



HOUSE OF COMMONS

# **Social Media: Transformative tool or #whybother?**

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House of Commons Library

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# Why use social media?

1. Go where our citizens are





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# Why use social media?

1. Go where our citizens are
2. We want to connect
3. Drive traffic to other channels
4. It's just better at some things
5. What would people think if you didn't?



# #WhyBother?

1. So many channels



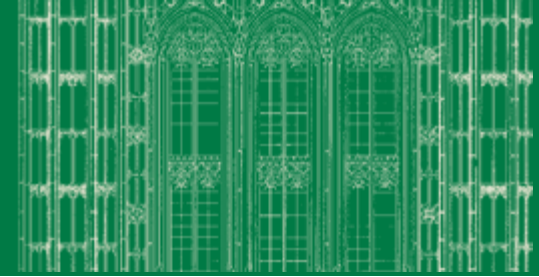


# #WhyBother?

1. So many channels
2. So much work







# #WhyBother?

1. So many channels
2. So much work
3. So many opinions





# #WhyBother?

1. So many channels
2. So much work
3. So many opinions
4. In addition to, not instead of...





# #WhyBother?

1. So many channels
2. So much work
3. So many opinions
4. In addition to, not instead of...
5. You'll never get as many views as Gangnam Style!



## Transformative tool – YES!

- Transforms how we engage with citizens and the hard-to-reach
- Provides ready-made resources for Members (and others) to use
- Provides access to authoritative information in a world of ‘fake news’
- Makes us think about our content and writing style
- Promotes political dialogue & informing citizens





## #whybother – sometimes?

- You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink
- Twittersphere is a world of opinions – be prepared to be challenged
- Tweet in haste, repent at leisure
- Difficult to measure impact
- Value for money – not always





## My questions to you are...

- How could social media transform my service?
- How would social media help my customers?





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**Thank you**

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**More information,  
resources &  
examples**







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# What have we learned from our experience?





## Lessons learned – 1

- Train staff
- Develop guidance / protocols / standards
- Be selective about the channels you use
- Look for opportunities to re-use, link & cross-promote content
- Co-ordinate messages across channels / teams



## Lessons learned – 2

- Be clear about what you want to achieve
- Post regularly
- Be authentic & authoritative, not too chatty
- Tailor your content to channel you are using
- Be relevant, interesting and shareable
- Avoid being formulaic; avoid jargon

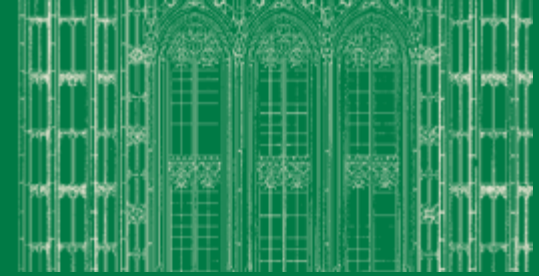


## Lessons learned – 3

- Get advice from others who understand the channels you use (potential partners)
- Use specialists in areas where you don't have expertise yourself
- Be prepared to experiment and learn from your failures



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# Practical Examples (1) – How does the UK Parliament use Social Media





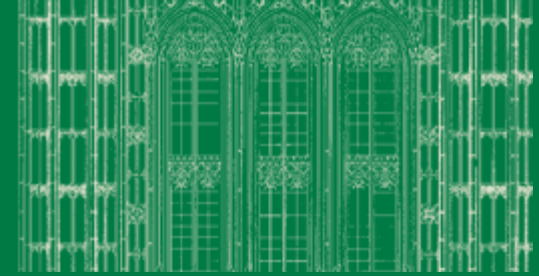
# Transformative tool or #whybother?

## You decide: UK Parliament

1.  <https://www.facebook.com/ukparliament/>
2.  <https://twitter.com/UKParliament>
3.  <https://www.youtube.com/UKParliament>
4.  <https://www.instagram.com/ukparliament>
5.  [https://www.flickr.com/photos/uk\\_parliament/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/uk_parliament/)
6.  <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/>
7.  [Digital Service Social Media Blog](#)



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## Practical Examples (2) – VOTE100 Anniversary





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VOTE100

1918

1928

1958

2018



## What is VOTE100?

2018 marks 100 years since the UK Parliament passed a law which allowed some women, and all men, to vote for the first time: the 1918 Representation of the People Act.

Throughout 2018 the UK Parliament is celebrating this important milestone in the UK's democratic history.

The digital element of VOTE100 is an important part of this as it enables us to engage with the citizens, students and the wider community.





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## Vote 100

2018 marks 100 years since Parliament passed a law which allowed the first women, and all men, to vote for the first time. Celebrate this milestone by getting involved with Vote 100. Lots of exciting activities are happening, including a major exhibition, talks and tours, plus events around the UK. Follow #Vote100 on Twitter to keep up to date.

### What is Vote 100?



It's 100 years since Parliament passed the Act which allowed some women, and all men, to vote for the first time. Find out how we're celebrating this and other milestones in the UK's democratic history.

### Your Story, Our History 2018



Explore how the UK Parliament's laws have changed the lives of women and continues to do so today through the stories of Sarian, Tobi, and Courtenay and Therese.

### EqualTeas



Register for EqualTeas, your opportunity to share, debate and celebrate our right to vote, over a cup of tea and slice of cake! It's a UK-wide celebration of our democratic equality, with tea parties taking place all over the

### Voice & Vote exhibition



Visit Westminster Hall between 27 June and 6 October 2018 and experience an amazing interactive exhibition covering the campaign for votes for women and the representation of women in the House of Commons and the

### Online learning



#### Beyond the Ballot: Women's Rights and Suffrage from 1866 to Today

Take this online course and explore the campaign for women's right to vote and its impact on women's rights.

# VOTE100 website

[www.parliament.uk/vote100](http://www.parliament.uk/vote100)



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VOTE100

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The website acts as a central hub for activities, resources & social media



– Promotes exhibition, events, talks & tours



– Resources for community activities



– Educational materials for teachers & students



– Links to social media channels



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#YourStory  
OurHistory

VOTE100

1918

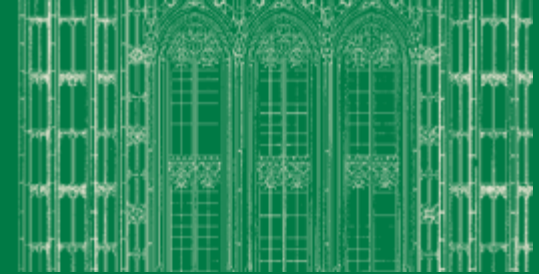
1928

1958

2018

YouTube videos featuring women who share their personal stories of how laws passed by Parliament have changed their lives for the better, with Twitter hashtag for the public to share their own stories.

<https://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/vote-100/your-story-our-history-2018/>



UK Parliament



@ukparliament

Home

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Posts

Notes

Community

Create a Page

Like Share ...



UK Parliament added 4 new photos.

19 June at 05:00 · 🌐

We've officially launched #EqualTeas.

Speaking at the EqualTeas launch event the Leader of the UK House of Commons, Andrea Leadsom MP said:

"EqualTeas is the perfect way to mark the Vote100 suffrage anniversary, by inspiring people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in our democracy. I hope everyone who participates in EqualTeas events this year channels the optimism, the hope and ambition of those suffragettes who met in tea rooms around the country 100 years ago... See more



Learn More

Send Message

Government organisation in London, United Kingdom

### Community

See all

367,138 people like this

364,479 people follow this

### About

See All

020 7219 3000

www.parliament.uk

Government organisation · Historical place

### People



367,138 likes

### Related Pages



UK Prime Minister Government organisation



Robert Downey Jr Artist



UK House of Commons Organisation

Parliament's Facebook page features posts and photos promoting events & activities along with #hashtags, and links back to the website and other social media channels.



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Parliament's Instagram channel also features photos and videos from VOTE100 events and encourages participants to post their own images.



ukparliament

Follow

609 posts

34.5k followers

98 following

UK Parliament We'd love to see your pictures of the Houses of Parliament. Share them by using #UKParliament.

[parliament.uk](http://parliament.uk)





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While Parliament's Twitter account re-uses the same photos and videos to promote events, publicise #hashtags, and drive traffic back to the main VOTE100 website for more information and resources that schools and communities can use themselves.



UK Parliament  
@UKParliament

Tweets  
16K

Following  
91

Followers  
1.39M

Likes  
698

Lists  
1



4 19 36



UK Parliament · Jun 18

Today is the start of #EqualTeas, celebrating 90 years since the passing of the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act.

Thousands of people across the UK are sharing, debating, and celebrating what democratic equality means to them. [EqualTeas.org.uk](http://EqualTeas.org.uk) #Vote100





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VOTE100

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## Strategy

All of Parliament's social media channels are used to cross-promote VOTE100 activities and events, encourage community engagement, share individual experiences, and drive traffic back to the website for more information and resources.



## Strategy

But at the same time it also promotes engagement with Parliament:

- Encouraging citizens to register to vote
- Explaining how citizens can contact their MP
- Public and school visits to Parliament
- Submitting evidence to Select Committees
- Stressing the importance of public debate in shaping government policy and legislation to the benefit of citizens and society

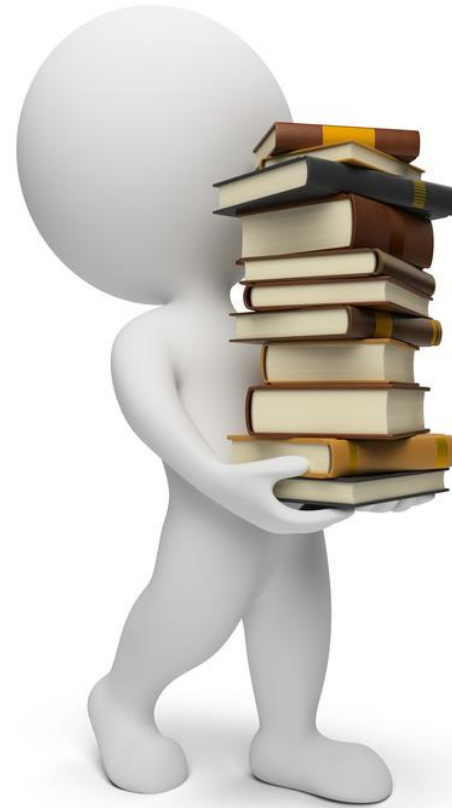




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## Other resources





# Transformative tool or #whybother?

## Some useful resources:

1.



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

[Social Media Guidelines for Parliaments](#)

2.



[World e-Parliament Report](#)

3.



[Open Government Partnership](#)

4.



[Speaker's Commission on Digital Democracy](#)