

# Peering in

An analysis of public and charity sector lobbying  
in the House of Lords

Esther  
Foreman

July 2012

F

# Foreword

---

Parliament is evolving. In a healthy democracy it needs to change as society changes. The communication revolution of the last decade is changing politics and media very rapidly and Parliament is struggling to keep up. Current attempts to reform the House of Lords are part of an attempt to catch up with a changing, more demanding, more connected electorate that wants more than an indirect relationship via the media.

This study is therefore extremely timely. The Lords do a good job despite the anachronistic composition of its membership. But as a chamber founded in the best traditions of British amateurism it is under strain.

For members of the Lords, the volume of electronic communications is overwhelming without any staff. Whilst some mobile technology and more expertise can help, most peers are not confident in using it.

This presents challenges for the public and lobbying organisations. We are dependent on hearing from these sources as we do not have constituents to inform us of the reality of their day to day lives. But we are not yet equipped to filter this information.

At the same time the public are starting to appreciate that the Lords is where law is changed. The Government majority in the Commons means that is where law is made but only in the Lords can Governments be defeated - and so it is where law is most often amended. As a consequence the public want to influence the work of Peers more and more. But public opinion doesn't want more salaried politicians or to have to fund more staff for politicians. This is a tough circle to square.

Esther's work provides an astute way forward, for now. It is an insight in how we can all make it work while we struggle for a more sustainable long term solution to Lords reform. I hope it is used and referenced by anyone who cares about the work of Parliament.

Lord Knight of Weymouth

# Foreword

---

The House of Lords is a revising chamber, having the discretion to spend as much time as it feels it needs debating and amending legislation it either originates or which it receives from the House of Commons. And whilst it lacks the teeth to completely deny legislation – the Commons can overturn or vote-out any changes it makes – this does not mean it is without relevance. Indeed, for a charity sector campaigning for fair and effective social and health policy on behalf of those who lack a voice, the House of Lords has never been more relevant.

The legacy of the last House of Lords reforms is a chamber with immense knowledge, talent and passion. Peers now bring to the legislative process world-leading expertise in a wide variety of important areas. And this matters for a revising chamber because they are able to deal with the sometimes minute and often complex detail just as much as the big picture.

But there is a problem. The House of Lords runs on a relative shoe-string. Where our MPs are backed up by a small industry of interns, administrators and researchers, the Lords is poorly resourced. Most members do not have administrative support. Even fewer have access to their own researchers. Instead they must rely on party briefings (for political appointments), briefings from the House of Lords Library and the information that they receive from outside.

As you will see in this research, the internet has had a massive impact on the volume of information coming from outside. And not all of it is positive. We have become much more immediate, issues-based and digitally connected and the rise of the online campaigning organisation has been an important development. But their campaigns run the risk of being little more than the digital equivalent of old-world postcard campaigns. They serve to raise the profile of the issue; to put it on the radar. But it is clear in this research that Peers are increasingly inundated with emails, tweets and Facebook comments without the concomitant increase in resources to manage it.

Peers need concise, positive input that cuts through the noise. This research shows that Peers respect charities and value what they think. It shows us that there is an opportunity for the charity sector to step into this information breach and provide clear, short, sharp and topical policy briefings for Peers on current legislation. I know from my own experience working with the House of Lords that this would be welcomed with open arms. Esther's research provides us with a clear roadmap for better policy intervention. It describes a way forward for the charity and campaigning sectors to work together to more effectively support, influence and inform the House of Lords.

Dr Andy Williamson FRSA FCMI MRSNZ

# Contents

---

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Foreword</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>1. Introduction</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| About the author  | 9         |
| <b>2. Methodology</b>   | <b>11</b> |
| <b>3. Brief Guide to the House of Lords</b>   | <b>15</b> |
| <b>4. Communicating with the House of Lords</b>                                       | <b>17</b> |
| 4.1 Correspondence  | 17        |
| 4.2 How often do Peers receive communication, from whom and how influential are they? | 18        |
| 4.3 Breadth of communication with the House of Lords                                  | 19        |
| <b>5. Themes from interviews</b>  | <b>25</b> |
| 5.1 The role of the House   | 25        |
| 5.2 Resources and public accountability   | 26        |
| 5.3 Communication and the charity sector  | 27        |
| 5.4 Making up minds and party politics  | 28        |
| 5.5 How effective are mass email campaigns?   | 30        |
| <b>6. Conclusion, recommendations and afterword</b>                                   | <b>33</b> |
| 6.1 Conclusion  | 33        |
| 6.2 Recommendations   | 34        |
| 6.3 Afterword   | 36        |
| Thank You   | 36        |
| Resources   | 37        |
| <b>Appendix 1: NGO Survey</b>   | <b>39</b> |

1

# 1. Introduction

---

“ *Democracy is not a static thing. It is an everlasting march.* ”  
 - *Franklin D. Roosevelt*

The campaigning landscape has changed significantly over the past 10 years as organisations have started to encourage members of the public to use online campaigning as a way of influencing power in the UK. Gone are the traditional ‘postcard to your MP’ campaigns; online campaigning has enabled more people to petition more decision-makers more often than ever before. Movements like 38 Degrees and Going to Work, and coalitions of social sector organisations, such as The Hardest Hit, the Disability Benefits Consortium (DBC) and Save Our NHS, have united and organised people in the public sphere around specific causes to effect change at a national policy level with a speed and pertinence previously unknown.

This was demonstrated most recently with campaigns around changes to the NHS in England, the welfare reform agenda and legal aid. Traditional campaigning organisations such as trade unions and charities have campaigned extensively around these reforms, using a mixture of campaigning and lobbying tactics. While the traditional targets of campaigns, such as MPs and local councillors, have been receiving higher numbers of campaigning correspondence from constituents, the past 12 months has also seen an increase in the number of people directly petitioning members of the House of Lords. Specific examples of this include the TUC ‘Adopt a Peer’ campaign, 38 Degrees’ and UK Uncut’s Save the NHS campaign.

However, unlike MPs and councillors, Peers have no constituency mandate, or legal obligation to respond to petitions, and limited administrative support to respond to correspondence. Only a minority of Peers consume or use social media (although this is changing) and unless they were previously a member of the House of Commons, few are used to being public targets for campaigners. Yet at the same time, the House of Lords has responsibility for scrutinising and revising draft legislation and for holding the Government of the day to account for its actions. While it has no power to veto legislation, it can delay and refer back to the Government and/or the House of Commons amendments to Bills.

The House of Lords has particularly come to forefront of public consciousness in the past 12 months, not just concerning the recent proposals on reform of the second chamber which has notably increased public interest in its’ work and its members (for example, see ‘Noble Ladies’, Observer, 13th May<sup>1</sup>). It has also seen extensive media coverage and public interest in three significant Bills, the Health and Social Care Bill, the Welfare Reform Bill and the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill, go through its chamber and in doing so generating an unprecedented amount of public campaigning. Yet, strikingly, a brief assessment of campaigning toolkits and handbooks from NCVO, Directory of Social Change, and Google searches reveal little guidance for campaigners about how to use the Lords as a vehicle for legislative change. Is the role of the House of Lords, historically an area for behind the scenes lobbying by the charity sector, ready to be escalated further into the public domain? And if so, is the charity sector ready for its traditional relationship to be redefined?

<sup>1</sup> See Noble Ladies, by Rachel Cooke, Observer, 13.05.12, The New Review

# 1. Introduction

---

A good campaigner should always measure whether their strategy and techniques have made an impact. They should also ask whether it is an effective use of resources, especially in a period of austerity. In the wake of recent events, I sought to ask Peers their views on being on the target of such tactics, and whether or not they considered it to be an effective method for campaigning. I also aimed to establish whether or not Peers perceived a difference between campaigning by members of the public, charity organisations and more recent online campaigning organisations. In some respects, this research is partly about using modern day communication methods in a historic institution, as well as an exploration about how, if and when members of the public can influence law-making in the House of Lords. The report also uncovers themes around issues-based campaigning, party politics and the amount of discordance between online campaigning organisations, third sector organisations and policy change. I believe there are lessons to be learnt for Peers, the third sector and online campaigning organisations, which could help the House of Lords be more able to respond to the changing dynamic of campaigning communication, while simultaneously helping organisations and individuals to grasp the power they have as citizens and use it as an effective lever of change.



---

## About the author



Esther Foreman is a social justice campaigner and social change agent. She has worked for over ten years in policy, public affairs and campaigns in the social sector on a variety of social justice issues, including learning disability, older people and homelessness. She is also trained as an Executive Leadership Coach and Consultant for the social enterprise and the campaigning sectors.

Esther was appointed as a 2011 Clore Social Fellow in October 2010, and will complete her active Fellowship in July 2012.

[www.cloresocialleadership.org.uk/esther\\_foreman](http://www.cloresocialleadership.org.uk/esther_foreman)

2

## 2. Methodology

---

This mixed-method research used a blend of qualitative and quantitative research methods, including desk research, semi-structured interviews with self-selecting Peers (1), a survey of NGO (third sector) organisational activity in the House of Lords (2) and desk research on campaign data from online campaigning organisations. (3)

1. Peer interviews took place between April-June, 2012 and consisted of the following: three Conservative, three Labour, one Liberal Democrat, one Crossbencher and one Lord Spiritual<sup>1</sup>:

Baroness Stowell of Beeston, Conservative  
 Baroness Stedman-Scott of Rolvenden, Conservative  
 Baroness Eaton of Cottingley, Conservative  
 Lord Clement-Jones of Clapham, Liberal Democrat  
 Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Labour  
 Baroness Thornton of Manningham, Labour  
 Lord Knight of Weymouth, Labour  
 Baroness Deech of Cumnor, crossbench  
 Justin Welby, Bishop of Durham

**Each interview was conducted with the understanding that their views are their own and are not representative of their party, and/or the Government.**

2. The online NGO survey (see Appendix 1 for breakdown of questions) was emailed in February/ March 2012 and lasted for a period of six weeks. It aimed to assess the actions, methods and rate at which NGOs had lobbied members of the House of Lords over the past 18 months. It was distributed through several networks, including the Disability Charities Consortium, the Care and Support Alliance, The Clore Social Leadership Programme, NFP Synergy, The Right Ethos and over my professional social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter.

In total twenty-one organisations completed the survey and while their responses remain anonymous, they can be broken down as follows:

- 18 Charities
- 1 civil organisation
- 1 social enterprise
- 1 community interest group

The income of the organisations who responded range from £100-£500, to £15.1 million- £25 million (Chart 1) and the number of supporters per organisation ranges from under 100 to over 100,000, (Chart 2).

## 2. Methodology

Chart 1: Organisations divided by income (Q.26)

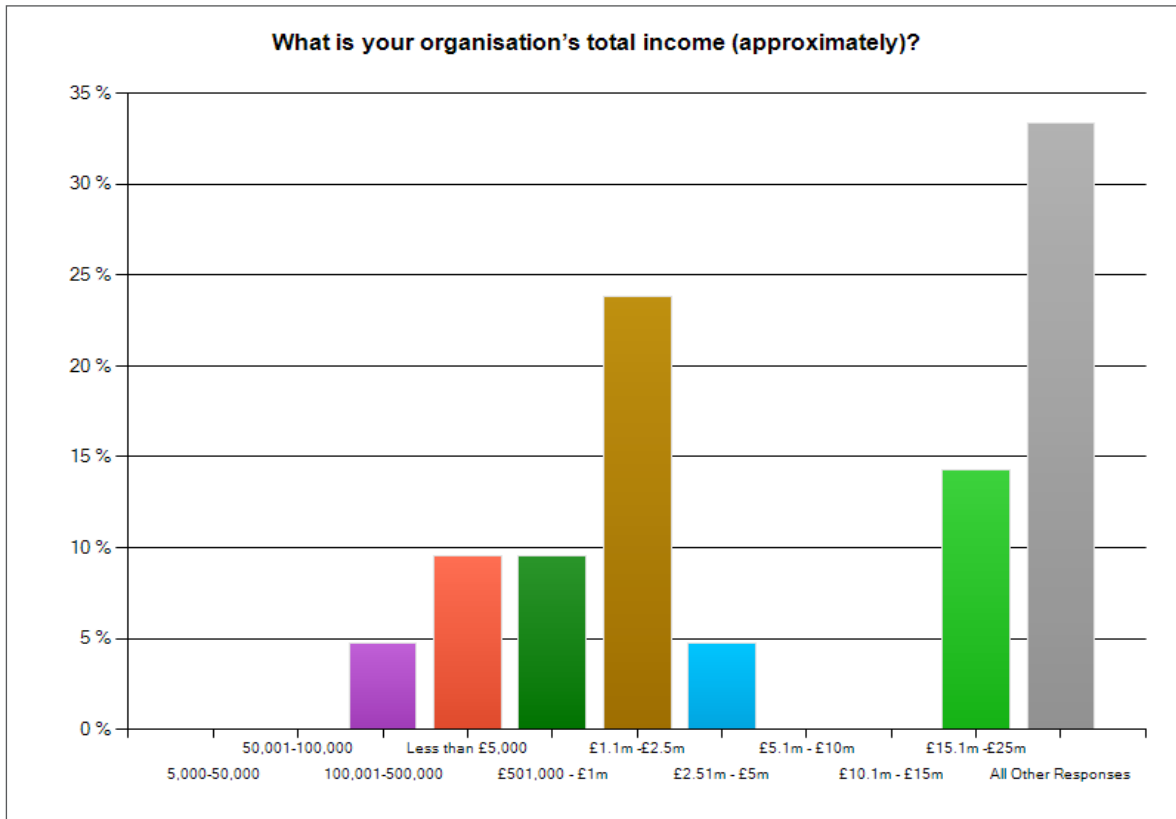
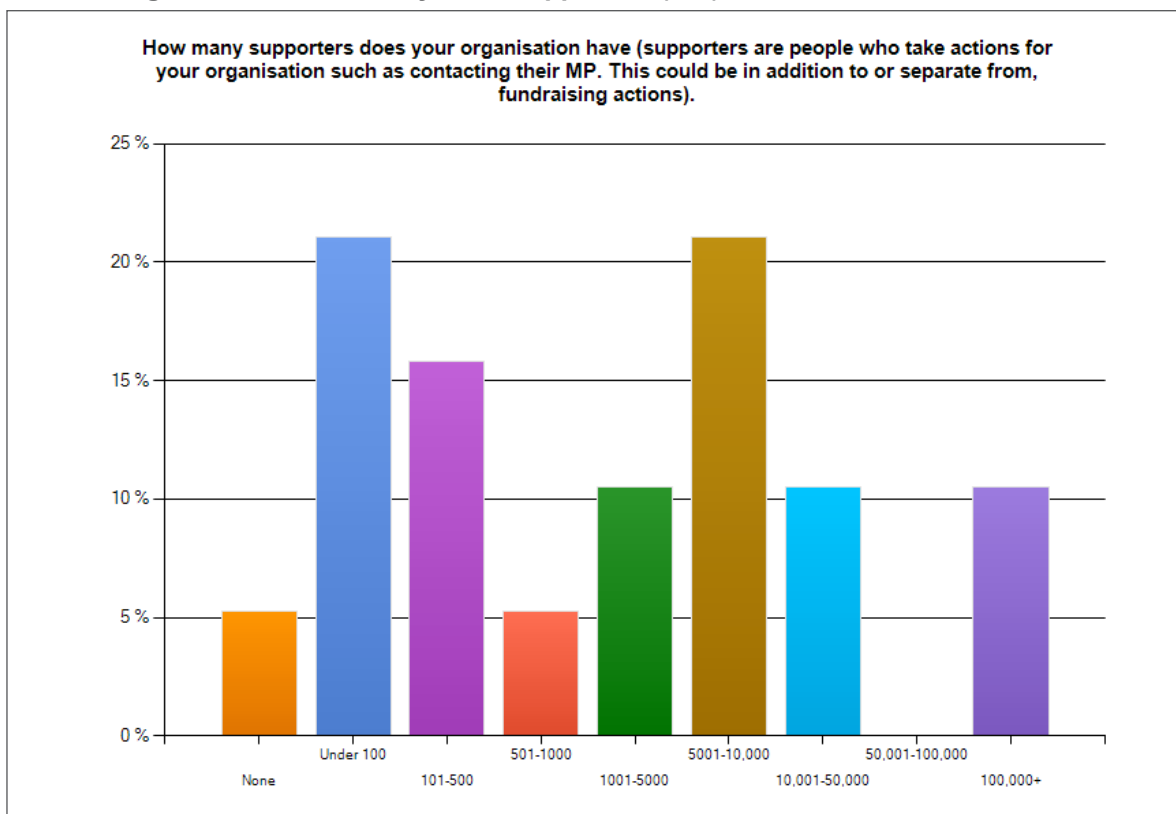


Chart 2: Organisations divided by no of supporters (Q.3)



Throughout the report a distinction is made between charities and online campaigning organisations. References to charities should be regarded as traditional NGOs who are registered as such by law. Typically they may run services for designated beneficiaries, as well as offering campaigning and advocacy, and information and advice. They receive funding from a variety of sources such as public donations, foundation and trusts, and Government and local authority contracts. Most charities will undertake online campaign activity, but often this is in conjunction with policy, research, media and public affairs activity.

Online campaigning organisations are mainly identified by the use of web-based tactics as their main activity to achieve social change. Usually they do not have a focus on a particular cause or beneficiary group, but aim to unite and organise members of the public online around an issue or a particular set of values. Although they may be registered as a charity, private company, social enterprise or community interest group, some may have no legal or organisational structure at all.

3. As part of the research for this report, access was provided to anonymous background data on campaigning activity from several online campaigning organisations in order to rate the intensity of campaigning activity by online campaigning organisations in 2011-12, and also nfpSynergy Charity Parliamentary Monitor data from Jan-June 2011, which is based on a quarterly survey of 50-100 Peers.

#### **A Quick Guide to: Online Campaigning Organisations / Movements**

##### **38 Degrees**

38 Degrees is the biggest online campaigning community in the UK, with over 1 million supporters. They aim to create a more progressive, fairer and better society and come together to decide which issues to campaign on and the actions they will take to help us achieve that. [www.38degrees.org.uk](http://www.38degrees.org.uk)

##### **UKUncut**

UK Uncut is a grassroots movement, which is organised online, but takes offline action to highlight alternatives to the Government's reductions in public spending. There are no members or Head Office, but they did encourage members of the public to email the House of Lords over the spending cuts in 2010-2011. [www.ukuncut.org.uk](http://www.ukuncut.org.uk)

##### **Going to Work and Adopt a Peer**

Going to Work is the online campaigning movement started by the TUC in 2010. It has thousands of members who regularly take action online. During the course of the Health and Social Care Bill in Parliament, it ran a campaign called 'Adopt-a-Peer' to help facilitate direct lobbying of members of the House of Lords by the public. Individuals could enter their details online and were randomly assigned a Peer to contact, with advice and support offered in terms of content and mailing. [www.goingtowork.org.uk/peers/](http://www.goingtowork.org.uk/peers/)

3

# 3. Brief Guide to the House of Lords

The House of Lords is the second, upper, chamber of the UK wide Parliament. It is independent from, and complements the work of, the elected House of Commons. The Lords shares the task of making and shaping laws and checking and challenging the work of the Government. Its members are largely appointed. Membership is broken down into Party, Life Peers, Excepted Hereditary Peers and Bishops. It has three main roles:

## 1. Making laws

Members spend almost half of the time in the House considering Bills (draft laws). All Bills have to be considered by both Houses of Parliament before they can become law. During several stages, members examine each Bill before it becomes an Act of Parliament (actual law).

## 2. In-depth consideration of public policy

Members use their extensive individual experience to debate public policy. Much of this work is undertaken in select committees which are small groups appointed to consider specific policy areas.

## 3. Holding Government to account

Members scrutinise the work of the Government during question time and debates in the chamber, where Government Ministers respond. In the 2010/2011 Parliamentary session, members held the government to account with 7,546 oral and written questions and debates on issues ranging from child poverty to immigration.

The traditional lack of a Government majority in the Lords, a more relaxed approach to party discipline and the fact that the House's procedures provides Peers with greater freedom to propose and debate amendments, means the Lords will often reach different conclusions on Bills, and agree amendments asking the Commons and the Government to reconsider matters.

The Lords spends around 60% of its time in the Chamber forming legislation (Bills and Statutory Instruments) and 40% scrutinising the Government (debates, questions and statements)<sup>3</sup>.

### A brief note on the Lords Spiritual

The Church of England comprises 44 dioceses, each led by a Bishop. The diocesan bishops of Canterbury and York are Archbishops, who also have oversight over their respective provinces. The occupants of the five “great sees”—Canterbury, York, London, Durham and Winchester—are always Spiritual Peers and Lords of Parliament. A limited number of 26 Church of England Archbishops and Bishops sit in the House, passing their membership on to the next most senior bishop when they retire. They are non-party affiliated, but are distinct from Crossbench Peers.

Membership of the Lords Table 1 <sup>4</sup>:

| Party                  | Life Peers | Excepted Hereditary Peers | Bishops   | Total      |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Conservative           | 166        | 48                        |           | 214        |
| Labour                 | 231        | 4                         |           | 235        |
| Liberal Democrat       | 8          | 4                         |           | 90         |
| Crossbench             | 154        | 32                        |           | 186        |
| Bishop/Lords Spiritual |            |                           | 25        | 25         |
| Other                  | 30         | 2                         |           | 32         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>667</b> | <b>90</b>                 | <b>25</b> | <b>782</b> |

<sup>3</sup> House of Lords Briefing: Role and Work of the House, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/lords/lords-by-type-and-party/>

4



# 4. Communicating with the House of Lords

---

## 4.1 Correspondence

The House of Lords was established around the 15th Century, and due to its archaic reputation some people may perceive that its communications have not modernised since then, however this would be misguided. The advent of social media has made a dramatic impact as to how we communicate, with the House of Lords with a small number of Peers also taking advantage of the opportunities it offers. In addition to a formal public outreach department in the House of Lords organises public facing engagement events, a Peers in School Programme and has started to increase its online presence, such as opening a Twitter account in September 2011. In terms of members of the House, there are now 56 peers and a few Lords Spiritual on Twitter - approximately 7% of the House (and rising all the time<sup>5</sup>). Twenty-five peers blog regularly on [lordsoftheblog.net](http://lordsoftheblog.net), a few have personal websites and blogs and two-thirds of Peers now have a '@parliament.uk' email address (although there is no measure on how often these are actually used or checked by Peers). Some of these are publicised on the House of Lords website and some Peers are also profiled on [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com) and [www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com) which facilitates correspondence between the public and the House.

In terms of submitting information to the House of Lords, the website suggests the most effective way is to contact a Peer is in writing. However, despite the increase in communication channels, contacting Peers is not always an easy or simple process. As part of this research, I started with a list of 50 peers I wanted to contact but could find details for only 30 of them. From this, only 50% of Peers responded - this could have been due to a number of reasons, but not checking a parliamentary email address on regular basis could well have been one of them.

<sup>5</sup>There were 20 more peers taking up Twitter over the course of my research.

# 4. Communicating with the House of Lords

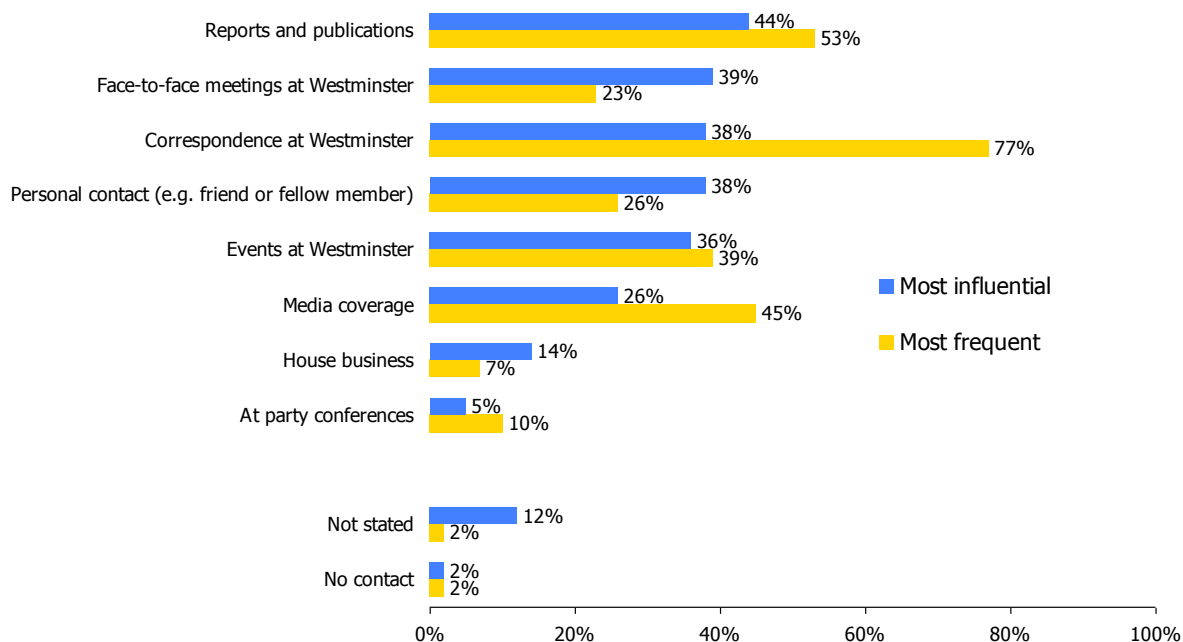
## 4.2 How often do Peers receive communication, from whom and how influential are they?

In June 2011, nfpSynergy Parliamentary Monitor reported on the most frequent form of contact from charities, public bodies or Government agencies for Peers and how they rated them as influential in helping to form an opinion. (Chart 3) Seventy-seven percent of Peers stated they receive most of their correspondence at Westminster (as opposed to a home or business addresses). From this 38% stated that it is the most influential form of communication, alongside personal contact and face-to-face meetings. However, these last two seem to be more infrequent, 26% and 32% respectively. From the same survey, 53% of Peers surveyed say that publications are the most frequent forms of correspondence, with 44% saying it was the most influential.

This would suggest that a savvy lobbying strategy would use a mixture of all four, publications, personal contact, face to face meetings and correspondence at Westminster, to communicate a message and the results from my NGO survey also indicates that many organisations are already aware of this; 70% of NGOs said they communicate with Peers often through email, and 90.5% will (often and sometimes) have face-to-face meetings. (Chart 6) Again, consistent with the nfpSynergy results, around 75% will have some regular communication by letter and 70% regular communication through other Peers. Interestingly, the use of social media is less common, with 95% never using Facebook to contact a Peer, 75% rarely or never using Twitter and only 5% sometimes using a website.

Chart 3

## Forms of contact with Peers: Most influential v. most frequent ways



"How do you come into contact with charities, public bodies or government agencies?"

Please tick the three most frequent ways and the three most influential ways (in helping you form an opinion of them) in which you come into contact with these."

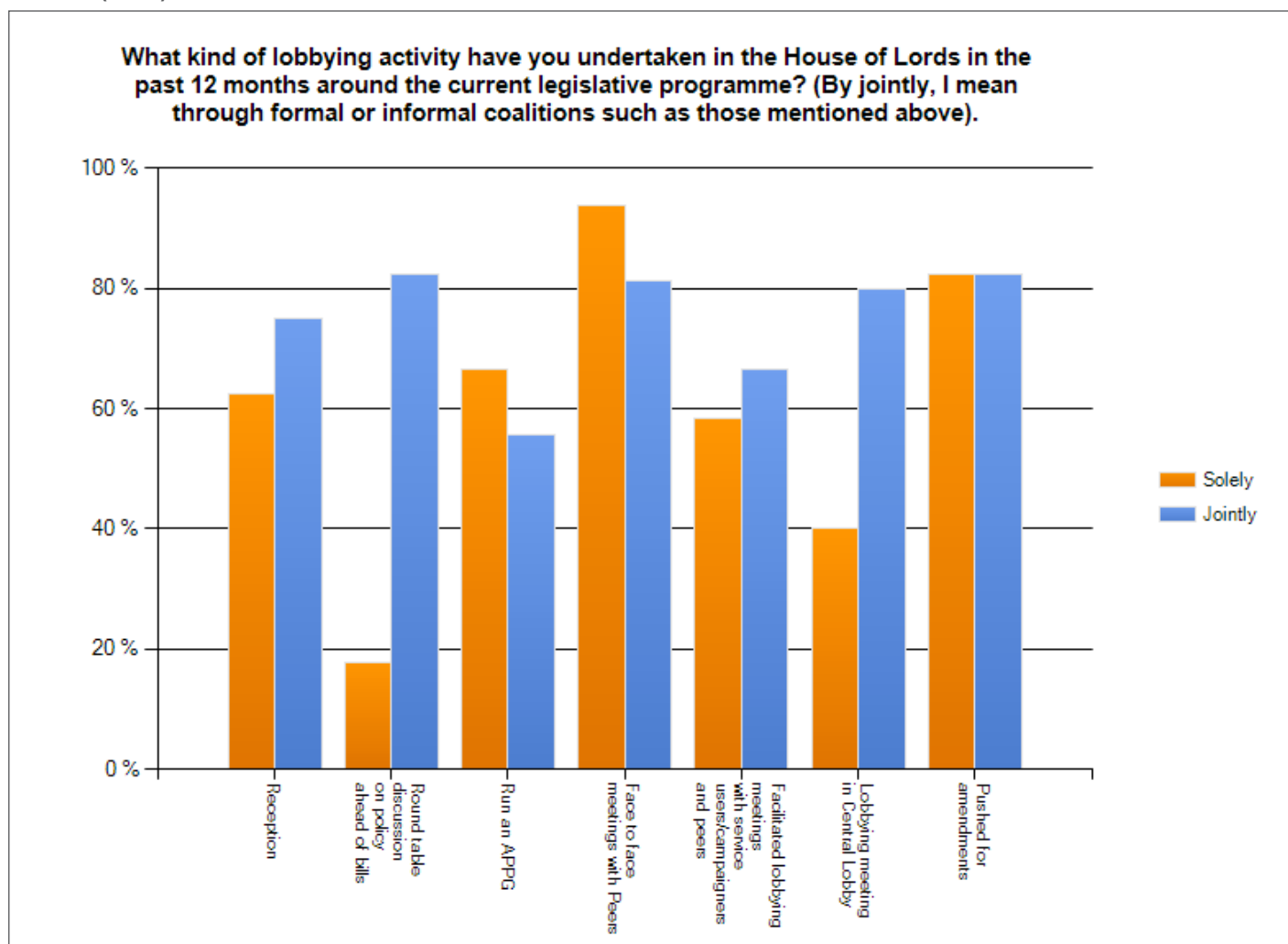
Base: 100 Peers, June 2011

Source: Charity Parliamentary Monitor, nfpSynergy

### 4.3 Breadth of communication with the House of Lords

As stated previously, with the introduction of three high-profile Bills in Parliament, charities have been particularly busy lobbying and campaigning in the past 18 months. (Chart 4) During the past year, according to the NGO survey, charities have taken part in a range of lobbying and campaigning activities connected with the House of Lords. Three-quarters have held a joint reception, 93.8 % have held face to face meetings, and 80% have jointly conducted lobbying meetings in Parliament. Considering the interest in the Bills going through, the fact that 82.4% pushed for amendments seems quite understandable.

Chart 4 (Q.12)

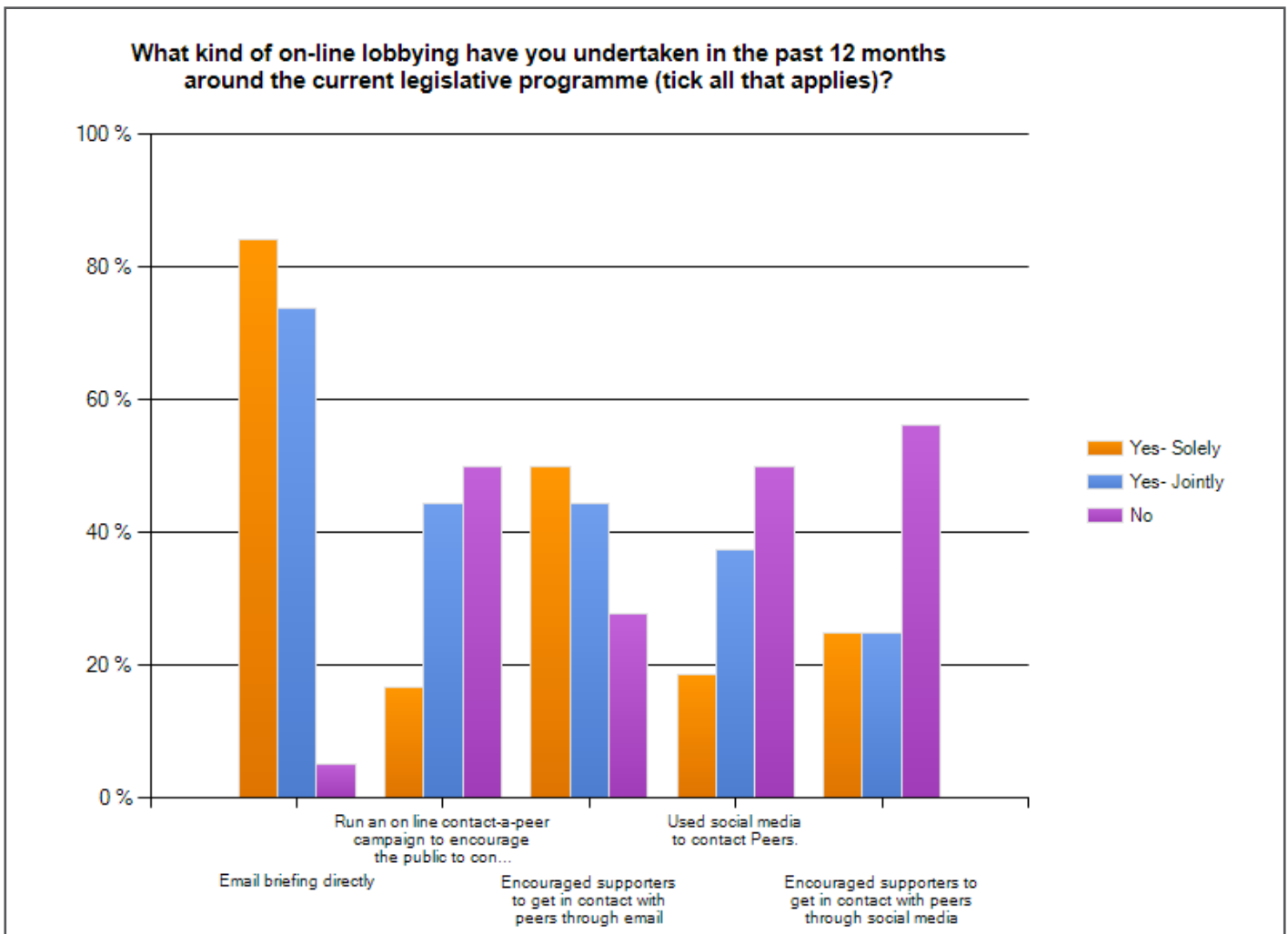


# 4. Communicating with the House of Lords

In terms of online communication, respondents generally seem to use a good range of online media to contact Peers (Chart 5). This includes 84.2% who emailed Peers directly with briefings around a specific Bill, and 20% who used social media to connect with Peers. In terms of mobilising their supporters to do likewise, 50% organised public campaigns to encourage their supporters to contact Peers through email and 44% did so jointly within a coalition (bear in mind that 94.8% of respondents have supporters who regularly take action for their organisation). Just under 50% encouraged their supporters to make contact with Peers through social media.

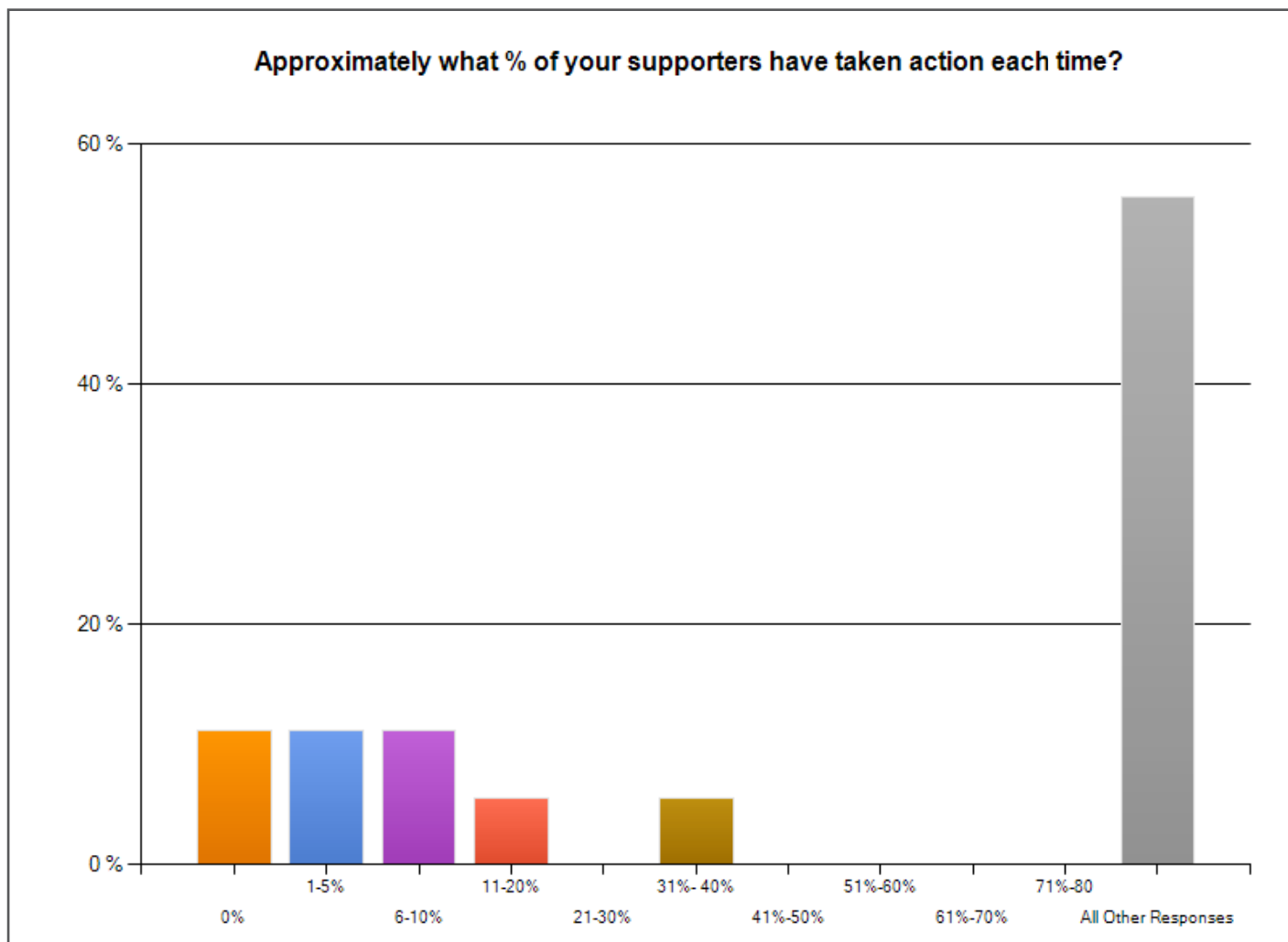
In terms of frequency, in the last 12 months, 9.5% of respondents have asked supporters to contact Peers between six and fifteen times and 43% asked supporters to contact Peers between one and five times. This means there has been at least one facilitated supporter action per month to the House of Lords at the lowest time of frequency, with over 14 organisations taking action per month at the highest level of frequency.

Chart 5 (Q.13)



It is notable that almost 60% of respondents to the survey did not know what percentage of their supporters had taken any action, if at all. (Chart 6) Whilst this could partly be because it was mainly Public Affairs team members who completed the survey rather than people from the communications or web teams, it could also be as a consequence of the respective organisations not holding this data. As will be developed later in this report, the disconnect between social media and public affairs does not help an organisation to undertake lobbying as effectively as it could do, for their stakeholders.

Chart 6 (Q.15)



# 4. Communicating with the House of Lords

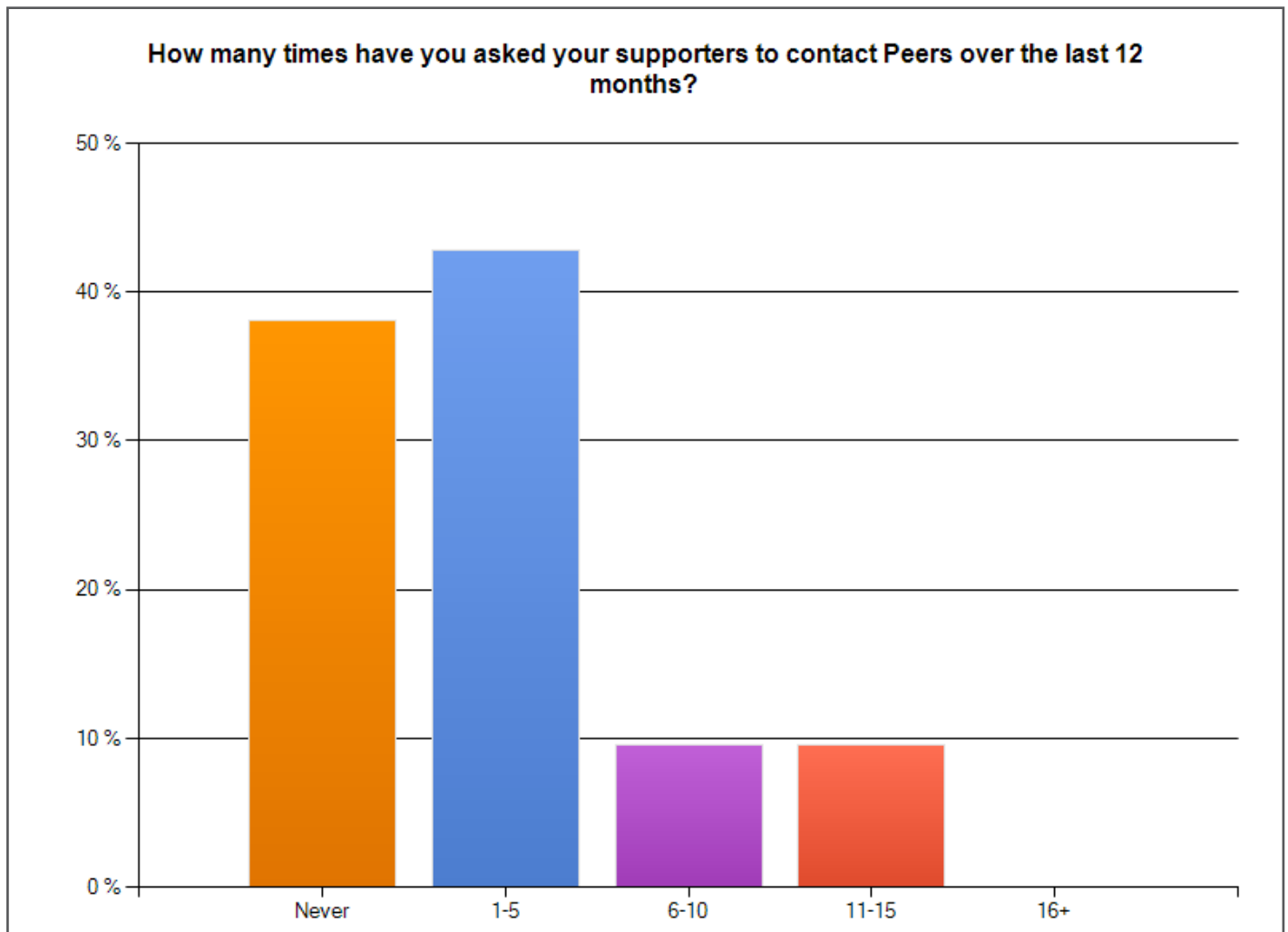
While the numbers may not appear to be significant, when amplified by the numbers of supporters who have taken action each time, (Chart 7) there is clearly a considerable amount of email traffic flowing into Peers' in-boxes facilitated by the charity sector. For example, one particularly prolific voluntary organisation has a supporter base of around 5,000 and has taken up to five actions in the past year resulting in a 31-40% action response rate on each occasion. Another organisation with 100,000 supporters who requested they contact Peers between six and ten occasions in the past 12 months, resulted in an 11-20% action rate, or the possibility of up to 200,000 emails.

Although the names of the Peers targeted have not been collated for the purposes of this research, it can reasonably be assumed that as some organisations

were lobbying on the same Bills, it could mean there would be a crossover of targets in the House of Lords.

There is nothing unusual about these lobbying efforts by the charity sector in the past 12 months but these figures reveal an intense period in terms of both the frequency and reach of digital communication from the charity sector to the House of Lords. It suggests an intensity and an unprecedented scale and speed of communication, the likes of which the House of Lords has not previously seen. What impact did the scale of communication have? Did it make a difference to the way Peers considered an issue? Did it influence or even change the way they voted? Did Peers draw a distinction between an email from a charity as opposed to one from a member of the public?

Chart 7 (Q.14)





5



# 5. Themes from interviews

---

## 5.1 The role of the House

During the interviews, Peers referred many times to their role in the House of Lords, and to the role of the House in general - to scrutinise legislation and to hold the Government to account. This is made possible by two things, first the very high level of expertise and specialism in different areas (interviewees spanned social mobilisation, education, railways, health and communication for example), and, secondly, as experts in their respective fields, most Peers exhibit a curiosity, and willingness, to seek new knowledge in areas where they may have limited knowledge in order to better informed about the decisions they are making.

*'It doesn't matter what the subject is. In the House of Lords there will almost certainly be a world expert involved in the debate.'* - Bishop Welby, Bishop of Durham

In general, Peers are very active people, with several professional or voluntary sector commitments at the same time. Most of the Peers interviewed for this research, held leadership roles outside or inside the House; some held ministerial or shadow ministerial positions. Some were Chief Executives or trustees of charities; one was also a local councillor and others were senior members of commercial businesses. All had family commitments and most lived outside of London. Contrary to popular opinion and unlike MPs, most Peers have very little, if any, administrative support, access to researchers or diary managers and with Crossbenchers this is even less so.

It is apparent that lobbying and campaigning in the Lords takes place against a background of stark, practical and hands-on experience on the part of Peers. With this in mind, there were a number of recurrent themes that emerged during the interviews around campaigning, regardless of where Peers sat on the political spectrum. Being aware of these themes and the implications of them will inform and allow charities and online campaigners to finesse their techniques and approaches.

These themes are as follows:

- 5.2 Resources and public accountability
- 5.3 Communication and the charity sector
- 5.3 Making up minds and party politics
- 5.4 Experiencing mass email campaigns

# 5. Themes from interviews

## 5.2 Resources and public accountability

It is important when discussing the work of the House of Lords to make reference to the lack of overall resources available to individual Peers. This dramatically informs and colours the way communication is handled in and out of the House. In contrast to MPs, Peers receive very little funding for administrative support or to undertake research to support their work. Only Government Ministers have resources and these are to support their respective portfolios. Party-aligned members do have access to their party's central information systems, policy briefings and daily press cuttings. Crossbench peers have little or no resources and the Lords Spiritual have two administrative assistants for all 26 Lords. Peers are able to call on the House of Lords Library to undertake research and produce briefing papers but once again resources are limited.

To what extent is this an issue? The fact that was referred to during every interview conducted for this research means that it is a strong consideration for Peers. Furthermore there is a risk that this issue will get significantly worse if public campaigning in the House of Lords continues to increase at the present rate. As referred to in parts 3 and 4, the House of Lords is a busy place and Peers are, on a very practical level, often overwhelmed by the volume of communication they receive and want to respond to. There is a dilemma here which needs to be resolved. All of the Peers interviewed for this research welcomed the increase in the public's profile of the House of Lords, but they were concerned about their ability to deal with the increase in communication this brings.

*'So the good thing at the moment is that the public felt they would get a response from the Lords. The bad side to it is we have no secretaries.'* - Baroness Deech, crossbench

*'I don't think there must be anyone in the country that could assume we could either all have every kind of IT skill and run our own office, and do our own correspondence, and manage our own diaries and be everywhere on time and do briefing packs, pull them off the printer and put them all in order for the week. It's a complete nightmare really.'* - Baroness Eaton, Conservative.

*'We have no secretarial help, we do it all ourselves.'* - Lord Faulkner, Labour.

All Peers interviewed expressed a huge time commitment and a desire to be in many places at the same time.

*'I had something on the third reading of the Legal Aid Bill that arrived at 2pm on the same day, saying, 'If you care about justice, you will vote against the third reading of the legal aid Bill in the House today.' Well, I was up in Durham, I couldn't have got there in time anyway.'* - Bishop Welby, Bishop of Durham.

The increase in emails has received a mixed reaction from Peers, many of whom struggle to deal with the administrative burden they encounter. Some of the Peers interviewed for this research stated they delete many emails without reading them, and some still take the time to draft a response personally to every single email they receive, although this was usually Peers who had been in the House for the shortest period of time.

To a certain extent, this is a staffing and resources issue for the parties and the House of Lords authorities to resolve. However, it cannot be done so, without there being significant resource implications and there is no likelihood that funding for the administration of Parliament will be substantially increased in the immediate future. Those issue appears unlikely to be resolved other than through the processes of House of Lords reform. Opportunities could be developed to ensure the wider use of technology and social media to help Peers deal with their workload. However, there are also implications for those trying to communicate with Peers. Understanding the context in which correspondence is received and adjusting accordingly would increase the likelihood of it being seen and responded to appropriately.

The use of Twitter and Facebook as a prompt to ensure emails are read seems to be effective. I used it myself successfully several times to nudge a response from a Peer to an email request for an interview. In the charity survey, a number of organisations said they used Twitter to generate a response from @LabourLords. Most of the Peers interviewed for this research who use social media tools such as Twitter seemed to accept it as a form of communication.

### 5.3 Communication and the charity sector

There were noticeable levels of concern from Peers about not being able to respond properly but this was about more than just a lack of sufficient administrative support. When pressed, many of the Peers said that while they understood that having increased exposure in the public sphere meant they were more likely to have more communications of all types, they also felt a great sense of responsibility towards the public, including responding to any communication received.

*'I have always felt accountable to the Public, I have never had any doubt about that. I have always regarded my mandate as one which is about being a Labour peer and the values of that, giving voices to people who don't have voices, so there is an accountability to listen to what people say, and to use stakeholders.'* - Baroness Thornton, Labour.

*"Obviously it's a different form of accountability from being an MP, but I think you've still got to go and justify your presence, that you're actually contributing something. If there is an issue which crops up that I think the public cares about, and I care about too, then I'll go out to bat."* - Lord Knight, Labour.

From the interviews conducted for this research, it is clear that Peers genuinely understand and want to receive information and correspondence from the Public. Most Peers in the absence of their own researchers, policy officers and administrative support, relied on such correspondence as a key source of information on how policies and legislation will affect the general public or stakeholders. Such interaction acts as a 'nudge', encouraging them to pay attention to various and sometimes specialist areas of legislation. This is in addition to the briefings available in the House of Lords Library, conversations with other Peers and contributions in the House, which act as other sources of knowledge.

It is as important to understand how Peers come to a decision about a policy area as it is to understand how to communicate with them. Not all Peers are as fortunate as the Bishop of Durham, who is physically present in a vast diocese, covering 243 parishes with whom he engages on a regular basis. Most of the Peers interviewed for this research, rely on the briefings that people and organisations send through, to help them consider policy areas. But organisations must realise they will not penetrate that crowded space on

brand capital alone. Just like anyone else considering expertise in a particular area, particularly when they lack time and resources, Peers place a high value on short, accessible, pithy, measured and informative briefings.

*'I think certainly briefings have a big impact, and certainly where there's an element of balance and thoughtfulness about them. You get some fairly hysterical briefings and inevitably they put you off.'* - Bishop Welby of Durham

So what does the communication Peers receive look like? All Peers interviewed for this research receive a variety of campaigning correspondence including, letters, email communication, tweets, Facebook 'likes', faxes, and LinkedIn requests. However, it was email correspondence that generated the most animated of responses. This is less than surprising because often Peers considered the content to be poorly drafted, ill thought out, illegible, inaccurate and sometimes impolite. While most Peers are capable of adopting an indifference to such approaches, there is a risk that it may alienate them from the message. This is particularly important issue, as few Peers, made a distinction between who sent the emails concerned, whether it was charities, members of the public or lobby groups. What seems to matter is the message and not just the sender.

*'I'm more likely to look at the validity of the argument than the organisation who sent it.'* - Lord Faulkner, Labour.

Fortunately the charity sector has a great deal of experience and discipline when lobbying the Lords. As the survey shows, most charities have trained public affairs teams and this appears to make a difference in the calibre of communication to the Lords.

The charity sector - which also includes the traditional voluntary sector - is held in high regard by every single Peer interviewed for this research. Many Peers have some formal engagement with the sector either as a Trustee or as a Chief Executive for example. Many Peers described it as an essential and reliable way to keep in touch and up to date with the issues facing many of the people the charities represent and support. More than one Peer describes it as their "eyes and ears" outside of the House.

## 5. Themes from interviews

*'I can guarantee that if I have a question down on the agenda, on any issue, the organisation that's passionate about the issue will send me an email telling me what they think I should say. That's important in here, because actually that's the only resource and the only way we can inform ourselves.'* - Baroness Thornton, Labour.

In this respect, the level of trust and credibility between Peers and the charity sector around policy briefings seems to be relatively high. This is reflected in the way Peers utilise charity briefings traditionally sent out from public affairs teams. (See chart 4 page 19).

All of the Peers interviewed for the research reported that they would be willing to meet and listen to a charity that wanted to engage with them on a particular issue. Most Peers had attended at least one charity-led briefing session at some point, all had been in a meeting with one, and all reported finding the briefings sent through on a particular piece of legislation useful. There appears to be a consensus and appetite for well-written and thought out briefings sent out by the charity sector. Some Peers even requested that briefings should be succinct, consist of no more than two pages and in a bullet point format.

*'When I was a back-bencher, on the Government benches, I was involved in all the children's legislation, I would listen very carefully to what Action for Children, Barnardo's, NSPCC etc would have to say about things. They would often inform me about what I wanted to do, and quite often I would join forces with another backbencher to try and get legislation amended.'* - Baroness Thornton, Labour.

During the interviews it became clear that the charity sector was considered to be more trustworthy than other sources of information, with most Peers referring to a charity's authenticity and its view of its stakeholders. However, some Peers stated they had reservations about perceived vested interests, particularly when charities lobby on issues where they may lose out on funding as a consequence of Government policy.

*'When NGOs, the charities, lobby, I've got no doubt that they are sincere about the individuals and saying that these are the impacts of what's being proposed... but underneath, I always think, if this happens, then that organisation's going to get less money too.'* – Baroness Stedman-Scott, Conservative.

Peers regard case studies and first-hand knowledge of an area as giving briefings their authenticity and credibility. Although as discussed this is more prominent in the charity sector, some Peers made reference to well received knowledgeable correspondence from GPs around the Health Bill, which contained references to first-hand experience and what they considered to be well-thought out perspectives. This reaffirms the point made previously that it is not necessarily who issues a briefing/email but how the content is presented. This research shows that if an organisation wants a Peer to take on board the point made in a briefing, it should be clearly written, concise, based on fact, credible and polite in its tone.

### 5.4 Making up minds and party politics

As one of the key roles of the House of Lords is to challenge and check Government decisions and to probe its activity, most Peers - unless they are Ministers or Party Whips – consider they have a great deal of latitude to question and vote with their own conscience. In this respect there are as many views and opinions as there are Peers. However, it is impossible to underestimate the influence of the party standpoint and it is clear from the views of Peers affiliated to parties, that the impact of the party line was strongly felt. Most Peers aim to remain loyal to their parties and said that they were unlikely to form a policy position that would be inconsistent with their party's stance on an issue<sup>6</sup>.

*'Where a big important party line lies, I'll try to deliver the party position. Where it's marginal as to the political importance, I'll go with whatever I think.'* - Lord Knight, Labour.

*'My party put me here and I am obliged and loyal to its' policies... except where I think they haven't thought it through properly.'* - Lord Clement Jones, Lib Dem.

Given the strong link between the Party Whips and Peers, albeit one which may be less intense than it is for MPs, the role of the 154 Crossbench Peers becomes increasingly important with regards to lobbying.

Being able to influence this group can potentially make a difference to the overall majority in a vote. However, as Crossbenchers are by definition not aligned to any of the major parties, this presents a challenge for lobbyists and campaigners, as they are organised differently as a group and are more likely to express an independent point of view, as they are not constrained by the Party Whips.

As Baroness Deech eloquently said, *'We can therefore listen and vote as our conscience tells us we should.'*

The importance as to the role of Crossbenchers was also highlighted by Baroness Thornton who said in relation to the NHS and Social Care Bill:

*'Unison and UNITE had both realised that the only way to win anything in this place was to get the Crossbenchers engaged with it. Because of the balance of the House, the only people who can change that political situations are the Crossbenchers, and the issues that the Crossbenchers are interested in are not the sharp political issues.'* - Baroness Thornton, Labour.

This view correlates strongly with the charity survey finding whereby 43% of respondents said that Crossbench Peers were more likely to be engaged with than politically appointed Peers. None of the respondents to the survey felt that politically appointed Peers were more responsive than Crossbenchers. (Q18).

The Lords Spiritual also fall into this category as they sit in the House as individuals, not ex officio for the Church of England, so do not as such have a party line to follow. Interestingly, voting records often show the Bishops voting in opposite ways.

However, the presence of party politics in the House of Lords does not mean there are a lack of opportunities to try and influence Peers affiliated to a particular Party. In conjunction with the briefings mentioned previously, Peers are often other Peers' best assets. Traditionally there has been a more collegiate and collaborative culture in the Lords than in the Commons. The level of specialist expertise in the Lords (and also because of the often very small offices), Peers will often work closely together, regardless of party or political position, to share expertise around a Bill.

*'We just get on with it, and we help each other, and it's fantastic. We all bring different expertise to each other.'* - Baroness Eaton, Conservative.

*'We do discuss things among ourselves, and we will have the occasional meeting.. and we do bump into each other in the Bishops' Robing Room and ask each other... 'What do you think about such-and-such, which way are you going to vote?'* - Bishop Welby, Bishop of Durham.

*'I picked up the real key issues that people were raising, three or four, and I went and found people I respected in the house from all parties, and I asked them how they were feeling about how they were responding, and they were very candid with me, and it helped me come to a position about what I would do in terms of voting.'* - Baroness Stedman-Scott, Conservative

From the interviews conducted for this research it can be concluded in general that Peers often choose which Bills they will become involved with, on the basis of personal interest, expertise and experience.

*'What I do, I do for causes for which I have a particular empathy, like the theatre, or the football club or the hospices.'* - Lord Faulkner, Labour

*'As a minister, your mind is made up for you. You don't have any choice about what you work on in terms of Bills. As a backbencher, there's a mix of constituency interest and policy interest. Here [in the House of Lords] there is a little bit of just acquired policy interest, but that largely is what informs your expertise. This is a House where you can't really get away with bullshit so you have to know something about it.'* - Lord Knight, Labour.

This is where knowledge is the key currency for influence, based upon more than just well-thought-out policy briefings. The way in which information is targeted to Peers also matters too. If it is recognised that Peers form some of their opinions through evidence, networks and colleagues, then mapping targets accordingly will help to spread a message in a very strong and effective way. It may also encourage Peers to be more inquisitive about the impact of certain parts of a Bill, to an extent they may not previously have done so.

<sup>6</sup> This is confirmed by research by Unlock Democracy which states that between 2001-2010, party-affiliated Lords had lower rebellion rates against the Government than MPs.

## 5. Themes from interviews

### 5.5 How effective are mass email campaigns?

The differentiation between the charity sector, campaigning organisations and the public appears to become more blurred in relation to online communication. Few of the Peers interviewed for this research could specifically name any particular organisation which had facilitated email campaigns or even any of the names of campaigns. This is despite the fact that all but two of the Peers interviewed for this research had been the target of an online campaign in the past 18 months around one or more Bills.

Only one of the Peers made a comparison with the postcard campaigns from pre-internet days, and many stated that this was the first time any Peers had been the target of such intense lobbying. However, the Peers expressed a plurality of views as to the effectiveness of this new technique in terms of political campaigning.

*'There was such a shock to Peers in this place when 38 Degrees launched their first onslaught online here, Peers had never, ever been lobbied in that way before. Never.'* - Baroness Thornton, Labour.

There were a number of reasons Peers offered as to why mass emails were not considered to be effective, of which the quality of the content of the emails was the principal factor.

*'I don't respond when it is very obviously a complete round-robin approach and there are obviously hundreds of thousands of people who have had this identical letter. They do seem to be counterproductive. I don't think they are very effective.'* - Lord Faulkner, Labour.

*'One the one hand you say, well, a lot of people are very worried. On the other hand, sometimes you stop and think, hmmm... there are 50 million people out there, and I've had a few hundred emails and I cannot begin to tell you how many were identical'.'* - Baroness Deech, Crossbench.

*'I'm sure that volume and the sheer scale of it waters down the impact but then we live in a democracy, you can't stop people or organisations doing it.'* - Baroness Stedman-Scott, Conservative.

Other reasons cited by Peers included tone, background knowledge, and inaccurate information.

*'It was a mass mailing, and the thing went on for about three pages. And it was ranting. So I just thought, 'Oh, phooey'. I'm not going to pay any attention. I just read two paragraphs and deleted it. That's extremely bad form, too late, unreasonable, long and manipulative.'* - Bishop Welby, Bishop of Durham

*'Over and over again, I got these identical ones, and they were extremely rude. I'm not saying the Lords should be special, but some of them are like, 'How can you sleep at night?''* - Baroness Deech, Crossbench.

There was some level of inconsistency as to whether or not these communications helped to change perspectives on a said policy position. Without the policy content or evidence that Peers believe they require in order for them to form an opinion, what role does mass communication have in campaigns? None of the Peers interviewed for this research said that email campaigns on their own had helped to change their views about an issue.

What is important is that all of the Peers interviewed acknowledged that, despite any inconvenience caused by email campaigns, they serve a useful purpose in bringing issues to their attention.

*'Had I not got so many, I still would have spoken to people [about the Health & Social Care Bill] but there is no doubt the emails helped.'* - Baroness Stedman-Scott, Conservative.

*'The value of it is they alert you to a particular amendment. You think, I'd better study that.'* - Baroness Deech, Crossbench.

To some extent the response by Peers to mass email communications is understandable. For many years Peers have been largely under the public's radar in terms of political engagement and interaction. This is a new terrain for many Peers, leading to a change in working habits, but without sufficient resources and support to do so.

*"I think the last time the House of Lords was being battered by members of the public was over the Hunting Bill. We were receiving hundreds and hundreds of letters. Email campaigns, like the ones fought on the NHS have changed this. I think it's made people, particularly Crossbenchers, realise they can't do this job scrutinising legislation in a bubble- you've got to actually listen to what the voices are saying." - Baroness Thornton, Labour.*

In a crowded space, how does this campaign technique become more effective as a tool to create 'nudge'? Throughout the interviews conducted for this research three key aspects stand out:

1. Clear, well-written, thoughtful and timely communication.
2. A personal link between the Peer and the individual/s sending the email.
3. When it is combined with, or pointing to, strong evidence-based policy position or personal stories/ case studies.

*'Although we are not members with a constituency interest, I do look out for people in Worcester while I am here- not in the same way as the MP for Worcester does, but if people from Worcester write in, they would always get a reply.' - Lord Faulkner, Labour.*

However, an analysis of the types of communication and correspondence many Peers had received through recent campaigns, reveals that many of them did not meet this criteria. As previously stated in this report, the House of Lords is a crowded space, with limited opportunities to find time to raise the many causes brought to the attention of Peers. There is a risk that mass emails could distract from the authentic voices in a debate, which are more likely to make the biggest difference in helping to change perceptions on an issue. It appears that online campaigning groups are filling the gap traditionally held by the charity sector. However, it remains a new and largely uncharted gap.

One of the concerns identified from the charity survey is that almost 30% of respondents stated that they found working with supporters to lobby the House of Lords a less effective tactic than doing so on their own, and over 50% did not know if campaigning through their supporters was an effective tactic. Although this may partly be due to charities not measuring impact effectively, it is worrying because I suspect that no-one in the charity sector has actually asked how they can make it more effective? Until this is done, this gap remains firmly within the terrain of online campaigning organisations.

6



# 6. Conclusion, recommendations and afterword

---

## 6.1 Conclusion

Online campaigning is to remain an important feature of political discourse and engagement. If the current trends of online campaigning continue, then it is very likely to increase. In contrast to the views expressed in the charity sector survey, and the initial reaction of those Peers who were targeted, it is clearly a useful tactic, although not necessarily in the way it was originally intended.

As the interviews with members of the House of Lords revealed, mass online campaigns will not alter the opinions of Peers, in much the same way that traditional postcard campaigns did not previously. The dynamic of online communications is dependent on drawing attention to key policy asks, amendments to Bills and coherent and well-presented positions. As stated previously, the House of Lords is a very crowded arena and one which is determined by the pressures of the parliamentary timetable, the Party Whips, other interest groups and many other factors. However, it appears that the charity sector still has to develop further and learn some of the lessons of the online campaigning organisations, if it is to maximise its influence. However, the online campaigning sector also has an opportunity to benefit from the experiences of the charity sector, if it is to be a credible and more substantial political force in the eyes of many more Peers.

Online campaigning has opened up opportunities for the public to play a greater role in lobbying Peers. Increasing democratic interaction with the House of Lords is one of the positive effects of social media (barriers to online access notwithstanding). However, there appears to be a disconnect between what some members of the public expect from Peers and the intended purpose of the House of Lords. There is a limit to what the House of Lords is able to do to address this issue, as there is clear information about its function on the Parliamentary website, combined with its outreach work in local communities. However, some members of the public appear to have unrealistic expectations as to the scope for Peers to alter matters in the way they would like them to do so. The Lords is bound by the legal system and as a revising chamber it exists to merely scrutinise and question. These unrealistic expectations may explain some of the misguided correspondence and communications received by Peers. There is also an opportunity for the charity sector and online campaigning organisations to help educate, better inform and manage the perceptions of the public who are encouraged to engage with member of the

House of Lords. This also raises some very practical issues for Parliament and the political parties as to how Peers can be better supported in undertaking their role in light of the demands of modern communications and social media. With the likelihood that members of the Lords could be operating in a very different political structure and an evolving and adapting public space, there will be further demands of their social media and public engagement skills. It is appropriate that as part of any reforms, practical consideration is given to how Peers can be better supported to carry out this function in a modern representative democracy.

The constant background to this research project is what form and structure will the House of Lords take into the future? Irrespective of the final outcome, it is clear that the proposed reforms will have an impact on the relationship of Peers with the third sector. Discussions with Peers revealed - as would be expected - a diversity of views on the subject with some Peers articulating strongly that the positive qualities and aspects of the relationship with the third sector, as discussed in this paper, remain in place. Interestingly, just over half of respondents to the charity survey (Q.21) said they had not given much thought to the proposals but were planning to do so. This means there is further work to be undertaken, before a proper evaluation can take place as to the impact on the relationship between the charity sector and the House of Lords, if and when the proposed reforms are implemented.

However, it remains the case that with the right approach and appropriate levels of support, there is no reason to fear any increase in the ability of the public to lobby Peers, regardless of any future reforms to the House of Lords. It could be argued that embracing such a change is a necessary step as technology based communications may raise the expectations of increased and more effective dialogue between the House of Lords and the public even further.

# 6. Conclusion, recommendations and afterword

---

## 6.2 Recommendations

In order to benefit all those with an interest in this issue, the following recommendations are divided into 3 distinct sections:

1. Recommendations for the charity sector and online campaigning organisations
2. Recommendations for Parliament, Peers the House of Lords and political parties
3. Recommendations for the public

### 1. Recommendations for the charity sector and online campaigning organisations:

- Charities need to encourage partnership working between those with policy/topical expertise and those with PR/social networking skills. Currently while there may be shared objectives, this can be at cross purposes, even within the same organisation. As this report reveals, there is a need for both the volume of public interest to ensure it is on the radar, combined with well-written policy briefs to complement it. One without the other is a #fail
- Building on best practice, charities can learn how to deploy their campaigners more effectively online by better utilising the online organising techniques to galvanise the support of the public
- Online campaigning groups must learn from the charity sector and enhance their email campaigns with evidence-based policy positions and 'real-life' case studies that directly relate to the policy issue/s
- Online campaigning groups and the charity sector should become more collaborative, developing co-working practices when organising online campaigning aimed at Peers
- There is a need for e-campaigning innovation groups to adopt different approaches about how to build online platforms that enable people to take part in a process that directly advocates for a grounded policy position This in turn will enhance a campaign without alienating Peers
- Quality of comment is more important than quantity of traffic

- Content matters more than brand and organisations should not just rely on their reputation just to get heard. Clear, well-written, concise, pithy briefings are far more like to have an impact
- Organisations cannot expect to influence Peers without an in-depth understanding of the context and subject matter, which links directly to statements on the Bill
- Case studies matter as much as a policy position. Arguments need to be wedded into the 'real world' by showing clear linkages between policy and people's lives
- Both charities and online campaigning organisations must aim to educate and empower campaigners to lobby Peers more effectively by providing clear information and links to the House of Lords on their websites
- Key sector organisations such as National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and Shelia McKethcnie Foundation (SMK) must provide toolkits and advice on lobbying Peers for smaller charities and organisations

### 2. Recommendations for Parliament, Peers & the House of Lords:

- Peers need better resources to deal with the increase in off and on line communication
- Peers need support to facilitate effective policy briefings from a range of well informed and credible sources
- Peers should identify opportunities to pool resources around social media management eg Lords of the Blog
- Parliament to offer Peers information management skills training and resources to help tackle increasing workloads

---

### **3. Recommendations for individuals contacting Peers either from the public, or from organisations.**

- Individuals do not need to be a lobbying expert to contact Peers, but must have full research to back-up arguments and be clear as to who is being contacted and why
- Advise Peers why an individual is contacting them and be explicit as to whether the representation is on their own behalf, somebody else or part of a campaign
- Establish a personal link with the Peer/s contacted
- Keep it clear, short, polite, well-written and thoughtful
- Advise Peers if a response is expected and in what format

# 6. Conclusion, recommendations and afterword

---

## 6.3 Afterword

It is important to recognise that most Peers, irrespective of party affiliation, are committed about the impact of the Upper Chamber on Parliament and how it can contribute to the benefit of public life in the UK. Although I did not necessarily agree with some of the positions held by the peers I interviewed, I was often humbled by their dedication to what they feel to be their role of holding the Government to account and scrutinising legislation.

They also demonstrated a passion for ensuring that the system in the UK is fair and just but differed in their interpretation of what justice and fairness actually meant. This is both the beauty and the curse of our democratic system—the House of Lords is the place where there can be open and honest debate about the role of fairness and justice in British society, even if people do not like or agree with the conclusions.

As I finished writing this report, I bumped into a neighbour who is also a local councillor. She spent ten minutes telling me how she was sick to death of rude emails, angry phone calls and requests for miracles from local residents. She explained how frustrated she was with the system, and that, no matter how hard she tried and how many hours she devoted to people's lives, she seemed to be shouted at by constituents who appeared neither to listen to her nor to take stock of the situation around them. She felt she had gone into politics for the right reason, but had had enough of feeling like the local punch bag for decisions that had been taken at the national level and she didn't have the time or resources to deal with each one individually. She said she doubted that she would run again for local office. It is a sad day when politics loses a dedicated woman like her, but I was immediately struck by the similarities between her perspective and that of many of the peers I had interviewed. What, I wondered, did this say for democracy at all levels of the political system?

This research aims to show that the lobbying process in the House of Lords is not a black box, but is very complex. People do have some power to influence Peers who make decisions and recommendations that affect the lives of the public. In fact, they probably have more power than they imagine. But in order to engage with the democratic process, people generally have to abide by its structures and respect both the individuals and institutions concerned, while the individuals and institutions must be open to engagement. The conversation between Peers, the public and campaigning organisations has a long way to run, but I hope that this report has at least contributed towards the debate.

### Thank You

I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude and thanks to the following people and organisations; Baroness Stedman-Scot and all the Peers who kindly gave up their precious time to be interviewed, Dr Andy Williamson, The Clore Social Leadership Programme, 38 Degrees, all 21 survey respondents, NFP Synergy, James Wo, Mikey Palmer, Peter Hand and all stewards at the House of Lords who always had a smile for me even when it was raining outside.

# Resources

---

Cook, Rachel, Noble Ladies, Observer, 13.05.12, The New Review

Kingham, Tess, and Coe, Jim. The Good Campaigns Guide, Campaigning for Impact. NCVO, 2005

House of Lords, Guide to Work in the Chamber, 2012

nfpSynergy. Influencing Peers, Charity Parliamentary Monitor, 2010-2011.

Parvin, Phillip. Lobbying in British Democracy. Hansard Society, 2007.

Public Zone, The online campaigning handbook. Public Zone.

Unlock Democracy <http://unlockdemocracy.org.uk/blog/entry/house-of-lords-a-more-independent-chamber>, Accessed, June, 2012.

Williamson, Dr Andy, Futurebriefing, Evolving Digital Engagement, Future Digital 2012

## Websites

For more information about the role, function and history of the House of Lords visit:  
[www.parliament.uk/lords](http://www.parliament.uk/lords)

Bishops in the House of Lords  
[www.cofe.anglican.org/about/bishopsinlords](http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/bishopsinlords)

BBC Democracy Live – Live and archived video from the House of Lords and other political institutions  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/hi/house\\_of\\_lords/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/hi/house_of_lords/default.stm)

Crossbench Peers  
<http://www.crossbenchpeers.org.uk/>

Lords of the Blog  
<http://www.lordsoftheblog.net>

This research report is published as part of my Clore Social Fellowship. As part of the Clore Social Leadership Programme, each Fellow is required to undertake a piece of practice-based research. The purpose of the research is to help develop Fellows' skills as critical users of research, and to help develop the evidence base for the sector as a whole. The research focus, methodology and output are all chosen by the Fellow.

A

# Appendix 1: NGO Survey

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

### Introduction

Congratulations- you've clicked on my link and are one of the lucky few who have made it this far!

Take a deep breath...you are about to contribute to a piece of research that will open up a debate on whether public lobbying in the House of Lords is a good idea for organisations such as charities, civic organisations, community groups and/or social enterprises.

This short survey is just one of the many methods I will be using to examine how Peers have experienced the Third Sector and the public, over recent months. If you are curious as to the rest of the methods - then you'll just have to sign up for more information at the end.

Now, we've all done questionnaires before, and we all know how boring they can be. Well, if it is not enough for you to know that you will be helping me, and our sector, out enormously, as well as progressing open democracy in our country, then maybe a prize draw will help. Every organisation who takes part before the 1st of April, will be entered into a £20 prize draw.

There are 26 short questions and it should not take more than 20 mins to answer it (longer if you would like to write more).

Ideally, it should be filled out by the person responsible for lobbying in your organisation- or, if there is no one responsible, or you are all responsible, anyone will do. You may also want to talk to your web/supporter/social media/activism people in your organisation too, as some of the questions relate to action rates of supporters.

I promise that all the information you provide will remain anonymous unless you give me permission otherwise- again, there is question for this.

In case you are curious about what the Clore Social Leadership programme is- please see below...

#### ----- About Clore

The Clore Programme aims to identify, develop and connect aspiring leaders in the wider third sector who are working for the benefit of individuals and communities across the UK. The wider third sector includes a full range of social purpose non-profit activity – charities, community organisations, social enterprises, co-operatives, social landlords and housing associations.

You can read more about the Clore Social Leadership Programme here: <http://www.cloresocialleadership.org.uk>

Now- are you ready?

#### **\* 1. Your details.**

|               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Organisation  | <input type="text"/> |
| Name          | <input type="text"/> |
| Position      | <input type="text"/> |
| email address | <input type="text"/> |

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

**2. Do you want to remain anonymous or can I can quote your organisation in my report?**

- Yes go for it
- No thanks- we would rather remain anonymous

**3. How many supporters does your organisation have (supporters are people who take actions for your organisation such as contacting their MP. This could be in addition to or separate from, fundraising actions).**

- None
- Under 100
- 101-500
- 501-1000
- 1001-5000
- 5001-10,000
- 10,001-50,000
- 50,001-100,000
- 100,000+

**4. Does your organisation have a formal relationship with Peers? (Formal refers to a position within the organisations' structure such as a Chair, or Trustee).**

- Yes
- No
- Oooh don't know

**5. Do you have other types of relationships with Peers, such as those who you may brief regularly?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, how many?

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

**6. How do you communicate with Peers?**

|                                  | Often                 | Sometimes             | Rarely                | Never                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Telephone                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Through other Members of the HoL | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Letter                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Fax                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Email                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Meeting                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Twitter                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Facebook                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Websites                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Other- Please list.

**7. Have you ever contacted a peer for the first time through a supporter?**

- Yes
- No
- N/A- we don't have supporters

**8. How do you identify whether a peer is relevant and worth engaging with?**

- Associated with a particular piece of legislation
- Associated with our cause
- Personal connection with the charity
- By party
- Because we like them

Other (please specify)

**9. Do you facilitate direct communication/lobbying between supporters and Peers?**

- Yes
- No
- N/A- don't have supporters.



## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

10. Is your organisation part of a coalition, like the DBC, The Hardest Hit, or The Care and Support Alliance which undertakes lobbying in the House of Lords?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, which coalitions is your organisation a part of?

11. Which bills have you lobbied on in the House in the past 12 months, either jointly or separately?  
 Please list.

12. What kind of lobbying activity have you undertaken in the House of Lords in the past 12 months around the current legislative programme? (By jointly, I mean through formal or informal coalitions such as those mentioned above).

|  | Solely                   | Jointly                  |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Reception  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Round table discussion on policy ahead of bills                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Run an APPG  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Face to face meetings with Peers                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Facilitated lobbying meetings with service users/campaigners and peers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lobbying meeting in Central Lobby                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pushed for amendments  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify)   | <input type="text"/>     |                          |

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

13. What kind of on-line lobbying have you undertaken in the past 12 months around the current legislative programme (tick all that applies)?

|  | Yes- Solely              | Yes- Jointly             | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Email briefing directly  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Run an on line contact-a-peer campaign to encourage the public to contact a peer around specific bills and amendments. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Encouraged supporters to get in contact with peers through email   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Used social media to contact Peers.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Encouraged supporters to get in contact with peers through social media  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (please specify)

14. How many times have you asked your supporters to contact Peers over the last 12 months?

- Never  
 1-5  
 6-10  
 11-15  
 16+

Other (please specify)

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

**15. Approximately what % of your supporters have supporters have taken action each time?**

- 0%  
 1-5%  
 6-10%  
 11-20%  
 21-30%  
 31%-40%  
 41%-50%  
 51%-60%  
 61%-70%  
 71%-80%  
 81%-90%  
 91%-100%  
 Don't know

**16. How responsive have you found peers when you have lobbied them with your supporters?**

- Fully engaged  
 Engaged  
 Somewhat engaged  
 Unresponsive  
 Hostile

Any thoughts or experiences you may want to share? (if you want this bit to remain confidential just say so).

**17. Have you specifically targeted Peers who are also Ministers?**

- Yes  
 No

If yes, can you tell me why?

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

**18. In your experience, do you find cross-bench peers to be more or less responsive than politically appointed peers?**

- More  
 Less  
 Same  
 Oooh Don't know

Any comments/thoughts/opinions?

**19. In your experience, have you found working with your supporters to lobby the House of Lords been a more or less successful tactic in gaining legislative change?**

- More  
 Less  
 Same  
 Oooh Don't know

Any comments/thoughts/opinions?

**20. In your experience, is it more effective to lobby MPs than Peers, in order to gain changes in the legislative programme?**

- MPs  
 Peers  
 Both  
 Neither  
 Oooh Don't know

Any comments/thoughts/opinions.....

**21. Has your organisation given any preparatory thought to the implications of the proposed reforms to the House of Lords, should Members be elected in whole or in part?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Not yet but we will  
 Don't know

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

22. Do you think public lobbying in the Lords is an effective way to influence the legislative process?

- Yes  
 No  
 Somewhat  
 Don't know

Further thoughts?

23. Do you think that public lobbying of the House of Lords could jeopardise the unique relationship some Peers have with the Third Sector?

- Yes  
 No  
 Maybe  
 Don't know

Any comments/thoughts/opinions?

24. Do you have any further thoughts or comments about the Third Sector and the House of Lords?

- No  
 Yes

This is your chance to let it all out!.....

## The Third Sector and Lobbying in the House of Lords

25. What kind of organisation are you?

- NGO  
 Civil Org  
 Social Enterprise  
 Community Interest Group

Other (please specify)

26. What is your organisation's total income (approximately)?

- 5,000-50,000  
 50,001-100,000  
 100,001-500,000  
 Less than £5,000  
 £501,000 - £1m  
 £1.1m - £2.5m  
 £2.51m - £5m  
 £5.1m - £10m  
 £10.1m - £15m  
 £15.1m - £25m  
 £25.1m - £50m  
 £50m+  
 Not sure

**27. WOW! You've done it! Your name can now be entered in a prize draw, democracy will prevail, biscuits will be given. A big thank you for your time and patience. If you want to get find out more about my research please contact me on [estherforeman@yahoo.com](mailto:estherforeman@yahoo.com). Thank you!**

- Yes please, enter me into the prize draw and send me a copy of the report  
 No thanks, you can keep your £20

Esther Foreman  
2011 Clore Social Leadership Fellow  
estherforeman@estherforeman.com  
<http://www.cloresocialleadership.org.uk/>  
@estherforeman