

**FOR EVERY  
CHILD IN  
DANGER**

**unicef**   
UNITED KINGDOM

## **GENERAL ELECTION 2017: HUSTINGS AND MEETING YOUR LOCAL CANDIDATES**

On Thursday 8 June, the British people will vote for the next UK Government. Like no other election in our lifetime, this General Election is about Britain's role in the world. It is about whether we see ourselves continuing to be a generous country, honouring our commitment to life-saving aid. It is about whether we provide the bridges that will ensure refugee children are reunited safely with their family, protected from trafficking and exploitation. We only have a few weeks to ensure that all the major political parties, and their candidates, commit to protecting the world's most vulnerable children.

**We need you to help us show that there is support in your constituency for UK aid and unaccompanied refugee children.**

**Unicef UK is calling on all the major political parties to commit to protecting the world's most vulnerable children by:**

- Reaffirming the UK's commitment to spend 0.7% of national income on life-saving aid ensuring it is spent in a way that alleviates poverty around the world
- Expanding the UK's immigration rules to ensure refugee children are reunited with their family

### **Remaining impartial**

Unicef UK is not party political and will never take a position on which way you should vote in an election. We are calling on all political parties to speak up for the world's most vulnerable children and are only interested in creating positive change for children. When you're engaging with local election candidates, it is important you reach out to Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs) from all major parties in your area.

### **WHY SPEAK OUT DURING A GENERAL ELECTION?**

This is a time when politicians are keen to hear what the public think and it's important that they hear that there is strong support for the world's most vulnerable children and Britain's role in the world. This will help to ensure that these important issues are prioritised across

British politics. As a constituent you are in a unique position to ensure PPCs view UK aid and unaccompanied refugee children as an important issue in the UK.

#### **Find out who your local election candidates are:**

Some candidates have been announced already, but more will continue to be announced until the deadline of 11 May, so we suggest you keep an eye on <https://whocanivotefor.co.uk> and your local papers. This is also a way to find out about local election events like hustings.

#### **TAKE ACTION: ATTEND A LOCAL HUSTINGS & ASK OUR QUESTIONS**

A hustings is a meeting where election candidates' debate policies and answer questions from the audience – usually made up of people from the constituency. A hustings aims to provide voters with an opportunity to hear the views of candidates and parties in the run up to an election. They are usually held by organisations, such as community groups or local charity groups, so that voters can ask candidates or party representatives about issues that are important to them.

Due to the nature of this snap election, unfortunately there isn't a quick and easy way to find out about hustings events in your area. The best way to find out about these events is to keep an eye on your local newspapers, or search for your constituency on Twitter (e.g. #BrentCentral or #Solihull). It's also worth keeping an eye on Church and Community notice boards. Of course we will do our best to let you know of hustings in your area when we hear about them.

**Please attend a local hustings before the election and ask our questions on UK aid and unaccompanied refugee children.** It would be great if you could also take note of their answers and share this with us (our contact details can be found at the end of this document).

#### **Hustings questions:**

1. Spending UK aid on alleviating poverty makes me proud of our country. **Do you commit to ensuring the 0.7% aid budget follows international rules that focus on eradicating poverty around the world, and maintaining an independent Department for International Development?**
  
2. It is important to me to protect refugee children from trafficking and exploitation, and reunite them safely with their family. **Are you committed to ensuring refugee children can reach safety in the UK and be reunited with their families here?**

#### **TAKE ACTION: MEET ALL YOUR LOCAL ELECTION CANDIDATES**

We want you to build relationships with your local election candidates to ensure every PPC understands the protection of vulnerable children is an issue that matters to constituents.

Please meet your local election candidates before the election to call on them to champion the world's most vulnerable children, and to find out their position on UK aid and unaccompanied refugee children.

### **Meeting Tips:**

- Find out who is running for election in your constituency (visit <https://whocanivotefor.co.uk> to help you - all candidates won't be announced until 11 May)
- Email your local candidates and ask to meet them
- Meet with them to discuss our key election priorities, find out their position, and ask them to champion our issues if elected. You could also ask them the hustings questions (see above)
- Leave them a copy of our [Unicef UK Election Briefing](#) – this should help answer any further questions they might have
- Send a thank you email following your meetings – thank them for their time and remind them to champion the world's most vulnerable children if elected

If you'd like further support with these meetings, please don't hesitate to get in touch and we can talk through what you're going to discuss with the candidates and how to approach the meetings. **Remember to let us know if you have a meeting and what happened** (contact details can be found at the end of this document).

### **Doorstep Talking Points**

Please also [download our General Election 2017 Briefing 1: "doorstep" talking points](#) as you're likely to have PPCs and party volunteers knock on your door to discuss why you should vote for them and their party. This is a great opportunity for you to raise Unicef UK's election priorities and voice your hopes for the elected UK Government. This document will also be helpful when preparing for your meetings with PPCs.

## **UNICEF UK GENERAL ELECTION PRIORITIES:**

### **Life-saving aid**

In the last few years, and certainly the last few months, we've seen a barrage of negative media stories on the UK's aid budget. Since the General Election was announced, all major political parties have reaffirmed their support for investing 0.7% of national income on overseas aid. This is an encouraging step forward. However, this will only count if we now see this guaranteed in their manifestos, ensuring aid is spent in a way that alleviates poverty around the world – not tied to short-term benefits. Aid must reach those who need it most – that's *real* aid. You, and other campaigners, can help make this happen by showing strong constituency support for life-saving aid.

### **Protecting refugee children**

Children are fleeing war and disaster in greater numbers than we've seen since World War 2. Without safe and legal routes, refugee children are at far greater risk of trafficking and

exploitation. By ensuring safe family reunion processes are in place for children who have relatives in the UK, the next Government can protect children from drowning at sea, suffocating in the back of lorries or being forced into the hands of traffickers and smugglers. You, and other campaigners, can call on all political parties to make this happen.

## STAY IN TOUCH

If you speak to any of your local election candidates or attend a Hustings, please do let us know. Please also don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any further questions.

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