

[Getting results through community campaigns](#)

There is a priceless personal warmth to grassroots community campaigning; it is the kind of human touch that can attract people who wouldn't ordinarily be drawn to campaigning and activism. Here are some tips on getting wider support for your cause

Community campaigning is all about what people can see down their street and in their local environment. It's their hospital that's having its A&E shut down; their library or nursery that is facing closure; their neighbours and friends who are affected by cutbacks. That familiarity makes it mean more by being more visible and tangible.

The power of disparate groups, who might not ordinarily work together in a common cause, can be harnessed through appealing to that kind of village view. Vital community issues can cut right across party lines and can influence MPs, MEPs, mayors and councillors into lending their support. When a community pulls together it can be a powerful force for change and influence which cannot be ignored.

Get the latest on the [PCS DWP Jobs, Services and Communities campaign](#), [read our dos and don'ts](#) and [see our guide to running a campaign](#).

Dos and Don'ts

DO spread the word. Your local newspaper can be a big help, either by reporting your story in print or online, using your press release or by publishing your letter on its letters page. Seek support from press@pcs.org.uk to get the best out of the press. They can help get your story in both the local and national media

DO speak to local politicians. Your MP, or parliamentary candidates for the opposition parties, may offer some support to your campaign, and it is worth contacting local councillors and officials for their support too. Seek support from campaigns@pcs.org.uk to get the best response from politicians

DO join up with other campaigning organisations, trade unions, anti-cuts groups and helpful activists. You will have some areas of common interest and purpose where you can offer help and support to each other.

DO make the most of social media. Start up a page on Facebook, an Instagram profile, and create a Twitter account for your campaign. Make connections with other like-minded campaigners and groups. If you've got time to create a blog, it will be an invaluable asset for your campaign, providing a forum for debate and a place for people to go to in order to get information.

DON'T rule anyone out from being a supporter. Lifelong Conservative party supporters can be outraged at the closure of an office in their community. Bear that kind of thing in mind when you're reaching out.

DON'T give up. There are going to be setbacks along the way and times when it might look like all is lost, but resilience and perseverance are extremely important qualities for any activist to have.

DON'T forget your goals. Always remember what you're fighting for, and "what a win would look like". Make sure you don't lose sight of the reasons you got into community campaigning in the first place.

DON'T Be too aggressive. Community campaigning is about winning new friends and teasing the activist side out of ordinary people. You run the risk of switching off these valuable assets to your campaign if you're too militant in your language or your actions.

Bishop Auckland - case study of a PCS campaign against a DWP office closure

Bishop Auckland Benefit Centre - Vinovium House

PCS campaigned in 2016 - 2018 when the DWP Bishop Auckland office in Vinovium House was threatened with closure. PCS reps asked members on site to keep all the receipts that they received from local businesses when they spent money locally over a few months and calculated the value of the contribution to the local economy by staff working at the office.

The branch also drafted a petition demanding that the office was kept open. This was circulated among staff but also supported by local businesses who had copies of the petition in their shops and cafes.

The branch issued press releases to the local newspaper and formed productive relationships with local journalists resulting in stories largely supportive of the campaign appearing in the local press.

They organised a rally and march in the town centre using the local trades council and retired members, as well as branch reps to gather support. The rally and march attracted good numbers of members and local activists.

The branch also gained the support of the local MP and encouraged PCS members and members of the local community to write to her. This prompted the MP to raise questions in Parliament and join the march and rally.

Ultimately the campaign was successful and the office kept open as you can see in [this report by the Northern Echo.](#)