

# The Landworkers' Alliance General Election Hustings Toolkit



## In this toolkit you will find:

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## 1. Attend a local hustings

Please see below for a non-exhaustive list of local hustings taking place in June 2024:

- [Gillingham and Rainham – Thursday 13 June](#)
- [Young People's husting – West Wight \(Isle of Wight\) – Thursday 13 June](#)
- [Watford – Sunday 16 June](#)
- [Queens Park & Maida Vale – Monday 17 June](#)
- [Inverness, Skye, and West Ross-shire – Tuesday 18 June](#)
- [Newcastle Upon Tyne East & Wallsend – Tuesday 18 June](#)
- [Rochester and Strood – Tuesday 18 June](#)
- [Chatham and Aylesford – Wednesday 19 June](#)
- [Bangor – Thursday 20 June](#)
- [Uxbridge and South Ruislip – Friday 21 June](#)
- [Hammersmith and Chiswick – Sunday 23 June](#)
- [West Suffolk – Thursday 27 June](#)
- [Ipswich – Friday 28 June](#)
- You can also find a list of nature hustings organised by the Wildlife Trusts [here](#).

☀️ If your constituency isn't listed above, you can search for your local hustings on [Eventbrite](#), just type in 'hustings' and choose your location. Or simply email your local candidates directly and ask if they will be attending any pre-planned hustings events in your constituency.

## 2. Example questions related to food, farming and land-use policy

Farming is a devolved issue in the UK. This means that if you are voting in for an MP in a constituency in England, your MP will be able to influence agricultural policy in England. However, if you are voting for an MP (to represent your constituency in Westminster) in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, your MP will **not** be responsible for shaping policy on agriculture in your respective nation. They will, however, be able to influence UK-wide policy on things like public budget, trade, welfare and tax. For more information please see our [Guide to the 2024 General Election](#).

Example questions for any UK constituency:

**Q .** Farmers are the cornerstone of our food system, but across the UK farmers are struggling to make ends meet. Will your party commit to doubling the agriculture budget for all four UK nations to support farmers through the transition to more environmental farming practices, and reward those who are already leading the way with nature-friendly farming? **NB:** *Although farming budgets are devolved, if HM Treasury increased the budget for England this would be reflected in an uplift for devolved nations in accordance with the Barnett principle.*

**Q .** Since leaving the EU the UK continues to develop trade deals with other countries that serve to undermine British farmers and producers - such as with Brazil, India, Australia and the US. What will your party do to make sure that the livelihoods of farmers here in the UK are protected from cheaper and lower-standard imports?

**Q .** Migrant workers are a crucial source of labour for the UK's fruit and veg sector, yet they often face high levels of debt and can be left vulnerable to exploitation. Will your party recognise the importance of migrant labour to UK horticulture, and ensure that their rights and welfare are protected?

**Example questions for constituencies in England:**

**Q .** In the light of the climate and nature emergency, will your party commit to going further and faster in implementing the Environmental Land Management Scheme and using public money to pay for public goods?

**Q .** Our farmers are getting a rubbish deal, especially those who are selling to supermarkets. What will your party do to ensure that farmers are paid a fair price for their produce and can earn a decent living?

**Q .** Organic and agroecological market gardens could contribute to making England more self-sufficient in fruit and vegetables while also delivering biodiversity and sequestering carbon, yet currently very little support is available for them. Will your party support the establishment and development of local and regional agro-ecological market gardens selling through farmer focused routes to market?

**Q .** Huge future savings in health spending would be made if more people were to choose healthier eating habits, yet healthy and sustainable food is often more expensive than ultra-processed alternatives. How does your party intend to address the fact that many people are unable to afford the healthy diet that we are being recommended to eat?

**Q .** The Conservatives promised the industry a Horticulture Strategy in their 2022 National Food Strategy, but have since U-turned on this promise. Will your party commit to a desperately needed Horticulture Strategy for England to make sure we have a resilient supply of home-grown fruit and veg in the UK?

**Q .** Local food systems are good for local communities, local economies and the environment, and they play an important part in our journey towards net zero. However, they have been hollowed out by years of under-investment. What will your

party do to help re-establish the infrastructure farmers and growers need to get their products to local customers?

Q . The average age of a farmer in the UK is over 60 and the number of active farmers is declining. Meanwhile many new entrants, seeking to produce food in sustainable ways are struggling to access land. How would your party address this?

Q . Many new land based businesses struggle to get started, when those running the businesses are unable to live on the land they work; yet getting consent for rural workers' dwellings is almost impossible, especially for small-scale horticulture. What would you do to address this?

Q . How would you ensure more people are able to afford to train in vital land based work and that the training they receive is appropriate for sustainable farming?

Q . Many established agroecological farmers and sustainable foresters are keen to pass on their knowledge to apprentices, but cannot afford to employ one. Would your party consider introducing a fund to support the green/rural economy apprentices' wages?

☀ Please also refer to our [Manifesto for Food, Farming and Forestry](#) for more detail on the LWA's specific policy asks. We have also compiled a list of our [Top 5 Demands for a New Government](#) which you may find useful.

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### 3. How to organise your own in-person hustings

Time is of the essence! But there is still time to organise a hustings before election day on July 4th. Hustings are a great way to take questions on both local and national issues to your local candidates, and to try and secure commitments.

#### Time

Choose a date and time as soon as you can so that you can start inviting candidates asap. You may need to be flexible to find a time that suits people's busy election campaign

schedules, but try also to bear in mind choosing a time when most of the general public are available, such as evenings and weekends. Hustings needn't take too much time, and usually last between 1 - 2 hours.

### Location

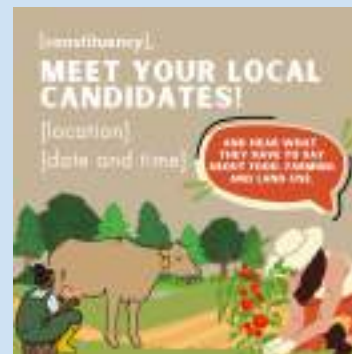
Make sure to choose a sensible location for your hustings. Ideally it should be somewhere in your local town or village, such as a town or village hall, community centre or place of worship. You could also host one on your farm if you have a suitable space! But please make sure that it is a) indoors (in case of bad weather) b) accessible by public transport c) has wheelchair access and d) is big enough to seat a decent crowd.

### How to reach out to your local candidates

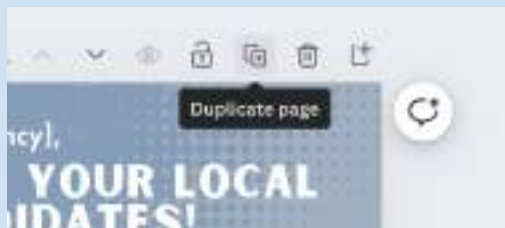
Reach out to your local candidates as soon as possible as they will have busy schedules in the run up to election day. You can find out who your local candidates are on this [website](#), simply enter your postcode. You can use our template email to get in touch with them ([click here](#)).

☀️ **Don't forget to let us know if you organise a hustings - we can promote it on our main social media channels and in our newsletter! Please email [yali.bantonheath@landworkersalliance.org.uk](mailto:yali.bantonheath@landworkersalliance.org.uk)**

### How to advertise and promote the event



Don't forget to advertise your hustings! You can do this online by sharing the event on social media, via email or via WhatsApp. Please feel free to use one of our customisable graphics (above) which you can access on Canva [here](#) (**IMPORTANT > please click the 'Duplicate page' icon before customising your own graphic!**).



**Political impartiality**

In order to comply with electoral law you must ensure that your hustings are 'non-selective'. This means that you should strive to invite all the candidates that are running for election in your constituency - or at least from the parties who won seats in the 2019 election, including Labour, The Conservative Party, Liberal Democrats and the Green Party, as well as Plaid Cymru in Wales and Scottish Nationalist Party in Scotland.

**Hosting and facilitation**

Make sure you have someone to host the hustings, who is able to introduce candidates, take questions and keep the time. This person must not be affiliated with any political party. Please refer to our [Safer Spaces Policy](#) for information and guidance on how to host and facilitate a safe, supportive and inclusive space.

☀️ **If you have any further questions about how to organise a local hustings please get in touch with us [yali.bantonheath@landworkersalliance.org.uk](mailto:yali.bantonheath@landworkersalliance.org.uk).**