

# Regional Asylum Activism Briefing

## Effective Campaigning – Getting Started

Campaigning takes many forms, depending on who you want to influence and what you're trying to change. Luckily there's a whole box of tools at your disposal and many years of campaigning know-how out there for you to draw on...

Whether you are stepping up to play your part in supporting a national campaign, or you want to lead a local campaign, we hope you'll find this briefing useful. For support and information about current campaigns to defend the rights of people seeking asylum in the UK, and advice on approaches to effecting change in your local area, please contact your Regional Activism Co-ordinator (contact details below).

### What is Campaigning?

You might call it **influencing, voice, advocacy, raising awareness, fighting for rights, a cry for freedom, or campaigning...** But all these are about **how people achieve the change they want to see in the world.**

Even if you're new to campaigning and feel a complete novice, **you probably know more about campaigning than you think.** Just ask yourself these simple questions: *Which campaigns have you heard of? What made them effective?*

### Key elements of an effective campaign:

1. Identify what you want to change - your **AIM** – this involves understanding the wider environment and really getting to grips with the key issues
2. Identify the right **TARGET** – the body or individual who has the power to make that change
3. Identify a clear **ASK** – this can be more challenging than it sounds, particularly when you are trying to change policy
4. Identifying the most effective **FORM** for your action – what will get the attention of the power holder(s) and how will this persuade them to support you?
5. Identify the right **ALLIES** – which bodies or individuals does that decision maker listen to? Who can influence them?
6. Develop a campaign **STRATEGY** and apply **SMART\*** objectives – this involves deciding what success looks like and when you'll know you've achieved your aim
7. Construct your **narrative or story** and get it out there using the **MEDIA**
8. Take **ACTION**
9. Build and maintain **MOMENTUM**
10. **REFLECT and EVALUATE** the results – celebrate successes, learn from challenges and adapt your strategy accordingly

\*Here's what **SMART** stands for:

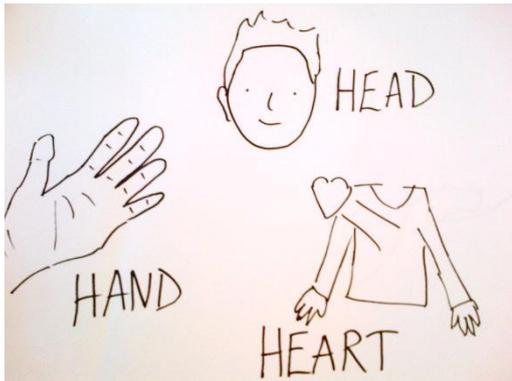
Specific  
Measurable  
Achievable  
Relevant  
Time-bound

## Striking the Right Balance

When you are really passionate about changing something it can be tempting to jump straight in, but it's worth taking the time to come up with a clear plan. Passion counts for a lot and can give you the power to mobilise and inspire others, but can also make it harder to see alternative ways of framing your message or communicating to people who don't see things the same way...

On the other hand - too little passion - and in particular, failure to give an inspiring narrative or story that connects emotionally with your target can leave you with dry arguments, facts and figures that fail to inspire and mobilise others to take action.

In an effective campaign, it's all about striking the right balance.



This can be summed up as the balance between:

**Head** thinking/ planning/ logic/ evidence/ rational arguments

**Heart** feeling/ creativity/ passion/ commitment/ emotional connection

**&**

**Hand** doing/ action

But remember, you do not have to be all things to all people: concentrate on what you do best. If you are naturally drawn to a particular activity or have skills in a particular area (writing articles, making banners, editing websites, tweeting, doing research, writing speeches, making films, etc) then it's likely that is what you can most usefully bring to a campaign. The trick is to make sure you collaborate with others who can bring different skills and perspectives to strengthen the campaign.

## Types of Campaign Actions/ Tools/ Tactics

The tools you use and the campaign actions you carry out can take many forms. We've divided these broadly into 'Influencing Decision Makers' and 'Creative Campaigning and Imaginative Stunts', but these approaches are by no means mutually exclusive.

Indeed, the team behind [Campaign Central](#) say if resources allow, it is a good idea to use a portfolio of tactics: *"Some might capture the imagination of some of your (potential) supporters but won't attract others. Most tactics will probably not have the desired impact on your target(s) but one or two might."*

*"Whatever range of tactics you use, integrate them into a coherent plan, so that you are not just being 'scattergun' in your approach. Think carefully about what tactics might work (and indeed which might backfire), be imaginative, and wherever possible try to actually enjoy it! Dedicated campaigners can burn themselves out if they're not careful, so it's important to make sure that your campaign activities are something that you and your supporters actually enjoy."*

Here are just a couple of examples of campaign tools:

- ★ Flashmobs
- ★ Public meetings/ debates
- ★ Petitions
- ★ Letter writing
- ★ Responding to consultations
- ★ Street stalls
- ★ Demonstrations
- ★ Street theatre
- ★ Radio interviews
- ★ Exhibitions
- ★ Marches
- ★ Publishing research/reports
- ★ Peaceful protest such as sit-ins and sleep-outs

## Want More Information?

Visit [Campaign Central](#) for advice and tips on:

- What is your vision?
- Mobilise support
- Influencing decision-makers
- Using the internet
- Funding your campaign
- Using the media
- Techniques, tools & tactics
- Quick campaign tips
- The law and campaigning

[NCVO](#) have some great resources, including short guides on:

- Campaigning in Collaboration
- Good Guide to Campaigning and Influencing
- Is Your Campaign Making a Difference?

For further information, please contact your Local Regional Asylum Activism Co-ordinator  
North West || **Estelle Worthington** || [northwest@regionalasylumactivism.org](mailto:northwest@regionalasylumactivism.org)  
Yorkshire and Humberside || **Lorna Gledhill** || [yandh@regionalasylumactivism.org](mailto:yandh@regionalasylumactivism.org)

