UK Parliament)
- **Publicise your campaign:** think about the best way to promote your cause. You could utilise social media, write letters to newspapers, and speak at meetings and events for instance
- **Finally: start small:** small actions can lead to big change!



Step 2 - find inspiration:

In this guide we highlight some of the changemakers who have inspired OU students and the wider public. They were all nominated during UKPW 2020. While some of the changemakers chosen have undoubtedly been able to harness their fame or position in making change, something not open to most of us, they all demonstrate how small actions can lead to big change, inspire others to act, raise the profile of important issues, and make change politically.

Which ones inspire you? Who can you learn from?

'Making change through inspiring young people'

Who: Greta Thunberg, a Swedish environmental activist.

Category: peaceful protest, media activism, petitioning.

Action: At the age of 15 she demonstrated outside the Swedish Parliament, calling for more action on climate change, holding up a sign which said: 'school strike for climate'. Other students joined in across the world, creating a youth climate strike movement.

Impact: Her initial small step of individual peaceful protest inspired a youth movement across the world, got politicians to engage with climate change issues, and improved public awareness. Her impact has been called the 'Greta effect'.

Challenges: Intense media/social media coverage and criticism from politicians and others who disagreed with her ideas and her tactics.



It's quite hilarious when the only thing people can do is mock you, or talk about your appearance or personality, as it means they have no argument or nothing else to say.



Greta Thunberg,
Person of the Year,
TIME magazine October 2019

'Making change through sport'

Who: Marcus Rashford, a British footballer and free school meals campaigner.

Category: media activism, lobbying, economic activism.

Action: With food waste charity FareShare he raised over £20 million to provide free food for children who could no longer receive their free school meal due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He then lobbied the UK Government about child poverty and free school meals. He has continued to campaign about this issue.

Impact: His highest profile impact is influencing the Government to change its policy and extend free school meals for children. By doing this he also raised the profile of the issue in the media and with the general public, leading to a national conversation about food poverty.

Challenges: Bringing politicians on board with his ideas. His earlier campaigning (supplying food boxes for young homeless people in Manchester) also had a limited reach, demonstrating the challenge of making a campaign successful on a large scale.



'Making change through broadcasting'

Who: David Olusoga, a British historian, writer, and broadcaster.

Category: writing/publishing, broadcasting.

Action: He has sought to challenge us to broaden our understanding of history, through his writing and broadcasting, focusing on slavery, race, and empire.

Impact: Greater public awareness of Britain's black history, highlighting the importance of a diverse and inclusive teaching of history.

Challenges: Social media abuse: "Every day on social media, someone says, 'stop talking about slavery. You hate Britain. If you don't like it go home.'" ([The Guardian, 2020](#)).

'Making change through new laws in UK Parliament'

Who: Barbara Castle (1910-2001), one of the longest serving female Members of Parliament in the UK Parliament and prominent Labour politician.

Category: UK Parliament.

Action: As Secretary of State for Employment she successfully intervened in the Ford sewing machinists' strike, helping the striking women to be paid more in line with their male colleagues. Then, she introduced the Equal Pay Act in 1970 which banned less favourable treatment between men and women in terms of pay and conditions of employment.

Barbara Castle



“

But for all her radicalism she also understood that change usually comes in increments. And even incremental change only happens when there is a radical individual demanding much, much more.

([BBC 2020](#))

”

Impact: The Equal Pay Act was ground-breaking: it was the first piece of legislation which enshrined the principle of equal pay for equal work. Subsequent legislation has continued to build on this principle to this day. She also inspired many women of all political colours to become politicians.

Challenges: She experienced sexism as a female politician in what was then overwhelmingly a male dominated House of Commons. This led to her being called egocentric and overly focused on her appearance.

Akala



'Making change through the arts'

Who: Akala, a British rapper, writer, and activist.

Category: working with the arts and music, media activism.

Action: Uses his music, writing and media work to explore the issues that matter to him, in particular racism and the oppression of the black community.

Impact: He has raised the profile of these issues, inspiring and educating young people about race and racial injustice along the way. He shows how music, and the arts more generally, are not only sources of entertainment, but can be used to empower people and make a difference politically, democratically, and socially.

Challenges: Dealing with ‘structural racism’ and ‘class oppression’: “I’m not saying it’s impossible for you to be successful if you’re born into a poor background in Britain. I’m saying the gargantuan effort it requires, and the hurdles you have to jump over, just make it incredibly unlikely.”

([New Statesman, 2019](#)).



Akala believes in using hip hop music as a force for education, raising awareness of political issues, empowering youth and encouraging social change... Akala is proof of contemporary musicians and music affecting social change and represents the positive impact of educating and empowering an otherwise marginalised group in society today- the youth

([Culture Trip, 2016](#)).



Impact: She showed how powerful the written word can be. She is regarded as a founder of feminist philosophy, with many of her ideas – perceived as radical in her day – central to contemporary feminism and human rights activism. She inspired the suffrage movement, with Millicent Fawcett writing the introduction to the centenary edition of ‘A Vindication’. She continues to inspire contemporary female campaigners and writers across the world.

Challenges: As a woman she had to work extra hard to be taken seriously. She was mocked in her time by many of her male contemporaries, with her ideas seen as crazy.

‘Making change through engaging with UK Parliament’

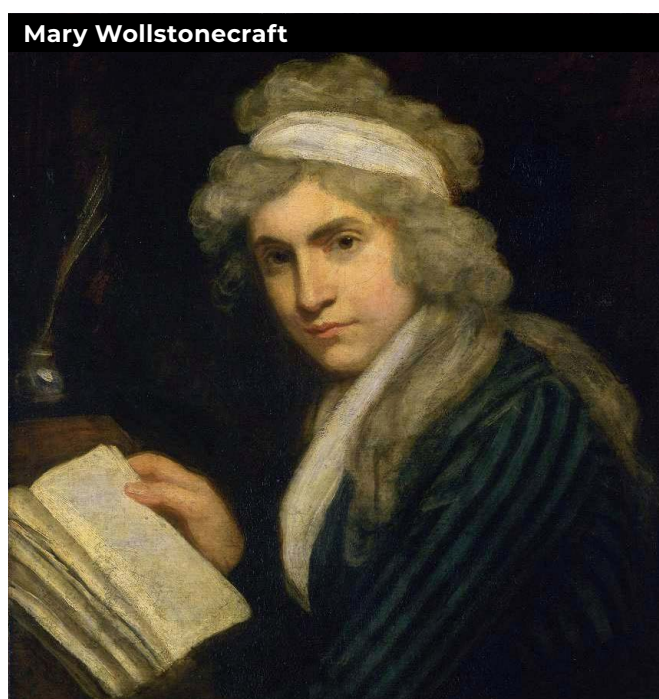
Who: Ian McKellen, actor and LGBT campaigner.

Category: media activism, lobbying.

Action: One of the founders of the UK gay rights (now LBGT rights) charity Stonewall in the 1980s, he worked with the charity to lobby the UK Parliament to reform equality law (issues like the repeal of Section 28 and introducing an equal age of consent). The charity set out to professionally lobby and engage in the political process in order to initiate change, influencing and working with politicians.

Impact: A slow and steady change in the law and public attitudes. As one of the most high-profile publicly gay actors, he has also inspired generations after him to be out and proud.

Challenges: The length of time it took to effect key political changes, and early hostile media attitudes.

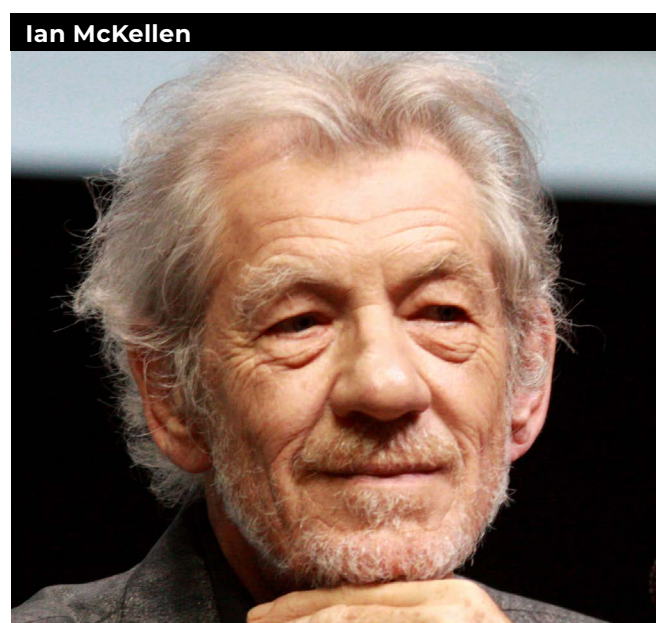


‘Making change through the written word’

Who: Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), British writer and women’s rights advocate.

Category: writing/publishing.

Action: She is most well known for her seminal book ‘A Vindication of the Rights of Women’. In this book she argues that women are not naturally inferior to men and both sexes should be treated as rational beings with the same rights. Her decision to become a writer was radical itself; at the time it was unusual for women to support themselves through writing, and she was not well off.



Step 3 - have an impact:

There are lots of different ways you can effect change.

Your vote counts!

Engaging in the democratic process is one of the most important ways you can make change: so, you need to vote! If you don't vote you don't get a say in who is elected and who makes the decisions that affect you. Make sure your voice is heard in a UK general election by registering to vote at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

Registering using this link also gives you the right to vote in local, mayoral and police and crime commissioner elections, and Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish Parliament, and Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament elections if you live in one of those areas, as well as in referendums.

The age at which you are eligible to vote depends where you live in the UK and the type of election. You need to be 18 to vote in the UK Parliament General Election. You can vote in person, by post, or have a proxy (asking someone to vote for you). You can find out more about this at the link.

Raise your issue in the UK Parliament

Whether the issue you're passionate about is local, national, or international there are lots of ways to raise the profile of your campaign in the UK Parliament. Who should you be speaking to and what could you ask them to do?

The UK Parliament is 'bicameral', which means it is made up of two chambers:

- The **House of Commons**: this is where the elected Members of Parliament sit
- The **House of Lords**: this is where Peers sit. Most are life peers appointed for their expertise, although there are still a few elected hereditary peers.

Both chambers make laws, check and challenge the government, and debate issues, although the Lords is the second chamber and therefore has more of a scrutinising function, giving the House of Commons the final say.

Did you know... you can speak to your Member of Parliament

Most MPs hold regular sessions called surgeries where they meet constituents to talk about issues of concern – this can be face to face or online. Your MP's website will have information about constituency surgeries. It will help your MP to help you if you bring along any documents or information about the issue or campaign you want to discuss. Find your MP's contact details at: www.parliament.uk/findyourmp.

Did you know... MPs can hold debates

MPs can request time for debates on local, national, and international issues. They put their case to the Backbench Business Committee which allocates time on issues that have broad cross-party support among MPs, with many debates coming about through campaigns.

Did you know... Members of the House of Lords can support your campaign

Alongside your local MP, members of the House of Lords (also known as Peers) may also support your campaign. They can play a key role in challenging the Government and can help to champion your cause as they often have more freedom from party politics than MPs. You can search for members of the House of Lords online whose policy interests and expertise align with your campaign on www.parliament.uk/lords

Did you know... Members of both Houses can put questions to the Government

You can ask members of both Houses to support your campaign by asking them to submit written questions to Government departments and ask questions in the Chambers. Questions can be used to appeal for further information and press for action, so consider what sort of question would help your campaign most. For example, MPs or Peers can ask the Government what it is doing about an issue or how many people have been affected by a problem or have been helped by a specific policy. They can also use questions as a direct way of urging the Government to take action.

Did you know... there are All-Party Parliamentary Groups

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal, cross-party groups formed by MPs and members of the House of Lords who share a common interest in a particular policy area, region, or country. While they are not official Parliamentary committees, these groups can sometimes be influential because of their non-party political approach to an issue. If the focus of an APPG aligns with your campaign, you could approach members to ask if they'll add their support. You can read more about APPGs including a list of the different groups on www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/members/apg/.

Did you know... there are select committees

Anyone can submit written evidence online to a select committee. Submitting evidence to one may not be the first thing that springs to mind when you want to raise the profile of an issue – but following committees online and submitting evidence can have a big impact and lead to positive changes.

At the beginning of an inquiry, select committees call for written evidence. Committees will also invite interested parties to give oral evidence to the committee where they may explore the focus of written evidence in more depth. Your experience or the focus of your campaign may provide valuable insights to a select committee inquiry. You can follow select committees online and find out when inquiries are taking place so you can submit evidence online: www.parliament.uk/about/how/committees/select/

Getting your MP on board

Persuading your local MP to support your campaign can be a step towards getting the issues that matter to you raised in the UK Parliament.

Writing (by letter or email) is probably the best method for contacting your MP and it provides a written record that can be referred to at a later date. When contacting your MP, keep in mind these tips:

DO:

- Before writing:
 - Finalise a clear description of what your campaign is trying to achieve
 - Gather evidence supporting your campaign
 - Consider how your issue fits with your MP's policy interests
 - Have a clear idea of why you want your MP to be involved
 - Think about what action you would like them to take
- When writing:
 - Explain who you are and clearly set out the issue you want to raise with them
 - Ask them to do something specific, e.g. ask a question during ministerial questions or attend a meeting with your campaign group to discuss the issue further
 - Remember to include your contact details
- After writing:
 - Give them time to respond. They are busy juggling their time between their constituency work and their job in the House of Commons, so it may take a little while for them to reply. But it's ok to follow up if you don't hear back.


DON'T:


- Rant! You may not agree with your MP on some issues, but they are your representative in the UK Parliament so building a positive relationship is more likely to move your issue up the agenda.

Create a petition

Raising awareness of an issue through petitions can connect people from across the UK on an issue that matters to them. It can demonstrate to MPs how an issue is affecting their constituents and how strongly people feel collectively.

The UK Parliament has an official petitions process. You create your petition online at petition.parliament.uk. It must be about something the UK Parliament or Government is responsible for. Only British citizens and UK residents can create or sign a petition.

 If your petition achieves 10,000 signatures you get a response from the Government. A Government response is a really important step for any campaign. It can help clarify the Government's position and provides the petitioner with further, more detailed information from which they may choose to take further action.

 If your petition achieves 100,000 signatures it will (almost always) be scheduled for a debate. MPs might consider a petition for a debate before it reaches 100,000 signatures. Sometimes people who create petitions are invited to take part in a discussion with MPs or government ministers, or to give evidence to a select committee. The Petitions Committee may also write to other people or organisations to ask them about the issue raised by your petition.

While you may set out with the ambition to change the law, there are many other significant outcomes that a UK Parliament petition can achieve. Gaining debating time in the UK Parliament's agenda is a huge step as ministers must explain government policy and face challenging questions from MPs of all parties. And never underestimate the value of raising public awareness of an issue. It can connect people across the UK with similar experiences and be the start of a wider campaign to effect change.

As well as creating an official UK Parliament petition, you can set up an online petition on sites such as Change.org and 38Degrees.org.uk, or submit a petition (almost like a formal complaint) to an organisation. You can start a campaign, gather support, and get media attention. In choosing which petition format to use, you need to think about what you are trying to achieve. The UK Parliament petition site is useful if you want a Government response and the subject matter discussed in UK Parliament. A petition site like [38Degrees](http://38Degrees.org.uk) may be useful if you have a wider campaigning focus.

A good petition is clear and easy to understand, has a realistic and specific aim (it's often a good idea to start with a smaller change which can be built on), outlines the issue and provides links to further information, is directed to the right people, and launched at the right time.



Work with other parliaments

If you are based in Northern Ireland, Scotland, or Wales, you can also contact your devolved elected representatives and raise your profile by engaging with debates and evidence gathering processes in the devolved parliaments. You can also submit a petition to the Scottish Parliament and Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament. There are some issues where it might be better to engage with devolved representatives (i.e. if it is local to these regions, or is within the devolved powers of these parliaments).

Work with local councils

The issue you want to change may be best dealt with at a 'local' level, through working with your local elected representatives, known as councillors. Councillors represent their local community, develop and review council policy, and scrutinise decisions taken by the council. They can be a good place to start if it's a 'local' issue, although you need to check who is responsible before you start.

Work with the arts and music

You can raise awareness through art ('artivism') and craft ('craftivism'), using visual creations to promote a political or social cause. Similarly, social injustices and political causes can be highlighted through musical performance and lyrics. This can be a good way to raise the profile of a cause, although may need to be accompanied by more 'formal' campaigning and media activism.

Take part in media activism

You may find this a quick and cheap way to raise the profile of an issue and gather support, including for groups who are underrepresented in the 'mainstream' 'traditional' media. It includes social media campaigning, creating websites and making videos. Petitions are often advertised via social media. However, you may still need to get your campaign covered by the traditional media (newspapers, television news) to get traction.

Get involved in broadcasting

Contributing to television and radio programmes, and even writing/presenting them, is a more traditional form of media activism. You will need to build up some traction to undertake the latter, with presenting often out of reach until you reach a certain level of reputation or you already work in this field. For this reason, you may find social media campaigning a better initial approach. Making your own videos and broadcasting them via a website like YouTube is an accessible alternative to traditional broadcasting.

Write/publish

If you want to reach a broad audience you should make your writing easy to understand, accessible to people who are visually and hearing impaired, easy to find, free (or low cost if professionally published), and potentially interactive (give people the opportunity to respond). It's useful to write in more than one mode, to reach as many people as possible (so, if you write a report also craft some social media messages which summarise it). Think about who you want to reach and what your aims are and chose the mode(s) that fit. The written word can be very powerful, whether it takes the form of journalism, books, poetry, reports, or writing for social media (blogging, for instance). The work could be professionally published or more informal, depending on the audience and your aim.

Lobby those with influence

You can attempt to influence your elected representative through lobbying (see 'working with your MP'). Lobbying is the lawful attempt to influence political decision makers, such as MPs and government ministers. It can be done by individuals, advocacy/special interest groups, or professional lobbyists (experts hired to lobby on behalf of an individual or group). Most lobbying is done by organisations via advocacy.

Take part in economic activism

You can utilise your economic power to make change. This can be done in two ways: 1) boycotting companies and organisations whose values/way of working you don't agree with, therefore pressuring them to change their behaviour, or 2) rewarding 'good' companies and organisations through patronage and positive social media.

Take part in peaceful protest















You can attempt to achieve change via raising the profile of an issue through non-violent and legal demonstrations. Peaceful demonstrations are legal under UK law, although can also be restricted with notification needed depending on the format. It is a good idea to check current legal guidance before taking part in or organising a demonstration. The attention gained from peaceful demonstrations can evolve into more formalised methods of campaigning like making documentaries, speaking at conferences, writing for newspapers etc.

Focus on your local community

Community talks, presentations, and local lectures can be great ways for you to raise awareness of an issue. It can also be a good way to gather support and set up a campaign group.

What makes a good changemaker?

Making change can be tough. You may have immediate success or you may have to campaign and lobby for a long time. You may make some progress but then face a setback. What qualities does a changemaker need?

- 
Emotional awareness and empathy: make an effort to understand how others feel – this will help when communicating with people in your own team and outside it. Placing yourself in the position of others can also help to strengthen your argument. Also, be aware of how you feel and how this impacts on your own performance
- 
Optimism: stay positive, but...
- 
Realism: ...be realistic. Understand what is achievable and set reachable goals
- 
Listening skills: listen to other members of your team and other campaigning groups – including people who disagree with you. Listening to people with different views may help you to strengthen your argument, or to come up with solutions acceptable to both sides
- 
Communication skills: you may need to communicate ‘formally’ (writing to your MP or submitting evidence to a select committee) as well as ‘informally’ (campaigning on social media). You need to consider different ‘modes’ of communication (written, visual) and how to communicate with different groups of people (politicians, the public etc)
- 
Assertiveness: stand up for what you believe in, but in a calm and positive manner
- 
Strategic mind: identify your long term goals and how you plan to achieve them
- 
Focus: have a clear outcome in mind and try not to get distracted by side-issues
- 
Resilience: if you face a setback, re-focus and re-strategise
- 
Self-motivation: the ability to drive yourself to take action, even in the face of setbacks. Keep your end goal in mind
- 
Organisation: be clear in what you want to achieve, with good planning and record keeping
- 
Flexibility: have an openness to change and an ability to react to changed circumstances
- 
Able to work with others: it is possible to achieve change working on your own, although it’s often easier in a team. This will involve working with people who may have different views to you (even if they share your end goal and/or are part of your team)
- 
Creativity: be imaginative when campaigning. Think of the different ways you can engage with the public and how you can publicise your campaign as widely as possible using different methods.

Step 4: spread the word!

Why not encourage other people to find out how they can be a changemaker? You can spread the word on social media as well as get more involved in UK Parliament Week.

Who is your changemaker?

Think about who has inspired you to make change. This could be a political figure, a writer, singer or artist, someone from the media, a teacher or lecturer, or someone you know. How have they made change? What worked well and what didn't? What can you learn from them?

Why not share your changemaker on twitter?

Tell everyone:

1. Who inspires you
2. Why you have chosen them
3. What impact they have had on you/others/ society (use the hashtags [#UKPW](#) and [#OUatUKPW](#). Has this person [#MadeChange](#), are they [#MakingChange](#) or do you think they [#WillMakeChange?](#)).



Find out more about UK Parliament Week

UK Parliament Week champions changemakers, with the annual Your UK Parliament Awards celebrating people across the UK who have taken action on the issues they care about.

Here are some of the winning changemakers from UKPW 2020 who you can take inspiration from when creating change:

Community Campaign of the Year

Celebrates an organisation that has campaigned for change in their community.

We Belong is an organisation led by young people who migrated to the UK. Launched in 2019, they work with and for other young migrants to ensure they are treated equally and fairly. Their campaign- Stronger Ties: British in all but paperwork- aimed to raise awareness on immigration issues, foster a

relationship with MPs and provide support to the young migrant community.

Using lived experiences, We Belong have helped to raise awareness of the how the current immigration system affects young lives. They provide a platform for the voices of young migrants to be heard so they can become agents of change. We Belong do this by teaching young migrants how to effectively engage with UK Parliament. They have written to MPs, created an online petition asking for shorter, more affordable routes to settlement, and hosted online events including one with members of the Home Affairs Select Committee. Through their work We Belong have empowered their community to share their concerns and experiences with policy makers.

Digital Campaign or Campaigner of the Year

Celebrates the work of those connecting people to democracy through digital engagement.

Due to all the digital activities in 2020, there were two winners!

APPLE Collective are a national network of individuals who have experienced poverty. In response to COVID-19 they launched a campaign around digital exclusion, highlighting the problem of digital disadvantage faced by people from low socio-economic backgrounds. They raised awareness through daily tweets, regular blogs and hosting webinars on digital exclusion. They joined #OperationWiFi in partnership with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Good Things Foundation to further their campaign. In addition, they wrote to MPs and Metro Mayors to initiate discussions. As a result, APPLE Collective were invited to speak at the APPG on Universal Credit and secured media engagement.

Harrow Mencap is an organisation campaigning for, and providing personalised services to, people with learning disabilities in Harrow. As there was only one learning disability nurse between five hospitals at North-West University Healthcare NHS trust (LNWH), Harrow Mencap started a campaign to recruit an additional nurse and highlight the national shortage of learning disability nurses. They built support for their campaign by creating an online petition and encouraged councillors, MPs and other charities to share it on social media. At a local level, they spoke with their MP via Zoom who then tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) in the House of Commons on the national shortage of learning disability nurses. They built support for the EDM through a discussion with the chair of the APPG on Disability, encouraged other self-advocacy groups to write to their MPs or the Minister for Health to support the EDM, and created content for MPs, Peers and councillors to share. As a result, LNWH gained another learning disability nurse and helped people with learning disabilities to get their voice heard on this issue.

Volunteer of the Year

Celebrates the amazing work of people who volunteered their time to get others involved with democracy and the UK Parliament.

Payzee Malika is passionate about women's rights. She is an active member of the campaigns team for the Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation. She is keen to break the silence on the issues of child marriage, female genital mutilation and so called 'honour' killings that women around the world face every day. Being a victim of child marriage herself, she now volunteers her time to raise awareness on these issues. As part of her campaign to criminalise child marriage in the UK, Payzee co-chaired the Girls not Brides event in UK Parliament in January 2020 and has lobbied MPs to back the Minimum Age Bill.

All about the Political Studies Association

Thank you to the Political Studies Association (PSA) for helping to fund this guide.

The PSA is a learned society and charity that has, for over 70 years, supported and championed the study and teaching of Politics and related disciplines. It is a vibrant community of academics, teachers, students and practitioners who strive to broaden the awareness, understanding and nature of our politics both in the UK and internationally. The PSA encourages active citizenship and engagement with politics and democracy. And that is why the PSA is proud to support the OU and UK Parliament Week with this Changemakers guide.

Please visit the PSA at www.psa.ac.uk or follow [@PolStudiesAssoc](https://twitter.com/PolStudiesAssoc) on Twitter if you wish to find out more about PSA events, resources and student membership as well as the vast array of 'Changemakers' currently active in the association.



FURTHER RESOURCES

Interested in finding out more about The Open University, UK Parliament Week, and the Political Studies Association?

- Politics at The Open University – find out about studying politics and international studies at the OU, research, events, and Open Politics: <https://fass.open.ac.uk/politics>
- UK Parliament Week – sign up and join in, plus discover more about how the UK Parliament works via free resources: <https://www.ukparliamentweek.org>
- Political Studies Association – all about the work of the UK PSA: <https://www.psa.ac.uk/>

Thank you to the **OU students** who helped to develop this guide and the wider **Changemakers project** as part of **Open Politics**. Thank you to **UKPW** and the **PSA** for their shared content.



PICTURE CREDITS

Illustrations:

Front cover. Photo by michael_d_beckwith, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/185017394@N08/48982329356>

Page 1. Photo supplied by The Open University.

Page 2 Photo supplied by the office of Catherine McKinnell MP.

Page 3 Photo by UK Parliament is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/25334641@N08/2700549757>

Page 4 Photo by CGP Grey is licensed under CC BY 2.0, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/52890443@N02/4887776334>

Page 5 Photo by Anders Hellberg, CC, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greta_Thunberg_4.jpg

Page 5 Photo by Oleg Bkhambri (Voltmetro), CC BY-SA 4.0, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Rashford#/media/File:FWC_2018_-_Round_of_16_-_COL_v_ENG_-_Photo_106_\(cropped\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Rashford#/media/File:FWC_2018_-_Round_of_16_-_COL_v_ENG_-_Photo_106_(cropped).jpg)

Page 6 Photo National Archives of Malawi, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Castle#/media/File:Mme_Barbara_Castle,_Ministre_britannique_du_d%C3%A9veloppement_outre-mer.jpg

Page 6 Photo Southbank Centre, CC BY 2.0, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akala_\(rapper\)#/media/File:Akala_crop_2014.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akala_(rapper)#/media/File:Akala_crop_2014.jpg)

Page 7 Picture John Opie, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MaryWollstonecraft.jpg>

Page 7 Photo by Gage Skidmore, CC BY-SA 2.0, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ian_McKellen#/media/File:SDCC13_-_Ian_McKellen.jpg

Page 10 Photo by [James Owen on Unsplash](#)

Page 14 Photo by [Elliott Stallion - Unsplash](#)

Page 15 Photo by Catherine Bebbington, is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 , <https://www.flickr.com/photos/25334641@N08/4642915654>

