

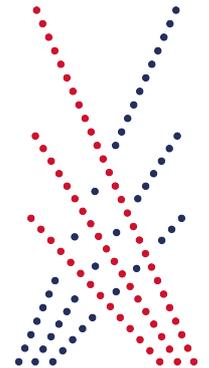
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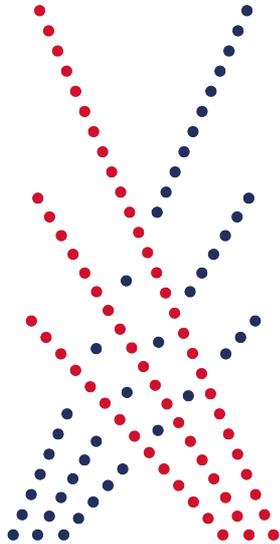
# Engaging with Policymakers: Routes to Impact in Whitehall, Parliament, and the Devolved Nations

**Dr Ashley Lenihan  
Head of Policy & Engagement  
British Academy of Management**

# Overview

1. Pathways to Impact
  - a) In Whitehall
  - b) In Parliament
  - c) In the Devolved Nations
2. Best Practice Communication
  - a) General Advice
  - b) Context Specific
    - Central Government & Parliament
    - Devolved Nations
3. Final Thoughts & Resources



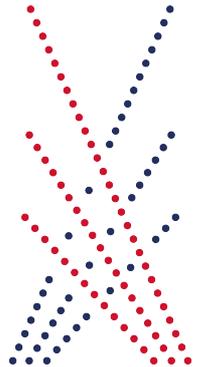


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**Pathways to Impact**

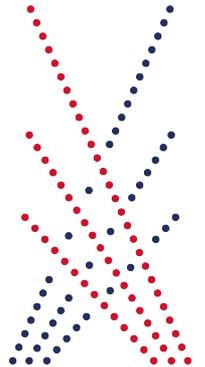
# Pathways to Impact – UK Parliament

- Multiple routes – but four broad categories
  1. Submitting written evidence or giving oral testimony to a parliamentary inquiry or APPG
  2. Engaging with the House of Commons or House of Lords' Librarians
  3. Engaging with the Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology (POST)
  4. Engaging directly with MPs, Peers, their SpAds or Researchers



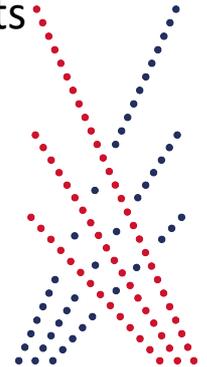
# UK Government

- Again – multiple routes, but some broad categories
  1. Government Consultations
  2. Engagement with Ministers, their SpAds, and their researchers
  3. Engagement with Government department teams / field heads
  4. Engagement with Government Social Research (GSR)



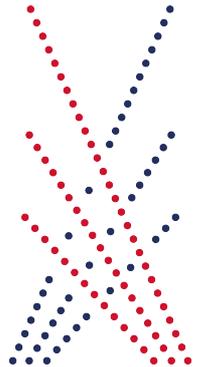
# Resources – Keeping abreast of opportunities

- Websites to watch
  - <https://www.bam.ac.uk/policy> – for policy monitor and other news
  - [Gov.uk website](#)
  - [Parliament's website](#)
- Twitter
  - Follow relevant parliamentary committees or government departments
  - Follow POST, BAM, etc.



# The Devolved Nations

1. Get to know the political context
  - Devolved powers
  - National context (scale, language, political culture)
  - Policy cycle
2. Get to know the political landscape
  - What unique pathways to impact might there be?
  - How might you increase your credibility nationally?
  - What unique factors might help your engagement count?

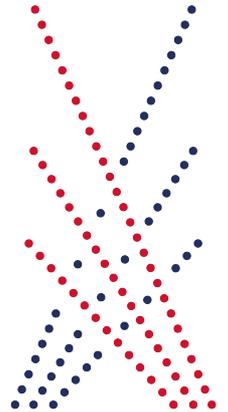


# Devolved Nations: The Welsh Example

## National Assembly

- Engage the [Assembly Research Service](#)
- Respond to the Assembly's calls for evidence through its [Committees' consultations](#)
- Reach out to the Chairs and Clerks of the Assembly Committees, as well as the Chairs of the National Assembly [Cross-Party Groups](#) in your areas of expertise.
- Engage Assembly Members, their researchers, party researchers, and Ministers' Special Advisors (SpAds).

For more detailed information, see my practical guide for researchers:  
<https://campaignforsocialscience.org.uk/pathwaystoimpact/>



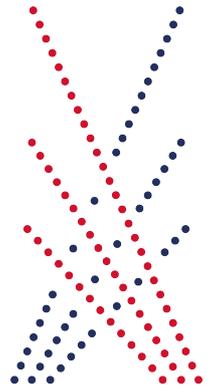
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# The Welsh Example

## Welsh Government

- Engage the Welsh Government's [Knowledge and Analytical Service](#) (KAS), which has its own evidence calls and tenders for research
- Tender for and engage in **commissioned research** (through, e.g. – [Welsh Government Suppliers' Fairs](#) and [Sell2Wales](#))
- Engage directly with **Ministers' research teams, SpAds, or civil servants**

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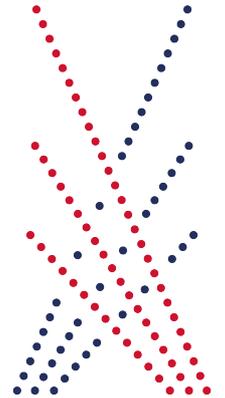
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# The Welsh Example

## General

- Apply to participate in **Advisory Committees** and **Reference Panels**
  - for example: Welsh Government's [Health Advisory Committees](#), [The KAS Statistical Groups and Committee](#), or the Welsh Assembly's [Climate Change Expert Reference Group](#)
- Work through **knowledge brokers**, such as research institutes, academic networks, think tanks, or charities
- Engage with the media (national and local)

For more detailed information, see my practical guide for researchers:  
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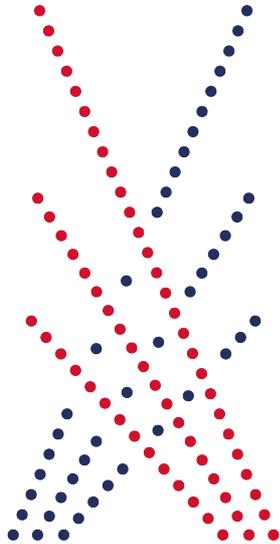
# Resources for the Devolved Nations

## Inquiries & Consultations

- **Northern Ireland Executive:** <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/consultations>
- **Northern Ireland Assembly:** <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/committees/calls-for-evidence/>
- **Scottish Government:** [https://consult.gov.scot/consultation\\_finder/](https://consult.gov.scot/consultation_finder/)
- **Scottish Parliament:** <http://www.parliament.scot/gettinginvolved/current-consultations.aspx>
- **Welsh Government:** <https://beta.gov.wales/consultations>
- **National Assembly for Wales:** <http://senedd.assembly.wales/mgConsultationListDisplay.aspx>

For practical guidance for researchers on having impact in Scotland:  
<https://spre.scot>



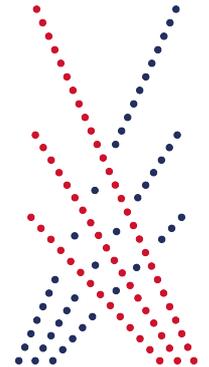


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## **Best Practice Communication**

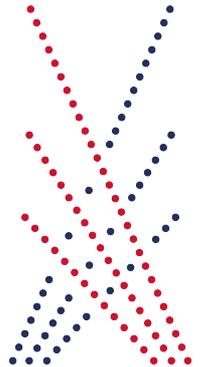
# Know your audience

- **Try to see the world from their point of view**
- **Policymakers have many demands for their attention**
- **Policymakers work with shorter time scales**



# General Advice for Impact

- **Be clear.**
  - Forego jargon and convey key points in simple precise language.
- **Be concise.**
  - Decision-makers work on short time scales. Brevity is key.
- **Be Focused.**
  - If consultation / inquiry: Answer the key questions or limit your response your area of expertise.
  - If commissioned work or general report, follow the 1-3-25 rule



# General Advice for Written & Oral Evidence

- **Provide a ‘takeaway’ point.**

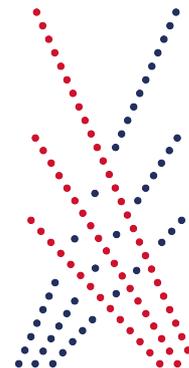
- This might be:
  - a new / significant fact /piece of research
  - how existing research may help solve an issue or answer an inquiry’s questions
  - that the evidence is unclear / incomplete on an issue

- **Make a recommendation.**

- Decision-makers prefer recommendations for action
- But recommendations may also highlight the need for new evidence, analysis, or evaluation.

- **Provide a summary**

- Of key takeaway points at the start of your submission.



# Presentation Counts! Guidelines for Written Evidence

- **Method**

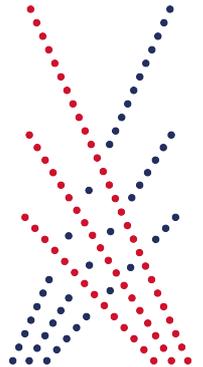
- Submissions are usually made online. Committees may accept alternative formats, but you will need to contact committee staff

- **Length**

- Commons submissions should generally be kept under 3,000 words
- Lords submissions are also best kept short, and should include a 1-page summary if over 6 pages

- **Format**

- A single Word document of less than 25 MB in size (no PDFs)
- Include no macros and as few pictures / logos as possible



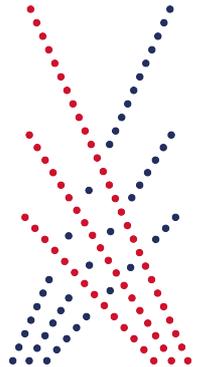
# Presentation Counts! Guidelines for Written Evidence

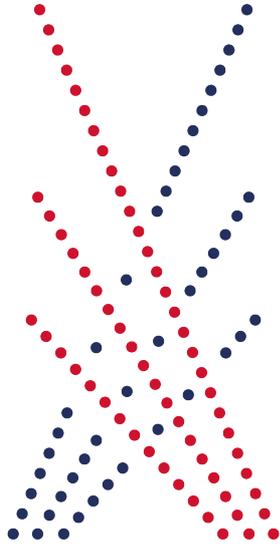
- **Style**

- Date your submission
- State your name or the name of your organisation and provide a brief bio
- Number all paragraphs
- Include a Summary

- **Content & Publishing**

- Committees usually publish your submission online if it is accepted as evidence.
- Your submission must comprise new content and not be previously published elsewhere
- If you wish to publish your evidence, you may only do so after your submission has been formally accepted by the committee as evidence and you have obtained the permission of the committee's clerk.



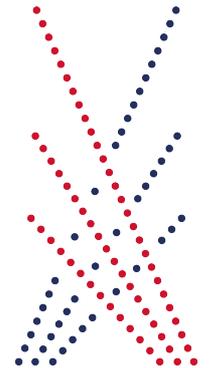


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## Concluding Thoughts & Resources

# Engagement

- Be proactive
- Use a mix of engagement methods
- Use available platforms
- Build relationships
- Take on advisory roles
- Present your work at every opportunity
- Make your research available and easy to find
- Frame your research for its context
- Be aware of timing
- Remember presentation counts!



# Sarah Foxen's Nine Ways Research Gets Into Parliament

## Through the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology

- This office provides independent, balanced analyses of topics in science and technology for both MPs and Peers
- The office publishes short briefings on relevant topics and also hosts events
- Input comes from a wide variety of sources including both academics and their research

## Through Commons and Lords Select Committee Inquiries

- Committees set an agenda for inquiries they want to carry out
- They also ask for ideas for inquiries on Twitter or their webpages
- They get written and oral evidence from various sources including academics
- The outcome of an inquiry is a report, which Government is obliged to respond to

## Through All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs)

- APPGs are composed of MPs and Peers who have an interest in a particular area, e.g. 'the aluminium industry', 'arts, health and wellbeing' and 'biodiversity' (they are a bit like university societies)
- They hold meetings on different topics with invited speakers who are sometimes academic researchers

## Through Commons and Lords Library Responses to MPs' and Peers' Questions

- The House of Commons and House of Lords libraries provide a confidential service for MPs, Peers and their staff wherein they can submit requests to the library for answers to questions they have
- Academic research, as well as other sources of information, may contribute to the response

## Through the House of Lords Library Current Affairs Digest

- The House of Lords Library publishes a weekly current affairs digest
- The digest summarises articles from a variety of sources including journals, magazines, the press, think tank reports, blog posts and speeches
- Summaries are grouped into six areas: social policy, science, economic affairs, home affairs, international affairs and the constitution

UPDATED

## Through Political Researchers

- Some MPs employ researchers to work in their offices, carry out research and gather information for them
- An MP's position in Government, for example 'shadow secretary of state for health', will impact on the sorts of information the researcher is tasked with gathering

## Through Commons Research Briefings and Lords Library Notes

- The House of Commons and House of Lords each have a library
- The Commons library has a number of subject specialists who research and write briefings on relevant topics
- The Lords library also produces briefings
- Some of the input comes from academics and their research

## Through Commons Debate Packs and Lords Briefing Packs

- When a debate is planned for a particular topic, for example 'shale gas', library specialists quickly compile briefing packs for MPs and Peers ahead of the debate
- Packs may include news items, press releases and parliamentary material
- They may also include information from research centres
- (Lords briefings are not available externally)

## Through Direct Correspondence and Engagement with MPs and Peers

- MPs and Peers have specific areas of interest on account of: the nature of their constituency; their political affiliation; or their general interests
- One of the ways they find out more about these areas of interest is through engaging with academics in relevant disciplines

# Getting your research into Parliament

## Why is it important?

PROVIDES EVIDENCE TO INFORM POLICY MAKING



USED TO SCRUTINIZE LAWS AND POLICIES



CITIZENS CARE ABOUT EVIDENCE

DEMONSTRATES RESEARCH IMPACT



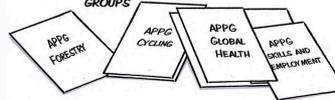
## The routes in:



CORRESPONDENCE WITH MEMBERS



ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS



## TOP 10 TIPS:

### Making Connections

1. BE SEEN ONLINE OR AT EVENTS SO THE RELEVANT PEOPLE CAN FIND YOU

2. BLOG YOUR RESEARCH SO THEY KNOW WHAT YOU ARE WORKING ON

3. FOLLOW WHAT PARLIAMENT MEMBERS ARE DOING VIA THE WEBSITE OR TWITTER

4. SIGN UP TO POST, COMMONS AND LORDS LIBRARY AND SELECT COMMITTEE ALERTS

### Presenting Research

5. INVITE PARLIAMENTARY STAFF TO YOUR EVENTS

I'M PRESENTING ON THIS AT A CONFERENCE - COME ALONG!

6. DON'T JUST SEND YOUR JOURNAL ARTICLES. SEND A BRIEF AND INCLUDE YOUR SOURCES

7. BE RELEVANT: START WITH A SUMMARY AND FOCUS ON HOW YOUR RESEARCH IMPACTS PEOPLE

Laws

Policies

8. USE VISUALS - A PICTURE CAN PAINT A THOUSAND WORDS

9. BE CLEAR AND ACCURATE: BE EXPLICIT ABOUT ALL LIMITATIONS AND CAVEATS

10. DON'T FORGET THE ESSENTIALS: INCLUDE YOUR CREDENTIALS AND DATE YOUR BRIEFING



Read in full: <http://bit.ly/researchinparliament>