

Connect

A guide to engaging with
your public representatives
(MSs, MPs and councillors)

wales

evangelical alliance
together making Jesus known



The Evangelical Alliance longs to see Christians engaging with their public representatives in a productive and encouraging way...

The past four years have been a challenging time for communities across the UK, British politics and global affairs. The legacy of the COVID pandemic continues to deeply impact communities in Wales and the recent violent civil unrest across the UK shows a growing trend of distrust between communities and politicians.

Despite this from our [Stories of Hope Wales 2021](#) publication we were able to demonstrate the incredible Church-led projects across the country supporting young families struggling with the rise in cost of living, students in university, as well as mental and physical health problems prevalent in communities. This is the church in Wales, consistently sharing the gospel, raising its voice and seeking to be a blessing to the communities they live in.

We want these connections and relationships to make a difference to our communities, for the love of Jesus to be made known. Similarly, God commands us to be active in serving and loving our public representatives. 1 Timothy 2:1–4 says: “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

Why should we engage with our public representatives?

The church's contribution matters

Our society is made up of people who hold various different beliefs and values. Sometimes these views contrast with those that are held by Christians, standing at odds with our biblical perspective. This can perhaps intimidate some of us, or make us think that we can't offer a relevant voice to conversations regarding key topics in society and in how we are governed.

Christians still account for a large proportion of the Welsh population, and therefore as a significant presence in our nation we should understand that our voices matter in shaping legislation. Instead of passively allowing other voices and worldviews to shape our national values and laws, we can all be positive and active citizens in conversations about issues that matter to us.

The Bible instructs us to respect people in authority

1 Peter 2:17 says, "Respect everyone and love the family of believers. Fear God and **respect** the king." What better reason to connect with our elected representatives than to put God's word into action by giving respect to their leadership role and office?

The Bible instructs us to love people who differ from us

Mark 12:31 commands that we "love our neighbours", including those from whom we differ. While Jesus talks of people of different religious backgrounds being our neighbours, those of different political persuasions are our neighbours too.

As Christians we are called to seek the welfare of the city

Jeremiah 29:7 instructs us to seek the peace and prosperity of the city wherever you live. Surely this is a call to activities and conversations that make life better for all in our society?

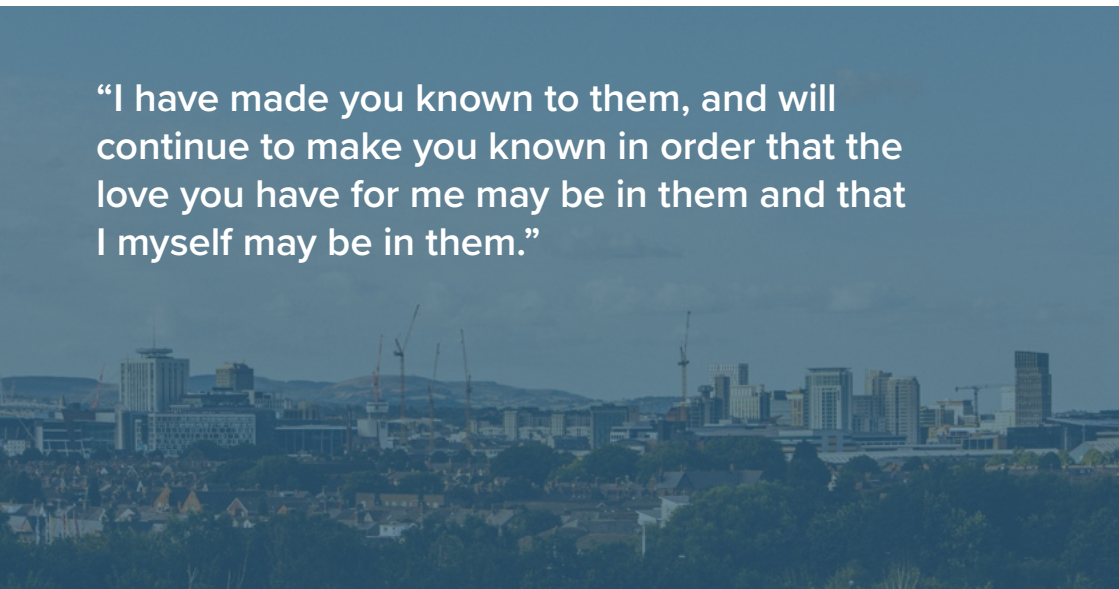
We're called to make Jesus known to everyone, including MSs

As we love our MSs, let's get to know them. Then when we share our Christian perspectives with them, they will already know and understand us. After all, you're more likely to take constructive criticism from someone you know well than from a complete stranger. When our MSs know us as people of love who build them up, they will hear us when we engage with them and when we offer our perspective.

This call applies to Christians within the church and in the public sphere. We are called to be known as people who show respect to one another, even those we disagree with — and sometimes especially those we disagree with.

In John 17:26, we read that Jesus prayed for the Father's love to be in His followers:

“I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”



The first step in connecting with your public representatives

As children of God, we should engage with our public representatives to show them gratitude for their service, praise them when they do something well and get to know them as people, not just a political party. When our public representatives know us as people marked by respect and love who build them up, they will hear us when we offer an alternative perspective.

Therefore, engaging well with your public representatives doesn't necessarily mean that you have to join a political party or march in protest rallies. In fact, we believe that one of the greatest ways to show support to our representatives is by praying for them regularly and with them when possible.

So, before you begin, take a moment to **pray for your public representatives.**



How do I connect with my public representative?

Your public representatives are ordinary people, so you don't have to be afraid to approach them. Start by introducing yourself; a major part of their roles as public representatives is to get to know their constituents, and they will be more willing to engage with someone when they have a better understanding of who it is that is contacting them. You can mention your job, the church you go to, and the community projects with which you are involved.

It is so important to contact public representatives regardless of the political party to which they belong. The starting point should be to contact your local representative regardless of their party affiliation, but you may like to widen the conversation and get a full perspective of the issue from all political angles. You may be surprised by where you find common ground and support for your issue.

Make sure you communicate a positive message in your conversation, something that will encourage your public representative before you go on to voice any opinions or complaints that you might have.

Some questions to consider in any interaction that you have with your public representative, whether that be online or in person, are:

- Is what I am saying constructive?
- Would I speak to a colleague the way I speak to my public representative?
- Is this how I want Christians to be perceived?
- Am I representing my church well?

Who are the individuals that represent us in Wales?

Councillors

Following boundary changes in Autumn 2023, Wales has 1233 councillors. You can find out who your local councillors are and areas of responsibilities, here: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/resources/resources-young-people/who-responsible/local-councils

Aelod Seneddol (ASs)/Members of the Senedd (MSs):

The people of Wales elect Members of the Senedd (MSs) to represent them in the parliament. MSs focus on issues of interest and concern affecting the people of Wales and examine laws introduced either by the Welsh Government, a Senedd Committee or an individual MS. The next Senedd election is due to be held May 2026 where 96 MSs will be elected. You can find out who your local MS is by clicking on the map at senedd.wales/find-a-member-of-the-senedd

MPs

Members of Parliament (MP) represent their local constituents interests and concerns in the House of Commons. There are 32 available seats in Westminster for Welsh MPs. You can find out who your Welsh MP is here: members.parliament.uk/members/commons

Who should I contact?

In the first instance we would encourage you to connect with your local councillor to discuss issues regarding local services, facilities and planning. If your local councillor is not able to help you, they should direct you to your local MS.

Your local MS is there to represent you in the Welsh Parliament and so do write or email them concerns you have about your community and the areas your church or charity have specialisms in.

When contacting your local MP you are looking to discuss issues that are governed centrally by Westminster, such as national security or the UK tax system. You can find out who your local representatives here: www.writetothem.com/

Eluned Morgan MS nominated as First Minister, 6 August 2024

© Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament



How can you support your public representatives practically?

Pray for them

Support your public representatives by praying for them. You could pray that they might have peace during stressful moments, or wisdom when they have to make difficult decisions. In addition to your personal prayers, you could hold church prayer meetings specifically for your political leaders, or simply pray for them more regularly during mid-week Bible studies.

Email them

It's good to be in regular contact with your public representatives and sending an email is the easiest way to do so. Get into the habit of sending an email to your public representative to encourage them, not only when you have a complaint. You could let your public representative know that you are praying for them, and you could also ask for specific prayer points to share with your church. You may be surprised by how much your public representative would appreciate this.

Send them a card

Like an email, a letter or card can be used to encourage your public representative, and it is more likely to be remembered. Lots of public representatives put cards up in their office as reminders of the support and encouragement they receive from their constituents.

Visit them

The best way to get to know your public representative personally, and for them to get to know and trust you, is to meet with them face to face. Don't be intimidated by this approach; your public representative is an ordinary person after all.

Take them a gift

Being a public representative is stressful, and the overtime and community work that public representatives do can often go underappreciated. So, why not give your public representative some baked goods or a small gift, to show your appreciation for the effort they are making?

Invite them to church

By inviting a public representative to your church, you're showing them that they, like anybody, are a welcomed and valued member of your community. You could invite them to a special service, such as a celebration of a community project or a church anniversary. But, don't just limit invitations to special days; invite your public representative to be part of your church and help them to witness the value that the church adds to their constituents' lives.



May we be *one*
so that the *world* will know

Since 1846 we've been a trusted voice in society,
uniting the church for the sake of the gospel.

Become a member today
eauk.org/joinus

wales

evangelical alliance
together making Jesus known



20 High Street, Cardiff, CF10 1PT

T 029 2022 9822 | **E** wales@eauk.org | **W** eauk.org/wales

The Evangelical Alliance. A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England & Wales
No. 123448. Registered Charity No England and Wales: 212325, Scotland: SC040576.

Registered Office: 176 Copenhagen Street, London, N1 0ST