EVIDENCE WEEK

JUNE 2018
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Parliaments the world over are charged with scrutinising policy on issues as far apart as rented housing and off-shore fisheries, and increasingly have to ask searching questions of new sources of data, complex interactions and trade offs, amid an explosion of scholarly (and not so scholarly) claims. Between elections, parliament represents our need for public reasoning and accountability. So this – the first ever Evidence Week – is a timely response to the changing demands of that role.

The message of Evidence Week isn’t a simple celebration of science. It’s that insights into the uses of scientific evidence go a long way to support effective scrutiny and reasoned decisions. That matters to the public in many, many ways – as teachers, cyclists, housing officers, construction supervisors, gym instructors, helpline operators, conservationists, patients, parents – and as voters who are deciding where they stand.

This is why Evidence Week opens with a delegation of community groups from all over the UK. It is why it ends addressing the question ‘Are we looking at what people want to know?’ And it’s why we hope that MPs, peers and parliamentary staff will take advantage of this unique four days of punchy briefings and cutting edge methods, which have come together through the impressive efforts of the research community, parliamentary research services and constituents.

Tracey Brown OBE,
Sense about Science
I am delighted to be welcoming so many communities to Parliament as part of its very first Evidence Week.

Our role as politicians, whether in scrutinising legislation or undertaking select committee inquiries, is ultimately about weighing together, and reaching compromise between, conflicting interests and concerns. Values play a part in that process, including judgements that are rooted in legal or moral principles, and sometimes politics is simply about what change the electorate will accept and when.

But objective evidence also has a vital role — ideally the biggest role — in making the trade-offs that lie behind all policy-making, not least because it means we go into decisions with our eyes open to all that is known about an issue. If the evidence points towards a particular judgement, it forces us politicians to assess how much weight we are prepared to put on any countervailing factors, and makes us think hard before we take a side.

Most of us still see a role for ‘experts’ in the big issues we face, whether on Brexit or what health treatments should be offered. It goes without saying of course that I, and my fellow MPs, know that we serve the public best when we are scrutinising the evidence for proposals, and when we are involved in a discussion about emerging issues with our constituents, our research communities and our own parliamentary research services.

Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP, Chair of the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee
A thriving parliamentary democracy needs impartial, high quality information; and a strong public voice. The House of Commons Library provides MPs with the factual information they need to represent their constituents and scrutinise the government. This helps the public too – better informed MPs ask better questions and make better decisions. We’re taking part in Evidence Week to show people all over the UK that evidence matters, and to show how Parliament uses evidence to inform decision making.

Penny Young, House of Commons Librarian

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) is a source of independent, balanced, and accessible analysis of public policy issues. POST’s flagship outputs, POSTnotes, are in-depth yet concise briefing papers aimed at providing Members of Parliament and Peers the evidence-based information they require to shape public policy. Traditionally focused on Science and Technology, our remit has grown to include work on Social Science and now encompasses all quantifiable evidence-based research. Today we also conduct important outreach across the UK, helping researchers and scholars get their work into UK Parliament, and we provide training to the next generation of policymakers and shapers through a number of Fellowship schemes available to academics across the career ladder.

Dr Grant Hill-Cawthorne, Head of POST
With pressing challenges facing the educational and political spheres, the next decade will bring critically into focus the integral importance of evidence based research and the vital role it plays in fair and effective public policies. From how to judge the quality of evidence and ensuring that we are using the right evidence to judge the right problems, to navigating the vast realm of data and statistics, we all have a role to play and insight to offer. Evidence helps empower us as critical thinkers – without it the impact of knowledge and reasoning is seriously eroded.

At SAGE we define our mission as ‘building bridges to knowledge’. Taking an idea from its development through the research process to a knowledge claim, which becomes certified, engaged with, critically understood and ultimately applied. The difficulty and importance of this work have only grown.

Since SAGE’s inception our commitment to advocacy and engagement on the value and importance of research has been a core principle. We feel a responsibility to get directly involved to champion the integral importance of evidence and its role in public policy. “Evidence Week” is a key vehicle to galvanise this global conversation.

Ziyad Marar, President of Global Publishing, SAGE Publishing
DAY 1
MONDAY 25 JUNE
QUESTIONING QUALITY

OPENING
12.30 – 1.30pm
Churchill Room, Westminster
Community groups and organisations from across the UK will come to parliament to open Evidence Week and tell MPs and peers why parliament’s scrutiny of evidence on their behalf is vital.

Evidence in policymaking
10am – 12pm
For committee staff
Tailored to committee staff, this session will introduce the transparency framework that enables efficient scrutiny of the transparency of evidence for policy. Run by Sense about Science, the Institute for Government and Alliance for Useful Evidence, this session will also include a taster of the Alliance’s evidence masterclass.
INTRODUCTION TO THE EVIDENCE MASTERCLASS
2 – 3pm
Portcullis House
A compressed taster of the Alliance for Useful Evidence’s comprehensive masterclass, for MPs’ and Peers’ staff. Guided by an expert facilitator, participants will be taken on an evidence journey, developing awareness of how evidence can help us make smarter decisions and understanding where to look for trustworthy and appropriate evidence.

MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT HEALTH CARE
3 – 4pm
Portcullis House
Cochrane Fellow Dr Lynda Ware is speaking about using research evidence to help make informed decisions about health care including systematic reviews – the backbone of Cochrane’s work. She will look behind some newspaper headlines and point to where reliable evidence-based medical advice may be found. Please RSVP to Katie.
  abbotts@cochrane.nhs.uk

EVENING LAUNCH
7 – 8.30pm
Churchill Room, Westminster
Having met with community groups from across the UK, Sense about Science, House of Commons Library, House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, POST and SAGE Publishing will launch Evidence Week. Sponsored by Norman Lamb MP.
DAY 2
TUESDAY 26 JUNE
NAVIGATING DATA ANALYSIS AND STATISTICS

Breakfast briefing
9 – 10am
Jubilee Room, Westminster
The UK Statistics Authority will introduce the key questions parliamentarians can ask when faced with statistics.

NAVIGATING DATA – USING CONSTITUENCY EXAMPLES
11am – 12pm
Evidence Week Stand, Upper Waiting Hall
This workshop from the UK Statistics Authority, Office of National Statistics and the Royal Statistical Society will look at where parliamentarians can go to for the most accurate research and statistics, and help explain how to interpret and understand the numbers behind the evidence base.

DAMNED LIES AND STATISTICS: USING STATS IN THE MEDIA
2 – 3pm
Portcullis House
Statistics can be a powerful tool to communicate complex issues. They can also be spun to create misleading information or only tell half a story. This workshop for MP’s staff, run by statisticians and communications staff from the House of Commons Library, will look at how to get the most out of House of Commons Library stats, how to make an impact in the media without undermining the truth, and help you spot spinning and misuse of stats.
THE 2021 CENSUS:
OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS
1 – 3pm
Macmillian Room, Portcullis House
    With the Royal Statistical Society and Office
    of National Statistics.

EVIDENCE IN SOCIAL SCIENCE
5 – 6.30pm
Millbank House
    Joint event with the Academy of Social Sciences, ESRC,
    House of Lords Library and the British Academy discussing
    the provision of social science research and expertise
    with members of the House of Lords.
DAY 3
WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE
WHAT IS EFFECTIVE
IN HEALTH AND ELSEWHERE

Briefing
8.45 – 9.15am
Upper Waiting Hall
How do we know what works? Health is the key area where this question is asked, from patients to doctors to policymakers. The session will introduce how evidence helps us know what is effective.

Too much or not enough?
11am – 12pm
Portcullis House
What do we do when the evidence isn’t there, or when it is overwhelming? A discussion with the Society for Applied Microbiology.

It ain’t necessarily so...
Simple stories can go wrong
1pm / 1.30pm / 2pm / 2.30pm
Upper Waiting Hall
In three minutes, find out how to disaggregate data to clarify inequalities and the effect of interventions.
Wicked problems are those knotty, seemingly intractable problems that can seem simple at a glance but are multi-faceted. Air pollution and homelessness for example. CLOSER will introduce how trends help us look at these problems and interventions.

How clean is your air, and what can we do about it?
10am – 1pm, Upper Waiting Hall, Westminster
People from across the country are coming to our stand in Upper Waiting Hall, to find out with their representatives, the quality of air in their area. A team from King’s College London and the universities of Manchester, Sussex, Imperial, Southampton and the wider university policy network co-ordinated by University College London will talk through what readings mean, how that might affect local people and the challenges in proposed solutions.

Health Inequalities
10am – 12pm
Room Q, Portcullis House
Addressing the ‘wicked’ problem of health inequalities and how to reduce them with the Policy Research Units.

A long-term look at obesity
2 – 4pm
Room Q, Portcullis House
Explore the problem of obesity via longitudinal studies and the need for a multi-faceted approach to a ‘wicked’ problem. We discuss how addressing obesity can have benefits across people’s lives including on their mental wellbeing.
ARE WE LOOKING AT WHAT PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW?

4.30 – 6pm
Attlee Suite, Portcullis House

Evidence Week will close with a roundtable that discusses are we looking at what people need to know? This will include perspectives on particular issues such as homelessness as well as input from SAGE Publishing and Sense about Science.
Evidence matters to me as part of Bristol Knititiative, a community project dedicated to keeping our homeless community warm. The UK homeless population continues to be severely underestimated due to the lack of evidence when auditing. As auditors take to the streets to count all those clearly about to sleep rough outdoors, sofa surfers, squatters, and those taking shelter in a hostel for the night are overlooked. Meanwhile, the “hidden homeless” population continues to grow alongside that of those whose misfortune lies in plain sight. Without sufficient evidence to begin effectively tackling the problem, time and again those most vulnerable slip through the net.

Rose Murray,
Bristol Knititiative

Lack of evidence means that interventions intended to support autistic people – around 700,000 people in the UK – in education, training, healthcare and employment are not well targeted, often waste scarce resources and, in some cases, may actually be harmful.

Elizabeth Vallance,
National Autism Project

I believe that every football fan should have the choice between sitting safely, or standing safely and in a recent English Football League survey, 94% of fans agree. Over 13m people attended premier league games alone last
The UK Statistics Authority is an independent arm’s length body, with a statutory objective of promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that ‘serve the public good’. Evidence matters because it helps us to mobilise the power of data to help Britain make better decisions by: informing the public about social and environmental matters, assisting in the development and evaluation of public policy, and regulating quality and publicly challenging the misuse of statistics.

At the Royal Statistical Society, we believe in the importance of statistics, evidence and data for the public good. We’re convinced that evidence should be taken more seriously in policy formulation and evaluation, while official statistics should be at the very heart of public policy debates. We believe, for example, that governments should always publish the data and evidence which underpin any new policies they announce. We also want more politicians, policy-makers and public service professionals to be trained in data-handling and statistics – helping them to use evidence properly and make better decisions on everyone’s behalf.

Clinical pharmacology encompasses all aspects of the relationship between drugs and humans. Clinical pharmacologists work as clinicians, in scientific research, medical education, policy and regulation and in
The scouts I lead are just a small part of the 390,000 across the country, but as a scout leader as well as a scientist and a lecturer, I get to see how important good critical thinking skills and the ability to judge the quality of different sources of evidence are every day for young people’s lives. Whether it’s helping them decide what to put in an essay, who to vote for or what brand of toothpaste to buy.

Jane Sarginson,
Scout leader

Evidence is hugely important to NCT. Our mission is to support expectant and new parents by providing accurate, impartial information to help them make decisions at this important time. We ensure the priorities of parents are represented in research, and campaign to get evidence adopted into practice. We were co-investigators on the Birthplace study to examine the safety of giving birth in different locations: in hospital, in a free-standing midwifery unit (FMU) and at home. We found that for low risk women, it was just as safe to have their baby in the FMU as in a hospital. This is cheaper for the NHS and women who give birth in FMUs are hugely positive about their experience. Yet, as the NHS struggles with funding shortfalls and staff shortages, FMUs are threatened with closure. We can see that there are systemic and structural barriers to translating evidence into practice. As both a research and a campaigning organisation with a strong focus on
the pharmaceutical industry. Data gathered by multiple organisations shows that the UK has a shortfall in skilled clinical pharmacologists. Failing to fill this skills gap poses a threat to the NHS, clinical research, and the development of new medicinal products, and will ultimately be detrimental to the public’s health. Evidence matters because it shows that investment in clinical pharmacologists will save the NHS money. For every £1 spent, nearly £6 will be saved through more efficient use of medicinal products, and fewer adverse drug reactions. That is why the British Pharmacological Society is part of the Clinical Pharmacology Skills Alliance, developing an action plan to tackle this crucial issue.

Good evidence matters in health and social care because it saves and improves lives. Before researchers gain Health Research Authority Approval to start their study, we expect them to show that they have involved patients, the public and service users in the design of their study; thought carefully about how research participants are recruited, informed and treated and, crucially, planned how to publicly share the research findings. By seeking assurances around public involvement, research ethics and transparency, the Health Research Authority, like others in the health and care system, makes sure that limited resources are focussed on the best areas and that research evidence is translated into new and better treatments and services, to the benefit of us all.
user involvement, NCT will continue to work with and for parents to overcome these.
Rachel Plachcinski, National Childbirth Trust

The evidence from research demonstrates the value of reciprocity to confidence, self-esteem, and wellbeing. Perhaps more importantly it demonstrates the value of communities of interest that are not defined by age, or by past experience, but instead are defined by the experiences still to be explored.
Sam Mauger, University of the Third Age

Aberdeen has a population of around 230,000 which includes backgrounds, cultures and religions from across the world – all affected by climate change. Evidence matters to us to bring people together to understand the effect of climate change for better environment.
Ahashan Habib and Narayan Prasad Shrestha, Aberdeen Multicultural Centre

Evidence matters for the 1 in 6 people affected by infertility in the UK and for all those affected by genetic conditions – evidence is crucial to our work to improve the choices for patients, practitioners and policymakers.
Sarah Norcross, Progress Educational UK

When scare stories around ingredients in cosmetics – like the common preservative parabens – are based on misinformation instead of scientific evidence, it leads to restrictions on innovation, increased issues for the consumer and products listing ingredients that aren’t even in the product. It is vital
Evidence matters in decisions about medicines. Many factors may influence an individual’s decision to take or refuse a medicine, including media exposure, prior experience, and beliefs about health, illness and treatments. The Academy of Medical Sciences, the independent body in the UK representing the diversity of medical science, believes that high-quality, trustworthy scientific evidence should play a major role in influencing people’s choices about medicines, in order for them to receive the best possible care. It is the only source of evidence that can be subject to systematic check and challenge according to a rigorous scientific process. To enhance this vital role, we must ensure that the evidence is robust, reliable and relevant to the people it intends to inform.

For many of the public, the molecular biosciences deal with intangible concepts and extraordinary ideas. As the molecular biosciences continually push the boundaries of scientific capabilities, the communication of evidence becomes increasingly important in helping people to make informed decisions about the impacts of new technologies on their lives. From using genetically modified crops to resolve food shortages, to new developments in drug discovery, strong, high-quality evidence is essential to enable public understanding and inform policy and regulatory decisions. As strong advocates of the importance of evidence,
to my business, the cosmetics industry as a whole and for me as a consumer that regulation and advice surrounding cosmetics and personal care is based on scientific evidence.

Sam Farmer, cosmetics brand owner

Half of young people enter Higher Education in the UK and there is real concern about rising levels of mental distress in this population. Last year Student Minds worked with 120 universities to support grass roots interventions for student mental health. Evidence matters to us because we need to know what works to improve student mental wellbeing, so we can direct limited resources to initiatives that will make the biggest difference, confident that the effects will be positive.

Nicola Byrom, Student Minds

Around a third of people take supplements most days, for all kinds of reasons including health and mood. But misleading information given to the public about supplements is overshadowing the importance of a holistic approach to health including stress, sleep, nutrition and movement. If we’re going to continue to use such enticing marketing, let’s at least give the consumers a high quality, thoroughly researched product.

Monty Simmons, personal trainer

In the field of nutrition and diet, everyone has a view on what constitutes the best diet for them, so basing our advice on evidence is particularly important. Dietitians pride themselves on being an evidence-based profession. Evidence-based dietetic practice is about asking questions,
the Biochemical Society aims to empower our members to communicate the evidence underpinning their science to the public and to policymakers. We have also developed accessible engagement activities to increase the understanding of complicated and often-contentious scientific concepts such as genome editing, food security and the mechanisms of new and existing medicines.
systematically finding research evidence, and assessing the validity, applicability and importance of that evidence. This evidence-based information is then combined with the dietitian’s expertise and judgement and a patient’s values and circumstances to provide the right support and advice.

Tom Embury,
British Dietetic Association

Evidence matters because it is fundamental in allowing patients to weigh the benefits and risks of treatment options, so that they can make the right decisions for them.

Nicole Naylor,
Patient Information Forum

Evidence matters when looking at ‘Wicked’ problems like reducing the harm caused by crime where we are working with schools, as one piece of the puzzle, to support young people to be more resilient.

Rachel Tuffin,
College of Policing, the What Works Centre for Crime Reduction

There are around 274,000 honeybee hives in the UK – maintained by 44,000 amateur keepers as well as professionals and small scale producers. Beekeepers in the South West are working with Exeter University to help protect their honeybees from the arrival of non-native, invasive and predatory Asian hornets. Evidence matters to us because it has allowed us to be prepared and identify the best strategies to protect our bees.

Anne Pike,
Somerset Beekeeping Association
SEEKING EVIDENCE

As the stigma about mental health has started to lift, sweeping generalisations have crept in. It is important to be robustly enquiring and dispassionate in any analysis. Last year I co-authored with Paul Farmer a review on mental health/wellbeing in the workplace. We commissioned an independent study which showed that poor mental health costs the UK economy circa. £100 billion and employers circa. £40 billion a year. It received much publicity; Government accepted all the recommendations, which are being rolled out in the public sector and if anything rather faster in the FTSE as companies realise the financial benefits of good mental health. The investment in evidence has undoubtedly accelerated the pace of change.

Lord Stevenson of Coddenham, cross-bench peer, founding chairman of mental health charity MQ and co-author of Thriving at Work (2017) with Paul Farmer, the CEO of Mind

John McNally was a barber for over 40, running a number of hair salons. He saw with his own eyes the amount of water that was being wasted in his line of work: ‘A row of hairdressers would be chatting away at the sinks, while the water washed down the drain and the water meter went “bing, bing, bing”’. As an MP he chairs the All Party Parliamentary Groups on the hair industry and on flood prevention and sits on the environmental audit select committee. He takes a keen interest in studies into water waste and how best to tackle it. He also points to research by the Hair Council showing strong support among hairdressers for a compulsory industry registration scheme, in part to increase awareness of environmental responsibilities. He says, ‘If you want to change the world, you have to get busy in your own little corner.’

John McNally, MP for Falkirk, SNP
As MP for Bath, Wera Hobhouse represents a city where air quality is so poor the government has ordered the council to comply with nitrogen dioxide limits. Wera arranged a public briefing session, bringing experts and constituents together to share evidence on the issue. Attendees learned that Bath faces a 40% increase in congestion over the next 10 years: urgent action is needed just to stay still. A follow up conference looked at what that action should be. ‘Tackling the school run is the key. Bath has lots of hills and parents take their children to school by car. I want to use evidence to reframe the debate as a public health issue. Children here know they live in a polluted area. Driving home the message on health risks for young people will deliver change.’

Wera Hobhouse, MP for Bath, Liberal Democrat

Carolyn Harris MP snappily sums up what led her to investigate the issue of women’s pensions, “My age!” At 57, she knows many women born a few years earlier who anticipated retiring at the age of 60 but must now wait seven more years to claim their state pension because of changes introduced in 2011. “They were never prepared for it because of the lack of notice. I didn’t have to hunt these women out, they came to me.” The number of the women campaigning against the changes brought its own challenges, “There are so many groups protesting that there’s no one organisation to go to for information. So I did my own research, consulting with these women about the impact of the changes and what could help them.” Over 100 groups responded to the consultation. Now the All Party Parliamentary Group on State Pension Inequality for Women, which Carolyn chairs, plans to lay a Bill before parliament drawing on this evidence.

Carolyn Harris, MP for Swansea East, Labour

Huw Merriman is a lawyer, an MP – and a beekeeper. When he arrived at Westminster he set up the All Party Parliamentary Group for Bees. Neonicotinoid pesticides are viewed with hostility by many in the beekeeping community but Huw and the group initially reserved judgement: ‘It’s really difficult to replicate the field in the
lab and until recently there wasn’t conclusive scientific evidence to support a ban.’ But two recent field studies have shown neonics to be harmful to bees. ‘Our thinking as a group has evolved. We’ve changed our position. It’s a good example of the evidence moving the debate on. If you don’t know something it’s better to rely on people who do: you should quiz them, and put the counter view, and then you usually get to the right place.’

Huw Merriman, MP for Bexhill and Battle, Conservative

‘The animal welfare field is fraught with tensions between politics, opinion and evidence,’ remarks Angela Smith. As an MP with a strong interest in animal rights and rural areas within her constituency she often experiences these tensions directly, pointing to the badger cull and driven grouse shooting as current examples. ‘Debate rages. It’s scientifically complex and very polarised.’ Both issues demonstrate ‘how evidence and science is completely submerged by politics.’ Angela’s opposition to the badger cull has brought her into conflict with farmers. ‘A ten year, multi million pound research project showed that a cull would not make a meaningful reduction to bovine TB. We need a proper strategy rather than the false hope of culling badgers. I’ve engaged more and more with the science on this issue. It’s important always to have an open mind.’

Angela Smith, MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge, Labour

Antoinette Sandbach first became concerned about over-the-counter sales of fetal dopplers – which monitor the fetal heartbeat in the womb – when campaigning about baby loss. She heard from a number of bereaved parents, some of whom had used dopplers. Antoinette discovered there was considerable concern within the medical community about dopplers being used by people without medical training and that they might give parents-to-be false reassurance. “The first evidence I found was from those who had used these products themselves, and were now seeking to warn others of the risks. Following this I consulted with various charities and royal colleges of medicine.
This led me to discover a study that highlighted the risks of these products.” Drawing on this evidence, Antoinette sponsored a Bill in parliament calling for dopplers to be used by medical professionals only. In advance of the debate on the bill in January, the Government announced the Medicines and Health Regulatory Agency would conduct a review into these products. It is hoped that this will further build the evidence base about how they are being used and any associated risks.

Antoinette Sandbach, MP for Eddisbury, Conservative

Across the world, the term ‘post-truth politics’ has become an accepted term of use and abuse in temporary political discourse. So if ever there was a time for a restoration, a renaissance, of evidence-based policy, and a celebration of the evidence collectors, and the discipline and integrity of the scientific process in all our endeavours, but particularly policymaking – then this is it.

George Freeman, MP for Mid Norfolk, Conservative

I believe that statistics and other evidence tell us how the world is working – or not – and therefore enable us, as engineers, as politicians, as scientists, as lobbyists, as campaigners: they enable us to make the world work better.

Chi Onwurah, MP for Newcastle upon Tyne Central and Shadow Minister for Industrial Strategy, Labour

I think the expectations from this campaign: that the government should use evidence wherever possible; that ministers should explain when they don’t base their decisions upon that evidence; and that we as parliament – those who are not part of the government – scrutinise that process; is absolutely right.

Stephen Metcalfe, MP for South Basildon and East Thurrock, Conservative
KEY RESOURCES

A practical resource for anyone wanting to understand how research evidence can help them make smarter decisions. ‘Using Research Evidence’ provides tips and clear guidance on why evidence is important, what evidence to choose, how to judge its quality, and where to find it. https://www.alliance4usefulevidence.org/publication/using-research-evidence-a-practice-guide-january-2016/

The Code of Practice for Statistics ensures that the statistics published by government serve the public. When producers of official statistics comply with the Code, it gives users of statistics and citizens confidence that published government statistics are of public value, are high quality and are produced by people and organisations that are worthy of trust. https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/

What is good evidence for policy? Based on work by the Getting Research into Policy in Public Health project, this accessible guide helps parliamentarians and policy makers identify which evidence is most important to inform policy decisions. Includes details of the associated Routledge open access eBook, The Politics of Evidence. bit.ly/GoodEvidence

The Royal Statistical Society’s Data Manifesto includes recommendations on how the UK government can improve data for policymaking, democracy and for prosperity, calling for official statistics to be at the heart of policy debate. http://www.rss.org.uk/RSS/Influencing_Change/Data_manifesto/RSS/Influencing_Change/Data_democracy_sub/Data_manifesto.aspx?hkey=5dd70207-82e7-4166-93fd-bcf9a2a1e496
Thank you to the following organisations for assistance in organising Evidence Week events.

Generating high-quality research and robust evidence is fundamental to UCL’s academic mission and our ambitions to transform how the world is understood and to address global problems. Ensuring that research evidence and expertise informs public dialogue and public policy is the driving force of the UCL Public Policy initiative to build engagement between researchers and policy makers. Better understanding of evidence and what it can tell us about crucial social problems will underpin our capacity to address them and improve outcomes.

The University of Southampton

The University of Southampton is a world-leading research intensive university committed to generating knowledge and technologies that have real economic and social benefits for societies around the world. The university based Public Policy|Southampton operates at the interface between evidence production and policymaking, and helps to advance high-quality research and evidence into policymaking process nationally, locally and globally. Evidence tells us ‘what works’, and by using it rigorously within a clear process, decision-makers can avoid costly mistakes, help address today’s biggest challenges and achieve important social policy goals.

At the University of Sussex, our interdisciplinary approach brings innovative solutions to real-world problems. We are number one in the world for Development Studies, and our growing investment in excellence has enhanced the impact of our work on economic progress and the well-being of society worldwide. Our researchers in mental health, Quantum technology and science policy are helping decision-makers to find solutions across a range of topics to address the social and economic challenges we face today.

It is vital that good quality evidence is used to properly inform the decisions taken on our behalf. Researchers at The University of Manchester are an important source of this evidence and expertise for government and other policymakers, both in the UK and internationally. Policy@Manchester showcases the contribution of academics from The University of Manchester to public policy development, and actively connects those researchers with policymakers, supporting and smoothing the process of knowledge exchange where needed.
Evidence is at the heart of the work that we do at the Grantham Institute-Climate Change and the Environment, Imperial College London. It is essential that policy decisions are underpinned by the latest research. Our work in engagement and communications acts as a bridge, connecting academic activities directly into the people and processes at the centre of government policy decisions. There is a great deal of experimental and theoretical research that takes place at the university – be it in engineering, the natural sciences or environmental sciences – that can be of value to decision makers outside the academic community. We see it as an essential part of our jobs to produce outputs from research that present evidence in a meaningful, clear, relevant and useful way to this range of stakeholders.

The Policy Institute at King’s addresses complex policy and practice challenges with rigorous research, academic expertise and analysis focused on improving outcomes. Our vision is to contribute to building an ecosystem that enables the translation of research to inform policy and practice, and the translation of policy and practice needs into a demand-focused research culture. We do this by bringing diverse groups together, facilitating engagement between academic, business, philanthropic, clinical and policy communities around current and future societal issues.

Evidence Matters to Cochrane because Cochrane’s vision is a world of improved health where decisions about health and health care are informed by high-quality, relevant and up-to-date synthesized research evidence. Cochrane exists so that healthcare decisions get better.

Evidence especially matters when you are looking at the microscopic level, beyond the reach of the human eye. In the climate of recent media stories on the resurgence of Ebola and the safety of US chicken imports, accessing the right microbiological evidence is more important than ever. Experts in the Society for Applied Microbiology include some of the brightest minds currently working to tackle significant global challenges such as drug-resistant infections; food security; healthy microbiomes and environmental conservation. SfAM works to support the voice of microbiology in public debate.
Evidence Week is an initiative of Sense about Science, the House of Commons Library, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology and House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, and is being held in partnership with SAGE Publishing with events and briefings being produced in collaboration with community organisations, research and regulatory bodies.

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