****

**Talk To Your Politicians Guide:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | ****Talking To Your Politicians:**** See the 5 Step Guide below on how to talk to your politicians. Some political commentators have suggested that we may have another general election within the next 12 months, so this could be a good angle to approach your local politicians with. | | |  | | --- | | Do your politicians know much about climate change? If not, you can offer your services to enlighten them. Also, if they are aware of the issues, you could also arrange a meeting to discuss these issues further and ask them what they are going to do. | |

**1. Hook:** Tell your story! This is your chance to bring together your personal story, current events, your existing relationship with your locality, and the work as a Climate Ambassador you’re doing or planning. It’s also a time for your politicians to get to know you. You can use humour, an emotional and compelling personal story, or even a leading question to get your politician thinking. Be yourself and you’ll draw people in.

Also, by knowing a bit about your politician beforehand, you may be able to identify areas of interest they have that overlaps with yours. For example, are they interested in job creation or health? Or perhaps they are more concerned with transport or agriculture? How can you bring those issues into the changes you would like to see? To find out who your TDs, Local Councillors and MEP’s are, click here: [**https://www.whoismytd.com/**](https://climateambassador.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=87ca71a0d1c64e7b6c5d59459&id=f60916d196&e=7dd928e601)  
   
**2. Problem:** Clearly state the problem we face and why it’s urgent for us to address it right now.  Maybe the problem is climate change as a whole, or maybe it’s something more specific with a more immediate solution. Have some details related to the problem ready to share.

**3. Solution:** Now is your chance to share a sense of hope by offering an achievable solution and explaining what we can do to make it happen. Are there existing solutions in other parts of the country or the world?  
  
   
**4. Visualisation:** After you’ve shared the problem and offered a solution, help your politician visualize what the world looks like when the problem is or isn’t solved. Provide vivid details about the consequences of inaction or the rewards of solving the problem.  
   
**5. Ask:** If you just tell people about the problem, solution, and consequences, they likely won’t be compelled to take action. Now is your chance! Make a specific and direct ask of your politician and be sure to get a commitment to action. Rather than asking a generic question like “Will you help us?”, be specific. Here are some examples;

* “Can I count on you to submit a question during a Dail sitting to request a Feed In Tariff allowing domestic solar panels sell excess electricity back to the grid?”
* “Will you support my request to have more funds spent on natural flood defences and extreme weather preparations?”
* “Can I count on you to submit a question during a Dail sitting to request an increase of the transport budget for sustainable travel from the current 1% for walking & cycling infrastructure combined, to the UN recommended level of 20%?”
* “Can I count on you to submit a question during a Dail sitting to request a commitment from the government to honour the 13 recommendations at the Citizens’ Assembly?”
  + Details of the 13 Citizens’ Assembly Recommendations: [**https://www.citizensassembly.ie/en/How-the-State-can-make-Ireland-a-leader-in-tackling-climate-change/**](https://climateambassador.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=87ca71a0d1c64e7b6c5d59459&id=7009847694&e=7dd928e601)

When you have their commitment, make sure you have a specific plan and timeline for action moving forward. Arrange for a future time to catch up and review progress.  
   
**And Remember...**  
   
**Have a conversation, not an argument:** Despite the disproportionate media attention given to sceptics, most people simply don’t talk or think about climate change all that much. This means that the very act of having a conversation about climate change – not an argument – can be a very powerful method of public engagement. See also your *“Climate Conversation Guide”* in your toolkit for more tips on how to hold discussion related to climate change.