



# CAMPAIGNING OUT ON THE DOORSTEP

In the 2017 General Election, the Labour Party, with Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, ran a positive and honest campaign offering hope and a real alternative to Tory cuts. This was in stark contrast to the Tories who ran a negative campaign and offered nothing to improve the lives of ordinary people. Part of the success of this campaign was reaching out to voters through the thousands of conversations that took place with existing, previous, potential and first time voters across the country. But we want to do more; we want to have more conversations, with more voters, in more places than ever before. And that's where you fit in.

For many of our members being involved in a Labour Party campaign is something new. One of the most consistent things you will be asked to do within the Labour Party is to go door knocking. This briefing explains exactly what this means, why we do it and how we do it, giving you the confidence to go out and talk to the millions of voters that we need to vote Labour.

## SO HOW DOES IT WORK?

People are the Labour Party's greatest asset. The Labour Party knocks on many more doors and speaks to many more voters than other parties,

which is crucial to achieving good results for Labour up and down the country.

Across the country teams of volunteers regularly go out and speak to thousands of existing and potential Labour voters in neighbourhoods across the country. We do this all year round, not just at election time. But think of how many more effective conversations we could have if more and more of our members and supporters joined them.

## DURING THE SESSION

When you head along to a door knocking session, a 'board runner' will have a list of the doors you'll be knocking on along with the voters' names. They'll direct you to the right house and let you know who lives there. Once you've spoken to a voter, you'll need to repeat the outcome of that conversation accurately to the board runner who will then record that information. If you're using the Voter ID app, then the session leader will give you a separate briefing.

The board runner will also provide you with all the resources you need including a clipboard, a one pager on local issues that might come up, a sheet which can be used to record casework, Individual

Electoral Registration (IER) cards, postal vote forms and membership forms and leaflets.

## WHAT DOES DOOR KNOCKING HELP US ACHIEVE?

- Opportunity to demonstrate that we are active and seeking local opinions in those local communities we wish to represent.
- Opportunity to talk about Labour's achievements in local communities.
- To demonstrate that we are aiming to represent communities better - we're the Labour Party!
- Opportunity to identify and discuss issues that mobilise, inspire and persuade voters.
- Enables us to target different types of electors with specific messages through direct mail & leaflets.
- We can identify key people for the candidate(s) to speak to such as undecided and swing voters.
- To make voters more likely to vote for us - they vote for people with whom they've spoken to.
- To demonstrate the size, strength and support of the Labour Party within an area.
- It will help us get a Labour Government – we can identify Labour supporters and get out the vote effectively (GOTV). In marginal constituencies, where there might be a few hundred votes in it, it will make all the difference.

## DO YOU NEED TO BE POLICY EXPERT?

No one needs to be a policy expert to join a door knocking session. If you can't answer a question, take down contact details and say someone will get back to them or ask a team member, candidate or elected representative to get back to them at the end of a session.

You can also join more experienced members on the doorstep until you feel confident.

## DO YOU PROVIDE A SCRIPT?

We do provide a script, which you can use to frame your conversation in order for us to get the voting intention that we do record systematically. However, we're not robots, so do have a proper conversation around issues that matter to local people and think about using open questions such as:

- What issues are important to you locally?
- Why is this issue important to you?
- How does this issue make you feel?
- What action would you like us to take to solve this issue?

### TOP TIPS

- ✔ When asking questions: introduce yourself – say where you are from and ask the voter's name.
- ✔ Remember, this is just the start of a conversation with a potential Labour voter – we will follow up with direct mail, leaflets, further door knocking etc.
- ✔ Don't get into long conversations, especially with those who may have voted Tory all of their life and unlikely to vote Labour any way!
- ✔ Use the script to frame your conversation.
- ✔ If the data we collect is not accurate then our targeting will be compromised.
- ✔ Write down the answers you are given on a clipboard.
- ✔ For every target voter you identify on the doorstep, make sure you also ask for a phone number and email. This way we can follow up with them personally or the candidate/elected member can.

There are a number of extra questions which we should ask of those who say they will be supporting the Labour Party, these include:

- Would you like a postal vote?
- Can we have your email address and telephone number to keep in touch?

- Would you like a poster for your window during election time?
- Would you like to join the Labour Party?
- Would you like to endorse our candidate?

## DO WE KNOCK ON EVERY DOOR?

When you go out door knocking, we want to ensure that as much of your time as possible is spent talking to electors, not trudging the streets. Time spent trudging the streets and walking past households where people are in, is time wasted unless there are very good reasons for not knocking on those doors.

However there will be occasions when you may wonder why we don't knock on a particular door. This may be because of a number of reasons, such as.

- Depending on where we are in the electoral timetable some electors are more important for us to talk to than others, for instance the closer we are to polling day we may only want to target potential Labour voters because:
  - They are more likely to be persuaded to vote Labour
  - They are more likely to turnout to vote
  - They need encouragement to turn out to vote
- To speak to every elector in a constituency would take a long time.
- We may have knocked on that door previously and know they will not be voting for us.

## DON'T BE AFRAID

- ✓ People do expect us to knock on their door.
- ✓ Vast majority of people are polite.
- ✓ Ease yourself in gently. The first few times you should be paired up with an experienced canvasser.
- ✓ We do not expect anyone to go canvassing on their own. Being part of a team is good for safety and makes canvassing more fun.

- ✓ You don't need to know the answer to every question an elector might have – it's fine to make a note of it and for us to get back to them.
- ✓ It will take several visits in order to change the minds of many electors, they don't need to do this in one go!

## DO KEEP SAFE

- ✓ Stay aware and be vigilant.
- ✓ Do not argue.
- ✓ Look out for dogs - your safety is more important than one leaflet, never put your fingers through any letterbox and never accept an owner's word that a dog is safe.
- ✓ Don't go inside - never go inside a house, even when invited. Always stay on the doorstep.
- ✓ Canvass blocks of flats in teams. Make sure all the team is accounted for before moving on to the next block.
- ✓ Trust your gut. Don't knock on a door or enter a garden that you feel uneasy about.
- ✓ If you are running the session make sure you know who is canvassing & where they are. Count them out & count them back in.
- ✓ Always have a phone. Canvassers should always carry a mobile phone with them and know who to call for help.
- ✓ Travel light. Only the essentials should be taken with you when canvassing. Leave any valuables locked in your car or at home.
- ✓ And last but certainly not least, it's always a best practice to go canvassing as part of a group and have each individual stay within sight of each other.

Remember, the framework for conversations and top tips all apply to phone canvassing as well – your local Party will talk you through what to expect when you arrive at a phone canvassing session, or if you're using Dialogue from home, log in with your Labour Login and watch the 'Introduction to Dialogue' video.