



## Local Campaign Manual

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This is a write up on all the information which is communicated in the compulsory “How to set up campaign” training session.

### 1. Overview


- As we all know people in Britain are more pissed off with conventional politics than at any time in our lives. We won't go into all the reasons now but this is the starting point of Assemble - can we make things a whole lot better.
- Assemblies have come together to create a new way of doing politics - it bottom up - use of assemblies because this is how we properly respect people and also because this is how to get more people involved to persuade more people to vote for the candidate.
- The purpose of our efforts are twofold - to get 1000s of people to vote for the candidate and win the election AND to build a social movement to get real political change after the elections
- What it means is a revolutionary change in HOW political power is operated - concretely- to take power away from the corrupted political parties and give it to ordinary people via legally binding assemblies - called citizens assemblies.
- Citizens assemblies are where people are selected by sortition - meaning randomly from the population so it is the people themselves who are in charge - and then they deliberate in detail getting all the information and view on an issue before coming up with a decision on what should happen. So it is 2 things - the decision makers reflect the people themselves and they have enough time and information to make good decisions. In short the rich and powerful do not get a look in!

### 2. Ways of Working Overview

- It is vital that the campaign works well and is a good experience for people. To do this we make sure that how the campaign works is clear to everyone and there is good documentation for people to read.
- We have a clear way to make decisions - who makes what decisions and when.
- We have a clear idea of the culture we want - one thing is that we are here to respect each other and be in service to the people of the constituency and the common good of our society. This is not the place for individual egos or big ideological conflicts. We are here to follow a way of running a campaign and of course if people find out how it works and don't like it they are free to leave and hopefully create something better. More information about this will be given in the induction session

### 3. How the Organisation works

- As mentioned the organisation has a set form but of course we are always learning and new tweaks and ideas will change how we work as we grow our social movement
- This structure can change somewhat if a campaign becomes a joint allied venture including various groups or networks. However for Assemble to be part of it, it will need to have a clear structure - where it is written down who does what and how and where what decisions are made.
- The basic structure is that there is a “Constituency Campaign Team” which basically runs the campaign - it makes all the final decisions and coordinates the whole thing. It should be around 7-8 people, not more otherwise the meeting gets clogged up and lasts too long a time.
- It then creates working groups as needed for various areas - eg finance and legal matters, tech and social media, website, media etc.
- Then there are the “Ward Campaign Teams” which are in charge of running the campaign in their wards. There are about 10 wards of around 5-10,000 people in a constituency which is the local areas that vote in councillors. Each ward team at a minimum runs an assembly every 2-3 weeks - a minimum of 4 before the election for all the constituency and increasingly encourages neighbour meet ups for a few or a single street in someone’s house (house meetups) and/or on a local pub. We will go into that in more detail in a minute.
- Outside this basic core structure the general rule is - keep it positive and go and do what you want - we encourage assemblies to be created for particular groups (eg Muslims, Football clubs, mums) as well as assemblies on particular themes (such as housing, climate, public services - where experts and witnesses can input the realities behind the various crises we face). In addition people should be encouraged to create their own posters and leaflets in art /print workshops. People can create social events - gigs, marches, banquets, raves - the more the merrier bringing in all parts of the local communities. It is the community’s campaign so people just get on and do things.
- In all the teams people have to attend an induction where it will be made clear we are all here to work in a team and respect each other. People can and will be asked to leave if they are abusive, discriminatory to any group, or fail regularly to do what they commit themselves to do. Each group will have one or two coordinators who can ask people to leave. These people can, if they want, appeal to the constituency campaign team and their decision is final.

See  [A - Constituency campaign organisational structure](#) for more details

### 4. National structure of Assemble

- So how does all this work at a national level? It’s a bit complicated but Assemble has its origins in the climate movements. This year however there was a change of direction and the decision was made to create an organisation called Umbrella that would create a strategy for a proper change in how the government works - a political revolution - not least so that vital policies on the climate crisis that just about everyone wants to see

happen, actually happen. Umbrella has various divisions focusing on different things - not just the climate but various social and economic campaigns and youth focus activities. And also Assemble which is focusing on assemblies leading to elections.

- Assemble has a national organisation similar to what happens on a constituency level. There is a National Core team of 7-8 people who make the top level decision and do national coordination. They are ultimately answerable to the Umbrella organisation's core group. There are then a bunch of working groups - the key ones covering mobilisation - setting up constituency campaigns, induction - into the national teams, networking and media - outreach to other groups and the press and other media. There are also teams for the website, social media, finance and fundraising. If you are interested in joining a national group then ask the national mobilisation person working in your area or contact the website.
- Again as with the local organisation people have to go to a compulsory general session on running campaigns and an induction. People join on a 4 week trial and can be asked to leave by their group's coordination if they are problems (see above)

## **5. The House of the People and creating real political change**

- Assemble also aims, with other organisations, to set up a "House of the People". People who go to the local assemblies will have their names put forward to go to this permanent national assembly after the national elections. It will hold a series of assemblies on the various issues which are being discussed by the House of Commons. So for instance if Parliament is talking about a Child Care act then it will be discussed by the House of the People and likely to come out with different conclusion - the government might decide "there is no new money for childcare" while the People's House might decide "there should be more money for childcare by its should be provided by taxing the rich properly".
- How political change really works historically - when it really happens - is when an alternative governmental institution like the House of the People is set up by local assemblies - rather than big NGOs or government agencies - meaning it really belongs and reflects the will of ordinary people. It then comes to conclusions on things which get in the national media and helps to create new campaigns and publicise existing campaigns. These campaigns then come together to support a popular manifesto covering the key area that the local assemblies want to see action happen. This becomes a series of demands for demonstrations and occupations which are supported by civil society and the trade unions. This is how governments are forced to follow the agenda of the people rather than the rich and powerful. It happens all the time in history but it needs organisation which is what Assemble and its allied groups are planning to do.
- The specific plan is to have a big demonstration in London and maybe other cities after the election to make clear the government "does not represent us". Then to hold a series of urban and small town festivals and conferences over the winter to build a big series of demonstrations and pressure for trade unions and civil society groups for the people's manifesto we have just mentioned.

For more on the people assembly see [House of the People Pitch](#)

## 6. The Run of the Campaign

### Short online briefing

Things often start with just a few people going to an online briefing (Zoom) for their constituency or town/city. Or they may go to one of the Assembly regular weekly national online briefings.

### Face to face open meeting and setting up campaign team

Then they talk to Assemble people about having an offline face to face open meeting in their constituency, publicised to anyone or groups interested in putting up an independent candidate - this will ideally need to have fifty or so people coming to it.

If this meeting decides to go for it, then a campaign team is set up of around 6-8 people who will run the campaign in the constituency. It is important that these initial people agree to step down if needs be to make way for people from a diversity of backgrounds as the campaign takes off, so that members of the various communities in a constituency can participate in running the campaign.

The campaign team goes on this [How to set up a campaign training session and the induction](#) mentioned above.

Okay, with all the essential training in place it's time to get started:

### The Big Launch Party

You create a team to organise this event and another to publicise it via leaflets, posters, social media and of course contacting every community group or club in the constituency.

Everyone is welcome to come along. At the launch you have short speeches, time for people to discuss in small groups. Then you split people into around 10 groups, based upon which ward they live in.

A first ward assemble date and venue will already have been organised and so people can sign up to do stalls, door knocking, etc. A campaign team is created for each ward - again with people being in service to the campaign and willing to step down as more people get involved.

See [A- Campaign Launch Event Design](#)

### Ward Assemblies

This is where the thing really gets going!

There is an initial assembly in each ward (around 10 in each constituency) which are publicised by door knocking (see [A- Doorknocking process & scripts](#)), leafleting, putting up posters in shops, doing stalls/voting boards (see [A- stalls, voting board process & scripts](#)), local media, and outreach to local organisations and groups.

Each assembly starts with people committing to listening to each other. They discuss in small groups the problems with the area/country for about 30 minutes and then what issues or policies they want to see adopted by their community's independent candidate for another half hour. Five key issues or policies are decided by each assembly. And if there is no agreed candidate then people are invited to nominate people they know.

Full details are here [A- organising and running a ward assembly](#)

## The Big Hustings/Programme Party

Another party!

Everyone in the constituency is invited to a husting event where all the possible community candidates speak, and one is selected (everyone votes) to stand as the candidate.

All the ideas on issues and policies from the Ward Assemblies are discussed, and the most popular ones are selected via small group discussions for the candidate to promote.

See [☰ A - Husting Assemble candidate selection](#) and for getting the local manifesto:

[☰ A - Agregation of programme design \)](#)

## Door Knocking!

Then the race is on!

Each of the approximately 10 wards has an Assembly every 2-4 weeks with the aim of having at least four before the end of September.

At each Assembly people will be asked to put their hands up to support the campaign and each Ward Campaign Team will aim to recruit 10 people from each Assembly to knock on the doors along their street or neighbourhood - making 40 volunteers per ward and 400 door knockers for the whole constituency.

To be in the ballpark of getting 1,000s of votes and even winning the seat you need 400 people to doorknock twice a week for 5 weeks in the run up to election day.

## House meetups

When people knock on the doors of their street they invite people round for a cup of tea for a meet up. People talk about why they support the candidate and people are asked to talk to their neighbours and put up posters in their windows/gardens. This way, we can reach tens of thousands of people to vote for our person - who is "not them".

So that, in a nutshell, is how to get into the ballpark of winning the seat.

The secret is that if people are able to decide what their community candidate will talk about and promote they are 10 times more likely to go door knocking. And it's talking to 1,000s of people on the doorstep that gets you the votes

See [☰ A- House Meet Up Design \(and House video\)](#)

## Other activities

As mentioned what is outline here is only the core structure of the Assemble plan - the whole point is that people then initiate the own activities such as

- Assemblies for particular communities eg Mums, sports clubs, religious groups
- Assemblies on particular themes (eg climate, social services, knife crime etc)
- Art and Print workshops - create your own leaflets and posters
- Cultural events - processions, carnivals, banquets, gigs, concerts, raves etc.

Basically you want to get round every corner of the community - every venue, group, event etc say you want them to participate in communicating what you think about things to the community candidate.

## 7. Income and Financing

The Assemble campaigns are explicitly set up to help create a mass movement for democratic political and economic change after the election - working with other progressive and radical organisations and networks. People will be asked at all public meetings to make an ongoing small monthly donation for the campaign and to help build a movement which will pressure Labour (assuming they win) after the election. This money will go into the national Assemble bank account and then be transferred to the local campaign team bank account. 20% of it will be kept by the national Assemble organisation to help pay for support services (training and full time support people) and to kickstart new campaigns.

Once a constituency campaign group has formally agreed to this agreement or a similar agreement with Assemble - then they will be given around £2000 to start up their campaign. To get this money the members of the initial campaign team will also have to have attended the running and campaign training and the induction session as well as a workshop of good facilitation (chairsing). They will need a bank account open, have set up a crowdfunder and website with an ability to take regular donations, and have set a date for a launch party.

Once they have done all the above they will be eligible for match funding from Assemble: Every £1000 raised will result in another £1000 being put into the local campaign account up to a maximum matching of £2,000. This arrangement may change depending on how successful national fundraising is from larger donors. This money should be used to ensure most of the wards hold an assembly within 6 weeks of the launch event. National support people will work closely with the local campaign to advise and train people in how to create well run assemblies.

## **8. Data**

At all online and offline public events people will be asked to give their personal details (name, phone number, email, and address) and this data will be owned by Assemble. If the local campaign is a formal alliance between several groups the access to that data given to all the groups in the local alliance, and a separate agreement will be drawn up to lay out the details (and the data law implications). Assemble will keep this data to use to mobilise people in support of the big movement events and activities after the election.

## **9. Mentoring**

Assemble wants to fully encourage local campaigns to help each other and learn for each other. Therefore once campaigns have had their launch meeting they will be formally required to support another campaign in another area of the country so the learning is not all top down. This should at a minimum involve a weekly call to share information and give advice. And of course we will encourage campaigns in the same region to meet and work together.

That's it. Remember to ring the national helpline **07955 798020** or the national mobilisation support team with any questions. We are all in this together x

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