

The first ever Evidence Week in the UK Parliament



From 25th to 28th June MPs joined with communities and researchers to look at how to use scientific evidence and statistics to support effective scrutiny and policy.

Evidence Week was an initiative of Sense about Science, the House of Commons Library, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology and Commons Science and Technology Committee, and held in partnership with SAGE Publishing. Training and briefings were given in collaboration with community organisations, research and regulatory bodies.



© James Hopkirk

A huge stand designed by Soapbox, in Upper Waiting Hall, provided 3 minute briefings on different kinds of data.



© James Hopkirk

Chi Onwurah MP responds to community speakers.



Phil Gomersall of the National Allotment Society and Nick Ross, Sense about Science trustee.



© James Hopkirk

Sarah Wollaston MP responds to community speakers.

Community groups came from all over the UK to open Evidence Week for assembled MPs in the Churchill room. Their interests ranged from beekeeping to community action to IVF and they

made clear their expectations that parliament should engage with evidence.

They were met by more than 40 MPs and peers. Norman Lamb, chair of the Commons science and technology committee, listened to every single statement.

The themes for the four days were:

- **DAY 1 MONDAY 25 JUNE**
QUESTIONING QUALITY
- **DAY 2 TUESDAY 26 JUNE**
NAVIGATING DATA ANALYSIS AND STATISTICS
- **DAY 3 WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE**
WHAT IS EFFECTIVE IN HEALTH AND ELSEWHERE
- **DAY 4 THURSDAY 28 JUNE**
'WICKED' PROBLEMS

“We are not living in a ‘post-truth’ society. We only need to look around at the many people and groups from all walks of life who are investigating claims and marshalling evidence to work out the nature of problems and how to tackle them. They expect parliament to be doing the same.”

Tracey Brown, director of Sense about Science

Read more at theguardian.com



Layla Moran MP brings her questions to the Evidence Week stand.



Vicky Ford MP with the Health Research Authority and Royal Pharmaceutical Society.



John McNally MP discusses evidence at our stand in Upper Waiting Hall.

MPs, peers and parliamentary staff attended different kinds of training and events, from navigating constituency data to using statistics in the media ([programme of events](#)) and met their constituents for briefings at the stand in Upper Waiting Hall.

On the day of a Commons debate on improving air quality, experts in monitoring and health effects from UCL, Southampton, Manchester and King's College London briefed MPs at the stand. [During the debate](#) Andrew Selous MP urged colleagues to go to Upper Waiting Hall to get data for their own constituencies.

Evidence Week ended with a roundtable about what people want and need from evidence gathering, which SAGE will publish as a discussion paper this autumn.



Statisticians from the House of Commons Library and the Office for National Statistics show Bamboos Charalambous MP the brand new constituency data dashboards.

Read more



Luke Hall MP looks through air quality data with a constituent.



In under 3 minutes, researchers from the Universities of Durham and Northumbria show Peter Dowd MP how to disaggregate data.



Mary Creagh MP is shocked by London air quality data.