



House meeting handout

What is a house meeting?

A house meeting is where people sit in small groups and share specific issues that concern them and begin to wrestle with the question of whether or not they are willing to invest their time or energy in addressing those issues. House meetings can be up to 30 people, although they work best with groups of around 10-15.

Why do we run house meetings?

- 1) Find new talented leaders
- 2) Surface new concerns or issues.
- 3) Develop a collective curiosity about 'what is possible' – these are moments to stir the imagination. Are we going to complain or imagine what could be?
- 4) Build relationships and energy that will enable us to act together
- 5) Determine who is willing to take action and what that action should be

Roles for the house meeting

1. HOST: To greet and welcome people. The host organises the location and the refreshments
2. SCRIBE: Writes down the key themes of the meeting and circulates them to the group. Sits next to the chair
3. CHAIR: Directs the meeting and normally oversees writing the agenda. Makes sure all voices are heard, and facilitates the identification of common interests, concerns and avenues for action.
4. TIME KEEPER: A role that is often undervalued. If you keep people over time they are unlikely to return. Time keepers must be able to judge when to move someone on, allow more time for a good testimony, or cut people off to ensure that the time agreed to end a meeting does not run over.

Outline for climate change house meetings (They should be no longer than 1 hour!)

BEFORE THE MEETING:

Clarify the purpose of the meeting, when inviting people. You may want to use the script below:

'In November, London Citizens (of which we are members), voted to make the Climate Emergency a key priority at the London Mayoral Assembly, at the Copper Box on April 21st. At this assembly, we will ask each of the Mayoral Candidates to commit to working with us to make London a carbon neutral city by 2030. In turn, as Citizens, we will promise to launch a massive London-wide listening campaign. This work begins even before the Copper Box. Over the next two months, we are piloting listening campaigns across several boroughs:

- To build relationship across our institutions
- To learn about people's climate concerns
- To share ideas about action we can take
- To make collective and individual commitments for a sustainable future



- To use these commitments to put pressure on politicians to show brave themselves

Some of the results of this listening will be shared at the Mayoral Assembly. We want to show the mayoral candidates that Citizens members have already been organising around the climate crisis and taking action through our institutions to make a genuine difference.'

1. INTRODUCTION (5 min)

- Welcome everyone.
- Describe *why* they are taking place (see above)

Chair will ask everyone if they are happy with the agenda, how long they have for the meeting, and if she/he has been given the go ahead for the agenda by the group, to direct the meeting.

2. ROUNDS (20-30 min) - *This is the most important part of the meeting*

- Open: Rounds are the key to good house meetings because want to hear everyone's voices & stories.
- **Rounds Question – Name, which organization are you from, and why does the climate crisis matter to you?**
- We **don't** want to find solutions at this point (eg 'lets ban all cars from the roads to reduce pollution'), we want to hear **stories**.
- **Take 2 minutes to write:** think about the question and write down their answers (So everyone can reflect and gives their own reactions).
- Watch out for talkers (**set a 60-90 second limit, depending on numbers, for each person – be strict on time!**). Watch out for pace – keep the rounds going so that it doesn't get bogged down with one person and so that everyone gets their chance.

4. CLIMATE SURVEY (10 minutes)

- Invite people to participate in the Citizens Climate Crisis survey found here: <https://citizensuk.typeform.com/to/AGbG2h>. It is mobile friendly.
 - Although house meetings should focus on people's relationships, and personal interests, completing the survey will allow us to make some powerful claims about the views and commitments of ordinary Londoners to the Mayoral candidates.
 - The survey will set out a list of potential actions for making London carbon-neutral, at the city-wide, borough, institutional and individual/community levels. In the resources for this campaign, you can also get this list as a table, explaining each action in more detail, which you can share. This list can then help inform the discussion of common issues and potential actions which follows.



3. COMMON ISSUES (15 minutes)

- Scribe and chair then tease out 3-4 common issues that the group is facing and allow people to comment and find consensus. Start to try to converge on avenues for action, and to identify people who might want to lead on this.
- Guiding questions:
 - What struck you about what other people said?
 - Are these stories common to other people in your institution? Who else feels similarly?
 - What do these stories say about our values as a community/our wider community? How should we respond?
 - Which of the actions (from the survey or the table) we have discussed do you want to commit to personally?
 - Which of the actions could we commit to as an institution? What part do you want to play in making this happen? Who are the key institutional leaders to get on board?
 - Are there actions which we are very excited about which were not on the survey/table? If so, be sure these are captured and fed back.
 - What can we do to involve others in this work?

5. CLOSING (5 minutes) Thank everybody and explain the next steps, times to share results of listening.

Next steps

At the end of your house meeting, you should have a set of leaders willing to take action, with a sense of what actions they want to prioritize. You want to make sure you can follow up on this and start planning action, by getting everyone's contact details.

You should also have identified some institutions who may be willing to adopt sustainability pledges. Having several institutions adopt such pledges *before* the Copper Box on April 21st will boost our collective power. A sustainability pledge means an agreement to enact one or more of the 'institutional' level actions in the survey/table. To progress this, you will need to identify the key leaders within each institution who would have to agree to such a pledge, and arrange conversations. When an institution is ready, have them complete the pledge form at

<https://tinyurl.com/CUKclimatepledge>