



Parliament for researchers

Impact and engagement at the UK Parliament

11th September 2019

#UKPfR

@UKParl_Research

10:35 UK Parliament and research

11:15 Select Committees

11:40 Break

11:50 Working with the UK Parliament

12:20 *Activity*; Select Committee evidence

12:35 Lunch

13:20 Finding the policy relevance of your research

13:35 *Activity*; how is my research relevant to
Parliament?

14:55 Break

15:05 *Activity*; action planning

15:25 Post-event support

Parliament is made up of:

- a) House of Commons and House of Lords
- b) House of Commons and Government
- c) Government and Monarch
- d) House of Commons, House of Lords and Monarch

What is the UK Parliament?



House of Commons



House of Lords



The Monarch

Which TWO answers describe the work of Parliament?

a) running Government departments

b) checking up on the work of Government

c) being the highest court of appeal in the UK

d) making new laws

What does the UK Parliament do?

- Represents the people
- Checks and challenges the work of the Government (scrutiny)
- Makes and changes laws (legislation)
- Debates the important issues of the day (debating)
- Checks and approves Government spending (taxes and budgets)



What is the UK Government?

The party or parties who can command the confidence of the House of Commons forms the Government.

The Government:

- runs public departments and public services (e.g. Home Office, NHS)
- proposes new laws to the UK Parliament
- is accountable to Parliament



Parliament ≠ Government

UK Parliament



- Commons, Lords and Monarch
- Holds Government to account
- Makes laws
- Enables the Government to raise and spend money

UK Government



- Some MPs and some Lords, chosen by the Prime Minister
- Runs Government departments and public services
- Is accountable to Parliament

Devolved administrations

- Northern Ireland Executive / *Northern Ireland Assembly (Stormont)*
- ‘MLAs’ = Members of the Legislative Assembly

- Welsh Government / *National Assembly for Wales (The Senedd)*
- ‘AMs’ – Assembly Members



- Scottish Government / *Scottish Parliament (Holyrood)*
- ‘MSPs’ = Members of the Scottish Parliament

Since 1999

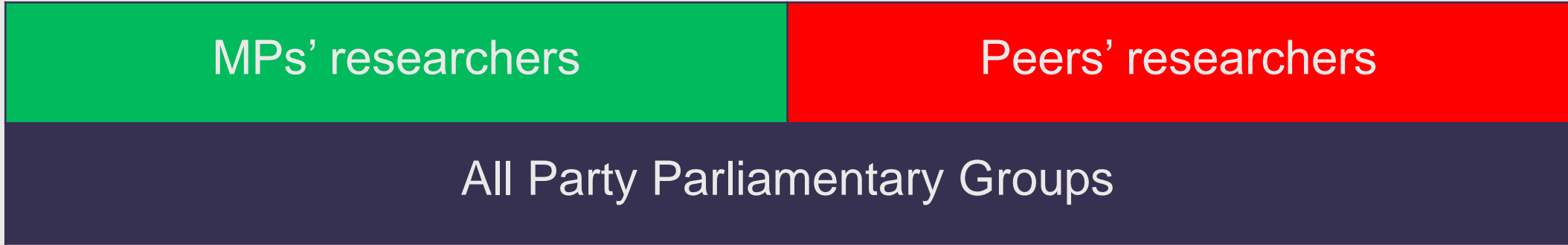
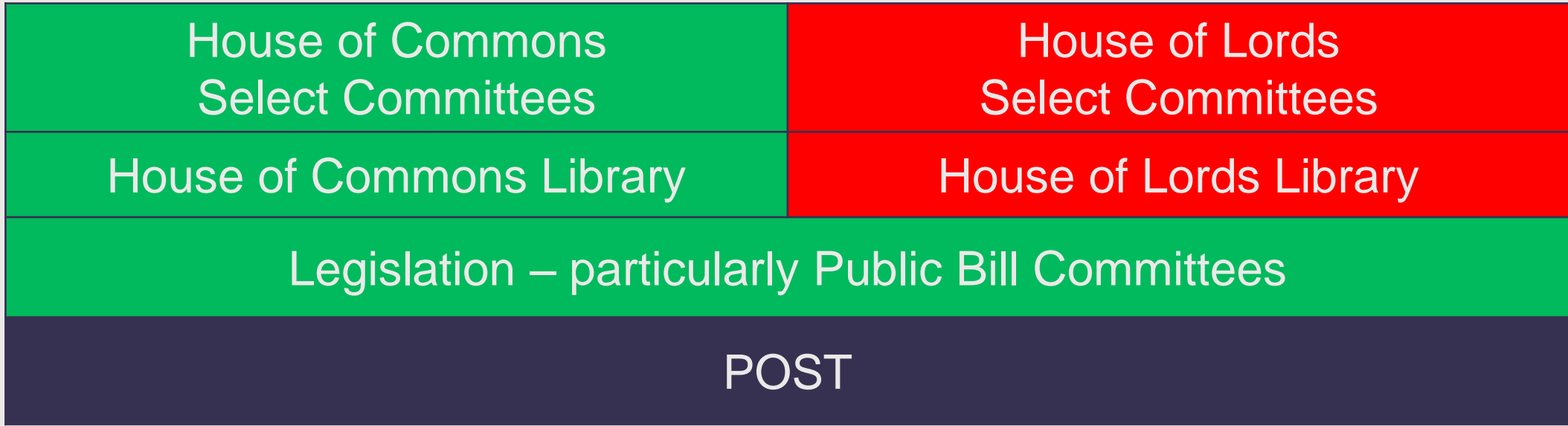
- Certain powers devolved (i.e. education or health)
- Certain powers are reserved (i.e. UK defence and foreign policy)

Who is the only person allowed an alcoholic drink on the Floor of the House of Commons?

- a) Speaker
- b) Prime Minister
- c) Chancellor of the Exchequer**
- d) Chief Whip



Who uses research in the UK Parliament?



Commons and Lords Libraries

- Provide specialist impartial information and briefing service for MPs, Peers, their staff, committees and staff of the Houses
- Produce wide range of briefing material
- Work tends to be reactive and responsive to questions from Members, business in each House and current affairs.
- Briefings available online at www.parliament.uk under research publications
- Contact papers@parliament.uk, FAO subject specialist, 250 words maximum



POST

- Bridges research and policy to ensure that the best available research evidence feeds into the legislative process and scrutiny of Government, through:
 - Horizon scanning briefings (POSTNotes)
 - Reactive advice for Committees and Libraries (POSTbriefs)
 - Events
 - Knowledge Exchange (internal and external)
 - Academic fellowships

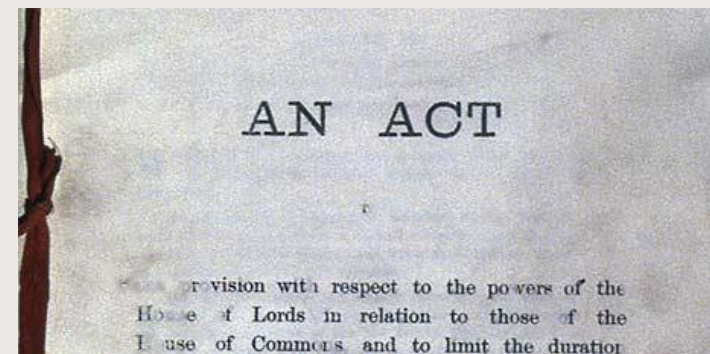


POST: getting involved

- Contribute to a current note
- Sign up to our mailing list
- Follow us on Twitter: @POST_UK
- Propose a POSTnote
- Attend an event
- Apply for a Fellowship
- See www.parliament.uk/POST for all of the above

Legislation

- Most new legislation is introduced by the Government
- All legislation must be scrutinised by both Houses of Parliament
- Members suggest changes (“amendments”) at particular stages throughout the legislative process
- All Bills before Parliament can be viewed and tracked at www.parliament.uk – including Bill documents, explanatory notes, amendments, committee minutes and Library briefings



Legislation: getting involved

- Respond to consultations from Government, e.g. Green and White Papers BEFORE a Bill is introduced to Parliament
- House of Commons Library produce briefings on Government Bills – make sure the subject specialist knows you
- Submit evidence to pre-legislative scrutiny committees and/or Public Bill Committees
- Brief opposition/backbench MPs and Peers to assist them in legislative debates

All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs)

- Informal groups of MPs and Peers focused on subjects or countries
- Some meet regularly, hold events, produce reports and run inquiries
- Allow Members to:
 - develop their knowledge
 - meet other interested Members
 - show their interest
 - raise awareness on a topic

Full register of groups available on www.parliament.uk

What support do we offer for researchers?

- “Parliament for researchers”: monthly regional training events (www.parliament.uk/academic-training)
- Advice and information from dedicated Knowledge Exchange Unit (foxens@parliament.uk or saintn@parliament.uk)
- Online resources on www.parliament.uk/research-impact
- Promotion of opportunities to engage through [@UKParl_Research](https://twitter.com/UKParl_Research) and other networks
- Fellowships

Parliament and the REF

- 20% of 2014 Impact Case Studies mentioned substantial engagement with Parliament
- Engagement with Parliament can result in REF-able impact
- In preparation for REF 2021 we have worked with Research England and the devolved administrations to ensure shared understanding of what parliamentary impact is and how it can be evidenced



Select Committees

What are Select Committees?

- Both Houses establish Select Committees to conduct inquiries and to produce reports on a range of matters, from the conduct of Government to specialist subject areas
- Invite evidence from witnesses, and also employ subject specialists for particular inquiries or on a more permanent basis
- Purpose is to hold Government to account

House of Commons Select Committees



- Appointed to scrutinise the spending, policy and administration of Government departments
- One Select Committee per Government department
- Members are backbench MPs
- Staffed by team of Parliamentary staff led by Clerk

Examples of Committee work

- Very high profile hearings – e.g. bankers during 2008 crash
- Report that have a major impact on public debate – e.g. latte levy
- Much more to Committees than that:
 - Evidence-led
 - Public engagement
 - Routine and focused work



House of Lords Select Committees

Six major Lords Select Committees:

- the European Union Committee (plus 6 sub-Committees)
- the Science and Technology Committee
- the Communications Committee
- the Constitution Committee
- the Economic Affairs Committee
- the International Relationships Committee
- plus ad hoc Committees

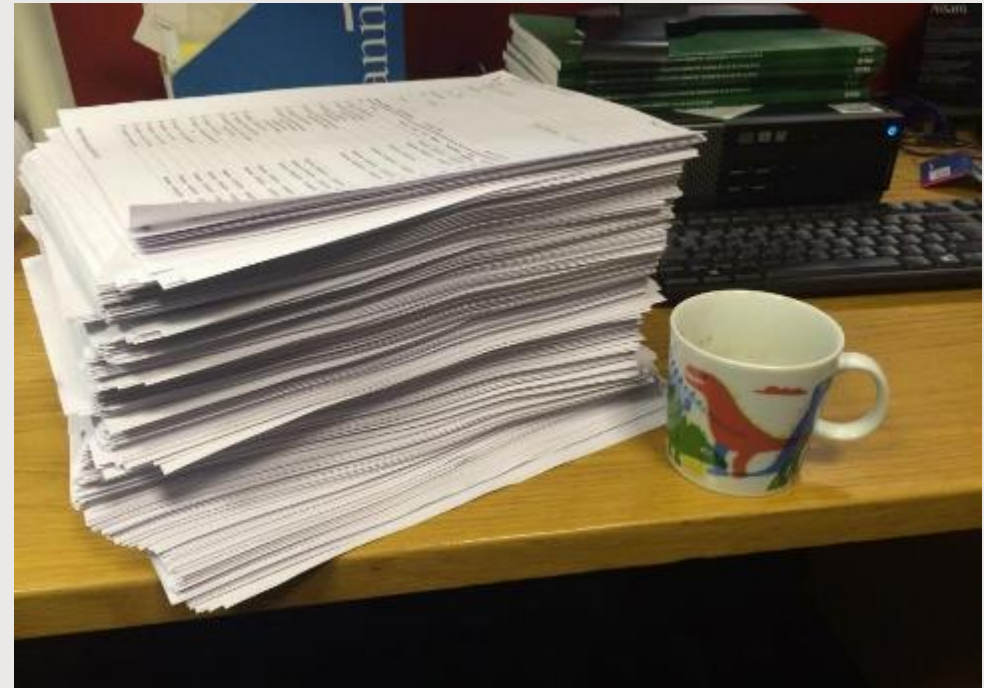
Each one runs inquiries and reports on issues within their specific areas

Members are backbench Peers

Also have team of Parliamentary staff led by Clerk

How Select Committees work

- Choose inquiry
- Announce Terms of Reference
- Collect written evidence
- ? Commission research
- ? Visit
- Take oral evidence
- Discuss conclusions
- Draft and agree report
- Publish report



Transparency

- Anyone can submit written evidence
- Written evidence is published online
- Oral evidence sessions held in public
- Transcripts and videos available online
- Visits as part of an inquiry recorded in the report



Select Committees: getting involved

- Look out for relevant Select Committee inquiries and submit written evidence - this may lead to an invite to give oral evidence
- Committees sometimes appoint a specialist adviser when expertise is needed to inform oral evidence sessions or shape a report. Advisers are usually academics/expert practitioners.
- Follow Committees on Twitter, or sign up for email alerts via www.parliament.uk
- Offer to host a visit for a Select Committee, or give a private briefing
- Suggest a subject for a Select Committee inquiry to the Clerk/staff or to Members of that Committee

What's in it for you / them?

- Select Committees:
 - expertise
 - objectivity
 - recommendations

- Researchers:
 - impact
 - publication
 - profile
 - parliamentary privilege

What is good written evidence?

1. Be concise and relevant:

- Keep to the word limit (3,000 words or less)
- Include a summary
- Use the Terms of Reference and don't copy/paste other reports
- Don't feel that you have to respond to every single term of reference
- NB written evidence must be unique/not previously published

2. Make policy recommendations

- Don't just diagnose the problem
- Be specific whenever possible
- Don't just call for more research!

3. Write for an interested non-expert, avoiding:

- Too many acronyms
- Jargon
- Politicised language

What is good oral evidence?

1. Be concise and relevant:

- Stick to the question you have been asked
- Don't feel you have to answer every question

2. Be engaging:

- Use examples where possible – e.g. refer to a real person (anonymously) rather than a vague problem
- [Highlight your calls for action](#)
- Show respect for the Members and the Committee – you'll have an easier time!

3. Feel free to follow up in writing

- If you forget to raise something important
- If you don't have certain facts and figures to hand
- If you want to request a footnote on the transcript



Select Committee evidence

- This is a mock Select Committee inquiry and two submissions.
- Read both evidence submissions.
- Discuss:
 - What are the good points of each submission?
 - What could be improved for each submission?
- Decide on 5 tips/pieces of advice that you would give to a researcher submitting written evidence to a Select Committee.

Communication tips

Before communicating

- Have it clear in your mind what you want to achieve through the communication
- Know what your core message is

When communicating

- Pitch information at an intelligent, non-specialist audience
- Make it clear *how* the research is relevant to Parliament and society and *why now*
- Make it clear *what* you want policymakers to do with the information
- Have a hook, be concise and use charts and images to break up text

- Consider framing as '(problem)/solution'
- Storytelling is a powerful tool



Finding the policy relevance of your research

Dr Andrew Williams



Dr Andrew Williams, Lecturer in Human Geography

Research interests centre on the relationship between welfare, ethics and care, religion and neoliberalism.

Methodologies include ethnographic engagements in city spaces – in drug and alcohol treatment, food banks, homelessness, protest, advocacy and care



Submitted written evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger and Food Poverty, for their inquiry into 'Feeding Britain'.

REPORTS & RESEARCH

The first Feeding Britain report was published in December of 2014, detailing the extent and causes of hunger in the United Kingdom. The inquiry received evidence from hundreds of people and organisations across the country.

Since that first report in 2014, Feeding Britain has continued to collect evidence from across the country to monitor the changing landscape of hunger, and reveal the hidden or less well known aspects of food poverty.

Reports published by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Hunger

Professor Norma Daykin



Professor in Research and
Knowledge Exchange,
Winchester University

Research interests centre on the arts,
health and wellbeing. Her research
spans from the impact of hospital design
on patient wellbeing through to the
impact of participatory arts in mental
health, primary care, community and
justice.

*All-Party Parliamentary Group
on Arts, Health and Wellbeing*

Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing

Was an advisor to the APPG on Arts Health And Wellbeing for their inquiry 'Creative Health: the arts for health and wellbeing'.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (APPGAHW) was formed in 2014 and aims to improve awareness of the benefits that the arts can bring to health and wellbeing. During 2015–17, the APPGAHW conducted an Inquiry into practice and research in the arts in health and social care, with a view to making recommendations to improve policy and practice. Our partners in this Inquiry have been the National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing, King's College London, the Royal Society for Public Health and Guy's and St Thomas' Charity. We are extremely grateful to our funders: Wellcome, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

20 December 2019

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Dr Ansgar Koene



Senior Research Fellow,
University of Nottingham

Expertise centres around developing and promoting ethical methods for social media and internet-based research. Critical evaluation of internet-based research practices, digital rights policies and privacy.

House of Commons

Science and Technology

Committee

Submitted written evidence to the Commons Science and Tech Committee inquiry 'Investigatory Powers Bill: technology issues'.

Investigatory

Bill: technology issues

20 December, 2019 **Third Report of Session 2015–16**

Professor Tim Grant



Professor of Forensic
Linguistics, Aston University

Research interests centre around forensic linguistics. He has an interest and expertise in forensic authorship analysis, focusing on short form messages such as SMS text messages, Twitter posts and messaging apps.



POSTNOTE

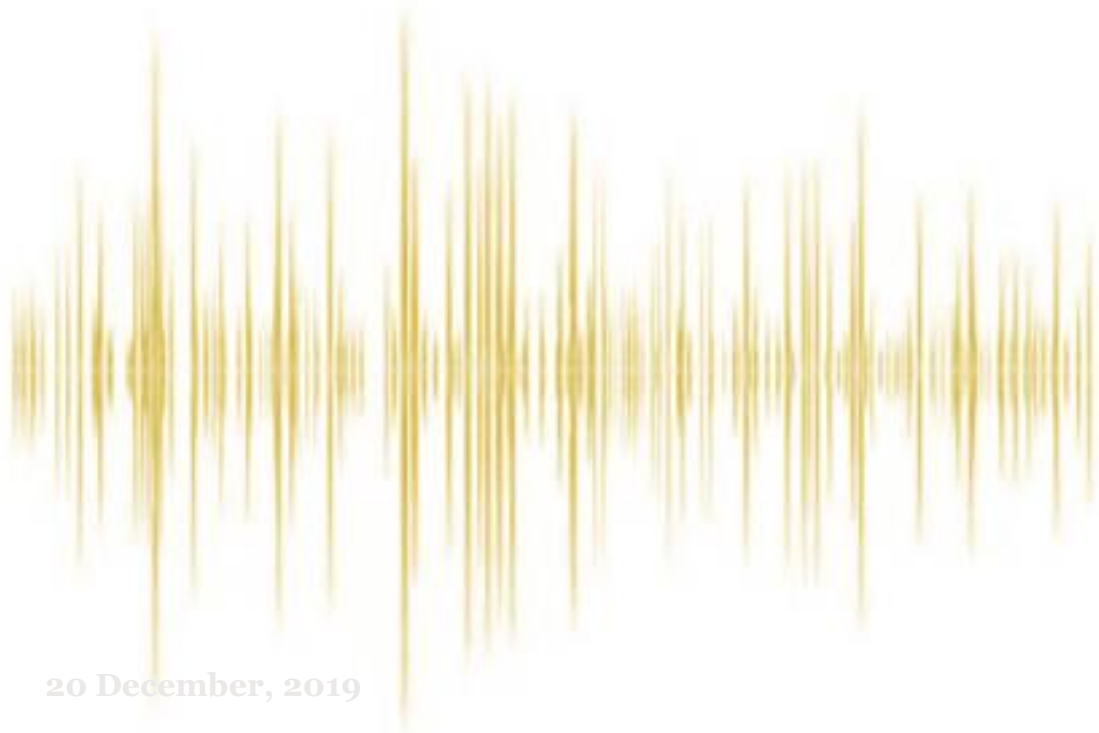
Number 509 September 2015

Forensic Language Analysis

Contributed to a POSTnote on Forensic Language Analysis, and then to a Private Members Bill on Forensic Linguistic Standards.

Overview

- Forensic language analysis is used in criminal courts to help determine the origin of evidence.
- Some forms of forensic linguistic and phonetic evidence are routinely used in criminal courts.
- There are guidelines on who can provide expert evidence; however, expertise is not statutorily regulated.
- The Home Office uses language analysis to help determine the origin of evidence.



Dr Alex Douglas and Dr Katherine Hawley



Lecturers in Philosophy,
University of St Andrews

Research interests span the epistemology of trust, promising and competence; metaphysics, identity and time; money, desire; Spinoza's monoism and syllogism.



Information and 'fake news'

Inquiry status: **open**

Interim Report published on 29 July 2018. Further oral evidence announced
Current Committee's Disinformation and 'fake news' publications
Former Committee's fake news written evidence

Submitted written evidence to the Digital Culture Media and Sport Committee Inquiry into Fake News.

Scope of the inquiry

Interim Report: Disinformation and 'fake news' (HC 363 17/19), published 29 July 2018.

Government Response to Interim Report (HC 1630 17/19), published 23 October 2018.

This inquiry continues the former Committee's work on fake news.



Commons Environmental Audit Committee: Inquiry into Planetary Health

Terms of Reference:

1. What are threats to global planetary health, and what do they mean for public health, including diets, in the UK?
2. What action is being taken internationally to tackle these threats? Could the UK be doing more to drive international action? What opportunities are there for the Government to promote good planetary health in forthcoming international summits or agreements?
3. Which countries have been effective at addressing the threats to planetary health, and how

Commons Environmental Audit Committee: Inquiry into Planetary Health

Possible relevant research (and underpinning expertise)

- Food safety and security
- Farming practices (from agronomy to anthropology)
- Food poverty
- Microbiology
- Health and income
- Welfare state (from economics to theology)
- Climate change
- Regional impacts of climate change
- Protein from insects, fake meat (from biology to sociology)
- Pollinators and climate change
- Innovation in nutrition and food production
- Economics
- Food banks
- Social media and behaviour change (from media studies to computer studies)

POSTnote on
Cyber Security of Consumer Products
Possible relevant research (and underpinning expertise)



POSTnote on Cyber Security of Consumer Products

Possible relevant research (and underpinning expertise)

- **Cyber security**
- **Computer science**
- **Psychology**
- **Philosophy**
- **Design**
- **Manufacturing**
- **Electrical and electronic engineering**
- **Robotics**
- **Law**
- **Criminology**



**How is my research relevant
to Parliament?**

1 minute pitch to a Parliamentarian



- You find yourself at a reception stood between the drinks table and your local MP.
- Your research points to a need for a specific policy change or change in law...or there is a need for raised parliamentary awareness on the topic.
- You have less than a minute to grab the MP's attention and try to convince her to take up the cause to bring about the policy or law change or raise awareness in parliament.
- Prepare a pitch lasting less than a minute in which you:
 - explain the proposed change or issue that needs raising
 - support the proposal with some details of your research evidence.
- Work in groups of 3 - spend time focused on each person's research.

Getting involved: a recap

- Look out for relevant Select Committee inquiries and submit evidence
- Offer to host a visit for a Select Committee
- Suggest a subject for a Select Committee inquiry to the Clerk or to Members of that Committee
- Work with POST/Libraries on briefings for Members
- Suggest a topic for a POSTNote to POST
- Submit evidence to a Public Bill Committee/Pre-legislative Scrutiny Committee
- Develop relationships with individual Members
- Apply for a Fellowship

Action planning

- Think about what aspect of your research you would like to raise at Parliament.
- Note on your postcard what action you will take.
- Consider any longer term plans or other ideas for engaging with Parliament, and write your ideas on your postcard.

Contact us for support

saintn@parliament.uk
@UKParl_Research



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Westminster
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