

# The Environment Bill: How to talk to your MP

The Environment Bill has finally found its way back into the timetable for the House of Commons, and MPs are engaging with it right now.

It's a very significant bill, as it lays down the rules and regulations for the protection of the environment once the UK is no longer under the legislation of the EU from January 2021. It is our opportunity to shape the way we care for our environment for the next 10 to 20 years.

All of us can have a stake in this important legislation because we can talk to our MPs and tell them what matters to us and what we would like to see when it comes to protecting and enhancing the environment. We've written this as a starter for the conversation you could have with your MP.

We're attaching a fantastic document written by Hope for the Future. It gives the background to bill, explains how it works and picks out some of the key points addressed by the bill. It's simple to read and really helpful. Read that next, then come back to this email for some specific suggestions for talking to your MP.

## To discuss with your MP

The Bill is an important piece of legislation, but we believe it could be better. Here are some of the ways we think it could be improved, which you might want to discuss with your MP

**The Office of Environmental Protection.** In order for it to do the best job it needs to have enough power and enough independence. Ask you MP to support amendments which strengthen the OEP and keep it independent.

**Keeping up our high environmental standards.** The bill should replace the high standards we have achieved while we've been in the EU. But it doesn't actually specify that the replacement standards will be as high, nor does it stop new rules from lowering standards. We'd like the bill to keep our current high standards and ensure we don't drop below them in future.

**Setting targets.** The bill creates the framework for setting targets in the future. We'd like the bill to make sure the target setting process is transparent and includes experts, the Government and MPs, and for both long-term and interim targets to be legally binding.

**Shouldering our global responsibility.** Actions we take in the UK have an impact on the environment in countries all round the world, especially when we buy things from other countries. Standards in other countries are not always as high as standards in the UK or EU and so we cause environmental damage that would not be allowed here. You could ask your MP to support amendments to the bill which makes the UK take responsibility for the environmental impact and carbon footprint of our supply chains. One particular area of concern is deforestation.

When the Bill has finished in the House of Common, it comes to the House of Lords. The Bishops in the Lords will also be focusing on these the four areas to improve the Bill.

## Committee MPs

Some MPs are on the committee scrutinising the Bill (see the list below). If one of those is your MP, it would be great if you could speak to them about it. If your MP is not on the committee, they are

still able to vote at this stage, discuss the issues that you raise with committee members, and then vote in support of any amendments from the Lords when the Bill returns to the Commons.

Bim Afolami (Hitchin and Harpenden) in St Albans Diocese  
Fleur Anderson (Putney) in Southwark Diocese  
Caroline Ansell (Eastbourne) in Chichester Diocese  
Saqib Bhatti (Meriden) in Coventry Diocese  
Leo Docherty (Aldershot) in Guildford Diocese  
Ruth Edwards (Rushcliffe) Southwell and Notts Diocese  
Gill Furniss (Sheffield, Brightside and Hillsborough) in Sheffield Diocese  
Richard Graham (Gloucester) in Gloucester Diocese  
Marco Longhi (Dudley North) in Worcester Diocese  
Cherilyn Mackrory (Truro and Falmouth) in Truro Diocese  
Robbie Moore (Keighley) in Leeds Diocese  
Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane) in Bath and Wells Diocese  
Dr Alan Whitehead (Southampton, Test) in Winchester Diocese  
Daniel Zeichner (Cambridge) in Ely Diocese

Jo Chamberlain  
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