

Tips for Engaging with your Local Member

Include where you live and make it local:

When writing to a Member of Parliament, include your address and contact details. This is important because their role as an MP is to answer queries from constituents and support the local community. Explain how they can be helpful to Landcare. Ask for a meeting or invite them to an event. Give them a warm welcome, take a photo, share it on Facebook or invite the local media representative to come and write a story.

Be clear about your purpose:

In order to receive a considered response to your letter or email, write a considered letter. Are you writing to introduce your group and form a relationship, seek their support for a local initiative, or ask them to support a broader statewide or national Landcare goal? There are many ways an MP can help – they are well informed and connected.

Be clear about action:

In your communication, whether by email or in person, it's important to be clear how the MP can help you; are you seeking a policy change? Funding? Is it to raise an issue with their Parliamentary colleagues or Ministers? Be clear if you are simply conveying a view, or also wish to talk to the MP or invite them to attend an event or meeting.

“3 Ps”:

In letters, emails and meetings be passionate, persistent and polite.

When meeting with your member:

Do your research about who they are, which political party, State or Federal Government, level of knowledge and interest in the issue. Have your key messages in mind. Be specific about what you are seeking. Talk about the local issues. Seek to build an ongoing relationship. Ask them to help connect you with others in the community.

Encourage the member to join Landcare:

Invite your Local Member to see your Landcare group in action – at a workshop, tree planting event etc. Invite them to join Landcare to represent their local Landcare community in Parliament.