

WHAT IS A HUSTINGS?

A hustings is a non partisan event bringing together electoral candidates in the run up to an election. It is an opportunity for voters to hear the views of politicians on a range of issues. It enables you, the voter, to raise the issues that matter most by asking a question during the event.

Hustings are often organised by a community group or several groups working together within an area. The easiest way to find out about a hustings near you is by searching the internet, you will also find information in local newspapers, libraries, communities centres or by asking the candidates directly.

Fancy organising a hustings? Read about Positive Money Bristol's event [here](#).

WHY SHOULD I GO TO HUSTINGS?

We don't often get the opportunity to directly address our political representatives. At a hustings you can ask a question and hear the response of your MP and their political rivals. With an election just around the corner, politicians are eager to connect with voters - they are likely to be listening more attentively than at other times in the election cycle!

As our [poll results](#) have shown, many politicians do not understand where money comes from and they are even less likely to have considered any alternatives to our current money system. As Zac Goldsmith MP highlighted during the Money Creation and Society debate in Parliament: "most people here would be humble enough to recognise that the banking wizardry we are discussing is such a complex issue that very few people properly understand it."

It is up to us to educate our politicians and raise awareness of the impact the money system has on society. Asking a well constructed question at a hustings is an effective way to do this.

Hustings provide us with an opportunity to:

1. Raise awareness of the Positive Money campaign
2. Educate politicians about the monetary system and the impact it has on inequality, housing and financial instability
3. Try to get a personal commitment on record
4. Make links with politicians and community groups

CONSTRUCTING A GOOD QUESTION

Asking a good question is not as easy as it sounds. Remember:

- **Keep it short** - monetary reform is a complex issue, you will never cover everything so stick to a single point.
- **Be polite and respectful** - It is easy to disregard a question if it is said in an aggressive or negative manner.
- **The audience matters** - even if the politicians ignore you or dodge the question remember that there is a whole room of potential Positive Money supporters in the audience. Frame your question in a way that will arouse the interest of other people in the room.
- **Be specific** - where possible try to have an actual question.

PREPARATION

Addressing a room of people can be nerve racking. Preparing your question and practicing saying it beforehand is the most surefire way to deliver it confidently.

Do some research about the current MP. Knowing about their voting record and interests will give you an idea of what reaction to expect and strengthen your response.

Have a look back at the 'Money Creation and Society' backbench debate that took place in November last year. You can find [footage and a transcript](#) of the debate on our website. It might be useful to have a couple of quotes and points raised during the debate on hand to show that there are MPs in Parliament already considering this issue.

WHAT WILL YOU ASK?

That is up to you - Below are a couple of questions to give you some inspiration.

*At the end of the backbench debate on Money Creation and Society in November of last year, politicians from both sides of the house called for a commission on money and credit. This debate followed a campaign by the organisation Positive Money who have been raising awareness that 97% of the money in our system is created by banks when they issue loans. This places huge amount of power into the hands of the bank whose lending decisions have in turn created huge problems for society. **Can all of the panel commit to supporting a commission on money and credit that will look at the role the current money system has had in creating an unstable financial system?***

*A poll of MPs conducted in the summer of last year showed that just over 1 in 10 MP accurately understood that banks create new money every time they make a loan, or that money is destroyed whenever individuals or businesses repay loans. Without an accurate understanding of where money comes from I am fearful MPs are ill-equipped to regulate the financial industry, prevent another financial crisis and deal with the most pressing issues facing us today. **Can the panel reassure me that they do understand how money is created and give their thoughts about whether the current money system is working for society or against it?***

DURING THE EVENT

Tweet about the experience and take a picture on the night. Remember to include the hashtag #sovereignmoney

AFTER THE EVENT

Tell us about it. We would love to hear what the event was like, how you found asking a question and what reaction you got from the panel. Email dora@positivemoney.org after the event.

Follow up with the politicians - if you got an interesting or positive response, write to the politician after the event and see if they will agree to meet with you. You might also want to follow up a frustrating response by directing them to the Positive Money website.

MORE INFORMATION:

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/105946/sp-hustings-rp-npc-ca.pdf

<http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/hustings/hustingsguide>

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/files/Hustings%20briefing%20web.pdf>