

# Lobby Day: Protect The Right To Boycott

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023



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## Your rights under threat

The government is trying to push through an 'anti-boycott bill' that - if passed - could dramatically affect our ability to campaign for social and climate justice in the UK and around the world.

The new legislation will specifically target public bodies (including local councils), with an aim of preventing them from cutting ties with companies involved in human rights abuses in Palestine or elsewhere. This could easily impact on any campaign using boycotts as a tool for achieving climate or social justice.

While limited in scope, this bill should be seen in the deeply worrying context of broader government attempts to close down spaces of political activism, and create a chilling effect on people talking about Palestine.

**This bill is a direct attack on our rights, and we need you in Parliament loudly opposing it. Join us for the Lobby Day on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March.**

## Take action

Over 60 civil society organisations – including climate campaigners, human rights advocates, trade unions, and faith groups – have [put out a statement](#) opposing the government's anti-boycott bill.

Our job is to amplify that message, and make sure it is heard in Parliament. Please add your voice by registering to join the Right to Boycott Lobby Day coordinated by PSC.

**[→ CLICK TO REGISTER TO ATTEND THE LOBBY DAY: REQUEST A MEETING WITH YOUR MP](#)**

The Lobby Day is an opportunity for us to demonstrate the strength of opposition to the government's dangerous and undemocratic bill. Our aim is to persuade as many MPs as possible to vote against the legislation, and for opposition parties to commit to campaigning against it in both the House of Commons and House of Lords.

For this to be effective we need your voice.

- You don't need to be an expert to take part in the lobby day. Everyone will be fully briefed, and guided through preparing for the day, attending the lobby, and follow-up actions.
- The lobby day is a nice way to meet like minded people who care about protecting our collective rights and campaigning for social and climate justice.

## Initial steps

- 1) Write to your MP and ask for a meeting with other constituents using our ready made [e-action](#).
- 2) Let us know when you get a response from your MP by completing this [online form](#) (even if a negative response). This is essential for our planning of the day.
- 3) Send a second chaser email to your MP if they haven't yet responded using our [e-action template here](#). You can also call their office to ask for a reply.
- 4) If you're in a PSC branch, then ask other branch members to also write to the local MP and to join you at the lobby day.
- 5) Join one of our online pre-lobby briefing sessions either on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 6-7pm, or on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 12.30 – 13.30. ZOOM LINK:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88293693835>

- 6) Read the [MP briefing document](#) and speaking notes ahead of your meeting.

Ideally you will join us in Westminster to meet with your MP on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March, but we understand it can be impractical to travel to London. An alternative option is to ask to meet with your MP in their constituency office, or even over Zoom, at a later date.

**If it is possible to join the main lobby day in London, then we would strongly encourage this. The more supporters in parliament on the day, the more visible our message is.**

If your MP doesn't respond to your meeting request, or say they are unavailable, then do still come to the Lobby Day. You can still leave a card for your MP to let them know you came, write them a personal letter, and help show support for Palestinians. You may find they are unexpectedly available or send a member of staff to meet you.

## Where to go on the day

**We would love to see you before you meet your MP!** Enter Parliament through the visitors' entrance, and PSC stewards will be around to help point you in the right direction.

Please come to Westminster Hall Room 3 (W3) to register for the day - at least an hour before your MP meeting is scheduled. W3 will be open for registrations between 11am and 5pm. There could be a long queue to get into Parliament, so it is advised to allow 30 minutes to make sure you get through security in time.

After registering, we will direct you on where to go for a final briefing with our experts, to meet fellow constituents lobbying your MP, and to collect your resource pack.

At the end of the day, you are invited to a concluding Lobby Day rally for all participants in Committee Room 11 from 5.30 – 6.30pm.

## Accessibility

The House of Commons has information online about accessibility issues:

[www.parliament.uk/visiting/access](http://www.parliament.uk/visiting/access)

All visitors are subject to a security scan and bag search when entering Parliament. Lobby Day stewards will be on hand to help you find your way, and Parliament's staff are also available to help.



The red dot marks the main visitors' entrance to the Palace of Westminster. The nearest tube is Westminster.

## Additional information

### Dress code

Believe it or not, people are often prevented from entering Parliament if they're wearing visible campaign slogans, or even carrying

Palestine flags. Please bear this in mind when getting ready to come.

### No posters or banners

The House of Commons will not allow posters or banners in Parliament.

### Refreshments

There is a public café within the secure area of Parliament, just off Westminster Hall where you can buy drinks, lunch or snacks. It is open until 5pm. You may want to bring supplies with you, particularly if you have a meeting later in the day.

## Meeting your MP

Whilst many MPs are supportive, others may know very little about the campaign, or even actively support the anti-boycott legislation.

Whatever the case, MPs have been elected to represent their constituents - so it's our job to inform and persuade them to protect the right to boycott.

You do not need to be an expert, but please do prepare by reading our MP briefing and Lobby Day talking points. We will also have experts on hand on the day itself for last-minute preparation and questions.

We ask that you come to registration at least an hour before your MP meeting – this is to allow time to meet with other constituents to coordinate who will say what.

The meeting with your MP will normally last about half an hour, but this can vary. Here is some guiding advice:

- Allocate someone in the meeting to take notes and complete the [online feedback form](#) afterwards.

- Select someone to introduce the group at the start and steer the direction of conversation. Thank the MP for meeting with you and ask how much time they have at the start.
- Each person to give a brief introduction of who they are (as well as any community groups they may represent).
- Allocate someone to outline the topic of the meeting, and people who wish to speak to the various talking points (see the additional document 'speaking notes for constituents').
- Ask your MP to state their position on the anti-boycott legislation – will they vote against it? Will they put out a public statement opposing it?
- Present a copy of the MP briefing paper before you leave, and offer to be able to send follow-up resources (we can provide this for you).
- Ask if you can take a photo of your meeting.
- Thank your MP for meeting with you, and let them know you'll be following the next steps of the bill in parliament.

You will have limited time in the meeting, so please stay focused on the topic at hand and key speaking points. Take time to listen to your MP's views – but do interrupt if they are taking up all the time.

Being aggressive is not an effective way to lobby – you can be forceful, but our aim is to persuade MPs into action through respectful dialogue. It is crucial that these meetings help advance PSC's relationship with MPs, rather than alienating them from working with us. Our Palestinian

partners rely on our positive contact with MPs when asking us to set up meetings for them.

## Our message

Please make sure to read these two additional documents ahead of the lobby day:

- MP briefing paper
- Speaking notes for constituents

We understand you may wish to talk to your MP about many things, but please refrain from doing so. You can set up another time with your MP to talk about other things separately! The focus of this lobby day is exclusively on opposing the anti-boycott legislation.

We are not asking MPs to support the BDS movement (though great if they do!), but rather to support the *right* of public bodies to use boycotts as a legitimate tool for political activism.

### The key asks of your MP are to:

- Vote against the bill.
- Speak with party colleagues about the dangers of the bill and why it should be opposed.
- Encourage contacts in the House of Lords to also oppose the bill.
- Campaign for their party to commit to reversing any anti-boycott legislation that is passed by this Parliament.

## After the meeting

Make sure someone from the meeting completes the [online feedback form](#). We'd also encourage you to come back to W Room 3 for a debriefing and to tell us how it went. Please also post a

photo of your lobby day meeting on social media  
if you can, using the hashtag #righttoboycott.

**And don't forget to join the evening Right  
To Boycott event in Committee room 11  
from 5.30pm – 6.30pm!**